

ANTIGUA & BARBUDA

COL activities in 2003-2006

BACKGROUND

Since COL's inception, it has organised annual meetings for the Caribbean Chief Education Officers. The meetings are used to share information within the region on open and distance learning (ODL) activities in order to promote and support sharing of expertise and experience. Antigua & Barbuda has been an active participant in these meetings but has not contributed to COL's budget in 2003-2006.

SUMMARY

In the 2003-2006 period, COL worked with Antigua & Barbuda to promote the exchange of experience with other countries by supporting the attendance of senior officials at international events and also by sending an expert to participate in a strategic planning event in the country. In this period Antigua & Barbuda pledged to support the COL driven initiative to create a Virtual University for the Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC).

POLICY AND SYSTEMS ENHANCEMENT

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

COL invited the small states of the Commonwealth, through their Ministers of Education, to indicate if they wished to participate in the creation of the VUSSC (for more details of VUSSC see section on Pan-Commonwealth initiatives). Antigua & Barbuda has signed the agreement.

Strengthening national systems

A COL staff member attended a workshop on the Strategic Use of ICTs in The Caribbean Agricultural Sector which was held in Antigua & Barbuda in September 2003. During the workshop he facilitated discussions on Open and Distance Learning and Community Learning.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

COL organises and supports a meeting of Caribbean Chief Education Officers (CEOs) on an approximate annual basis. The purpose for the meeting is to discuss and share information about regional ODL initiatives, and to provide an opportunity to the CEOs for professional development.

The Chief Education Officer from Antigua & Barbuda attended the last three CEO meetings – one in March 2003, a second held in conjunction with the 3rd Pan-Commonwealth Forum in Dunedin, New Zealand in August 2004, and a third, in Trinidad in February 2005, which was held just prior to the launch of the Caribbean Association for Distance and Open Learning.

LOOKING FORWARD

Antigua & Barbuda's commitment to VUSSC was an important feature of the 2003-2006 period. This initiative will continue to be a significant focus in 2006-2009.