

NOTES ON THE STAFF/BOARD RETREAT: PLANNING FOR 2012-2015

TUESDAY, 7 JUNE 2011 – 13:35-17:30
COAL HARBOUR SUITE, PAN PACIFIC HOTEL

PRESENT

COL Staff

Sir John Daniel, President
Professor Asha Kanwar, Vice President
Dr. Venkataraman Balaji
Ms. Doris McEachern
Dr. Kodhandaraman Balasubramanian
Ms. Frances Ferreira
Professor Madhulika Kaushik
Mr. John Lesperance
Ms. Alison Mead Richardson
Mr. Ian Pringle
Dr. Abdurrahman Umar
Ms. Trudi van Wyk
Ms. Angela Kwan
Mr. Dave Wilson

Ms. Anna Lee

Note-taker

Ms. Lydia Meister

Board of Governors

The Honourable Burchell Whiteman, Chair
Dr. Linda Sissons, CNZM, Deputy Chair
Ms. Janet L. Ecker, ICD.D
Ms. Rashmi Chowdhary
HE Ms. Mariam Yalwaji Katagum
Ms. Jennifer (Jenny) Glennie
Ms. Jo Bourne
Professor Akilagpa Sawyerr
Professor Dr. Atta-Ur-Rahman, FRS
Professor Clement Sankat
The Honourable Dr. Dame Carol Kidu
Professor John Wood
Mr. Ransford Smith
Ms. Séline Grandchamp, attending on behalf of
CIDA Advisor to the Canadian Board
Mr. Roger Clarke, DFID Advisor to the UK
Board

The Retreat started earlier than planned, at 13:35.

1. Welcome and Overview of the Commonwealth of Learning – Sir John Daniel

Sir John welcomed all to the planning retreat, noting that what came out of the meeting would be taken into consideration as the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) moves forward in the planning of its next Three Year Plan (TYP), 2012-2015. Next year, COL would have a formal draft of the plan to present to the Board. Sir John presented a timetable of COL's planning process of the next TYP.

He then gave a brief overview of the afternoon's agenda. Sir John and Professor Kanwar would start with brief preliminary presentations; Sir John would present COL's strategic background, followed by Professor Kanwar who would give an overview of COL's programmes. The eight Education Specialists would follow; each Education Specialist would give a two-minute overview of what had transpired in their respective initiatives, and what their proposed plan in the next TYP would be.

Sir John started the meeting with a brief PowerPoint presentation, which set the scene for Professor Kanwar's programme review.

2. Introducing proposed programme for the next Three-Year Plan 2012-2015 – Professor Asha Kanwar

Professor Kanwar talked to her PowerPoint presentation, starting with the context of COL's programmes. She followed with a brief overview of the results from the mid-term Stakeholder Survey held during the Pan Commonwealth Forum 6 in Kochi, India in November 2010. She then reviewed the role of the Focal Points and their importance to COL's planning process. She gave a broad overview of the results of the two regional Focal Point meetings held thus far: the Caribbean region, and the Mediterranean and Africa regions. Regional Focal Point meetings would be held later in the year for the Pacific and Asia regions.

Professor Kanwar then reviewed COL's proposed plan for the next planning period. The vision statement remains, but COL added the words "equitably" and "expand" to its mission statement. Cross-cutting themes would be "gender" and "eLearning". COL would retain its four special initiatives: Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA) (Asia); Southern African Development Community – Centre for Distance Education (SADC-CDE) (Southern Africa); Regional Training and Research Institute for Distance and Open Learning (RETRIDOL) (West Africa); and eLearning for International Organisations (eLIO). Its five core strategies would remain as per the current TYP:

1. Partnerships: foster key relationships and networks which further COL's objectives
2. Models: develop and share replicable models across the Commonwealth
3. Policies: assist countries and institutions in policy development and implementation
4. Capacity: facilitate training and organisational development
5. Materials: materials development to help scale up COL's work.

Professor Kanwar then then requested the Education Specialists to give a brief overview of their initiatives and their plans for the next triennium.

3. Education Specialists on "The implications of their work for the next three years"

Professor Kanwar requested the **Education sector** to present their initiatives.

Ms. Frances Ferreira, Open Schooling

Over the past three years, the Open Schooling initiative has invested in the development of resources to facilitate the establishment of sustainable open schools. Over the next three years, open schools will use this investment to assist countries to develop new open schools and to ensure that existing open schools have appropriate policies and systems in place. In collaboration with the Hewlett Foundation, COL has facilitated the development of open education resources (OER) for Open Schools and will make special efforts over the next three years to ensure it is introduced and used in six countries (Trinidad & Tobago, Namibia, Zambia, Lesotho, Seychelles and Botswana), as well as in countries affiliated to the Commonwealth Open Schooling Association (COMOSA). COL will use the lessons learned from the OER4OS model to assist open schools to expand their curriculum through the integration of technology and vocational and academic education. Fostering collaboration and capacity building will be a huge focus for open schooling and COL will continue to use technology and social media to add value to its efforts.

Dr. Abdurrahman Umar, Teacher Education

The Teacher Education initiative has its context in support of the Education for All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDG). In reviewing the statistics of unqualified teachers: Africa will have a shortfall of four million teachers by 2015. A significant number of these teachers are unqualified. In Uganda, 63% of teachers are unqualified, and in Nigeria, 44% of teachers are unqualified. Traditional teaching methods cannot address the dual issue of teacher supply and teacher quality; only open and distance (ODL) can tackle the problem. COL will strengthen the capacity of teacher education institutions in Commonwealth countries to harness the potential of ODL to address shortfalls in teacher supply, as well as to support, train and enhance the skills of teachers. COL's strategy in the current TYP has been to focus on building capacity through the use of ODL, developing materials to improve the quality of teacher education, primarily through the use of OER, and on forging strong partners. Teacher Education is currently working with over 40 partners in 23 Commonwealth countries. In the next triennium, Teacher Education will consolidate its achievements to date, and based on the lessons learned, address the challenges it has faced. Its continued success depends on full and sustained engagement with its partners, and congruence with national and institutional needs.

Professor Madhulika Kaushik, Higher Education

The focus of the Higher Education initiative has been on capacity building through training in various aspects of ODL, materials and resource development and RETRIDOL for the development of ODL in West Africa. In the next triennium, Higher Education is moving away from material development by building partner institution capacity for OER-based revision and development. Its work in capacity building will continue but with a sharper focus on some areas. COL believes that technology supported ODL makes access to higher education possible to far larger learner populations, especially the working adults. One area of focus therefore is to encourage more institutions to adopt ODL processes by increasing COL's efforts in development and implementation of ODL policy. Due to the rapid growth in the secondary sector, higher education has seen an explosive growth in the developing countries. Such accelerated growth demands close attention to quality assurance, a key objective of the Higher Education initiative. COL plans to work closely with tertiary institutions to implement quality assurance measures through the application of models. High levels of growth also create gaps between the supply and demand for effective leadership in higher education institutions. COL will therefore focus on leadership capacity building for both men and women.

Mr. John Lesperance, Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

VUSSC was established in the year 2000, but it only started to gain momentum in 2006. Since inception, the VUSSC initiative has held nine training and materials development workshops (boot camps) and has offered six online and face-to-face ICT workshops. These boot camps and workshops have succeeded in building the capacity of educators in member states in OER and distance learning and ICT methodologies, and has resulted in the development of course materials. VUSSC also established a Transnational Qualifications Framework (TQF), which has attracted both small states and international attention. VUSSC launched an online Learning Management System (LMS) called Moodle, which would give participating institutions access to a web-based platform for course delivery, as well as an offline version called Poodle. For the next three years, COL will continue with some of its current activities, but will shift its focus to implementation. COL will work with individual institutions to strengthen their capacity and provide support for the delivery of VUSSC

courses. COL will also work with countries and regions to ensure the implementation of the TQF, which will allow the movement of learners and recognition of programmes for accreditation purposes. COL will assist in the development of a TQF portal, which will aggregate information from diverse sources, thereby facilitating access to both learners and institutions. COL is using technology to increase access to learning opportunities in the small states.

Professor Kanwar thanked the Education sector for their presentations, and then invited the **Livelihoods and Health sector** to present their initiatives.

Ms. Alison Mead Richardson, Skills Development

As noted earlier, governments are increasingly focusing on issues of access and quality in skills development and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). ODL approaches are rarely considered, especially in the formal TVET system. COL believes the use of appropriate technologies in ODL approaches can impact positively to improve both access and quality of skills development. The Skills Development initiative is building capacity in institutions in Africa, Asia and the Pacific to deliver both formal and no-formal TVET programmes through appropriate technology, using audio, video and eLearning through Moodle. Skills Development has established an online Community of Practice with 200 TVET teachers, managers and policymakers, which is important for sustainability. Thirty-five institutions and organisations have started piloting or developing new ODL courses, many of which will be shared as OER. In the next TYP, the aim is to assist more institutions in Africa strengthen their capacity and support collaboration and networking between them to develop a self-sustaining system.

Dr. Kodhandaraman Balasubramanian, Learning for Farmers

In this triennium, the model for the Learning for Farmers initiative has established that ODL can add value in empowerment and in strengthening livelihood security in agriculture. Technology, innovation and mLearning have played a major role in the success of the model. COL's model has reinforced the hypothesis that lifelong learning by rural communities has implications for a win-win framework for financial institutions, ICT companies, knowledge institutions, civil society and markets, leading to a self-propelling process. However, this process cannot be scaled up in a conventional sense. The initiative aims to address location specific, small-scale solutions, and using the principles of the long tail approach (the retailing strategy of selling a large number of unique items in relatively small quantities), attempts are being made to replicate the model in large numbers. Such replication requires a certain threshold level of operation. During the next TYP, such operations will take place which will facilitate the replication of the model through self-sustaining and self-replicating process.

Mr. Ian Pringle, Healthy Communities

In the current TYP, the Healthy Communities initiative has been working primarily on two outputs. The first is developing and demonstrating an innovative model for community learning using local radio and increasingly, mobile phones, particularly in concert. The goal is to provide learning opportunities to marginalised communities and hard-to-reach citizens, especially women. The approach is adaptable; however, the main subjects to have emerged are: maternal and child health; HIV/AIDS; and nutrition and fitness. The second focus is to build capacity among COL's partners – mostly national and regional agencies working in development communication. COL works with these agencies to build similar capacities with their partners at the district level - health agencies,

community groups and networks, and media outlets. Looking forward to the next TYP, our successes position us well to: (a) develop the training and other materials, including the use of distance training, that will enable a broader replication of the community learning programme model, (b) deepen the relationships and expand the number of national and regional partner agencies that COL works with, and (c) better integrate research and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) with COL's partners, in order to improve advocacy and policy feedback. Most importantly, the Healthy Communities initiative aims to achieve a degree of scale – both in select countries where COL is pursuing a more national take-up, for example, in South Africa and Bangladesh, but also in more countries across the Commonwealth.

Ms. Trudi van Wyk, Integrating eLearning

In the Integrating eLearning initiative, COL identifies two specific areas of intervention: policy support to governments, and ICT integration into teaching and learning. Furthermore, COL has assisted institutions to integrate OER as a component of quality teaching and learning through advocacy, materials development, capacity building and professional development. Moving forward, COL has developed three strong models which will be implemented in the next TYP: (a) Teacher ICT integration through the use of the UNESCO ICT Competency Framework for Teachers for governments and institutions; (b) the use of low-cost technologies (CD-based, mentor supported) in teacher development, and (c) the use of mLearning for Mathematics in formal schooling. COL will continue to work with governments to create an enabling ICT environment and with institutions to increase the digital literacy of managers, administrators, teachers and learners through ICT in Education. COL and its network of Public-Private-Partnerships (PPP) with such entities as UNESCO, Commonwealth Secretariat (ComSec), Microsoft, Intel and Nokia will support the integration of new and emerging technologies and continue capacity building at various levels.

Professor Kanwar thanked the Livelihoods and Health sector for their presentations.

4. Questions from the Board

Professor Kanwar asked the floor for questions.

Q: Does COL publish newsletters, or is this information only available on COL's website?

A: Information regarding COL's programmes is available through COL's newsletter, *Connections*, and through COL's website.

Q: In the area of Mathematics and telephony, is COL looking at partners who are already working in specific areas?

A: COL makes use of existing activities, and then seeks to scale them up and replicate them across the Commonwealth. A thorough search through the web is undertaken to avoid duplication of work.

Q: What is COL achieving through its Public-Private-Partnerships (PPP), and what is COL's approach in evaluating the success of these partnerships?

A: Two PPP were described: one related to COL's partnership with Microsoft, and how ComSec joined COL to deliver a UNESCO platform of teacher training. COL developed a framework of collaboration, working primarily in the social responsibility area of a corporation. The second PPP described a business model and a capacity-building model used in the Learning for Farmers initiative.

Q: What M&E methods does COL employ to evaluate its programme work?

A: COL (a) trains partners in the field to collect data throughout the life of the activity, (b) initiates tracer studies over a two-year period, and (c) engages in independent evaluations each TYP to triangulate data.

Q: Is it possible for COL to map what activities are taking place in each initiative, and link to existing and emerging activities to avoid overlap?

A: Every quarter, COL hosts a one-day retreat to learn what each Education Specialist is engaged in. Regional meetings are held to learn what is happening in each region, and how COL could work with existing activities.

Q: Since last year, growth in PPP in the area of skills development has increased. Does COL consider PPP with large employing organisations, as well as banking institutions?

A: Traditionally, COL has not sought those types of relationships. eLIO works with organisations, but COL does not wish to be seen as a teaching organisation that competes with local teaching establishments.

Q: The rise of corporate universities having global influence has risen greatly; is it worthwhile for COL to develop partnerships with these types of organisations?

A: The Learning for Farmers initiative was used as an example to respond. The Central Bank of Sri Lanka is working with the Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL) in training bank staff in agricultural methodologies.

Q: What is the role of special initiatives and their relationship to COL's TYP?

A: Special initiatives complement COL's work. For example, CEMCA is working across five initiatives, which feed into the achievement of COL's corporate outcomes. The special initiatives assist in developing linkages with other organisations, which spins off into other partnerships being developed.

Q: Is the TQF confined only to VUSSC?

A: The TQF is designed to allow the free movement of learners across VUSSC. At the moment, the VUSSC Management Committee would like to keep the TQF at the small state level before expanding it to include non-VUSSC members. Once the TQF is finalised, VUSSC ministries will be requested to sign it to ensure buy-in.

Q: What are COL's limitations?

A: For its limited resources, COL punches well above its weight. However, COL is not a household name, like UNESCO, nor does COL have a brand image. COL is known in small pockets, and is well-received, but it does not have political clout. COL's challenge is to get more resources on the ground. For example, replicability needs more resources on the ground to spread successful models more widely. On the other hand, being small does have its advantages. Unlike UNESCO, COL does not have gate keepers that prevent it from being responsive.

Q: As a niche player, COL does not have to compete with UNESCO, does it?

A: The advantage of being small is that COL is a niche player. The disadvantage is that it takes much longer to tell your story. However, through the power of the web, COL is recognised as a key player in development education.

Q: What would happen if COL strengthened the role of the Focal Point?

A: Focal Points have day jobs; they have been nominated as Focal Points by their Ministry, but it is an add-on to their existing position. They are often COL's champions, and they do a lot for COL, but COL cannot exceed expectations.

Q: What is COL's partnership strategy? When does COL decide to engage in a partnership, how does COL choose its partners, and how does COL determine its exit strategy or terminate a partnership?

A: COL's work is strongly based on partnerships and these are highly diverse. Some partners are chosen by COL (e.g. the banks in L3Farmers), others come through contracts and grants such as the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and UNICEF. UNICEF is a good example of a partnership that has been very successful but quite difficult to manage because of the disparities in size and culture between the organisations. Often, of course, it is these very disparities that make for success, because the partnership does more than either body could do alone. However, most of COL's partners are institutions all over the Commonwealth. Responsiveness is a particularly important quality when it comes to maintaining a partnership. Unproductive partnerships die a natural death.

Q: What is the difference between replication and scaling up? Is there any deliberate programme as to where the replication is taking place? How is COL making its replication model known?

A: Replication is taking the conceptual basis of a model to other countries and adapting it to the local environment; scaling up is standardising one single model and taking it to other countries. The Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3 Farmers) model is an example of replication. It involves four key partners (farmers, learning institutions, ICT companies and banks); however, the model is adapted to the socio, economic and political needs of the local environment. The concept remains the same, but how it is implemented changes. The VUSSC TQF, on the other hand, is an example of scaling up. The TQF document provides small states with procedures and guidelines to translate national accreditation for recognition through VUSSC's international accreditation programme. The model remains the same for all 34 VUSSC members. COL is waiting for the results of its L3 Farmers longitudinal study before making its replication model known. The evaluation will provide a clear indication of what is and is not working in the replication model.

Q: What M&E exercise does COL engage in?

A: COL monitors its work regularly at quarterly retreats, presents a self-assessment annual report to the Board, organised a mid-term stakeholder survey, and has commissioned longitudinal studies for each initiative which will be synthesised in a final summative report written by an external evaluator.

Q: Are there criteria or policies that drive the selection of a partner and is there something that gives guidance to management in terms of ending a partnership? Is the methodology used in the selection of partners unique to each initiative?

A: COL distinguished two partners with whom it works: donor partners and development partners. COL also presented a paper to the Board on the *Ethics of Partnerships* at last year's meeting. COL

gave an example from the Skills Development initiative. A *readiness tool* was developed to assist in the identification of ten key institutions to work with in the development of course material. When deciding to end a partnership, sustainability is key. The Commonwealth Executive Master of Business Administration/Master of Public Administration (CEMBA/CEMPA) and VUSSC were given as examples. Once the partners are ready to take ownership of the programme, COL will withdraw from the partnership.

The Board suggested that as COL establishes more partnerships, COL should consider developing a set of principles which will guide how it engages with partners. Both senior management and Education Specialists would have clarity in terms of selecting partners that support COL's mission, as well as assisting to ensure partners are ready to partner. Ultimately, having clear guidelines for the selection of partners will lead to greater success of COL's programmes.

Professor Kanwar thanked the Board for their questions, and ended the session for a break.

Following the break, Professor Kanwar returned to her PowerPoint presentation. Two group-work sessions were planned, but as the meeting was running late, she decided to combine Session 1 and Session 2 group work.

The group work was split among five groups, consisting of:

Group 1: Professor Kanwar, Ms. Kwan, Professor Wood, Ms. Chowdhary, Professor Dr. Rahman, Dr. Balasubramanian, Dr. Sissons.

Group 2: Ms. McEachern, Professor Kaushik, The Honourable Dr. Kidu, The Honourable Mr. Whiteman, Ms. Glennie, Mr. Pringle.

Group 3: Mr. Wilson, Dr. Balaji, Dr. Umar, Ms. Grandchamp, Ms. Ecker, Mr. Clarke.

Group 4: Professor Sawyerr, Ms. Ferreira, Ms. van Wyk, Professor Sankat.

Group 5: Sir John, Mr. Lesperance, Mr. Smith, HE Mrs. Katagum, Ms. Bourne, Ms. Mead Richardson.

Following discussions amongst the groups, a representative from each group was asked to present their group's responses to the following questions:

5a. Session I: "What can COL do in the next TYP which will further the agenda of your country/region/organisation?"

1. What are the new development trends since 2009?
2. Does the proposed plan respond to these trends?
3. In which ways can COL further the agenda of your country/region/organisation?

5b. Session II: "Do the outcomes and performance targets in the Logic Model adequately capture the results that we should achieve in 2012-2015? What would you advise?"

1. Are the proposed outcomes and performance targets adequate?
2. Have important areas been missed?
3. Is the proposed plan sufficiently focused?

Group 1: represented by Dr. Linda Sissons, CNZM

Group 1 noted three trends that COL should be aware of:

1. *The exponential growth in new technologies:* COL should be aware of the new technologies under development, and should integrate and use these new technologies in its planning process. COL could disseminate new technologies through web conferencing.
2. *The importance of quality assurance:* the accreditation of distance education institutions is very important for the recognition of ODL. COL should develop a repository of new methods to benchmark them against recognised standards, such as those of the ACU, to ensure their quality. COL could also develop a template to support institutions in their course development. This would assist in the employability of graduates.
3. *The continued rise of degree mills:* to combat the rise of degree mills, which tarnishes the reputation of ODL institutions, COL should develop a directory of quality courses in different disciplines. The directory of peer-reviewed courses would be regularly updated.

With respect to furthering the agenda, Group 1 suggested COL:

1. Publish bulletins on new and emerging technologies.
2. Develop, in addition to the COL Blog, a Mobile Blog, and use webinars to disseminate information.
3. Expand the networks it develops. COL could partner with local institutions to train focal points in COL's work. It could act to create networks of all sorts: linking academics with students studying through ODL; networking people in the delivery of quality and skills; develop a network for higher education institutions and a network for teacher education institutions, etc.

Group 1 was happy with COL's proposed logic model; they thought the initiative outcome statements were sufficiently focused. Group 1 thought the performance indicators (PI) should be left to COL to decide. Some specific suggestions regarding initiative activities included:

Healthy Communities: explore working in the area of telemedicine; NAFSA, the Association of International Educators could be considered as a model.

VUSSC: should move away from developing TVET courses and develop more academic courses. VUSSC is in the formal Education sector, not in the Livelihoods and Health sector.

Higher Education: should consider COL as an e-content eLearning provider; it would be a good fit for developing an institutional benchmarking tool.

eLearning: very happy that eLearning will be considered cross-cutting in the next TYP.

Group 2: represented by Ms. Jennie Glennie

Group 2 also noted three trends that COL should be aware of:

1. *The corporatisation of global economy:* growing global companies are becoming more powerful with bigger revenues than the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of developing countries. This poses a serious challenge for small developing states. What are the implications for COL?
2. *The youth bulge and the demand for skills:* the youth bulge at the secondary and tertiary level will impact Open Schooling, Teacher Education, Higher Education, VUSSC, Healthy Communities and Skills Development. The demand for education is more diverse and greater than in the past; institutions must meet demands with fewer resources. Students often do not have the skills for employment. Similar to what is occurring in the service sector, youth need to be encouraged to become job creators rather than job consumers.
3. *The importance of food security and new lifestyle diseases:* climate change has impacted food security; increased droughts have led to food shortages, increasing commodity cost prices. The distribution of food will be controlled by wealthier nations. This will impact COL's work. On the other hand, as developing countries such as India become wealthier, there is an increase in lifestyle diseases, such as diabetes and heart disease. What will COL's role be?

With respect to the proposed TYP, Group 2 thought the plan is appropriate. Descriptions are required for the core strategies, and COL should ensure it provides evidence of actual impact. The initiative outcome statements could be refined, but the areas identified are important. Group 2 found the PIs very focused.

With respect to Open Schooling, the group noted that Open Schooling is about schools, not schooling. Group 2 also questioned the phrase "access to learning" rather than "success in open schooling."

Group 3: represented by Ms. Janet Ecker

Group 3 noted the following development trends that COL should be aware of:

1. *Shift in demographics:* COL needs to address the
 - a. feminisation of illiteracy
 - b. youth bulge
 - c. success of Universal Primary Education (UPE). Access to senior secondary education has become an issue. The transition from primary to secondary school needs to be enhanced.
2. *Changes in technology.*
3. *Fewer resources.*
4. *Emphasis on results:* Governments, organisations and institutions will be seeking value for money.
5. *Proliferation of donors and NGOs:* represents to COL both competition (more agencies seeking funding), as well as a pool of potential partners (donors).

To the question, does the proposed plan respond to these trends? Group 3 thought the PIs for the initiative outcome statements seem to be at the output level. The group required more information in order to determine the adequacy of the plan vis-à-vis the trends.

Group 3 thought they required more information in order to respond to the proposed TYP. The group made some general comments on the proposed PIs:

1. COL needs to target a specific group of countries, rather than referring to “countries” and “regions”.
2. Gender is better integrated in the draft logic model than in the current logic model.
3. There is a lack of consistency in the measurements of the regional spread.
4. COL needs to start looking at the real people impact. This requires the tracking of learners and beneficiaries, not just institutions.

With respect to furthering the agenda, Group 3 suggested COL:

1. Focus more on the fragile states and the opportunities ODL provides these countries.
2. Focus on poor countries, particularly those that are trying to strengthen their democratic institutions.
3. Focus on the MDGs.

Group 4: represented by Ms. Frances Ferreira

Group 4 focused on new development trends per initiative, rather than giving a generalisation.

Open Schooling should focus on:

1. Early childhood education.
2. The underperformance of boys and the high school dropout rate.
3. Mathematics, Science and Technology to encourage boys to remain in school.

Teacher Education should focus on:

1. The quality of teachers, and their attitude and commitment towards the teaching profession.
2. The management, accountability and performance of teachers.
3. Teacher performance: how can COL contribute to teachers’ enhanced performance? Note that “enhanced” does not mean teachers can teach.

Higher Education should focus on:

1. The globalisation of higher education: many higher education institutions are being established in developing countries, but how are they managed and regulated?
2. The slow response by traditional institutions to use new technologies: these institutions may be overtaken by new institutions that are more flexible and not as concerned about quality.

3. Increased technology use by mature and service staff.
4. The rise of private, local institutions.
5. Quality assurance issues.
6. The brain drain: the ability for universities to attract and retain quality professors.
7. Moving to systematic/national and industry issues rather than focusing on institutional issues.

VUSSC should focus on:

1. Widening its partnerships, and offering programmes to other countries.
2. Promoting TQF for All.

Technical and Vocational Skills Development should focus on:

1. Increasing its presence and visibility, perhaps through the Focal Points.
2. Increasing its efforts to make offerings that the industry values, and serves the economy.
3. Practical and applied programmes.
4. Building PPP rather than just institutional partnerships.
5. Moving to systematic/national and industry issues rather than focusing on institutional issues.

Learning for Farmers should focus on:

1. Promoting food and agriculture over the whole value chain (across the sector).
2. Promoting business, entrepreneurship and agribusiness: farming is not only for the poor.
3. Promoting transformation, which may vary from region to region.

Healthy Communities should focus on:

1. Raising its profile: healthy communities cut across the economic divide; through the use of technology, everyone can benefit, regardless of their socio-economic background.
2. Changing its perspective: lifestyle diseases, such as diabetes, cancer, etc. impact everyone. The focus should shift from the resource poor to include the wealthy, i.e., a healthy lifestyle for all, both rural and urban.
3. Broadening its community: while recognising the urgent need to assist the poor and underserved, the same methods can be used to widen the community to include the wealthier segments of society.

eLearning should focus on:

1. Lifelong learning and training-the-trainers.
2. Maintaining a clear direction for the future.

Group 5: represented by Ms. Jo Bourne

Group 5 noted that COL should be focusing on demand-for-education (demand driven) and not the other way around. When planning the TYP, the following trends should be considered:

1. *Rapid growth and urbanisation*: increased primary school completion has led to increased demand in post-basic education. There is an urgent need for skills development, employment and entrepreneurship.
2. *Mobility and migration*: the movement of people require flexibility and adaptability. Education has to shift from teaching skills required in today's environment to educating people for technologies that have not yet been developed.
3. *Quality "crisis"*: how does COL measure quality? There is growing evidence that the quality of basic education matters. Early grade literacy and numeracy set the trajectory for future learners. This impacts GDP. The quality of education should be at the centre of educational policy.
4. *Diversity of partnerships and providers*: it is clear public institutions will not be able to provide all services to all people. For example, 70% of children living in Lagos, Nigeria attend a private school.

Group 5 made the following comments:

1. Healthy Communities has a direct impact on the MDGs. COL needs more reach into the community.
2. Evidence indicates higher education has the most impact on a country's economy. COL needs to increase access of populations to higher education. Technology developments require improved access to broadband connectivity.
3. There is upward pressure on the education system, and upward pressure in a changing world. What is COL's role in this changing environment? Is COL thinking about what comes after 2015?
4. How does COL stay at the forefront of what is going on? It is not appropriate to be involved in everything, and it is good that COL is not spreading itself too thin.

With respect to PIs:

1. The draft logic model indicates a gap between PIs and impact: what assumptions are being made in achieving each step of the logic model?
2. COL needs to improve its data collection: it is important to know what works, based on evidence. It is challenging for educational institutions and governments to collect data. It is not done routinely or robustly. COL must be able to say: "This intervention has led to this impact, and here is the evidence."
3. With respect to PIs, COL needs more PIs on quality. Does COL track interim milestones towards impact? Is COL sure a stated PI contributes to the impact statement? What is the extent to which outcomes are attributable to COL? PIs contribute to an outcome only if they can be counted or measured. COL needs to strengthen the results chain.

Professor Kanwar thanked the groups for their insightful comments and valuable input.

6. Wrap-up

Sir John thanked all present for their active engagement in the Retreat. He thanked the five groups for their useful presentations, and Board members for sharing their diverse expertise. COL would be more confident as it moved forward in the planning of its next TYP. He thought it timely to close the meeting so Board and staff members could have a break prior to the reception.

Sir John thanked all those present for a very worthwhile day. The retreat ended at 17:30.