Learning for Development

COL is an intergovernmental organization created by Commonwealth Heads of Government to encourage the development and sharing of open learning and distance education knowledge, resources and technologies.

Vision:
Access to learning is the key to development

Mission:
To help governments and institutions expand the scope, scale and quality of learning by using new approaches and technologies, especially those subsumed under the general term of open and distance learning (ODL).

Programme sectors and initiatives:

Education:
- Open schooling
- Teacher education
- Higher education
- Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth

Livelihoods & Health:
- Skills development
- Learning for farming
- Healthy communities
- Integrating eLearning

Key aims:
- Increase the number of trained teachers
- Open up access to secondary school to larger numbers of pupils
- Assist in the development of tertiary education
- Support skills development to improve the livelihoods of communities

Strategies:
- Partnerships
- Models
- Policies
- Capacity
- Materials

Commonwealth of Learning
1055 West Hastings Street, Suite 1200
Vancouver, BC V6E 2E9 Canada
phone +1.604.775.8200 | fax +1.604.775.8210
info@col.org | www.col.org

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FOREWORD

COL in the Commonwealth is a companion text to Learning for Development, the Commonwealth of Learning’s Three-Year Plan for 2009-2012. This compendium reviews COL’s work over the last three years (2006-2009) country by country. Together these two documents are the springboard for the Country Action Plans that will guide COL’s future activities in each country over the 2009-2012 triennium and ensure that they are consistent with the national priorities of governments.

Ministers were enthusiastic about the previous issue of COL in the Commonwealth that was presented to 16CCEM in Cape Town in 2006. That report covered only developing countries whereas this one, at the request of Ministers, covers all members of the Commonwealth, showing also what COL has done in relation to the international development priorities of Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. These country reviews are grouped under four regions: Africa (and the Mediterranean), Asia, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

COL tries to create synergy within regions and across the Commonwealth by bringing countries and institutions together in common endeavours. For this reason each grouping of countries begins with a short account of the regional activities which COL has promoted in 2006-2009.

Member States also greatly value COL’s Pan-Commonwealth work, which benefits from the unifying characteristics of the Commonwealth such as a common language, similar constitutional and legal frameworks, and a shared commitment to the values of peace, democracy, equality and good government. Some of the Pan-Commonwealth activities and facilities that underpin COL’s work in the regions and countries are listed in the next section.

The production of COL in the Commonwealth 2006-2009 has been an intense collective effort. COL’s advanced knowledge management systems have enabled us to exploit fully the information contained in the numerous event reports prepared by staff as they work and travel. I express particular gratitude to Jasmine Lee, for diligently updating the country profiles that provided the raw material for these reviews, and to Judith Mosley, who brought this volume together in an impressively efficient and expeditious manner.

Sir John Daniel
President and Chief Executive Officer
Commonwealth of Learning
BACKGROUND

As a Commonwealth inter-governmental organisation, the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) has the mandate to operate in all 53 member states. Its work focuses particularly on 46 developing countries across Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and the Pacific. COL also seeks to align its activities with the education and training priorities and the countries of particular concern for major donor agencies such as the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID) and the New Zealand Agency for International Development (NZAID).

COL has developed Action Plans in consultation with Focal Points and country partners in the 46 member states, with activities specific to the individual needs of each country. However, several activities have a regional or pan-Commonwealth nature. This section looks at pan-Commonwealth activities.

QUALITY ASSURANCE IN EDUCATION

COL provides material and capacity building support for assuring quality in higher education and teacher education in the Commonwealth. A toolkit called the Quality Assurance for Teacher Education and Development Toolkit, includes Quality Indicators for Teacher Education and Best Practices in Teacher Education, was launched in December 2007 to be used by Ministries of Education and teacher education institutions.

COL is also developing a quality assurance toolkit for open schools. As a first step towards this, staff members from 14 countries across all Commonwealth regions have been trained in the Quality Assurance of Open Schools. A Quality Assurance Toolkit for Higher Education is nearing completion.

OPEN SCHOOLS

COL encourages the application of open and distance learning (ODL) to increase access to primary and secondary schooling. In support of this, two publications, Perspective Series on Open Schools – Open Schools for the 21st
Century and Handbook for Managers of Open Schools have been completed with contributions from chapter authors across the Commonwealth. Both publications will be distributed as a resource to policymakers. Other resources which have been developed include the Evaluation Study on Open Schools and the Cost and Financing of Open Schools as well as a Learner Support Guide for Open Schools.

In addressing the need for quality educational resources, COL has initiated the development of Open Educational Resources for Open Schools (OER4OS) in 20 subjects involving six countries. The open educational resources (OERs) will be available to all Commonwealth countries.

ELEARNING FOR EDUCATION SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

COL has two major and related pan-Commonwealth initiatives in this area: WikiEducator and Learning4Content (L4C).

COL’s WikiEducator (www.col.org/WikiEducator) provides an online service to support online educational communities. Use of WikiEducator has grown rapidly during the past year with the number of registered users passing the 9,020 mark and number of hits per day now exceeding 247,653. A wiki is a website on which any user can edit and update pages. The best known is the Wikipedia, the biggest encyclopaedia ever produced. Wikis are a part of the emerging “Web 2.0” environment that includes user-contributed works such as YouTube and MySpace.

COL’s WikiEducator creates online communities whose members participate from remote locations to create educational content collaboratively and to plan conferences and other events. It is one of the tools used by the Virtual University of Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC). WikiEducator is reaching 79% of countries around the world and COL is now supporting the installation of a French language version.

The L4C initiative aims to build capacity among educators in using WikiEducator to develop free content for education. Training is free and educators “pay” for their training by donating time to develop one free content lesson of their choice. L4C workshops have already been held in 28 Commonwealth countries and at least one face-to-face workshop will be held in each member state. In addition, 26 online workshops have been held and others are scheduled. Commonwealth teachers and educators are thus becoming WikiEducators themselves, developing and donating one free content resource back to the WikiEducator community.

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation approved a grant of USD 100,000 to COL over one year as core support for this initiative.

THE VIRTUAL UNIVERSITY FOR SMALL STATES OF THE COMMONWEALTH (VUSSC)

VUSSC is a collaborative network of small states that create and share materials for livelihood-related post-secondary programmes. Activities during this planning period have included capacity building and the creation, customisation and reuse of OERs. Quality assurance and cross-accreditation of learning programmes has also been an area of focus.

The VUSSC is a creation of the participating countries and their existing tertiary institutions. It is a collective mechanism for people to develop expertise in online collaboration, eLearning and information and communication technologies (ICTs). It also provides an opportunity for them to produce, adapt and deploy courses and learning materials on selected subjects identified by country Interlocutors and stakeholders.
The model that has emerged is a three-week training and course development workshop at which subject specialists from a subset of the participating states strengthen their information technology (IT) skills and begin to develop course material collaboratively online. Six workshops were held during this planning period:

1. Entrepreneurship and Tourism, hosted in Mauritius in August 2006.
3. Life Skills, hosted in Trinidad & Tobago in June 2007.

Orientations for the selected team leaders in preparation for the workshops took place in Vancouver six weeks before each workshop.

Senior officials from VUSSC countries met in Singapore in February 2008 to consider, refine and agree mechanisms of a transnational qualifications framework (TQF), the first of its kind. This will allow the 30 participating small states to transfer course materials, qualifications and qualified learners between countries. The South African Qualifications Authority, an organisation of the South African Government with more than twelve years experience in establishing frameworks in South and Southern Africa, helped to prepare a concept document and facilitate the proceedings.

The Ministry Interlocutors for VUSSC met in London in July 2008 to discuss the implementation of the TQF, the establishment of a management committee, the logo and branding of VUSSC, monitoring and evaluation, and copyright issues.

**TRANSNATIONAL PROGRAMMES**

COL designs, develops and delivers distance and technology mediated learning programmes for international organisations with a global workforce. During this planning period, COL has developed and delivered a number of new programmes including: Writing Effectively for the International Labour Organization (ILO); World Bank Writing E-mails, Memos and Letters and World Bank Report Writing; and an Operational Data Management Learning Programme for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). These eLearning courses are designed to enhance the skill of staff working in field offices and in headquarters.

**GOOD GOVERNANCE**

COL promotes gender equality in all its programmes. Specific gender-related issues are identified during the work-planning process with country stakeholders and addressed through appropriate research, training and materials development.
COL and the Commonwealth Secretariat (ComSec) are working together to develop ODL training materials aimed at promoting good governance and gender equality in the public sector. The work is based on two workshops hosted by ComSec which concluded that there was limited capacity among the majority of policy makers, senior managers and professionals to mainstream gender equality in their daily work. A critical decision was to explore the role of ICTs and ODL in delivering training on a larger scale and to support research on flexible learning opportunities. A status report on what learning materials for gender mainstreaming are currently available to the public service concluded that while there are some materials available online, the current model for accessing the materials is not adequate.

A two-day meeting was convened in July 2008 to deliberate how best COL and ComSec could develop the required content using ODL tools. Invited participants included members of administrative staff colleges and other institutions involved in training public servants such as National Women’s Machineries, Commonwealth partner agencies and resource people. The focus for piloting this initiative is Africa in the first instance.

**COL-PROTEIN PROGRAMME**

The COL Poverty Reduction Outcomes through Education Innovations and Networks (COL-PROTEIN) programme supports innovative uses of ODL to alleviate poverty in rural areas. In particular, COL-PROTEIN supports initiatives that adapt ODL, ICTs and media to build capacities for community development, for example, in areas such as food security, environmental protection, women’s empowerment, micro-enterprise and good governance. Several projects across the regions have already been recipients of a COL-PROTEIN Award.

**PAN-COMMONWEALTH FORUMS**

More than 500 people from 64 countries and various international organisations gathered in Ocho Rios, Jamaica for COL’s Fourth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF4) from 30 October to 3 November 2006. In his closing remarks, Sir John Daniel pointed to three key areas of progress since the Third Pan-Commonwealth Forum in Dunedin, New Zealand in 2004:

1. Better research
2. More participation from developing countries
3. Integration of technology.

COL was grateful to the local hosts of the Forum for ensuring the success of the event, in particular the University of the West Indies’ Distance Education Centre, in co-operation with the Caribbean Association for Distance and Open Learning, the Jamaican Association for Distance and Open Learning, the Trinidad & Tobago Distance Learning Association and the Office of Continuining Education and Distance Learning at the University of Technology, Jamaica.

The Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF5) took place in London, UK, in July 2008, with the theme “Access to Learning for Development”. It was hosted by COL in collaboration with the University of London, as part of the University’s celebration to mark the 150th anniversary of the establishment of its External Degrees Programme. PCF5 brought together practitioners, researchers, planners and policy makers in the fields of ODL and development to explore the contribution of ODL to international development goals. Over 700 participants from over 70 countries, the majority from the developing Commonwealth, took advantage of opportunities to share experience and expertise, and to contribute to future policy and provision.
COL NEWS SERVICE & NEWSLETTER

COL customises services provided by Google and Yahoo to provide a news service on ODL and specialised topics. The general news service is available from COL’s homepage while the specialised services are available on the appropriate topic pages on the website. The news service is updated approximately every hour.

COL publishes a newsletter, Connections, and a companion publication, EdTech News, three times per year, designed to provide regular news and information to COL’s stakeholders. The publications are distributed in print and electronically directly to 10,000 government officials, ODL and educational technology leaders and practitioners throughout the Commonwealth and beyond. The newsletter offers updates on COL and partner activities; ODL developments, resources and events; and educational technology reviews – all with a “development” focus. It also features an “In Focus” section which highlights a different COL programme in each issue, and periodic editorials as well as “Fair Comment” columns from external sources. It can be found on COL’s website at www.col.org/connections.

COPYRIGHT FOR EDUCATORS AND ADMINISTRATORS

COL has worked extensively in the area of copyright in education. The focus of COL’s attention is on providing information on how learning resources may be made available at low or no cost by applying the Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights Agreement (TRIPS). In early 2009 COL published a book on copyright for educators and administrators titled Introducing Copyright which is available on the COL website at no cost.
Africa and the Mediterranean

Botswana | Cameroon | Cyprus (Mediterranean) | The Gambia | Ghana | Kenya | Lesotho | Malawi | Malta (Mediterranean) | Mauritius | Mozambique | Namibia | Nigeria | Seychelles | Sierra Leone | South Africa | Swaziland | Tanzania | Uganda | Zambia
REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

BACKGROUND

The African continent is home to 18 Commonwealth member states in various stages of development. It can be divided into the Southern, Eastern and Western African sub-regions and COL is active in all of them.

Distance education is not new to Africa. Correspondence education took root in Africa in the early part of the 20th century through colleges such as Wolsey Hall and Rapid Results. The University of South Africa (UNISA) was the world’s first dedicated distance education university, established in 1951. It provided a model for the British Open University.

There are now four open universities in Africa and a further six are planned over the next three years. Distance education is also being used for increasing the number of trained teachers, for enhancing access to secondary schooling and for skills training.

Two further Commonwealth member states included in this region are in the Mediterranean: Cyprus and Malta.

TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

COL is a partner of the Teacher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa (TESSA) consortium. In June 2007, The BBC World Service Trust, in partnership with the UK Open University and 13 education institutions across Africa, launched the Teachers in Africa Radio Season. The project aims to help train thousands more teachers, so millions more children can receive a quality basic education. The materials developed by TESSA are easily accessed via the internet or provided in print format by teacher training institutions. Colleges and universities across Africa are able to download materials to equip primary school teachers with teaching skills in the key areas of literacy, numeracy, science, life skills, social studies and the arts.

In July 2007, COL and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) signed a Work Plan Agreement. Within the Teacher Training Initiative for Sub-Saharan Africa (TTISSA), UNESCO and COL are working to link teacher policy to national development goals, increasing access and improving the quality of teacher education through open and distance learning (ODL) and strengthening the delivery of quality teacher education through effective multi-stakeholder partnerships with civil society, the private sector and academia.
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY – CENTRE FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION (SADC-CDE)

COL provides funding support for the activities of SADC-CDE, located at the Botswana College of Open and Distance Learning. SADC-CDE activities are designed to build and strengthen regional capacity in ODL as well as the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs).

The Centre collaborated with the Distance Education Association of Southern Africa (DEASA) to publish the DEASA – SADC-CDE International Journal of Open and Distance Learning, launched in September 2007. It is a refereed journal that publishes articles drawn from across the SADC sub-region.

COL undertook an evaluation of SADC-CDE in June 2008 and the report of the evaluation was tabled to the Advisory Council.

FREE/LIBRE AND OPEN SOURCE SOFTWARE FOR EDUCATION INITIATIVE

The Free/Libre and Open Source Software for Education (FLOSS4Edu) initiative is promoting the development of free content in education using open source software tools among educators. Conceived in East Africa, several chapters have now been established including an East African Chapter and a West African Chapter. Now that a French language installation of WikiEducator is in development, a Francophone Chapter of FLOSS4Edu is being planned. The aim is to establish regional chapters throughout the Commonwealth.

During this planning period, two workshops, in Nairobi in November 2006, and in Ghana in July 2007, took place with participants from a number of African countries.

REGIONAL TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET) SUMMIT

COL and UNESCO’s UNEVOC Centre for TVET co-organised the first African UNESCO-UNEVOC TVET Summit on the theme of “Access to and Inclusion in TVET in Africa Through New ICT-based Solutions”. UNEVOC is UNESCO’s International Project on Technical and Vocational Education. Held in Nairobi in May 2007, the Summit attracted participants from across the region and was part of the 2nd International Conference on ICTs for Development, Education and Training. The sessions considered TVET as central to the effort to foster sustainable development and attain the first Millennium Development Goal of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger in Africa. COL, the Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa and UNEVOC agreed to collaborate further to assist African countries through the sharing of knowledge and expertise in TVET and to organise a second TVET Africa Summit in 2008.

COL co-funded the second African UNESCO-UNEVOC TVET Summit in Accra, Ghana in May 2008. The Summit promoted good practice projects in the use of ICTs in TVET across Africa. COL sponsored two of the three winners. COL also sponsored the keynote speaker for the Summit.
ICTs IN EDUCATION IN AFRICA SURVEY

A survey on ICTs in Education in Africa, funded by the Information for Development Program (InfoDev) was carried out. A team of eight researchers were contracted by COL to produce reports for each African country and the final report was delivered at the end of June 2007. It covered all countries in continental Africa according to the following education sectors: Schools (primary and secondary), higher education, TVET, and non-formal education (adult literacy, health, agriculture, etc.). The study explored answers to several basic questions including how ICTs are currently being used in the education sector in Africa; what strategies and policies are related to this use; what the common challenges and constraints faced by African countries are in this area; what is actually happening on the ground; and to what extent donors are involved.

NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICA’S DEVELOPMENT (NEPAD) E-SCHOOL INITIATIVE

NEPAD asked COL and InfoDev to monitor and evaluate the NEPAD e-Schools initiative that was launched in a number of countries across Africa during the previous planning period. The completed report is available on COL’s website.

REGIONAL FOCAL POINTS MEETING

The first Regional Meeting of COL’s Focal Points for Africa and the Mediterranean was held in Lilongwe, Malawi, in May 2008. These meetings are planned to take place every three years. During the meeting, each participant reviewed, on behalf of their country, the progress that had been made at the mid-term of COL’s current Three-Year Plan 2006-2009. They provided feedback on COL’s planning process and concrete inputs for developing the next Three-Year Plan 2009-2012. The meeting was also a valuable opportunity for inter-country networking that will facilitate future collaboration.

The role of the COL Focal Points was discussed and a number of key aspects of this valuable role were agreed. The Focal Points will be a one-stop window in each country for COL, will coordinate with other ministries and stakeholders and will disseminate COL-related information to relevant constituencies. The Focal Points will also meet visiting COL staff and arrange appointments with ministry officials and others as necessary. In particular, they will keep their Minister briefed and will ensure timely payment of contributions to COL. Finally, the Focal Points will be advocates for ODL and for COL in their countries and will provide advice and guidance to COL from time to time.

COL created an online “BaseCamp” for the African and Mediterranean Focal Points to encourage online dialogue and the exchange of ideas and information.

REGIONAL BROCHURES

COL has regional brochures which summarise its activities in each of the four regions of the Commonwealth. These can be found on COL’s website at: www.col.org/regional.
NAMIBIA

COL Focal Point: Mr. Norman Titus (2006-2007)
Ms. Norah Bennett (2008)
Ms. Eva-Liisa Kafidi, Namibian Open Learning Network Trust (current)

BACKGROUND

A large yet sparsely-populated country, Namibia is a regular contributor to COL’s budget and an active member country in COL’s activities, promoting open and distance learning (ODL). Namibia is also a member of the Distance Education Association of South Africa (DEASA). The former Director of the Namibia College of Open Learning (NAMCOL) is now a COL staff in charge of Open Schooling in the Commonwealth.

SUMMARY

During this planning period, open schools have been a particular focus and COL has supported Namibia in both training and content development. Namibia has continued its full participation in the activities of the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC). Namibia is included in an Africa-wide survey on the application of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in education in all countries in continental Africa, part of a larger World Bank project to better serve the region. The country has also attended key regional and international meetings.

EDUCATION

Teacher development

COL sponsored Namibia’s initiation to the Teacher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa (TESSA) consortium by supporting its participation at the TESSA Conference in October 2007 in Mozambique.

Open/alternative schooling

In its efforts to develop and promote models which are sustainable, COL identified costing and financing of distance education as a critical element in planning for sustainable open schools. As a result, a workshop was organised to enhance the capacity of Chief Executive Officers of open schools and policymakers. This was the first step in
developing an interactive learning resource which is now available on COL’s WikiEducator. Three delegates from Namibia attended the workshop which was held in August 2007 in Gaborone, Botswana.

Namibia is contributing to the development of two new publications for open schools through two chapter authors for the Perspective Series on Open Schools – Open Schools for the 21st Century and a Handbook for Managers of Open Schools.

COL sponsored 16 participants, including two from NAMCOL, to a workshop on Developing Digital Content run by the Mindset Network in Johannesburg in September 2007.

In October 2008, Ministries of Education and open schools in six countries including Namibia began a two-year partnership with COL to develop Open Educational Resources for Open Schools (OER4OS) in 20 subjects to be used in open and conventional schools. The open educational resources (OERs) will be available to all Commonwealth countries.

COL commissioned an evaluation study on open schooling for secondary and higher education. The study included an examination of the cost efficiency, effectiveness and benefit of open schools, the student profile, how open schools can best complement the formal system, learner success, course types and development, learner support and assessment, planning and management systems as well as quality assurance. The report was submitted in October 2008.

Namibia was one of 11 participating countries from across the Commonwealth to attend a workshop on “How can ICTs enhance the capacity of Women in Leadership?” in Vancouver in November 2008. A participant from the Namibian College of Open Learning attended the workshop which featured presentations, discussions and site visits to educational institutions. The workshop’s recommendations and findings informed the development of self-instructional materials that can be used to help women in leadership positions in open schools to embrace the potential of ICTs.

Other COL support for open schools have included staff members from Namibia receiving training in learner support and also in quality assurance as a step towards a quality assurance toolkit for the schools.

COL also supported NAMCOL in its development of digital content in five subjects and assisted them with the development of a strategy to integrate multimedia in their services.

Namibia is participating in the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and COL’s OER4OS project which is training selected teachers in the search and use of OERs. A workshop was conducted in Namibia in February 2009. The 25 teachers who took part were trained in copyright issues and BaseCamp navigation, part of providing them with the requisite skills in ICTs to start the development of OERs in five subjects: English, Entrepreneurship, Geography, Life Science and Physical Science.

Namibia is a member of DEASA and COL has been working with this organisation to build its research capacity in support of improving the quality and status of ODL in the region.

**Higher education**

COL has worked with the Namibia Open Learning Network Trust towards the development of a national ODL policy framework. A national consultative forum was held to consider the education sector review supported by COL. A costing exercise was completed and the report received in February 2009.
ELearning for education sector development

As part of the major pan-Commonwealth initiative, Learning4Content, Namibia hosted two face-to-face workshops in November 2008.

LEARNING FOR LIVELIHOODS

Learning and skills for livelihoods

As part of COL’s initiative for recognition of prior learning (RPL) in TVET, two workshops took place in Mauritius in 2007 and 2008. The second workshop, in June 2008 was attended by a delegate from the Namibian Qualifications Authority.

COL organised a conference on Livelihood Initiatives in Sub-Saharan Africa in Accra in November 2008. The theme was “Think Globally; Act Locally”. A delegate from NAMCOL attended and took part in a session on RPL resulting in a strategic plan for 2009-2012. The conference participants created the West African TVET (WATVET), a regional TVET association.

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

Namibia has continued to be an active member of VUSSC during 2006-2009. Activities have included capacity building and the creation, customisation and reuse of OERs. Quality assurance and cross-accreditation of learning programmes have also been a focus area in this planning period. Namibia attended all six training and course development workshops that took place including participants from the Namibia Training Authority, the Namibian College of Open Learning, the University of Namibia, the Ministry of Higher Education, Training and Employment and the Polytechnic of Namibia. Workshop team leaders for the third and fifth workshops were from Namibia.

Namibia is contributing to the development of the transnational qualifications framework (TQF). It has submitted information on its national qualifications framework for analysis and participated in the officials meeting in Singapore. Namibia has been a member on the TQF Management Committee.

A delegate from Namibia, from Namibian Open Learning Network Trust (NOLNet), attended another key VUSSC meeting, when the Ministry Interlocutors met in London in July 2008.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

Good governance

COL and the Commonwealth Secretariat (ComSec) are working together to develop ODL training materials aimed at promoting good governance and gender equality in the public sector. A two-day meeting was convened in July 2008 to deliberate how best COL and ComSec could develop the appropriate content using ODL tools. The focus for the initiative in the first instance is Africa. A gender consultant from Namibia attended the meeting.
OTHER ACTIVITIES

Pan-Commonwealth Forum

COL’s Fourth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning, held in Ocho Rios, Jamaica from 30 October to 3 November 2006 was attended by eight delegates from Namibia including the COL Focal Point, from NAMCOL, the University of Namibia, the Polytechnic of Namibia, Schoolnet Namibia and NOLNet. Four others were sponsored by COL, from the University of Namibia and NAMCOL. NAMCOL Online, Welcome to the World of Physical Science Grade 12 was one of the recipients of the Award of Excellence for Distance Education Materials - Category B: Interactive, electronically delivered materials, which may be supplemented by materials developed in other media.

The Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning, held in London in July 2008, was attended by 15 delegates from Namibia. Eight were sponsored by COL, among them the COL Focal Point, from the Namibian College of Open Learning, NOLNet, the University of Namibia and the Polytechnic of Namibia.

Regional Focal Points meeting

The Regional Focal Points meeting for Africa and the Mediterranean, held in Lilongwe, Malawi, in May 2008 was attended by the COL Focal Point for Namibia.

LOOKING FORWARD

The work that has taken place with COL in developing capacity and resources for open schools will provide a strong foundation for the next three years in the education sector.

During the next planning period, COL looks forward to Namibia continuing its full contribution to the VUSSC and helping to bring key initiatives, including the TQF, to fruition.