

EXCERPTS FROM:

# COL in the Commonwealth 2006–2009 Country Reports

FOR: NEW ZEALAND  
INCLUDING OTHER PACIFIC COUNTRIES

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COMMONWEALTH of LEARNING

Learning for Development

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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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Daniel', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sir John Daniel  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Commonwealth of Learning

# PAN-COMMONWEALTH INITIATIVES



## 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 21<sup>st</sup>*

*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](http://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.
2. Professional Development of Educators, in Singapore in March 2007.
3. Life Skills, hosted in Trinidad & Tobago in June 2007.
4. Disaster Management, in November 2007 in Samoa.
5. The Fishing Industry, in Seychelles in March 2008.
6. The Construction Industry, in The Bahamas in November 2008.

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 Continuing 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 150<sup>th</sup> 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](http://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.



# Pacific

**Fiji Islands | Kiribati | Nauru | Papua New Guinea | Samoa |  
Solomon Islands | Tonga | Tuvalu | Vanuatu**



# REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

## BACKGROUND

The Pacific region is home to 11 Commonwealth member states, including larger countries such as Australia and small island states such as Nauru. This diverse region is divided into three areas, Melanesia (Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu), Micronesia (Kiribati and Nauru) and Polynesia (New Zealand and Cook Islands, Samoa and Tonga).

Within the region, there is considerable expertise and leadership in open and distance learning. Australia has a long history of distance education and is the model of best practice in dual-mode provision. Fiji has developed multi-modal distance education through the University of the South Pacific (USP). New Zealand is a leader in how distance education can be used for technical and vocational education and training.

## 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. Following the establishment of the East African Chapter in Kenya and the West African Chapter in Ghana, COL launched the initiative in the Pacific region.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Education, New Zealand, COL hosted a regional workshop on open educational resources (OERs) in August 2007 in Wellington, New Zealand. Nominated representatives from Kiribati, New Zealand, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tokelau and Tuvalu attended the workshop. The workshop established a firm foundation for future collaboration in eLearning for the region. The group also successfully launched a Pacific chapter of the FLOSS4Edu initiative called WikiPacifica and have commenced planning for both national and regional activities associated with the development of OERs.

The workshop developed a number of recommendations for the region:

- Establish and promote wiki Ambassadors for each country,
- Conduct workshops on the use of WikiEducator,
- Utilise existing wiki support resources and integrate with locally available resources,
- Re-examine existing and/or develop new policies in the light of the outcomes of this workshop,
- Maintain and promote national and regional networks for OERs,
- Lobby publicly-funded content development projects to release materials under a free content license,

- Develop fundraising strategies,
- Advocate senior-level support and commitment.

## LITERACY AND OCCUPATIONAL TRAINING

COL continues to work with the Pacific Association of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (PATVET) to develop and offer basic trades courses for young people throughout the region. During this planning period, three courses were made available, in Timber, Concrete and Small Engines.

## DISTANCE LEARNING FOR AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

COL and USP Alafua Campus, Samoa, organised a regional strategic workshop on the theme of Delivering Distance Learning Programs for Agriculture and Rural Development in June 2007 in Samoa. The workshop engaged 23 participants in presentations and discussions about strengthening the role of the School of Agriculture and Food Technology, at USP in Samoa, in distance learning for agriculture and rural development across the South Pacific. Participants represented the Cook Islands, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu, as well as the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

It was agreed that appropriate distance learning strategies could help address challenges related to agriculture and rural development in the region. Further, the Alafua Campus received specific advice regarding the formal and informal educational programming that would be most useful in this field. Three potential objectives for collaboration were identified:

- Developing Lifelong Learning for Farmers work for uptake at a regional level through USP.
- Collaboration between USP Alafua Campus and COL for non-formal and continuing education at Alafua.
- Collaboration with USP Alafua Campus and other stakeholders in the region, including the National University of Samoa, the FAO and other local and regional agencies, including some units affiliated with the United Nations or the European Union.

The initiative is now with the USP Alafua campus to confirm next steps.

## REGIONAL FOCAL POINTS MEETING

The first Regional Focal Points Meeting for the Asia and Pacific regions was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in October 2008. These meetings are planned to take place every three years. At the 2008 meeting, each participant reviewed, on behalf of their country, the progress that had been made so far in COL's current Three-Year Plan 2006-2009, provided feedback on COL's planning process and gave concrete inputs for developing the next Three-Year Plan 2009-2012. The meeting also provided a valuable opportunity for networking, facilitating future inter-country collaboration. As part of the event, the group visited the Open University Malaysia and Universiti Tun Abdul Razak.

## 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](http://www.col.org/regional).



# FIJI ISLANDS

**COL Focal Point: Mr. Aseri Manulevu, Ministry of Agriculture (2006)**

## BACKGROUND

The Fiji Islands are part of the South Pacific group. A small state of the Commonwealth, Fiji is a member of the regional network, Pacific Association of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (PATVET) and has benefited from many of COL's activities via this network. Fiji contributed to COL's budget in 2006.

Pending the end of Fiji's suspension from the Councils of the Commonwealth, COL is not initiating new activities in the country. However, activities already under way are being completed.

## SUMMARY

COL's work in Fiji has been in all three sectors, Education, Learning for Livelihoods and the Human Environment. In Education, COL has focussed predominantly on eLearning by inviting and supporting active engagement from Fijians in initiatives for developing free content and capacity building.

The work in Learning for Livelihoods has been in supporting Fiji to participate in regional training and capacity-building opportunities. Fiji has begun to participate in the activities of the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC).

In the Human Environment sector, COL has continued to expand its ongoing programme of developing media capacity for open and distance learning (ODL).

## LEARNING FOR LIVELIHOODS

### **Learning and skills for livelihoods**

The basic trades courses on Timber, Concrete and Small Engines, developed by COL in collaboration with PATVET, have been made available to young workers in Fiji.

## **National/international community development**

Three representatives from Fiji were among 23 from seven countries in the Pacific to participate in the regional strategic workshop, Delivering Distance Learning Programmes for Agriculture and Rural Development, held in June 2007 in Samoa. Participants from Fiji included one from the Centre for Educational Development and Technology and one from the University of the South Pacific (USP).

## **Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)**

During 2006-2009, Fiji has begun to participate in the activities of the VUSSC. Fiji is participating in the development of the transnational qualifications framework (TQF). Two representatives from Fiji, from the South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment and from the Ministry of Education, attended the officials meeting in Singapore, the first of whom is a member of the TQF Management Committee.

## **Transnational programmes**

Five staff members of the International Labour Organization based in Fiji were trained in Writing Effectively through a tutor-mediated eLearning COL course.

## **HUMAN ENVIRONMENT**

### **Educational use of mass media and ICTs**

As part of COL's support for the ongoing efforts of the Fiji Institute of Technology (FIT) in multimedia development for technical and vocational education, COL upgraded the video editing technology at FIT in March 2007. COL also provided training in advanced audio and video production in May 2007, as part of an earlier activity.

## **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 five delegates from USP in Fiji, three of them sponsored by COL. The University was also one of the recipients of the Awards of Excellence for Institutional Achievement. USP received the Award Recognising Distance Learning Experience for the Degree Granting Programme: *Acknowledging a notable distance education learning experience.*

The Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning, held in London in July 2008, was attended by six delegates from USP Fiji including one sponsored by COL.

## **LOOKING FORWARD**

In the next triennium, COL will continue to support activities already underway in Fiji and encourages its continued participation in VUSSC activities and other regional and international initiatives. COL looks forward to being able to expand its work in Fiji in the near future.



# KIRIBATI

**COL Focal Point: Mr. Tebania Tebakabo (2007-2008)**  
**Mrs. Maria-Teretia Kaiboia, Ministry of Education (current)**

## BACKGROUND

Kiribati is a small state of the Commonwealth made up of an island and atolls spread over an immense expanse of ocean. COL has worked in Kiribati for over a decade and the country became a contributor to COL's budget in 2006.

## SUMMARY

COL's work in Kiribati is in all three sectors, Education, Learning for Livelihoods and the Human Environment.

In Education, Kiribati is able to benefit from the regional and pan-Commonwealth activities of COL, providing material and capacity building support to Kiribati for assuring quality in higher education and teacher education programmes and institutions. In the Learning for Livelihoods sector, basic trades courses developed for the South Pacific islands are available for Kiribati. In the Human Environment sector, COL has continued to work with Kiribati Video and has upgraded their technology and training during this period.

## EDUCATION

### Higher education

COL has provided a scholarship to a student from Kiribati to study for the Postgraduate Diploma in Legislative Drafting at the University of the South Pacific, as part of its programme to provide 15 such scholarships to nationals in the South Pacific.

### ELearning for education sector development

A delegate from Kiribati attended the regional open education resources (OERs) workshop in Wellington, New Zealand in August 2007. This workshop was organised by COL and the Ministry of Education, New Zealand.

## LEARNING FOR LIVELIHOODS

### **Learning and skills for livelihoods**

The basic trades courses on Timber, Concrete and Small Engines, developed by COL in collaboration with Pacific Association of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (PATVET), have been made available to young workers in Kiribati.

### **National/international community development**

Representatives from Kiribati participated in the regional strategic workshop on Delivering Distance Learning Programmes for Agriculture and Rural Development, held in June 2007 in Samoa.

## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

### **Health, welfare and community development**

COL has continued to work with Kiribati Video and utilise its video production capacity to train others in the South Pacific to develop high quality video-based educational programmes for the Pacific region. In December 2006, COL increased the capacity of Kiribati Video to deliver video training on health and environment issues to the remote atolls with upgraded video editing and camera technology.

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

### **Regional Focal Points meeting**

The Regional Focal Points meeting for the Asia and Pacific regions, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in October 2008, was attended by the COL Focal Point for Kiribati.

## LOOKING FORWARD

In 2009-2012, Kiribati will continue to benefit from COL's initiatives in the region. Kiribati has been invited to participate in the activities of the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth which could help to strengthen the human resource development process.



# NAURU

**COL Focal Point: Mr. Michael Longhurst, Ministry of Education (current)**

## BACKGROUND

Nauru is a very small state of the Commonwealth and the world's smallest independent republic with a population of 10,000 and covering just 21 sq. km. Literacy rates are high and the University of the South Pacific has a campus on the island.

Nauru contributed to COL's budget in 2008/2009.

## SUMMARY

Nauru is benefiting from COL's work in the region, providing materials and capacity building support for assuring quality in education and teacher education programmes. COL is also providing technical and vocational training programmes.

## EDUCATION

### **E**Learning for education sector development

As part of the major pan-Commonwealth initiative, Learning4Content (L4C), a face-to-face workshop was held in Nauru in August 2008.

## LEARNING FOR LIVELIHOODS

### **L**earning and skills for livelihoods

The basic trades courses on Timber, Concrete and Small Engines, developed by COL in collaboration with the Pacific Association of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (PATVET), have been made available to young workers in Nauru.

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

### **Regional Focal Points meeting**

The Regional Focal Points meeting for the Asia and Pacific regions, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in October 2008, was attended by the COL Focal Point for Nauru.

## LOOKING FORWARD

In 2009-2012, Nauru is set to continue to benefit from COL's activities in the region. Nauru has been invited to participate in the activities of the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth which could provide significant benefits for the country.



# PAPUA NEW GUINEA

**COL Focal Point: Mr. Ouka Lavaki, General Education Services (current)**

## BACKGROUND

Papua New Guinea is the largest of the Pacific Island countries, yet with a population just over four million, qualifies as a small state of the Commonwealth. The country faces many significant development challenges including a growing level of HIV/AIDS and many people without access to clean water. Papua New Guinea is a priority country for NZAID and the organisation signed a joint strategy with the government in July 2008. Education, health and rural livelihoods were all identified as priority areas and a focus was put on addressing gender inequality.

COL's work in Papua New Guinea is the most extensive in the Pacific region and the country works in partnership with COL, participating fully in regional and pan-Commonwealth opportunities. The Regional Representative for the Pacific on COL's Board of Governors since January 2008, The Honourable Dr. Dame Carol Kidu, Minister for Community Development, Women, Religion and Sports, is from Papua New Guinea. The Open College at the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG) has been a partner in many COL initiatives and received Awards of Excellence at both recent Pan-Commonwealth Forums.

Papua New Guinea contributed to COL's budget in 2007/2008.

## SUMMARY

COL's work in Papua New Guinea in 2006-2009 has been in all three sectors, Education, Learning for Livelihoods and the Human Environment.

In Education, the focus is on quality assurance, teacher education and supporting the development of open/alternative schooling. Papua New Guinea is participating in the activities of the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC). In Learning for Livelihoods, the focus is on rural and peri-urban community development where the feasibility of introducing the Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F) programme is being explored. Additionally, the opportunity to use open and distance learning (ODL) and information and communication technologies (ICTs) to promote education and training related to issues such as water use management, global warming and climate change are being explored. COL is providing training for local government as well as supporting health education, particularly in the battle with HIV/AIDS through the effective use of mass media.

## EDUCATION

### Teacher development

A COL consultant completed a review of the Teacher Education Programme at the Open College, UPNG and the report was submitted in late 2007 with clear recommendations on the way forward.

### Open/alternative schooling

Papua New Guinea 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 UPNG 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.

Papua New Guinea is contributing to the development of one of two new publications for open schools through a chapter author, from UPNG, for the *Perspective Series on Open Schools – Open Schools for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*.

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

### Higher education

COL provided two consultants to undertake reviews. The first was of the existing models of dual mode delivery and recommended how the higher education systems in Papua New Guinea could be improved. The second was a review of quality assurance in higher education in the country. Both reports were submitted in 2008 and officials in Papua New Guinea are considering the recommendations.

The Commonwealth Executive Master of Business Administration/Master of Public Administration (CEMBA/CEMPA) programme has been expanded to UPNG.

### E-Learning for education sector development

A delegate from Papua New Guinea, from Department of Education, Flexible Open and Distance Learning, attended the regional open education resources workshop, organised by COL and the Ministry of Education, New Zealand and held in Wellington, New Zealand in August 2007.

As part of the major pan-Commonwealth initiative, Learning4Content (L4C), Papua New Guinea hosted two face-to-face workshops, in March and August 2008.

## LEARNING FOR LIVELIHOODS

### Rural and peri-urban community development

COL is working with the National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI), UPNG Open College and other stakeholders concerned with improving the livelihoods of farmers and rural women, by helping them to introduce or

adapt COL's Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F) programme and to identify and prioritise ODL strategies which will increase access for farmers and rural women to lifelong learning and earning opportunities.

An initial meeting among potential partners took place at Port Moresby during September 2007 during which the partners agreed to review the potential communities for a L3F initiative in Papua New Guinea. A COL consultant conducted a needs analysis and feasibility study for introducing or adapting components of the framework. The study took place from 27 February to 7 March 2008 and a report and budget were provided.

COL supported a representative from NARI to participate in the meetings and site visits related to the L3F programme in India and Sri Lanka. NARI now plans to implement the programme, co-ordinated from Buba in the Morobe Province in partnership with the University of Technology (Unitech) and UPNG Open College.

The South Pacific Institute for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (SPISARD) of the Department of Agriculture of Unitech, was the recipient of a COL-PROTEIN Award for 2008. The proposal titled "Training of Women and Youth at Selected Model Villages in Papua New Guinea" aimed to establish a kiosk information centre and work with model villages through ODL mode in support of women and youth to have access to their livelihoods need-based learning.

### **National/international community development**

COL is supporting the Papua New Guinea Association of Distance Education (PNGADE), facilitating the involvement of representatives from a wider range of areas and interests including agriculture, literacy, community development, health and gender. During this period, PNGADE has been active in widening ODL coverage through increasing membership and partnership. Two conferences organised by PNGADE were well attended by policy makers, professionals and practitioners. COL provided financial support for the 2008 conference where COL's President & CEO gave the keynote address.

### **Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)**

Papua New Guinea is 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. Participants from Papua New Guinea attended five of the six training and course development workshops that took place, from UPNG, the National Department of Health, NARI Livestock Programme and the University of Goroka. On two occasions workshop team leaders were from Papua New Guinea.

Papua New Guinea is participating in the development of the transnational qualifications framework. The country has submitted its national qualifications framework for analysis and a representative from the Office of Higher Education attended the officials meeting in Singapore.

Papua New Guinea also attended another key VUSSC meeting when the Interlocutors met in London in July 2008.

## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

### Health, welfare and community development

COL, in partnership with the World Health Organization has continued to support the NGO, Anglicare STOPAIDS in its efforts to address HIV/AIDS prevention and stigma in the country. In April 2007, with the addition of large screens and projection systems, COL increased the capacity of the organisation to deliver health information to larger audiences throughout the country.

### Good governance

COL is supporting local level government training as part of the public service reform initiative involving all levels of government and a number of training institutions. COL is working directly with UPNG in this activity. The work is intended to be gender sensitive. Two workshops were held in Port Moresby, coordinated by UPNG Open School to bring together all training partners, senior levels of government and the European Union to jointly develop curricula and a plan of action. Course materials are in development at UPNG with a unique system of learner support to facilitate success. Two modules have been developed.

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. Papua New Guinea participated due to COL's current focus there on governance issues. Three delegates from Papua New Guinea attended, among them the High Commissioner to the UK along with the Executive Director of UPNG Open College and a representative of the Department of Provincial and Local Government Affairs. The Minister for Community Development, Women, Religion and Sports contributed a short taped interview on her views and ideas on the importance and challenges of gender mainstreaming for the public sector.

COL supported the distribution of DVD drama and activity guides on conflict resolution and women's role in society to village cinema events, schools and television in Papua New Guinea in September 2008. The materials were produced in Vanuatu with COL's support.

## 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 five delegates from UPNG. In addition, COL sponsored four delegates, including two from the Department of Education and one from Unitech. The Degree-Granting Programme submitted by UPNG was a recipient of an Award of Excellence for Learning Experience.

The Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning, held in London in July 2008, was attended by 16 delegates from Papua New Guinea including seven sponsored by COL, from Unitech, UPNG, Divine Word University, Bougainville Open University Campus and the Department of Finance. UPNG was a recipient of an Award of Excellence for Institutional Achievement.

## **Regional Focal Points meeting**

The Regional Focal Points meeting for the Asia and Pacific regions, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in October 2008, was attended by the COL Focal Point for Papua New Guinea.

## **Appointments**

The Honourable Dr. Dame Carol Kidu was appointed Regional Representative for the Pacific on COL's Board of Governors in January 2008.

## **LOOKING FORWARD**

As we look forward to 2009-2012, Papua New Guinea's strong partnership with COL will provide an excellent foundation for further progress in all areas with many initiatives already in progress across all three sectors. The possible implementation of the L3F programme will be an important development and will be of interest to other countries in the region.



# SAMOA

**COL Focal Point: Mrs. G.T.T. Afamasaga, National University of Samoa (current)**

## BACKGROUND

A small state of the Commonwealth, Samoa has been a regular contributor to COL's budget since inception. Samoa participates in regional and pan-Commonwealth meetings and benefits from COL's activities in the region, including through the Pacific Association of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (PATVET) with which COL is involved. A former Minister of Education, the Honourable Fiamè Naomi Mata'afa, served on COL's Board of Directors from 1998 until 2004.

## SUMMARY

In 2006-2009, the major focus of COL's assistance to Samoa has been on-going capacity development for educators, particularly with open educational resources (OERs) and in areas related to technical and vocational education. Alongside activities in-country, Samoa has continued to benefit through regional and international activities and programmes as well as tools and resources that COL makes available as open content.

Samoa has continued to be an active participant and partner of COL. Samoa has been a contributor to the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC). Samoa hosted several workshops and participated at key regional and pan-Commonwealth meetings. Samoa was prominent at the Fourth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF4) in 2006 where the Honourable Fiamè Naomi Mata'afa was named an Honorary Fellow of COL. In 2008, Mr. Perive Tanuvasa Lene became COL's regional coordinator for the Pacific.

## EDUCATION

### Teacher development

COL met with representatives of the University of Samoa in 2007 to discuss how COL could facilitate the strengthening of teacher education through open and distance learning (ODL) in the country. Capacity-building needs in teacher education were identified.

## **Open/alternative schooling**

Staff members from Samoa have received training in learner support and also in quality assurance as a step towards a quality assurance toolkit for the schools.

## **Higher education**

COL has provided a scholarship to three students from Samoa to study for the Postgraduate Diploma in Legislative Drafting through the University of the South Pacific (USP), as part of its programme to provide 15 such scholarships to nationals in the South Pacific.

## **ELearning for education sector development**

A delegate from Samoa attended the regional open education resources (OERs) workshop, organised by COL and the Ministry of Education, New Zealand and held in Wellington, New Zealand in August 2007.

As part of the major pan-Commonwealth initiative, Learning4Content (L4C), Samoa hosted a face-to-face workshop in September 2008 and two further face-to-face workshops in March 2009.

## **LEARNING FOR LIVELIHOODS**

### **National/international community development**

COL and USP Alafua Campus, Samoa, organised the regional strategic workshop on the theme of Delivering Distance Learning Programs for Agriculture and Rural Development in June 2007 in Samoa. The workshop engaged 23 participants representing seven countries including Samoa, as well as the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). It was agreed that appropriate distance learning strategies could help address challenges related to agriculture and rural development in the South Pacific. Further, the Alafua Campus received specific advice regarding the formal and informal educational programming that would be most useful in this field.

Three potential objectives for collaboration were identified, including the potential for collaboration between USP Alafua Campus and COL for non-formal and continuing education at Alafua, and the potential collaboration with USP Alafua Campus and other stakeholders in the region, including the National University of Samoa, the FAO and other local and regional agencies, including some units affiliated with the United Nations and the European Union. COL is waiting for a response from the USP Alafua campus.

### **Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)**

Samoa is 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. Participants from Samoa attended all six training and course development workshops that took place, from the National University of Samoa (NUS) and the University of Samoa and in two cases Samoa provided a workshop team leader. A member of the VUSSC Management Committee is from Samoa.

Samoa is participating in the development of the transnational qualifications framework. A representative attended the officials meeting in Singapore.

Two representatives from Samoa also attended another key VUSSC meeting when the Interlocutors met in London in July 2008.

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

### **Pan-Commonwealth Forum**

PCF4, held in Ocho Rios, Jamaica from 30 October to 3 November 2006 was attended by a COL-sponsored delegate from the University of Samoa. The Honourable Fiamè Naomi Mata'afa, Minister for Women, Community and Social Development, former Minister of Education and former member of COL's Board of Governors, was named Honorary Fellow of COL at the Forum.

The Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning, held in London in July 2008, was attended by three COL-sponsored delegates from Samoa including two from the University of Samoa.

### **Regional Focal Points meeting**

The Regional Focal Points meeting for the Asia and Pacific regions, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in October 2008, was attended by the COL Focal Point for Samoa.

### **Other events**

COL sponsored a delegate from NUS to participate at the 12<sup>th</sup> Cambridge International Conference on ODL in the UK in September 2007.

## LOOKING FORWARD

Samoa's positive contribution and participation in 2006-2009 sets the tone for the next triennium. Several activities are already underway and benefits should be seen from progress in the agriculture and rural development initiatives with USP. In 2009-2012, COL looks forward to Samoa's continued participation and leadership contribution to the VUSSC.



# SOLOMON ISLANDS

**COL Focal Point: Mr. Bernard Rapasia, Ministry of Education & Human Resources Development (current)**

## BACKGROUND

The Solomon Islands are a small state of the Commonwealth and part of the South Pacific group of island nations. The country faces many development challenges after years of conflict. It is a major focus of NZAID support with priorities including education for all children, addressing gender disparity in education as well as developing sustainable livelihoods. The Solomon Islands contributed to COL's budget in 2007-2008 and 2008-2009.

## SUMMARY

In 2006-2009, the major focus of COL's support to Solomon Islands has been on-going capacity development for educators, particularly with open educational resources (OERs) and in areas related to technical and vocational education, as well as the use of media and information and communication technologies (ICTs) for non-formal learning. Alongside activities in-country, Solomon Islands continues to benefit through regional and international activities and programmes as well as tools and resources that COL makes available as open content.

Solomon Islands has begun participation in the activities of the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) and has participated in regional workshops and meetings, hosting one for the Learning4Content (L4C) initiative in 2008.

## EDUCATION

### Higher education

COL has provided a scholarship to four students from Solomon Islands to study for the Postgraduate Diploma in Legislative Drafting through the University of the South Pacific, as part of its programme to provide 15 such scholarships to nationals in the South Pacific.

## **ELearning for education sector development**

A delegate from Solomon Islands attended the regional OERs workshop, organised by COL and the Ministry of Education, New Zealand and held in Wellington, New Zealand in August 2007.

As part of the major pan-Commonwealth initiative, Learning4Content (L4C), Solomon Islands hosted one of the first face-to-face workshops in February 2008. Sixteen participants from Solomon Islands attended and a further 26 took part in online workshops.

## **LEARNING FOR LIVELIHOODS**

### **Learning and skills for livelihoods**

A residential writing workshop on the development of literacy materials to supplement three basic trade courses was held in Solomon Islands in June 2007. Over 20 participants attended the workshop, organised by COL and The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand.

### **National/international community development**

Representatives from Solomon Islands were among 23 from seven countries in the Pacific to participate in the regional strategic workshop, Delivering Distance Learning Programmes for Agriculture and Rural Development, held in June 2007 in Samoa.

### **Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)**

Solomon Islands have begun to participate in the activities of VUSSC. A participant from Solomon Islands attended the last of the six training and course development workshops that have taken place during this period, on the construction industry.

A representative from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) attended a key VUSSC meeting on behalf of Solomon Islands when the Interlocutors met in London in July 2008.

### **Health, welfare and community development**

COL, in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO), has continued to support the efforts of the Solomon Islands Development Trust (SIDT) to address HIV/AIDS prevention and stigma through effective media productions delivered to the remote areas of the country. COL implemented a media unit for audio and video production at SIDT in 2005 and has continued to support that effort with additional training and updates. COL upgraded the digital editing system at SIDT with accompanying training in March 2007. Following the severe earthquake and tsunami in April 2007 in the Western Province, SIDT was involved in the post tsunami effort with video productions dealing with health issues and awareness.

In 2009, COL initiated a new activity involving existing and new media, technology and health partners to network and share content.

COL also implemented digital video production and projection systems with the Don Bosco Institute of Technology and provided appropriate training.

## **Good governance**

COL conducted a workshop with the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development and developed a draft ODL policy and an overview of school board training curricula. Further development of the policy and curricula is pending with the Ministry.

COL supported the distribution of DVD drama and activity guides on conflict resolution and women's role in society to village cinema events, schools and television in Solomon Islands in September 2008. The materials were produced in Vanuatu with COL's support.

COL, in partnership with the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP), is working with local organisations and youth groups in Isabel, to develop capacity in youth to produce digital video and audio content relating to conflict resolution and peace-building using community radio, email stations and distance learning centres.

## **OTHER ACTIVITIES**

### **Pan-Commonwealth Forum**

The Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning, held in London in July 2008 was attended by two COL-sponsored delegates, from SIDT and the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development.

### **Regional Focal Points meeting**

The Regional Focal Points meeting for the Asia and Pacific regions, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in October 2008, was attended by the COL Focal Point for Solomon Islands.

## **LOOKING FORWARD**

In 2009-2012, Solomon Islands has the opportunity to benefit from increased participation in VUSSC activities. COL looks forward to making further progress with initiatives concerning healthy communities, livelihoods and skills development, including increased capacity to use media and ICTs as part of non-formal ODL.



# TONGA

**COL Focal Point: Mrs. S.T. Takapautolo (2006-2009)**  
**Mrs. Siatukimoana Vaea, Tonga Institute of Higher Education,**  
**Ministry of Education (current)**

## BACKGROUND

The Kingdom of Tonga is a small state of the Commonwealth and has been a steady contributor to COL's budget since inception. The country has made good progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Education remains a key priority.

## SUMMARY

The major focus of COL's assistance to Tonga in 2006-2009 has been in on-going capacity development for educators, particularly to work with open educational resources (OERs). Alongside activities in-country, Tonga continues to benefit through regional and international activities and programmes as well as tools and resources that COL makes available as open content. Tonga has participated in regional workshops and hosted two for the Learning4Content (L4C) initiative. Tonga has been an active contributor to the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) and was represented at VUSSC international planning meetings in 2008. Tonga has also participated in key regional and pan-Commonwealth meetings.

## EDUCATION

### Higher education

COL has provided a scholarship to three students from Tonga to study for the Postgraduate Diploma in Legislative Drafting through the University of the South Pacific, as part of its programme to provide 15 such scholarships to nationals in the South Pacific.

### ELearning for education sector development

A delegate from Tonga attended the regional OERs workshop, organised by COL and the Ministry of Education, New Zealand and held in Wellington, New Zealand in August 2007.

As part of the major pan-Commonwealth initiative, Learning4Content (L4C), Tonga hosted two face-to-face workshops in August 2008.

## LEARNING FOR LIVELIHOODS

### **Learning and skills for livelihoods**

The basic trades courses on Timber, Concrete and Small Engines, developed by COL in collaboration with the Pacific Association of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (PATVET), have been made available to young workers in Tonga.

### **National/international community development**

Representatives from Tonga were among 23 from seven countries in the Pacific to participate in the regional strategic workshop, Delivering Distance Learning Programmes for Agriculture and Rural Development, held in June 2007 in Samoa.

### **Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)**

Tonga is 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. Participants from Tonga attended three of the six training and course development workshops that took place, from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Works.

Tonga is participating in the development of the transnational qualifications framework. Tonga has submitted information on its national qualifications framework for analysis and participated in the officials meeting in Singapore.

Tonga also attended another key VUSSC meeting when the Interlocutors met in London in July 2008.

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

### **Pan-Commonwealth Forum**

The Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning, held in London in July 2008 was attended by the COL Focal Point for Tonga, sponsored by COL.

### **Regional Focal Points meeting**

The Regional Focal Points meeting for the Asia and Pacific regions, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in October 2008, was attended by the COL Focal Point for Tonga.

## LOOKING FORWARD

In the next triennium, Tonga's participation in COL's work in the Pacific will show benefits for Tonga and the region. Tonga will continue to gain from its participation in the activities of the VUSSC as that initiative gathers further momentum. Tonga has already begun to build capacity in developing OERs and will be encouraged to expand its contribution in 2009-2012.



# TUVALU

**COL Focal Point:** **Mr. Tapugao Falefou (2006)**  
**Mr. Solofa Uota (2006)**  
**Ms. Katalina P. Taloka, Ministry of Education and Sports (current)**

## BACKGROUND

Made up of nine islands and atolls in the South Pacific, Tuvalu is one of the small states of the Commonwealth. Tuvalu is a regular contributor to COL's budget and has worked with COL to develop the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in the country. With a high literacy rate, Tuvalu's educational focus is on vocational skills such as fishing, tourism and agriculture.

## SUMMARY

In 2006-2009, COL has provided professional and technical support to education and training in Tuvalu. Alongside activities in-country, Tuvalu continues to benefit through regional and international activities and programmes as well as tools and resources that COL makes available as open content.

Tuvalu has participated in regional workshops and hosted one for the Learning4Content (L4C) initiative. Tuvalu has been a contributor to the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) and was represented at VUSSC international planning meetings in 2008. Tuvalu has also participated in key regional and pan-Commonwealth meetings.

COL has been working with the Ministry of Education on the development of multimedia capacity for the delivery of training to the outlying atolls of the country.

## EDUCATION

### **ELearning for education sector development**

A delegate from Tuvalu attended the regional open education resources (OERs) workshop, organised by COL and the Ministry of Education, New Zealand and held in Wellington, New Zealand in August 2007.

As part of the major pan-Commonwealth initiative, Learning4Content (L4C), two face-to-face workshops were held in Tuvalu in November 2008.

## LEARNING FOR LIVELIHOODS

### **Learning and skills for livelihoods**

The basic trades courses on Timber, Concrete and Small Engines, developed by COL in collaboration with the Pacific Association of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (PATVET), have been made available to young workers in Tuvalu.

### **Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)**

Tuvalu is 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. Participants from Tuvalu attended five of the six training and course development workshops that took place, from the Ministry of Education and Sports and Motufoua Secondary School.

Tuvalu is participating in the development of the transnational qualifications framework. A representative from the Ministry of Education and Sports attended the officials meeting in Singapore.

A representative from Tuvalu also attended another key VUSSC meeting when the Interlocutors met in London in July 2008.

## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

### **Educational use of mass media and ICTs**

COL is working with the Ministry of Education and Sports on its capacity to deliver multimedia-based learning materials to remote atolls of the country. COL implemented a media unit in May 2007 and provided training for staff at the Ministry. A production concerning education in Tuvalu was completed as an output of the training and technology implemented.

## 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 a delegate from the Ministry of Education and Sports.

The Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning, held in London in July 2008, was attended by a COL-sponsored delegate from the Ministry of Education and Sports.

### **Regional Focal Points meeting**

The Regional Focal Points meeting for the Asia and Pacific regions, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in October 2008, was attended by the COL Focal Point for Tuvalu.

### **LOOKING FORWARD**

In 2009-2012, Tuvalu will continue to benefit from COL's activities in the region and through its participation in the VUSSC. It should also see benefits from the media unit development work completed and COL's ongoing support.



# VANUATU

**COL Focal Point: Mr. Daniel Lamoureux, Ministry of Education (current)**

## BACKGROUND

Vanuatu comprises a chain of 83 islands in the South Pacific. It is one of the small states of the Commonwealth with a population of 232,000. Vanuatu last contributed to COL's budget in 1992 but continues to be a strong supporter of COL's activities and has worked in partnership to develop open and distance learning and information and communication technologies (ICTs) in the country.

## SUMMARY

In 2006-2009, COL has provided professional and technical support to education and training in Vanuatu. Alongside activities in-country, Vanuatu continues to benefit through regional and international activities and programmes as well as tools and resources that COL makes available as open content. Vanuatu has participated in regional workshops. It has been a contributor to the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) and was represented at VUSSC international planning meetings in 2008. Vanuatu has also participated in key regional and international meetings.

## EDUCATION

### Higher education

COL has provided a scholarship to three students from Vanuatu to study for the Postgraduate Diploma in Legislative Drafting through the University of the South Pacific (USP), as part of its programme to provide 15 such scholarships to nationals in the South Pacific.

## LEARNING FOR LIVELIHOODS

### Learning and skills for livelihoods

The basic trades courses on Timber, Concrete and Small Engines, developed by COL in collaboration with the Pacific Association of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (PATVET), have been made available to young workers in Vanuatu.

### National/international community development

Representatives from Vanuatu were among 23 from seven countries in the Pacific to participate in the regional strategic workshop, Delivering Distance Learning Programmes for Agriculture and Rural Development, held in June 2007 in Samoa.

### Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

Vanuatu is an active member of VUSSC. During 2006-2009, activities have included capacity building and the creation, customisation and reuse of open educational resources (OERs). Quality assurance and cross-accreditation of learning programmes have also been a focus area in this planning period. Participants from Vanuatu attended four of the six training and course development workshops that took place, from the Vanuatu Institute of Technology (VIT) and the Ministry of Education.

Vanuatu is participating in the development of the transnational qualifications framework. Vanuatu has submitted information on its national qualifications framework for analysis and a representative from the Ministry of Education attended the officials meeting in Singapore.

Vanuatu also attended another key VUSSC meeting when the Interlocutors met in London in July 2008.

### Transnational programmes

One staff member of the World Bank based in Vanuatu was trained in Writing Effectively through a tutor-mediated eLearning COL course.

## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

### Educational use of mass media and ICTs

COL supported Wan Smolbag of Vanuatu to develop and distribute DVD drama and activity guides on conflict resolution and women's role in society. The materials were provided to all areas of Vanuatu through village cinema events, schools and television as well as Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea.

COL has continued to support VIT in its multimedia capacity to deliver technical and vocational learning materials, implementing a new digital video editing system at the Institute in December 2006.

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

### **Pan-Commonwealth Forum**

The Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning, held in London in July 2008 was attended by three COL-sponsored delegates from the Ministry of Education and USP.

### **Regional Focal Points meeting**

The Regional Focal Points meeting for the Asia and Pacific regions, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in October 2008, was attended by a representative for the COL Focal Point for Vanuatu, from the Ministry of Education.

## LOOKING FORWARD

In 2009-2012, COL looks forward to Vanuatu's continuing participation in regional activities and anticipates that Vanuatu will benefit considerably from these and its ongoing participation in the VUSSC.



# Partner Countries

Australia | Canada | New Zealand | United Kingdom





# AUSTRALIA

## BACKGROUND

Australia was a regular contributor and a major donor until 2004. More recent support has been for COL's Pan-Commonwealth Forums on Open Learning with Australia sending many participants to the Third Forum in New Zealand in 2004 and continuing its involvement with the fourth and fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forums.

The Australian government provides resources and financial support to projects around the globe through the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID). Australia's aid programme focuses on the Asia Pacific region. Australia also continues to provide selective assistance to Africa. Many of the developing Commonwealth countries that COL works in are located in these regions.

## SUMMARY

Australia's support to COL during 2006-2009 was through sponsorship, planning and participation for the Pan-Commonwealth Forums in 2006 and 2008. Australia also provided expertise through the consultants hired by COL for a range of projects. As a leader in open distance and technology-mediated learning, Australia is a natural partner of COL.

## AusAID MANDATE AND PRIORITIES

The aim of Australia's aid programme is to assist developing countries to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development. Australia, as a member of the United Nations, supports efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Australia is an active member of the Commonwealth and particularly values its role in supporting the developing countries and the small states. It also contributes to the Commonwealth Youth Programme.

## COUNTRIES AND REGIONS OF FOCUS

AusAID focuses primarily on the Asia Pacific region where two thirds of the world's poor reside. Australia also supports selected projects in Africa and elsewhere. COL is active in all these regions, where many Commonwealth member states are located.

Priorities for AusAID in the Pacific include basic education, adult learning and vocational education as well as primary health care. In Bangladesh, the focus is on quality in education while in Pakistan it is on improving girls' education.

## EVENTS

Australia's primary support to COL's activities during this period was for the Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF5), held in London in 2008. AusAID was a major sponsor of the event, enabling the attendance of a number of representatives from the Pacific region. About seven Australians also attended or presented at the Forum.

Delegates from Australia attended the Fourth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF4) in Jamaica in 2006 and one of the theme leaders was from Australia.

Individuals participated in pre-Forum online discussions and programme planning committees for both PCF4 and PCF5.

## ASSISTANCE AND EXPERTISE

Since July 2006, COL has hired ten Australian consultants to provide expertise and resources to projects in the region.

## LOOKING FORWARD

In 2009-2012, COL looks forward to regular support from Australia for activities in the Asia and Pacific regions and hopes to build a more substantial partnership with AusAID to achieve common goals in these regions and beyond. COL also hopes that a Focal Point will be nominated to facilitate information sharing and collaboration. The nature of the support would not just be financial but also intellectual. COL would seek to bring Australian expertise in open distance and technology-mediated learning to its partners in Asia and Africa and to forge strong links between open and distance learning (ODL) institutions for further collaboration.



# NEW ZEALAND

**COL Focal Point: Ms. Myra Harrison, NZAID (current)**

## BACKGROUND

New Zealand is a major contributor to COL's budget, doubling its input in the past few years. As a key donor, New Zealand is represented on COL's Board of Governors. It provides considerable support and expertise to COL projects in the Pacific region in particular as well as contributing to pan-Commonwealth activities. New Zealand hosted the Third Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning in Dunedin in 2004.

New Zealand works through NZAID, the Government's international aid and development agency, to deliver New Zealand's Official Development Assistance to priority projects, countries and regions.

## SUMMARY

In 2006-2009, COL's work has been aligned with NZAID's goals in the Pacific, New Zealand's area of focus. COL's work in all three sectors, Education, Learning for Livelihoods and Human Environment is reflected in NZAID's priorities. Over the next triennium, COL will continue to work in three of NZAID's priority areas: education, livelihoods and health.

New Zealand has continued to be a valuable partner to COL in the region. New Zealand has hosted several regional meetings and workshops and provided support for both Pan-Commonwealth Forums including planning and participation. New Zealand consultants contributed considerable expertise to COL projects during this planning period.

## NZAID MANDATE AND PRIORITIES

NZAID was formed in 2002 and since then it has given central priority to activities that contribute to poverty reduction. New Zealand recognises that the causes of poverty are multidimensional and interrelated so NZAID supports initiatives that address many areas including creating safe, just and inclusive societies, fulfilling basic needs, and working towards environmental sustainability and sustainable livelihoods. New Zealand supports the internationally agreed Millennium Development Goals and Education for All (EFA) goals. COL's work in "Learning for Development" helps to support these goals.

Education is the top priority for NZAID. Historically, approximately one third of the total annual bilateral aid has been allocated to education. Since 2000, the focus has shifted away from tertiary education in the form of scholarships, to greater support for the provision of basic education towards achieving the EFA goals. Around half the budget now targets basic education. NZAID also supports post-basic and tertiary education, to develop leadership as well as technical, analytical and strategic capabilities. This includes technical and vocational training and distance learning and training, all key priorities in COL's activities.

## COUNTRIES AND REGIONS OF FOCUS

New Zealand places particular focus on the Pacific region as well as projects in Asia, Africa and Latin America, working with partner organisations to achieve its goals.

In the Pacific, NZAID supports regional cooperation and provides particular assistance to all Commonwealth countries included in COL's work: Fiji, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. A particular focus for New Zealand is Papua New Guinea, which has the lowest living standards of any country in the Pacific and accounts for much of the region's population. COL is making special efforts to work in Papua New Guinea in the areas of open schooling, teacher education, quality assurance, lifelong learning for farmers and media empowerment.

## EVENTS

New Zealand supported both Pan-Commonwealth Forums during 2006-2009 in a number of ways. Four delegates from New Zealand took part in the Fourth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF4) in Jamaica and 11 delegates participated in the Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF5) in London. For PCF4, New Zealand provided two theme leaders. Individuals also participated in pre-Forum online discussions and programme planning committees for both PCF4 and PCF5.

The Ministry of Education collaborated with COL to host a regional workshop on open educational resources in August 2007 in Wellington. Representatives from Kiribati, New Zealand, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tokelau and Tuvalu attended the workshop which established a firm foundation for future collaboration in eLearning for the region and launched a Pacific chapter of the Free/Libre and Open Source Software for Education (FLOSS4Edu) initiative called WikiPacifica.

A representative from New Zealand was present at the Regional Focal Points meeting for the Asia and Pacific regions, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in October 2008.

Dr. Wayne Mackintosh, Education Specialist, eLearning & ICT Policy, was one of the speakers at the Digital Learning Resources Conference on "*A Day in the Life of a Digital Learning Resource : from access to reuse*" in Wellington in March 2009.

## COL GOVERNANCE

As a major contributor to COL's budget, New Zealand has a seat on the Board of Governors, currently held by Dr. Linda Sissons, Chief Executive Officer of the Wellington Institute of Technology.

Her predecessor, Ms. Shona Butterfield, CNZM, the then Commissioner on New Zealand's Tertiary Education Commission, served on COL's Board of Governors from 1998 to 2007.

## ASSISTANCE AND EXPERTISE

Since July 2006, 12 consultants from New Zealand have been hired by COL to assist with projects throughout the region.

The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand (TOPNZ) worked with COL to develop a residential writing workshop on the development of literacy materials to supplement three basic trade courses developed by COL and the Pacific Association of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (PATVET). The workshop took place in June 2007 in Solomon Islands.

TOPNZ also hosted the office of COL's representative for the Pacific region from 2002 to 2008.

## LOOKING FORWARD

In 2009-2012, COL looks forward to its continued partnership with New Zealand, working towards achieving key goals in education in the Pacific region. New Zealand's significant support for COL through sponsorship and expertise is invaluable to COL's activities in the region and throughout the Commonwealth.

New Zealand expertise in open and distance learning (ODL) for skills development is a valuable model for the developing world and will be used especially in Africa. Over the next three years COL will engage more actively with the dependencies, Cook Islands and Niue, among others.