

EXCERPTS FROM:

# COL in the Commonwealth 2006–2009 Country Reports

FOR: SOUTH AFRICA  
INCLUDING OTHER SADC COUNTRIES

trust  
new access  
freedom education  
impact open and distance learning  
focus diversity people regions  
paradigm shift gender equality open schools  
small states people strength livelihoods  
institutions strength capacity regions health vusse  
clearing skills development knowledge  
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accessibility quality assurance accountability students  
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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.



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.



# 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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](http://www.col.org/regional).



# BOTSWANA

**COL Focal Point: Mr. Thulaganyo Thutoetsile (2006-2008)**  
**Mr. Godson Gatsha, Southern African Development Community –**  
**Centre for Distance Education (SADC-CDE)(current)**

## BACKGROUND

Botswana has been an active participant in activities in the region, partnering with COL in the promotion of open and distance learning (ODL) and consistently contributing to COL's budget. A country of 1.9 million people, Botswana has been hard-hit by HIV/AIDS but now has extensive treatment programmes available. Its growing economy has been pushing towards greater diversification for future stability.

## SUMMARY

Botswana has continued to be fully involved in COL activities during 2006-2009 and is building its role as a resource centre to the region. The Botswana College of Open and Distance Learning (BOCODOL) is host to the Southern African Development Community – Centre for Distance Education (SADC-CDE) which continues to develop capacity in ODL and establish new open schools in the sub-region. Botswana is also contributing to COL initiatives beyond the region as a member of the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC). In addition, a Botswana education company has been contracted by COL to develop a low cost institutional Quality Audit Model to benefit higher education institutions across the Commonwealth. Delegates from Botswana have participated in several COL forums and collaborative activities both in Africa and elsewhere during this period.

## EDUCATION

### Teacher development

Efforts in teacher development have been supported with partner organisations including BOCODOL and the University of Botswana. Study visits, attachments and other activities have facilitated ODL capacity-building of individuals and groups of practitioners.

COL also contracted a consultant to conduct an evaluation of the Diploma in Primary Education Programme by ODL offered by the Ministry of Education in Botswana. The report was submitted in March 2008.

## Open/alternative schooling

In its efforts to develop and promote models which are sustainable, COL identified the cost 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. Eight delegates from Botswana attended the workshop which was held in August 2007 in Gaborone, Botswana.

In October 2008, Ministries of Education and open schools in six countries including Botswana 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.

Botswana 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 BOCODOL 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 information and communication technologies (ICTs).

Botswana is contributing to the development of two new publications for open schools through two chapters authored for the *Perspective Series on Open Schools – Open Schools for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* and a *Handbook for Managers of Open Schools*.

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

Botswana is a member of the Distance Education Association of Southern Africa (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 is supporting the development of expertise in ODL and ICTs in BOCODOL as a resource for the Southern Africa region. As a result, COL supported the African Access to Knowledge Alliance Trust through BOCODOL, to host the Conference on Open Access in Southern Africa Regional Universities Association (SARUA) in November 2007 in Botswana.

## ELearning for education sector development

COL is providing funding support for activities of the SADC-CDE, located at BOCODOL and hosted and supported by the Botswana Ministry of Education and BOCODOL. SADC-CDE and Indira Gandhi National Open University, India, signed a Memorandum of Agreement to provide 40 scholarships for participants from four countries in the region, including ten from Botswana.

As part of the major pan-Commonwealth initiative, Learning4Content, Botswana hosted two face-to-face workshops in March 2009.

## LEARNING FOR LIVELIHOODS

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

The Botswana Training Authority participated in the 1st African UNESCO-UNEVOC Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Summit on the theme of “Access to and Inclusion in TVET in Africa Through New ICT-based Solutions”. Held in Nairobi in May 2007, the summit was co-organised by COL and the UNEVOC Centre for TVET.

COL is collaborating with the Department of Vocational Education and Training (DVET) under the Ministry of Education, in partnership with BOCODOL, to develop basic programmes in hair dressing and beauty therapy for girls. DVET launched the first unit of a Beauty Therapy Course (The Human Body) in March 2008.

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

Botswana has continued to be an active member of VUSSC during 2006-2009. Participants from Botswana attended five of the six training and course development workshops that have taken place during this period including participants from BOCODOL, the University of Botswana and the Construction Industry Trust Fund.

Botswana is contributing to the development of the transnational qualifications framework. It has submitted information on its national qualifications framework for analysis and participated in the senior officials meeting in Singapore.

## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

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

COL is assisting BOCODOL in developing the strategy and plans for an educational radio channel. This is part of COL’s initiative to help colleges and universities improve their use of educational broadcasting, especially radio.

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

### **Pan-Commonwealth Forum**

At COL’s Fourth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning held in Ocho Rios, Jamaica from 30 October to 3 November 2006, BOCODOL was one of the recipients of the Awards of Excellence for Institutional Achievement. The event was attended by eight delegates from Botswana including four sponsored by COL. Delegates were from BOCODOL, the University of Botswana and SADC-CDE.

The Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning held in London in July 2008 was attended by nine delegates from Botswana including five sponsored by COL. Delegates came from BOCODOL, Francistown College of Technical & Vocational Education, and the University of Botswana.

## **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 Botswana.

## **LOOKING FORWARD**

As we look forward to 2009-2012, Botswana is set to continue its active involvement in COL initiatives and its contribution in the Sub-Saharan region and beyond. Several projects are already underway through VUSSC, SADC-CDE and BOCODOL. For example, Botswana's partnership in the OERs development project will continue through to 2010 and as a member of VUSSC, Botswana is active in helping this organisation work towards fulfilling its potential in strengthening capacity in ODL.



# LESOTHO

**COL Focal Point: Dr. Mokopane Moshabesha, Institute of Extra-Mural Studies,  
National University of Lesotho (current)**

## BACKGROUND

Lesotho is a small state of the Commonwealth, facing challenges in economic development and a high rate of HIV/AIDS. The country has embraced the opportunities offered through COL and has been a contributor to COL's budget since 2006.

## SUMMARY

COL's work in Lesotho focuses on all three areas: Education, Learning for Livelihoods and the Human Environment. In Education, COL's work has been in building regional capacity in open and distance learning (ODL) as well as eLearning, including COL support for participating in Commonwealth communities dedicated to the development of free content and capacity building. In Learning for Livelihoods, COL continues to support Lesotho in the development of basic skills in information and communication technologies (ICTs).

## EDUCATION

### **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 Lesotho attended the workshop which was held in August 2007 in Botswana.

COL sponsored two participants from the Lesotho Distance Teaching Centre to a workshop on Developing Digital Content hosted by the Mindset Network in Johannesburg in September 2007.

Other COL support for open schools have included 25 staff members from Lesotho being trained in course development. Staff members have also been trained in quality assurance as a step towards a quality assurance toolkit for schools.

Lesotho is a member of the Distance Education Association of Southern Africa 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.

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

Lesotho is participating in the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and COL OER4OS project which is training selected teachers in the search and use of OERs. COL conducted a two-week workshop in Lesotho in February 2009. The 15 participants were trained on copyright issues and BaseCamp navigation.

### **Higher education**

To enhance capacity in ODL materials development, a consultant was provided by COL to train on Creating Learning Materials for Open and Distance Learning, at the National University of Lesotho. This was the first one of two workshops for professors, lecturers and instructors at the Institute of Extra-Mural Studies at the University of Lesotho, part of a programme aimed at assisting them in developing ODL courses.

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

COL is providing funding support for activities of the South African Development Community – Centre for Distance Education (SADC-CDE), located at the Botswana College of Open and Distance Learning, with the goal of building and strengthening regional capacity in ODL and the use of ICTs. SADC-CDE and the Indira Gandhi National Open University, India, have signed a Memorandum of Agreement. One of the four institutions included is the Lesotho Distance Teachers Centre. Ten participants in Lesotho have signed up.

Educational practitioners from Lesotho participated in a two day workshop in Nairobi in November 2006. The workshop was organised by COL and the Free/Libre and Open Source Software for Education (FLOSS4Edu) initiative to discuss the role of free and open educational resources (OERs) in the East African Region. The workshop also focussed on identifying innovative and creative ways for partnerships to build OERs as a direct input in the provision of lifelong learning and alternative education for all. The workshop discussed establishing a content development group to spearhead the development of free educational resources in Africa and several content production and dissemination technologies were demonstrated.

As part of the major pan-Commonwealth initiative, Learning4Content, Lesotho hosted three face-to-face workshops in March 2009.

## **LEARNING FOR LIVELIHOODS**

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

Lesotho 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 the National University of Lesotho, the Disaster

Management Authority, Lesotho Agricultural College and Lerotholi Polytechnic attended five of the six training and course development workshops that took place.

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

A delegate from the National University of Lesotho also attended another key VUSSC meeting, when the Ministry Interlocutors met in London in July 2008.

## 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 four delegates from Lesotho including three sponsored by COL. Delegates were from the National University of Lesotho.

The Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning, held in London in July 2008, was attended by two COL-sponsored delegates from Lesotho, from the Lesotho College of Education and the National University of Lesotho.

### **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 Lesotho.

## LOOKING FORWARD

As we look forward to 2009-2012, initiatives to further develop and support open schooling are ongoing in Lesotho. COL will continue to support the National University of Lesotho in developing ODL resources and the country will also benefit from its participation in the VUSSC and the progress made in strengthening capacity and resources in ODL through this initiative.



# MALAWI

**COL Focal Point: Mrs. Bethel S. Masauli, Malawi College of Distance Education (current)**

## BACKGROUND

Malawi has a long history of open and distance learning (ODL). The Malawi College of Distance Education has been in existence since 1965 and today has more than 150,000 active students. Malawi is also a member of the Distance Education Association of Southern Africa.

## SUMMARY

In 2006-2009, COL's activities in Malawi have been in two of the three programme sectors, Education and the Human Environment. The main focus has been in the Education sector, in four key areas: quality assurance, teacher development, eLearning and ODL for education. Malawi is also benefiting from the work of the South African Development Community – Centre for Distance Education (SADC-CDE).

The Millennium Development Goals underpinned COL's previous Three-Year Plan and continue in the current Three-Year Plan 2006-2009 with three of the Goals focussed on health. COL, in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO), is focusing a health-based activity within the country.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Malawi hosted the first Regional Focal Points Meeting for the African region in Lilongwe in May 2008.

## EDUCATION

### Teacher development

COL sponsored Malawi'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

COL organised a staff training workshop, "Introduction to Distance Education", at Malawi College of Distance Education (MCDE), in March 2007. There were 21 participants from MCDE (central and regional offices), Muzuzu

and Deezee Universities, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Malawi Institute of Education, teachers training colleges and the College of Education. The participants were introduced to the fundamentals of ODL, the student support services in ODL, planning and management of distance education in developing countries, materials design and the development of distance education and were trained on how to prepare training sessions.

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. One delegate from Malawi attended the workshop which was held in August 2007 in Botswana.

COL sponsored two participants from MCDE to a workshop on Developing Digital Content hosted by the Mindset Network in Johannesburg in September 2007.

In other COL support for open schools, staff members have been trained in quality assurance as a step towards a quality assurance toolkit for schools.

## **ELearning for education sector development**

COL is providing funding support for activities of SADC-CDE, located at Botswana College of Open and Distance Learning (BOCODOL), with the goal of building and strengthening regional capacity in ODL and the use of ICTs. SADC-CDE and the Indira Gandhi National Open University, India, have signed a Memorandum of Agreement. One of the four Institutions included is MCDE. Ten participants from Malawi have signed up.

## **LEARNING FOR LIVELIHOODS**

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

COL and the Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa co-sponsored a policy awareness seminar on integrating ICTs and eLearning into technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Freetown, Sierra Leone in May 2007. A representative from Malawi was among those from 120 TVET institutions across 17 African countries. The delegates gained valuable information about the potential of using ODL to improve livelihoods.

### **Transnational programmes**

Two staff members of the World Bank based in Malawi were trained in Writing Effectively through a tutor-mediated eLearning COL course.

## **HUMAN ENVIRONMENT**

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

Working with WHO, Ministries of Health and MACRO, an NGO, COL has expanded its health media empowerment initiative in Malawi. In October 2007, a media unit was established, providing audio and video production digital technology and training was completed, towards creating content to reach greater numbers of people with

appropriate health information in the linguistic and cultural context of the targeted groups. A plan of action was agreed upon by WHO and COL concerning the activity.

COL is working with a variety of groups in Mchinji district to develop a community-based learning programme in maternal and child health.

## 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 Malawi, including one from the Commonwealth Youth Programme. The other, Mr. David Nthengwe, was the winner of the Award for Learning under Difficult Circumstances.

### **Regional Focal Points meeting**

The Regional Focal Points meeting for Africa and the Mediterranean was hosted by Malawi in Lilongwe in May 2008. The meeting was jointly organised by COL, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and MCDE and was attended by the Focal Point of Malawi. Colleagues from Mzuzu University attended the meeting as observers.

### **Other events**

The Vice-President of COL made a presentation on “ODL: Trends and Quality Issues” at MCDE in August 2007. A small group of about 15 participants from Mzuzu University, Domasi College of Education and MCDE attended the presentation and there was good interaction on various aspects of ODL. The session was recorded at the request of the Permanent Secretary who wished to share it with the deputy ministers as they had been unable to attend due to parliament being in session.

## LOOKING FORWARD

In 2009-2012, Malawi will benefit from the partnerships developed during this period as well as COL’s support through SADC-CDE as its activities gather momentum. Support for open schools will continue to be a priority. The media empowerment initiative to disseminate health information in the country will be a focus as the plan is put into action.



# MAURITIUS

**COL Focal Point: Ms. H.C.L. How Fok Cheng (2006)**  
**Mr. H.B. Dansinghani, Ministry of Education, Culture & Human Resources (current)**

## BACKGROUND

Mauritius has been engaged with COL since its inception. The first President of COL, the late Professor James Maraj, served as Executive Director of the Mauritius Tertiary Education Commission from 1995-1997. Mauritius has expanded its tertiary education system through the years and embraced open and distance learning (ODL) through the Mauritius College of the Air (MCA). The country is a regular contributor to COL's budget and an active member of the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC). It hosted the first course development workshop of VUSSC in 2006. Mauritius has also taken an active role in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) initiatives with COL.

## SUMMARY

COL works in Mauritius in two of its programme sectors and continues to draw upon the expertise from Mauritius to strengthen COL's programmes. In the Education sector, priorities were set in consultation with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Human Resources and the Tertiary Education Commission, with interest in all five initiatives. In the Learning for Livelihoods sector, the major focus has been on the development and delivery of e-content through the VUSSC.

COL has been working with the National Productivity and Competitiveness Council (NPCC) through COL's Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F) programme to address women's empowerment and through TVET programmes to improve livelihoods. Tertiary institutions have had access to the full text of the Practitioner Research and Evaluation Skills Training (PREST) including an online version of the programme which is aimed at developing research capacity in institutions.

## EDUCATION

### Quality assurance

Two delegates from Mauritius attended the first Forum on Quality Assurance in Teacher Education for policy makers and senior administrators from Commonwealth Asia, jointly organised by COL and the National Assessment and Accreditation Council, India. It was held in Bangalore, India in December 2007. The Forum was designed to expose policymakers and senior administrators from Ministries of Education to the various quality assurance practices in teacher education.

### Teacher development

COL supported participation of delegates from Mauritius in the Teacher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa consortium held in Mozambique during October 2007.

### Open/alternative schooling

As a part of an initiative to strengthen the capacity of open schools, COL provided support to Mauritius to contextualise materials from Indira Gandhi National Open University, India. Mauritius attended the Quality Assurance for Open Schools workshop in South Africa.

### Higher education

COL undertook a review of the tertiary sector in Mauritius to identify the scope for establishing an open university. The review was completed in September 2007 and the report was submitted to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Human Resources for implementation. This has been accepted and the open university is being established in consultation with COL.

### E-Learning for education sector development

Educational practitioners from Mauritius participated in a two-day workshop in Nairobi in November 2006. The workshop was organised by COL and the Free/Libre and Open Source Software for Education (FLOSS4Edu) initiative to discuss the role of free and open educational resources (OERs) in the East African Region. The workshop also focussed on identifying innovative and creative ways for partnerships to build OERs as a direct input in the provision of lifelong learning and alternative education for all. The workshop discussed establishing a content development group to spearhead the development of free educational resources in Africa and several content production and dissemination technologies were demonstrated.

As part of the major pan-Commonwealth initiative, Learning4Content, about 19 delegates from Mauritius participated in online workshops.

## LEARNING FOR LIVELIHOODS

### Learning and skills for livelihoods

COL and the Mauritius Qualifications Authority (MQA) are designing a mechanism on the recognition of prior learning (RPL) in TVET to be shared with other institutions in African countries. The Director of MQA is the Lead

Facilitator of RPL for COL in Africa. Two workshops took place in Mauritius in 2007 and 2008. The first workshop was attended by 37 participants, including 26 from the public and private sectors of Mauritius. The second workshop in Lusaka, Zambia, in July 2008 was attended by a delegate from MQA.

Two representatives from MQA were sponsored by COL to attend the 1st African UNESCO-UNEVOC TVET Summit on the theme of “Access to and Inclusion in TVET in Africa Through New ICT-based Solutions”. Held in Nairobi in May 2007, the Summit was co-organised by COL and was part of the 2nd International Conference on ICT for Development, Education and Training. A second TVET Africa Summit was held in Ghana in May 2008. It promoted good practice projects in the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in TVET across Africa. Mauritius was one of the three winners with a project called “Global Learning: Making job-related personalised post-secondary education accessible and available to and affordable for a much wider population”.

COL organised a conference on Livelihoods Initiatives in Sub-Saharan Africa, in Accra in November 2008. The theme of the conference was “Think Globally; Act Locally”. A delegate from MQA 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.

### **Rural and peri-urban community development**

COL is working with NPCC so that it can draw on COL’s experience in improving rural livelihoods through the L3F model and add value to the National Empowerment Programme that addresses women’s empowerment, a crucial issue for development.

COL sponsored the Executive Director, NPCC and senior officials of NPCC with a farmer from NPCC to study the L3F activities in India and Sri Lanka. They also participated in a workshop to identify performance indicators for quality assurance for higher education in agriculture. With COL’s support, the council has initiated an L3F Project with a focus on strengthening entrepreneurship among women.

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

A COL-sponsored participant from Mauritius attended the 4<sup>th</sup> Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa General Assembly and African Agricultural Science Week, held at Sandton, Johannesburg, South Africa in June 2007. The main theme of the Assembly was “Innovation to transform agriculture for improved livelihoods and development in Africa”. More than 670 delegates representing stakeholders in agriculture in the public and private sectors and the donor community attended the Assembly.

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

Mauritius 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 the University of Mauritius; MCA; the Mauritius Institute of Education; the Ministry of Education, Culture and Human Resources; the Mauritius Meteorological Services; the Ministry of Fisheries; the University of Technology; and the Industrial and Vocational Training Board attended all six training and course development workshops that took place. Mauritius also hosted the first workshop, on entrepreneurship and tourism in August 2006.

Mauritius 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.

Three delegates from Mauritius also attended another key VUSSC meeting, when the Ministry Interlocutors met in London in July 2008. The three included the Interlocutor for Mauritius from the Ministry of Education, Culture & Human Resources and delegates from MQA and the Mauritius Institute of Education.

### **Transnational programmes**

One staff member of the World Bank based in Mauritius was trained in the Online Report Writing Programme through a tutor-mediated eLearning course of COL.

## **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 three delegates from Mauritius, from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Human Resources, the Halley Movement and the University of Mauritius.

The Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning, held in London in July 2008, was attended by 11 delegates from Mauritius including nine sponsored by COL.

### **Regional Focal Points meeting**

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

## **LOOKING FORWARD**

As we look forward to 2009-2012, Education sector initiatives will continue to be a focus with the opportunity to move forward with the planning and establishment of an open university in Mauritius. Mauritius is taking an active role in the VUSSC, and can contribute to the progress of key initiatives such as the TQF. COL's support for TVET in the country is ongoing and the organisation will work with Mauritius to strengthen and consolidate the L3F programme.



# MOZAMBIQUE

**COL Focal Point: Ms. Zaida Paz Helena Baùle, Ministry of Education and Culture (current)**

## BACKGROUND

Mozambique has made great strides in economic development over the last decade and has experienced benefits in improved health and education. Mozambique is a regular contributor to COL's budget and has worked with COL in the promotion of open and distance learning (ODL) and building capacity in the country.

## SUMMARY

In 2006-2009, the major focus of COL's support to Mozambique was in the Education and Learning for Livelihoods sectors. In the Education sector, COL worked in the areas of quality assurance, teacher development and eLearning for education sector development.

Mozambique has partnered with COL in hosting several regional meetings and workshops during this period and has supported Portuguese language participation in the pan-Commonwealth initiative, Learning4Content (L4C).

## EDUCATION

### Teacher Development

Mozambique hosted the Teacher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa Conference in October 2007.

### Open/alternative schooling

COL engaged an external consultant to conduct a quantitative and qualitative evaluation on the work done by COL in Mozambique. The Final Report was made available in June 2008.

Mozambique 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 National Institute of Distance Education 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 information and communication technologies (ICTs).

COL's support for open schools has given staff members from Mozambique training in learner support and quality assurance in the context of developing a quality assurance toolkit for open schools.

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

As part of the major pan-Commonwealth initiative, L4C, Mozambique hosted a workshop in Portuguese in November 2008.

Advanced learners from Mozambique were among those from several African countries to participate in an online pilot of the Practitioners Research and Evaluation Skills Training (PREST) programme. The pilot introduced concepts of research and evaluation to learners within their own contexts. On completion of the online course, learners produced comprehensive draft research proposals that they could use to submit to their own institutions or to funding agencies to support their research projects. Learners demonstrated a critical approach to conducting research in terms of its importance in the planning stages of ODL implementation and how it can impact decision-making within their institutions.

## **LEARNING FOR LIVELIHOODS**

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

The Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR) and COL organised a meeting on Improving Agricultural Education and Learning through Collaboration and Partnerships during the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) Annual General Meeting in Maputo, Mozambique, in December 2008. Participants were from many African and other developing countries, CGIAR institutions, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), GFAR and associated regional member programmes and national partners, the World Bank and several donor agencies.

### **Transnational programmes**

Seven staff members of ILO based in Mozambique were trained in Writing Effectively through a tutor-mediated eLearning COL course.

## **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 one delegate from the Higher Institute of Public Administration, Mozambique.

The Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning, held in London in July 2008, was attended by five delegates from Mozambique including two sponsored by COL. Delegates included the COL Focal Point for Mozambique and a staff member from the National Institute of Distance Education. Others represented the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Institute of Open and Distance Learning, the Eduardo Mondlane University and the Foundation for Community Development. Professor Lidia Brito, Assistant Professor of Wood Science and

Technology, Universidade Eduardo Mondlane and former Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology, was a keynote speaker at the Forum.

### **Regional Focal Points meeting**

The Regional Focal Points meeting for Africa and the Mediterranean, held in Lilongwe, Malawi, in May 2008 was attended by a representative of the Focal Point for Mozambique, from the National Institute of Distance Education.

### **Other events**

The Vice-President of COL met the Minister of Education and Culture in Angonia and 15 ODL providers in Maputo in September 2007. She made a short presentation on ODL trends at the meeting.

## **LOOKING FORWARD**

In 2009-2012, Mozambique will continue to benefit from COL activities in-country as well as regional initiatives. The country has an important contribution to make to the development of ODL resources, particularly through the L4C programme, supporting Portuguese language materials and events.



# 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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.



# SEYCHELLES

**COL Focal Point: Ms. Marie-Reine Hoareau, Ministry of Education (current)**

## BACKGROUND

A small state of the Commonwealth, this archipelago in the Indian Ocean has a firm commitment to open learning. Seychelles played a major role in establishing the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) and has participated fully in its activities since inception. Seychelles contributed to COL's budget in 2008. It would only seem natural that a Seychelles national, John Lesperance, is now on COL's staff as the Education Specialist - VUSSC.

## SUMMARY

COL's activity in support of the priorities of the Government of Seychelles in 2006-2009 has been in the programme sectors of Education and Learning for Livelihoods. In the Education sector, Seychelles has benefited from COL's regional and international support for open schools. COL has also supported Seychelles in the planning of tertiary education development in the country. In the Learning for Livelihoods sector area, Seychelles is participating in the activities of VUSSC.

## EDUCATION

### **Teacher development**

COL sponsored Seychelles' 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**

COL support for open schools has included staff members from Seychelles receiving training in quality assurance as a step towards a quality assurance toolkit for the schools.

In October 2008, Ministries of Education and open schools in six countries including Seychelles 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.

## **Higher education**

COL has been working with the Ministry of Education and Youth and the National Human Resources Development Council to provide policy advice and assist in developing an implementation plan for expanding and diversifying the provision of tertiary education through a blended-learning approach.

As part of this initiative, a National Consultative Forum on Tertiary Education Provision was held in Seychelles in April 2008. The Forum engaged a wide range of stakeholders in reflecting on issues pertinent to future developments in tertiary education which are relevant and sustainable in the context of Seychelles. The Forum achieved a number of objectives:

- Broadened consultation and enriched the findings of the draft consultancy report,
- Enabled the sharing of experiences from other Small Islands Developing States tertiary education systems,
- Identified the most viable options for the development of tertiary education in Seychelles,
- Enabled consensus building on future policies for tertiary education in Seychelles.

The Government of Seychelles has received the reports of the Forum.

## **ELearning for education sector development**

As part of the major pan-Commonwealth initiative, Learning4Content, Seychelles hosted a face-to-face workshop in November 2008.

## **LEARNING FOR LIVELIHOODS**

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

A participant from Seychelles is assisting in a COL initiative to design a mechanism on recognition of prior learning (RPL) in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) to be shared with other institutions in African countries. As part of this initiative, two workshops took place in Mauritius in 2007 and 2008. Both were attended by a representative from The Seychelles Qualifications Authority. He also attended a further workshop held in Lusaka in July 2008.

Nineteen participants from Seychelles, including one from the Ministry of Education attended the 1st African UNESCO-UNEVOC TVET Summit on the theme of “Access to and Inclusion in TVET in Africa Through New ICT-based Solutions”. Held in Nairobi in May 2007, the summit was co-organised by COL and the UNEVOC Centre for TVET.

At the request of the Ministry of Education and Youth, COL is collaborating with Ghana to train TVET teachers in Seychelles using open and distance learning (ODL). The first Curriculum Review Workshop for the Seychelles Institute of Technology took place in May 2008 in Seychelles. It was organised by COL with a consultant from the University of Education, Winneba, Ghana.

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

Seychelles 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 the Ministry of Education and Youth, the Ministry of Health and Social Services, the Seychelles Maritime Training Centre, the Seychelles Fishing Authority and the Seychelles Institute of Technology attended all six training and course development workshops that took place.

Seychelles is contributing to the development of a transnational qualifications framework. Seychelles has submitted information on its national qualifications framework for analysis and participated in the officials meeting in Singapore.

The Interlocutor for Seychelles, from the Ministry of Education and Youth also attended another key VUSSC meeting, when the Ministry Interlocutors met in London in July 2008.

## **Transnational programmes**

One staff member of the World Health Organisation (WHO) based in Seychelles was trained in Writing Effectively through a tutor-mediated eLearning COL course.

## **OTHER ACTIVITIES**

### **Pan-Commonwealth Forum**

A delegate from the Ministry of Education and Youth attended COL's Fourth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning in Ocho Rios, Jamaica from 30 October to 3 November 2006 as well as the Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning in London in July 2008.

### **Regional Focal Points meeting**

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

## **LOOKING FORWARD**

In 2009-2012, Seychelles will continue to support the RPL initiative, participating in the committee. The country also has the opportunity to continue its full involvement in the VUSSC. COL looks forward to further working with our partners in the expansion of tertiary education following the National Consultative Forum held in 2008.



# SOUTH AFRICA

**COL Focal Point: Mrs. Trudi van Wyk, Department of Education (current)**

## BACKGROUND

South Africa is a major donor to COL and has a seat on the Board of Governors currently held by Ms. Jenny Glennie, Executive Director of the South African Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE). She is also a member of the Executive Committee and Performance Sub-Committee and chairs the Audit Committee. COL's Director of Information Technology and Knowledge Management, Mr. Paul West, is a South African national.

South Africa is a key partner to COL in Africa and sees its contribution to COL as an investment in the development of the SADC countries in particular. It is a provider of expertise for the region as well as an active participant in COL activities. Professor Barney Pityana, Principal of the University of South Africa (UNISA), was a keynote speaker at the Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning held in London in 2008. Consultants from SAIDE, the University of Pretoria and the Mindset Network are engaged regularly for quality assurance, learner support and developing digital content and research. The Mindset Network has also been contracted to assist the Namibian College of Open Learning with the development of strategy. The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) has played a critical facilitating role in the development of a transnational qualifications framework (TQF) for VUSSC.

## SUMMARY

COL works in South Africa in all three of its programme sectors. In the Education Sector, COL provides material and capacity-building support for assuring quality in higher education and teacher education programmes and institutions. In 2007, COL conducted a trial quality audit at the request of UNISA which was very satisfied with the results. In the Learning for Livelihoods sector, the focus was on literacy and skills development for youth, particularly girls, and the possible extension of COL's Lifelong Learning for Farmers programme is being explored with South African partners. Without the expertise brought to the process by the South African Qualifications Authority, the VUSSC would have found it much more difficult to develop the TQF that is key to its objective of course sharing. Work in the Human Environment sector relates to media and health and continues the work already initiated in the previous triennium 2003-2006.

COL's Knowledge Management service is available to South African institutions and individuals. COL has carried out capacity building in open and distance learning (ODL) and information and communication technologies (ICTs)

either directly with South African institutions or through the Southern African Development Community – Centre for Distance Education (SADC-CDE) facility located in Botswana. COL has supported conferences organised by distance education associations such as the Distance Education Association of Southern Africa (DEASA), the African Council for Distance Education and the National Association of Distance Education Organisations of South Africa. South African expertise in ODL and ICTs is being used in other developing Commonwealth countries and, importantly, for the development of the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC). Research in ICTs in education in Africa included South Africa as one of the countries in the survey.

## EDUCATION

### Quality assurance

Seven international experts including one from South Africa took part in a workshop to critically review the *Quality Assurance for Teacher Education and Development Toolkit*. The workshop was held in December 2006 in India by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council of India and COL.

### Open/alternative schooling

South Africa is a member of DEASA and COL has been working with this organisation to build its research capacity so as to improve the quality and status of ODL in the region. COL also researched the use of mobile technologies with educational institutions in South Africa as well as Uganda and the UK, in its efforts to develop sustainable models for mLearning (mobile learning).

The Mindset Network hosted a workshop on Developing Digital Content in Johannesburg in September 2007. Part of COL's initiative to strengthen the capacity of open schools, the workshop objectives were to share experiences among participants about digital content development and to develop skills in development and production. Twelve participants from South Africa's Mindset Network took part in the workshop.

SAIDE hosted a Quality Assurance workshop in October 2008 with participants from across the region.

COL is assisting in the development of partnerships to facilitate collaboration and increase access to quality education through a project on twinning of secondary schools in the UK with secondary schools in South Africa. The BBC and the Open Learning Systems Education Trust (OLSET) are COL's partners in this initiative.

### Higher education

COL led a trial audit exercise to prepare UNISA for the institutional audit that was conducted in 2008 by the Higher Education Quality Committee of the Council on Higher Education. The report of the trial audit was published in August 2007. UNISA staff reported that they found the trial audit very useful.

The Certificate Course for Distance Education Practitioners created by the Institute of Continuing Education at UNISA in collaboration with the South African Committee for Higher Education Distance Education Training Unit provides a basic introduction for all staff involved in or about to become involved in ODL. COL conducted an evaluation of the program to determine its effectiveness which was very positive.

COL is supporting the development of expertise in ODL and ICTs at the Botswana College of Open and Distance Learning (BOCODOL) as a resource for the Southern African region. As a result, COL supported the African Access

to Knowledge Alliance Trust (AAKAT) through BOCODOL, to host the Conference on Open Access in Southern Africa Regional Universities Association in November 2007 in Botswana. COL sponsored two delegates from South Africa to attend the conference, from the University of Pretoria and Witswaterstrand University.

## **ELearning for education sector development**

An educational practitioner from South Africa participated in a two-day workshop in Nairobi in November 2006. The workshop was organised by COL and the Free/Libre and Open Source Software for Education (FLOSS4Edu) initiative to discuss the role of free and open educational resources (OERs) in the East African Region. The workshop also focussed on identifying innovative and creative ways for partnerships to build OERs as a direct input in the provision of lifelong learning and alternative education for all. The workshop discussed establishing a content development group to spearhead the development of free educational resources in Africa and several content production and dissemination technologies were demonstrated.

As part of the major pan-Commonwealth initiative, Learning4Content, over 40 delegates from South Africa participated in online workshops.

Advanced learners from South Africa were among those from several African countries to participate in an online pilot of the Practitioners Research and Evaluation Skills Training (PREST) programme. The pilot introduced concepts of research and evaluation to learners within their own contexts. On completion of the online course, learners produced comprehensive draft research proposals that they could submit to their own institutions or to funding agencies to support their research projects. Learners demonstrated a critical approach to conducting research in terms of its importance in the planning stages of ODL implementation and how it can impact decision-making within their institutions.

## **LEARNING FOR LIVELIHOODS**

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

The South African Adult and Basic Education and Training sector and the Mauritius Qualifications Authority (MQA) are working with COL in designing a mechanism on recognition of prior learning (RPL) in TVET to be shared with other institutions in Africa. The Director of the National Literacy Campaign was contracted to assist. Two workshops took place in Mauritius in 2007 and 2008. A further workshop in Lusaka, Zambia, in July 2008 was attended by a delegate from UNISA. South Africa shared with participants at the workshop its experiences of the national literacy campaign, launched earlier in 2008, and the RPL policy which was developed under its Professional Accreditation Board.

The Commonwealth Computer Navigator's Certificate is an international collaboration to develop a basic skills qualification in ICTs using open source software. South Africa is a founding module developer and has assisted COL in the educational design and development of the materials based on the Open International Computer Driving Licence. Seven content developers including one from South Africa attended a review meeting in Vancouver in June 2007. They reviewed the status of local certification of the programme, collaboratively identified areas of improvement potential in the course materials, designed an assessment strategy for the course, identified and specified potential multimedia support resources and the student support requirements for the course.

COL organised a conference on Livelihood Initiatives in Sub-Saharan Africa in Accra in November 2008, attended by a delegate from South Africa. The theme was "Think Globally; Act Locally". The delegate took part in a session

on RPL resulting in a strategic plan for 2009-2012. The participant was also in a working group on ODL course materials development for community health nursing, drawing up a plan of action for 2009-2012 and contributed to the roundtable session on short- and long-term training and upgrading of TVET teachers using ODL. The conference participants created the West African TVET (WATVET), a regional TVET association.

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

South Africa hosted the 4<sup>th</sup> Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) General Assembly and African Agricultural Science Week at Sandton, Johannesburg, South Africa in June 2007. The main theme of the Assembly was “Innovation to transform agriculture for improved livelihoods and development in Africa”. More than 670 delegates representing stakeholders in agriculture in the public and private sectors and the donor community attended the Assembly, including 30 COL-sponsored participants from 11 Commonwealth countries. COL and FARA also organised side events prior to the General Assembly including one on “Technology-Mediated Open and Distance Education (Tech-MODE) for agriculture education and livelihoods in Africa” and another on “Lifelong learning for Farmers and Tech-MODE: A paradigm shift in extension for Africa”.

### **Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth**

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) has supported COL and VUSSC in the drafting of a concept document for a transnational qualifications framework (TQF). A delegate from SAQA attended the workshop on professional development of educators in Singapore in March 2007, assisting in designing ways that the SAQA could help VUSSC create a TQF for all VUSSC countries. In February 2008, two representatives from SAQA attended the TQF meeting in Singapore.

The Shuttleworth Foundation hosted a meeting on OERs in Cape Town in September 2007 which was attended by COL and VUSSC. The Cape Town Declaration on Open Education that was released in January 2008 is a compromise document that attempts to take into account a wide range of views in the field of OERs. COL’s statement on this Declaration is available at [www.col.org/capetowndeclaration](http://www.col.org/capetowndeclaration).

A representative from SAQA also attended the meeting of Interlocutors for VUSSC in London in July 2008.

### **Transnational programmes**

COL was engaged by the World Bank to develop a distance learning CD for editors and publishers in Sub-Saharan Africa to enhance their professional skills in textbook production. A faculty member at UNISA was the content developer for this course. The interactive, self-contained CD-ROM was completed in June 2007. The World Bank’s Office of the Publisher plans to deliver the course through its African Publishers’ Network after testing it with 15 pilot takers.

Eight staff members of the International Labour Organisation, the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the World Bank based in South Africa were trained in Writing Effectively through a tutor-mediated eLearning COL course. One staff member from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was trained in the online Operational Data Management Learning Programme (ODMLP) in 2008.

## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

### Health, welfare and community development

As part of its Media Empowerment programme, COL has been supporting the Valley Trust in combating HIV/AIDS stigma, helping the Trust to enlarge its capacity to produce video content by contributing equipment and providing training. Media content production has been strongly integrated into the operations of the Trust, primarily in communicating their activities, in particular to donors. The degree of integration is an important achievement and a valuable lesson in communicating development in areas like HIV/AIDS. The Trust has also been using their media unit for participatory video programmes in which they work directly with community groups to produce their own content and then share it with other groups.

Five delegates attended the LearnShare, HIV/AIDS in Africa Workshop for Community Media in April 2009.

### Educational use of mass media and ICTs

COL has continued to support multimedia delivery by OLSET of primary education materials and health education. COL has helped OLSET to enlarge its capacity to produce video content by contributing equipment and providing content. Video production has added value to OLSET's core work of using radio to support English-language learning at the primary school level. Video has also been used to communicate with stakeholders, especially donors, to help them visualise OLSET's approach of using radio to model and use new curricula. OLSET rates these contributions highly, especially for organisational communications.

## 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 18 participants from South Africa. COL also sponsored three delegates, from UNISA, Worldwide Resources Training Centre and the University of Pretoria. One of the recipients of the Awards of Excellence for Distance Education Materials, Category A: *print or other "low-end" media materials as part of a distance education course/programme* was the Advanced Certificate in Education in the Field of Learners with Special Educational Needs submitted by the School of Education, University of Witwaterstrand, South Africa.

The Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning, held in London in July 2008, was attended by 11 delegates from South Africa as well as 15 sponsored by COL, from the Mindset Network, Neil Butcher and Associates, the University of Pretoria, TSiBA Education, SAQA, the Faculty of Adult Basic Education and Training Institute, Worldwide Resources Training Centre, OLSET, University of Cape Town, AAKAT and UNISA. Professor Barney Pityana, Vice-Chancellor, UNISA was named Honorary Fellow of COL at the Forum and was a keynote speaker.

### 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 South Africa.

## LOOKING FORWARD

In 2009-2012, South Africa will continue to be a major resource for the region, providing leadership and expertise and contributing to COL's work both regionally and internationally. In one such collaboration, COL and SAQA will work together to formalise ways in which the Authority can add value to VUSSC initiatives and the TQF development. COL appreciates the consistent quality of the consultancy work that it commissions from South African individuals and organisations and understands that South Africa wants its contribution to COL to benefit the SADC region in particular and Africa generally.



# SWAZILAND

**COL Focal Point: Mr. Sibusiso Mkhonta, Ministry of Education (current)**

## BACKGROUND

Swaziland is a small state of the Commonwealth and a regular contributor to COL's budget. The country is a member of the Distance Education Association of Southern Africa (DEASA).

## SUMMARY

COL's work in Swaziland is in all three sectors: Education, Learning for Livelihoods and the Human Environment. In education, COL's work is predominantly on building regional capacity in open and distance learning (ODL) as well as eLearning, which includes invitations and COL support for participating in Commonwealth communities dedicated to the development of free content and capacity building. In Learning for Livelihoods, COL also supports Swaziland in the development of basic skills in information and communication technologies (ICTs). Working with the World Health Organization (WHO), Ministries of Health and NGOs, COL has continued support of its health media empowerment initiative in Swaziland.

## EDUCATION

### **Open/alternative schooling**

Swaziland 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.

COL's support for open schools has given staff members from Swaziland training in learner support and quality assurance in the context of developing a quality assurance toolkit for open schools.

### **Higher education**

COL has engaged a consultant to review the current systems and develop strategies for improving provision and management of distance learning courses at the University of Swaziland.

## **ELearning for education sector development**

COL is supporting the activities of the South African Development Community – Centre for Distance Education (SADC-CDE), located in Botswana, which are designed to build and strengthen regional capacity in ODL and the use of ICTs. Swaziland is benefiting from the activities that SADC-CDE is organising and managing for practitioners and institutions within the region.

## **LEARNING FOR LIVELIHOODS**

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

COL and the Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA) co-sponsored a policy awareness seminar on integrating ICTs and eLearning into technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Freetown, Sierra Leone in May 2007. A representative from Swaziland was among those from 120 TVET institutions across 17 African countries. The delegates gained valuable information about the potential of using ODL to improve livelihoods.

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

Swaziland is an active member of VUSSC. During 2006-2009, activities have included the capacity building and 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 Swaziland attended five of the six training and course development workshops that took place, from the University of Swaziland, the Ministry of Education and the Vocational and Commercial Training Institute. The workshop team leader for the second workshop, in Singapore in March 2007, was from Swaziland.

A delegate from the Ministry of Education participated in the officials meeting for a transnational qualifications framework in Singapore.

The Interlocutor for Swaziland, from the Institute of Distance Education at the University of Swaziland attended another key VUSSC meeting, when the Ministry Interlocutors met in London in July 2008.

## **HUMAN ENVIRONMENT**

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

COL, in partnership with WHO, has continued to support the efforts of The AIDS Information and Support Centre (TASC) in delivering AIDS/HIV prevention and stigma-based information to the general public. COL provided a Canadian intern, new equipment and the supporting technology training to TASC in January 2007.

## 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 four participants from the University of Swaziland including three sponsored by COL.

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

### **Regional Focal Points meeting**

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

## LOOKING FORWARD

In 2009-2012, Swaziland will continue to benefit from COL initiatives both in-country and regionally. The results of the consultancy on distance learning at the University of Swaziland will provide the groundwork for clear strategies for COL to support the University's development in ODL. COL looks forward to Swaziland's continuing participation in the activities of VUSSC and its contribution to the achievement of key initiatives.



# TANZANIA

**COL Focal Point: Mrs. Lambertha H. Mahai, Institute of Adult Education (current)**

## BACKGROUND

Tanzania has had a long association with COL and has been a regular contributor to COL's budget since 2003. The country has made economic progress in recent years and has advanced strongly towards universal primary education even if significant challenges remain. It has been an active participant in COL activities, particularly through the Open University of Tanzania (OUT) which was established in 1992.

## SUMMARY

In 2006-2009, the major focus of COL's assistance to Tanzania has been quality assurance, teacher development and the expansion of open schooling in support of the Secondary Education Development Plan. This work has included advocacy, curriculum development and capacity building, carried out in association with the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training and the Institute for Adult Education (IAE). COL is also assisting Tanzanian institutions such as OUT, the Tanzanian Universities Commission and other universities and colleges in the areas of teacher education, eLearning, and administrative staff development.

During this period there has been notable progress in the development and use of media materials produced by the Health Media Unit that COL helped to establish in the Christian Social Services Commission (CSSC). COL has initiated new activities in the area of Learning for Livelihoods and begun to explore how COL's Lifelong Learning for Farmers programme might contribute to the Agricultural Sector Development Strategy within the national development plan.

## EDUCATION

### Quality assurance

COL and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) jointly presented a workshop on quality assurance in teacher education for a group of teacher educators at the Third Global Forum on International Quality Assurance, Accreditation and the Recognition of Qualifications, held in Dar es Salaam in

September 2007. COL presented the *Quality Assurance for Teacher Education and Development Toolkit* developed by 20 countries of Sub-Saharan Africa through COL's strategy for south-south cooperation.

A UNESCO-COL Chair in open and distance learning (ODL) has been established at OUT.

## **Teacher development**

COL has assisted OUT in capacity building, developing courses for primary teacher education, using materials developed by the Teacher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa consortium of which COL is a partner.

## **Open/alternative schooling**

COL organised a workshop on the Management of Open and Distance Learning for 23 participants, mainly from IAE, in March 2007. The workshop introduced participants to the fundamentals of ODL, student support services in ODL, the planning and management of distance education in developing countries, materials design and development and how to prepare training sessions.

In its efforts to develop and promote models which are sustainable, COL identified the cost 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. Two delegates from Tanzania attended the workshop which was held in August 2007 in Botswana.

COL sponsored two participants from IAE to a workshop on Developing Digital Content hosted by the Mindset Network in Johannesburg in September 2007.

Tanzania 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 Institute of Adult Education 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 information and communication technologies (ICTs).

COL's support for open schools has given staff members from Tanzania training in learner support and quality assurance in the context of developing a quality assurance toolkit for open schools.

## **Higher education**

COL is assisting in the professional development of OUT administrative staff and staff at the Tanzanian Commission for Universities. As part of this support, an eLearning workshop was facilitated by the Regional Training and Research Institute for Distance and Open Learning (RETRIDOL) in November 2008 in Begamoyo.

COL also provided assistance to the Tanzanian Commission for Universities in conducting a leadership seminar for senior university executives from Tanzania and four other countries in Dar es Salaam in 2008.

## **ELearning for education sector development**

COL is supporting the activities of the South African Development Community – Centre for Distance Education (SADC-CDE), located in Botswana, which are designed to build and strengthen regional capacity in ODL and the use of ICTs. Tanzania is benefiting from the activities that SADC-CDE is organising and managing for practitioners and institutions within the Southern African region.

An educational practitioner from Tanzania participated in a two-day workshop in Nairobi in November 2006. The workshop was organised by COL and the Free/Libre and Open Source Software for Education (FLOSS4Edu) initiative to discuss the role of free and open educational resources (OERs) in the East African Region. The workshop also focussed on identifying innovative and creative ways for partnerships to build OERs as a direct input in the provision of lifelong learning and alternative education for all. The workshop discussed establishing a content development group to spearhead the development of free educational resources in Africa and several content production and dissemination technologies were demonstrated.

## **LEARNING FOR LIVELIHOODS**

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

COL-sponsored participants from Tanzania attended the 4<sup>th</sup> Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) General Assembly and African Agricultural Science Week, held at Sandton, Johannesburg, South Africa in June 2007. The main theme of the Assembly was “Innovation to transform agriculture for improved livelihoods and development in Africa”. More than 670 delegates representing stakeholders in agriculture in the public and private sectors and the donor community attended the Assembly, including 30 COL-sponsored participants from 11 Commonwealth countries.

COL and FARA organised side events prior to the General Assembly. The first side event provided an opportunity to promote ODL/ICTs: “Technology-Mediated Open and Distance Education (Tech-MODE) for agriculture education and livelihoods in Africa”. COL facilitated the development of country case studies on Tech-MODE from eight countries including Tanzania.

The report, *Technology-Mediated Open and Distance Education (Tech-MODE) for Agricultural Education and Improved Livelihoods in sub-Saharan Africa – Synthesis of Eight Country Studies* and the country paper, *Status, Opportunities, Potential and Challenges of Technology-Mediated Open and Distance Education (Tech-MODE) for Agricultural Education and Improved Livelihoods – A case study of Tanzania* were distributed in September 2008.

### **Transnational programmes**

Fourteen staff members of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Health Organisation (WHO) based in Tanzania were trained in Writing Effectively through a tutor-mediated eLearning COL course.

## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

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

COL has continued to support the Health Media Unit created with CSSC in partnership with WHO in 2005 to deliver health information about HIV/AIDS stigma and prevention. COL completed an assessment visit to CSSC and WHO in October 2007.

Three delegates attended the LearnShare, HIV/AIDS in Africa workshop for Community Media in April 2009.

### **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. The Director of the Tanzania Global Development Learning Centre attended the meeting.

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

In partnership with UNESCO, COL supported the Media Institute of Southern Africa – Tanzania Office, the Community Media Association and the Ministry of Communication, Science and Technology in the design of a capacity building approach, the development of related OERs, and the organisation of a pilot workshop at Radio Sengerema involving over five community radio, media and telecentre groups from Tanzania. The results were actively shared as an open content project among COL's international community media peer group.

## 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 OUT, sponsored by COL.

The Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning, held in London in July 2008, was attended by six delegates from OUT, the National Council for Technical Education, GlobalHort and the University of Dar-es-Salaam. COL also sponsored two further delegates from OUT.

### **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 Tanzania.

## LOOKING FORWARD

In 2009-2012, COL will work with Tanzania to support further development of open schooling in the country. COL will also seek to partner further with OUT for activities in Tanzania, supporting capacity and expertise at the University, as well as other Tanzanian institutions. COL looks forward to Tanzania's continuing contribution to OERs development through the FLOSS4Edu and L4C initiatives and Tanzania will have opportunity to benefit from COL activities in the region, both directly and through SADC-CDE. COL will work with UNESCO to strengthen the Chair at OUT.



# ZAMBIA

**COL Focal Point: Mr. Victor Muyatwa, Ministry of Education (current)**

## BACKGROUND

Zambia is a proponent of distance education and an active participant in COL's activities. The country is a regular contributor to COL's budget. With an established open university and a Directorate of Distance Education, Zambia is also able to provide expertise and experience in the region. Rates of primary education and literacy are improving but huge potential remains to utilise open and distance learning (ODL) and information and communication technologies (ICTs) for education in the country. Vocational skill development is a major focus for agriculture, mining and other industries.

## SUMMARY

In 2006-2009, COL has been involved in providing professional and technical support to education and training in all three sectors: Education, Learning for Livelihoods and Human Environment.

The focus of COL's work in Zambia is the Education sector with considerable actions in the areas of capacity building and quality assurance in teacher education as well as strengthening open schooling approaches in the country. COL continues to work in Zambia as a member of the Teacher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa (TESSA) consortium and the University of Zambia is involved in TESSA course material development, formulating ODL and ICTs in an integrated national education policy with a focus on higher education. Zambia's ODL expertise has been used to support related activities, especially in Southern Africa.

In other sectors, training courses for Caregivers to Orphans and Children have been adapted for Zambia and COL, in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO), focusing on a health-based activity within the country.

## EDUCATION

### Quality assurance

In 2005, COL provided consultancy on capacity building for enhancing the quality of teacher education in colleges in Zambia. The Ministry of Education has now begun implementation of the plan.

Seven international experts including one from Zambia took part in a workshop to critically review the *Quality Assurance for Teacher Education and Development Toolkit*. The workshop was held in December 2006 in India by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council, India and COL.

## **Teacher development**

COL supported five participants from Sub-Saharan Africa to attend the Distance Education and Teachers' Training in Africa conference in Uganda in August 2007.

## **Open/alternative schooling**

In its efforts to develop and promote models which are sustainable, COL identified cost 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 Zambia attended the workshop which was held in August 2007 in Botswana.

COL sponsored two participants from the Directorate of Distance Education and Zambia College of Open and Distance Education to a workshop on Developing Digital Content hosted by the Mindset Network in Johannesburg in September 2007.

Zambia 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 Ministry of Education 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 Zambia receiving training in learner support and also in quality assurance as a step towards developing a quality assurance toolkit for the schools.

## **E-Learning for Education Sector Development**

COL is providing funding support for activities of the Southern African Development Community Centre for Distance Education (SADC-CDE), located at Botswana College of Open and Distance Learning (BOCODOL), Botswana. SADC-CDE and Indira Gandhi National Open University, India, signed a Memorandum of Agreement. One of the four institutions included is the Department of Open and Distance Education, Zambia. Forty participants from the four countries involved have signed up.

As part of the major pan-Commonwealth initiative, Learning4Content (L4C), two face-to-face workshops have been held in Zambia, one in June and one in September 2008. Over 60 participants attended the two events. The project manager of the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP) in Zambia is in the process of training Zambian institutions on wiki skills under the L4C programme.

## LEARNING FOR LIVELIHOODS

### Learning and skills for livelihoods

COL and the Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA) co-sponsored a policy awareness seminar on integrating ICTs and eLearning into technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Freetown, Sierra Leone in May 2007. A representative from Zambia was among those from 120 TVET institutions across 17 African countries. The delegates gained valuable information about the potential of using ODL to improve livelihoods.

Zambia is one of four countries taking the lead on a COL initiative to encourage TVET institutions to develop ODL policy. Participants from the Technical and Vocational Teachers' College, Zambia and two other African Polytechnics attended a COL-CAPA conference entitled, "Promoting Innovation in TVET through Public-Private Partnership" to edit a first draft of the ODL policy in TVET, at Makerere University, Kampala in May 2008.

As part of COL's initiative for recognition of prior learning (RPL) in TVET, a workshop was held in Lusaka in July 2008 to adopt the report on the pilot prepared by the Mauritius Qualifications Authority. The workshop was attended by 14 delegates from Zambia including the Senior Tourism Development Officer; the Principal, Technical Vocational Training College; the Director, Ministry of Science, Technical and Vocational Training; and representatives from the Technical Educational Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority and the Hotel and Tourism Training Institute Trust.

### National/international community development

COL-sponsored participants from Zambia attended the 4<sup>th</sup> Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) General Assembly and African Agricultural Science Week, held at Sandton, Johannesburg, South Africa in June 2007. The main theme of the Assembly was "Innovation to transform agriculture for improved livelihoods and development in Africa". More than 670 delegates representing stakeholders in agriculture in the public and private sectors and the donor community attended the Assembly, including 30 COL-sponsored participants from 11 Commonwealth countries.

COL and FARA organised side events prior to the General Assembly. The first side event provided an opportunity to promote ODL/ICTs: "Technology-Mediated Open and Distance Education (Tech-MODE) for agriculture education and livelihoods in Africa". COL facilitated the development of country case studies on Tech-MODE from eight countries including Zambia.

The report, *Technology-Mediated Open and Distance Education (Tech-MODE) for Agricultural Education and Improved Livelihoods in sub-Saharan Africa – Synthesis of Eight Country Studies* and the country paper, *Introduction and Adoption of Technology-Mediated Open and Distance Education (Tech-MODE) in Agricultural Education and Training in Africa: A case study of Zambia* were distributed in September 2008.

### Transnational programmes

Eleven staff members of the International Labour Organization (ILO), World Bank, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) and Red Crescent Societies were trained in Writing Effectively through a tutor-mediated eLearning COL course. Two staff members from UNHCR were trained in the online Operational Data Management Learning Programme (ODMLP) in 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. The Vice-Chancellor of the Zambian Open University attended the meeting.

COL has partnered with In-Service Training Trust, an organisation that provides training to NGOs, to develop ODL materials on local organisation strengthening, collaborating with learning centers, church community radio centres and NGOs.

## 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 participants from Zambia including one from ComSec and five sponsored by COL, from In-Service Training Trust of Zambia, the University of Zambia and the Ministry of Education.

The Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning, held in London in July 2008, was attended by five delegates from Zambia, including one from CYP (African Regional Office), and four sponsored by COL, from the In-Service Training Trust of Zambia, the University of Zambia, the Educational Broadcasting of the Directorate of Distance Education and the Ministry of Education.

### Other events

The Vice-President was the guest speaker at the Commonwealth Heads of Mission Luncheon in October 2007, organised by the High Commission of Zambia, Ottawa, Canada.

## LOOKING FORWARD

In 2009-2012, the focus of COL's work in Zambia will continue to be in the Education sector, with ongoing support for open schooling as well as teacher development and quality assurance. Participation in the L4C programme training has been excellent in Zambia and the country will be able to contribute considerably to the development of content through this initiative. Further exploration of the application of ODL and ICTs for the benefit of agricultural livelihoods in the country will take place during this time.

As part of its collaboration with TESSA, COL will support the dissemination of the TESSA open education resources (OERs) in Zambia. The aim is to enable the primary school teachers and teacher educators to use the OERs to support and enrich their classroom practices in the subjects, English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and Life Skills.