

EXCERPTS FROM:

COL in the Commonwealth

2006–2009 Country Reports

FOR: UGANDA

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
clearning skills development knowledge
partnerships effective models capacity odl
accessibility quality assurance accountability students
technology communities effective indicators
targets knowledge trusts small states materials applications
impact values policy opportunity innovation
innovation commonwealth development learning for farmers
teacher training access region commonwealth paradigm shift
universities governments as media trust access
quality school quality scopes scale
learning focus on ve cou impact
synergies ble. tions
innovation
comm
teach
streng
synergi
wealth
trainin
know
impac
institu
diversit
governmen
development goal
open and distance learning
knowledge trusts regions

WWW.COL.ORG/REPORTING



COMMONWEALTH of LEARNING

Learning for Development

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD	5
PAN-COMMONWEALTH INITIATIVES.....	7
AFRICA AND THE MEDITERRANEAN	13
UGANDA.....	89

FOREWORD

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sir John Daniel
President and Chief Executive Officer
Commonwealth of Learning

PAN-COMMONWEALTH INITIATIVES



BACKGROUND

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

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

QUALITY ASSURANCE IN EDUCATION

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

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

OPEN SCHOOLS

COL encourages the application of open and distance learning (ODL) to increase access to primary and secondary schooling. In support of this, two publications, *Perspective Series on Open Schools – Open Schools for the 21st*

Century and Handbook for Managers of Open Schools have been completed with contributions from chapter authors across the Commonwealth. Both publications will be distributed as a resource to policymakers. Other resources which have been developed include the *Evaluation Study on Open Schools* and the *Cost and Financing of Open Schools* as well as a *Learner Support Guide for Open Schools*.

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

ELEARNING FOR EDUCATION SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The VUSSC is a creation of the participating countries and their existing tertiary institutions. It is a collective mechanism for people to develop expertise in online collaboration, eLearning and information and communication technologies (ICTs). It also provides an opportunity for them to produce, adapt and deploy courses and learning materials on selected subjects identified by country Interlocutors and stakeholders.

The model that has emerged is a three-week training and course development workshop at which subject specialists from a subset of the participating states strengthen their information technology (IT) skills and begin to develop course material collaboratively online. Six workshops were held during this planning period:

1. Entrepreneurship and Tourism, hosted in Mauritius in August 2006.
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 150th anniversary of the establishment of its External Degrees Programme. PCF5 brought together practitioners, researchers, planners and policy makers in the fields of ODL and development to explore the contribution of ODL to international development goals. Over 700 participants from over 70 countries, the majority from the developing Commonwealth, took advantage of opportunities to share experience and expertise, and to contribute to future policy and provision.

COL NEWS SERVICE & NEWSLETTER

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

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

COPYRIGHT FOR EDUCATORS AND ADMINISTRATORS

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



Africa and the Mediterranean

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



REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

BACKGROUND

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

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

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

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

TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

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

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

SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY – CENTRE FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION (SADC-CDE)

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

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

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

FREE/LIBRE AND OPEN SOURCE SOFTWARE FOR EDUCATION INITIATIVE

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

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

REGIONAL TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET) SUMMIT

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

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

ICTs IN EDUCATION IN AFRICA SURVEY

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

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

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

REGIONAL FOCAL POINTS MEETING

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

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

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

REGIONAL BROCHURES

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



UGANDA

COL Focal Point: Mrs. Elizabeth K.M. Gabona, Ministry of Education and Sports (current)

BACKGROUND

Uganda is a regular contributor to COL's budget and an active participant in COL's activities. The higher education system in Uganda is one of the oldest in East Africa, with Makerere University providing education to the entire region. However there is great potential for the further development of open and distance learning (ODL) and the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) for education in the country. Economic growth has been significant in the past decade and Uganda has won praise for its progress in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Expanding education and vocational training is essential to better prepare people to build and sustain the economy.

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 major focus of COL's assistance to Uganda is in the Education sector with considerable actions taken towards formulating ODL and ICTs in an integrated national education policy with a focus on higher education. Work involves the area of developing capacity for initiating open schooling approaches for secondary and vocational education and also quality assurance in teacher education. COL continues to work in Uganda as member of the Teacher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa (TESSA) consortium. The Makerere University is involved in TESSA course material development. Ugandan expertise in ODL is used to run orientation workshops and assist with the adaptation of ODL materials for the local context in Malawi and Tanzania.

During this period, COL also initiated work in the area of using media for health.

EDUCATION

Quality assurance

Seven international experts including one from Uganda took part in a workshop to critically review the pan-Commonwealth publication, *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.

The *Quality Assurance for Teacher Education and Development Toolkit* was launched in December 2007. Makerere University has adapted the *Quality Indicators for Teacher Education*, included in the Toolkit, for quality assurance at the University.

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

COL engaged two staff from Uganda, from Kyambogo University (KYU) and the Shimoni Primary Teachers' College Kampala, to conduct Trainers' workshops in Malawi and Tanzania in March 2007. The workshops on the Management of ODL 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. Malawi and Tanzania hope to adapt and contextualise the training materials and to register tutors for the distance education professional course offered by KYU.

COL has commissioned a study on the use of Mobile Technology and Makerere University is part of this study.

Higher education

COL is assisting Uganda in the development of a national ODL policy framework and implementation action plan for Uganda. As part of this, COL supported a National Consultative Forum on ODL, "Opening New Frontiers for Equity and Quality Education through Open and Distance Learning", held in Kampala in December 2006. The Forum brought together key stakeholders from ministries, educational institutions and representatives of civil society to examine the potential of ODL to reach out to all levels of education. It explored ways in which distance education methodologies can serve to fulfill the development needs of Uganda and established a consensus on the broad framework for a national policy on ODL. It attracted 99 participants from different ministries, the 13 universities (four public and nine private) and civil society organisations and featured presentations and group discussions. The Vice-President of COL gave two presentations at the Forum, "Open and Distance Learning: Challenges and Innovations" and "Quality Assurance in Distance Education".

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 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 in November 2007 in Botswana. COL sponsored two delegates from Uganda to attend the conference, including one from the National Book Trust.

COL is supporting the creation of a National Open University in Uganda. COL has sent materials to the Commissioner of Higher Education to assist in the administration and planning of the University.

ELearning for education sector development

An educational practitioner from Uganda 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, Uganda hosted three face-to-face workshops from December 2008 to February 2009 and more than ten participants from Uganda have taken part in online workshops.

Advanced learners from Uganda 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

Learning and skills for livelihoods

Makerere University, Kampala, was host to a joint COL and Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA) conference held in May 2008 and entitled, “Promoting Innovation in TVET through Public-Private Partnership”. The conference objective was to edit a first draft of the ODL policy in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and was attended by participants from three African Polytechnics from Ghana, Kenya and Zambia.

COL is also assisting Makerere University School of Business to develop an ODL policy for TVET.

Rural and peri-urban community development

COL is working with the Ministry of Education, Makerere University, the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO) and the National Agricultural Advisory Services to explore their interests in introducing and adapting Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F) concepts and greater use of ODL and ICTs for rural community development. Makerere University organised a one-day visioning exercise aimed at developing an innovation system for promoting learning using ICTs with a focus on organic farming. The meeting was attended by a range of public, private and NGO groups involved in agricultural development. Makerere University plans to hold further consultations to develop a proposal along the lines of L3F. COL sponsored a delegate from NARO and one from

Makerere University to participate in the meetings and site visits related to L3F in India and Sri Lanka, respectively. They are planning to incorporate the concepts for their community development initiatives in Uganda.

National/international community development

COL-sponsored participants from Uganda attended the 4th 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 Uganda.

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 and Potential of Technology-Mediated Open and Distance Education (Tech-MODE) for Agricultural Education in Uganda* were distributed in September 2008.

Makerere University, its partners and COL developed the Electronic Uganda National Agricultural Innovation System (eUNAIS) to strengthen the use of ICTs in the agriculture sector in Uganda. eUNAIS is a multi-stakeholder forum and a platform for members to share agriculture-related market information, participate in curriculum reform and to support grassroots extension workers and farmers to use decision support tools.

COL, in partnership with the Technical Centre for Rural and Agricultural Cooperation, Netherlands, and the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM), organised a training course, Web 2.0 Tools for Research Support and Networking in Africa, in Kampala, Uganda, in September 2008. Thirty five scientists from the RUFORUM member institutions in nine countries including Uganda attended the workshop to build capacity in the use of web 2.0 tools. It resulted in developing an online network of developers of OERs for agricultural training and research and the establishment of two online collaborative projects. Each RUFORUM partner institution agreed to hold at least two follow-up workshops in the use of web 2.0 tools.

Makerere University and four universities in Kenya are working with the International Centre for Development-oriented Research in Agriculture in the Netherlands for a project, Strengthening of University Capacity for Promoting, Facilitating and Teaching Rural Innovations Processes. COL is helping to build faculty capacity to develop open agricultural education resources as a contribution towards the project.

Transnational programmes

Six staff members of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Health Organisation and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies based in Uganda were trained in Writing Effectively through a tutor-mediated eLearning COL course. Four staff members from UNHCR were trained in the online Operational Data Management Learning Programme (ODMLP) in 2008.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

Health, welfare and community development

Two delegates attended the LearnShare, HIV/AIDS in Africa Workshop for Community Radio 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 Principal Gender Officer from the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development 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 six participants from Uganda, from the National Book Trust of Uganda, the Ministry of Education and Sports and Makerere University. COL also sponsored two participants from Makerere University.

The Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning, held in London in July 2008, was attended by eight delegates from Uganda, from the Ministry of Education and Sports, Makerere University, Ndegeya Primary Teachers College and the Government of Uganda. COL sponsored 10 participants from the National Library of Uganda, Makerere University, Mbarara University, Civil and Social Rights Awareness, Association of Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA) and East African Center for Open Source Software (EACOSS). The Right Honourable Professor Apolo R. Nsibambi, Prime Minister of Uganda, was one of the keynote speakers at the Forum. The Honourable Gabriel Opio, Minister of State for Higher Education was also present.

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 Uganda.

Other events

The President and Vice-President of COL attended the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Uganda in November 2007. They met with the Minister of Education, the Minister of State for Primary Education and the Minister of State for Higher Education together with the COL Focal Point for Uganda.

LOOKING FORWARD

The next planning period of 2009-2012 will see Uganda continue to work closely with COL in all three sectors. In Education, in particular, the groundwork has been laid for the planning of an open university in Uganda and during

this period COL will assist in formulating the national ODL policy framework and implementation action plan already in development.

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

In partnership with COL, Uganda will continue to develop capacity and expertise that can provide support locally to Tanzania and Malawi.