



SAMOA

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GUIDELINES FROM COMMONWEALTH OF LEARNING (COL)

1. Key challenges and opportunities (not more than 3 each) for 'learning for development' in your country
2. Status of distance education/elearning in your country
3. Identify (not more than 5) top priorities that you would like COL to take up during the next Three Year Plan 2012-15.

SAMOA

Key Challenges and Opportunities

- Development of infrastructures to enable use and access to the appropriate technology for Open and Distance Education (ODE)
- Building capacity for materials development and supporting students learning
- Development of an appropriate policy for ODE

Status of e learning in Samoa

Policies

- Samoa is yet to develop a policy for e learning. Reference to the need for ODE to enable TVET to be available to as wide a clientele base as possible is made in the *Samoa Strategic Policies and Plan 2006-2015*. In fact ODE or Distance and Flexible Learning (DFL) mode with policy support could include and broaden all levels of education in Samoa.
- The recently approved *Strategic Plan (2010-2020)* for the National University of Samoa (NUS) has also made a commitment to the development of DFL at NUS in order to increase access by all people of Samoa to the NUS courses and programmes.

Teacher Education

- Samoa recently launched its National Teacher Development Framework (NTDF) which brings together all policies to do with teacher education (pre-service and in service) as well as the professional standards for teachers and leadership teachers, the institutional framework for the registration, appraisal, quality assurance of teachers and for the

negotiating of salaries and conditions of work to enable fair and just remuneration. However, legislation to enforce the framework is being prepared.

- The use of ICT in education is a major part of pre service teacher education but much work remains to be done for in service and the professional development of teachers.

Infrastructure

- The Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture is committed to the development of School Net in primary as well as secondary schools in line with its commitment to improve the use of technology in education in the schools in the next five years.
- The NUS needs to improve its infrastructure particularly its band width to enable more effective online teaching, learning and connectivity with its students.
- Broadband and wireless internet connections are readily available in Samoa, however the costs need to be negotiated down to enable institutions, schools and all educational users to have access.
- Promoting partnerships in ICT is considered an advantage to share costs for affordability especially for those in rural areas.
- Issues of maintenance and sustainability are real.

Content

- Samoa has participated in the VUSSC enterprise since its inception.
- Academic and teaching staff members have contributed to course content for VUSSC courses and received training at each of the VUSSC Bootcamps. Samoa has been represented on each of the bootcamps. A total of nine (9) people mainly academic and teaching staff members have been team leaders in the boot camps and have gained the experience of developing materials and content on line. This expertise must now be utilized by Samoa through NUS.
- Content from VUSSC training workshops has been used to develop new courses and supplement existing courses. Skills and knowledge in the use of ICT – in developing courses as well as the collaborative approach involving the VUSSC members has strengthened the course development capabilities amongst a large number of staff members at NUS in different faculties. Content from the Agriculture Bootcamp in Maldives has been incorporated by the NUS participant/ team leader into an on campus Diploma of Agriculture Programme. This is currently further adapted into distance mode to be accessed by learners in the rural areas.
- COL supported Training in wiki educator for education personnel at NUS, the Ministry of Education, TVET institutions, schools and colleges has also supported the development of IT skills as well as knowledge in the use of Open Educational Resources as well as accessing and evaluating other available content on the net.

TOP PRIORITIES FOR 2012-2015 (NOT MORE THAN FIVE)

1. Development of appropriate ODL policy for Samoa.
2. Developing the infrastructures such as school net to reach all schools and securing sustainable connectivity
3. Building capacity to produce both online and offline materials which are affordable or free
4. Training teachers to develop supportive online materials at various levels.
5. Creating a support unit which can provide pedagogical as well as technical support to teachers using ICT in delivery of curriculum. Development of core modules and training for teacher use of ICTs for their use and improved learning for students learning.