



COMMONWEALTH OF LEARNING

Gender Update, June 2010

COL/BD/27-21

Progress Report

The Commonwealth of Learning recognises that women's empowerment and gender equality are central to its agenda of "learning for development". COL has adopted gender mainstreaming as an organisational strategy to ensure that gender equality is considered an integral part of all COL's policies and programmes.

In order to progress this, the following actions were taken during July 1, 2009 to April 30, 2010:

1. The Internal Gender Committee chaired by the Vice President with representation from all categories of COL staff, met every quarter to review and assess COL's progress in mainstreaming gender.
2. A half-day workshop on "Understanding and Integrating Gender" was conducted by Ian Pringle and Rebecca Kinakin for COL staff, in October.
3. A Gender Blog was initiated in November, 2009. It attracted 196 visits from Canada, USA, India, Germany and South Africa. Discussions centred on gender roles, sexuality, HIV/AIDS, the education of adolescent girls and women in higher education, among others.
4. A study titled *Revisiting Gender in ODL – Gender Mainstreaming in Course Content and Service Delivery* which examines sample IGNOU course materials and aspects of service delivery in two Indian states, Rajasthan and Kerala, was completed. The findings indicate that course materials reflect a traditionally male construction and ownership of knowledge, leading to the invisibility of women in course materials. Learners, across the states, locations (urban/rural) and programmes of study, hold stereotypical beliefs about the learning styles of men and women, with more men upholding limiting images about women. This study can enable ODL institutions to review their gender inclusion strategies and will be presented at a plenary session during PCF6.
5. The Gender Microsite has been updated. The purpose of this is to provide access to print and electronic resources on gender and ODL/ICT in one location to help ODL policy makers and practitioners to make informed choices and decisions.
6. To mark International Women's Day (8th March), a brown-bag lunch was organised in April to discuss the Women's Reservation Bill in India. This was presented by Dr. Pema Samdup from CEMCA.

7. *Connections* continues to focus on gender concerns in all Issues.
8. A Gender Action Plan has been elaborated for the TYP 2009-12 and will be updated annually over the life of this Plan. At least one gender-related activity will be implemented in each initiative and the “longitudinal study” for each initiative will provide evidence whether COL interventions have advanced gender equality or not with appropriate data from the field.

Documents:

- I. Corporate Level Action Plan
- II. Programme Level Report

Corporate Level Gender Indicators

COL's Vision, Mission and Gender Impact Statement	Expected Outcomes	Outputs and Outcomes	Performance Indicators	Status
<p>COL's vision: Access to learning is the key to development.</p> <p>COL's mission: To help governments and institutions expand the scope, scale and quality of learning by using new approaches and technologies, especially those subsumed under the general term of open and distance learning (ODL).</p>	<p>1. Gender considerations are an integral part of all COL's policies and processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Progress reports on gender given each quarter at the internal Performance Update Meetings (PUM). o Integration of gender considerations into internal data forms and templates. o Staff trained in the development of gender-inclusive Performance Indicators (PIs). o Gender considerations are included in consultants' contracts and in the selection of consultants. o Gender is integrated and prioritised into the Human Resource Framework and Compensation Plan (HRF&CP). o Annual written report to COL's Board of Governors. o Internal Gender Committee meets every quarter. o New staff oriented in the gender policy, tools and Microsite. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Analysis of number of consultants, vis-à-vis gender, reviewed on an annual basis with a view to increasing the number of women consultants. o A standard gender clause is used in all contracts and contribution agreements. o An equal number of female and male candidates are short-listed for professional positions. o Gender related items in <i>Connections</i> and on COL's website. o Half-day workshop on gender sensitisation is held annually. o A gender Micro-site has been developed and maintained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Analysis completed/Ongoing o Achieved o Achieved / ongoing o Achieved o Achieved o Updated
<p>Gender Impact Statement: Strengthen COL's internal capacity to ensure that it is a model organisation which mainstreams gender in all its processes and programmes.</p>	<p>2. COL's work contributes to a deeper interrogation, analysis and articulation of gender equality issues as reflected in its initiatives to enhance increasing access to quality learning for both men and women.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o "Gender Keys" tool developed and used. o Sharing of lessons learned at team meetings and other fora on a regular basis o COL staff discuss findings on gender within initiatives and feed lessons learned into new plans. o Gender considerations brought to bear in Monitoring and Evaluation. o Gender highlighted at PCF6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o There is at least one specific gender activity within each initiative. o Additional tools are developed in response to programme needs and available for staff and partners. o More COL programme staff consider gender equality issues at all stages of programme cycle. o More partners consider gender equality issues and report on them. o A minimum of 50% of female participants are encouraged at all COL-hosted workshops, particularly from countries where they are generally under-represented. o Gender considerations are a major criterion for accepting proposals for support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Not achieved / ongoing o Implementation of gender keys initiated. Tip sheet on gender-sensitive indicators disseminated o At least one gender-specific activity identified in 6 of the 8 programme sectors; 'longitudinal studies' commissioned through which gender data will be collected o Ongoing o This is not entirely within COL's control o Ongoing

Programme Level Gender Indicators

Sector	Initiative	Outputs & Outcomes	Performance Indicators	Milestones
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open Schooling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women and technology workshop in the SADC region A Perspectives book: <i>Leadership in ODL: A gender perspective</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A gender sensitive technology strategy for the open school Enhanced capacity in technology amongst participants as will be evidenced through a study A useful resource as evidenced by reports of at least two international reviewers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training during August/September 2010 Technology strategy by June 2011 Tracer study by November 2011 Book available by June 2011 Review by October 2011
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study on women's participation in ODL at NTI in Nigeria and Freetown Teachers' Centre in Sierra Leone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report and findings of the Study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field-testing at Freetown Teaching Centre: April 2010 Field-testing at NTI: May 31, 2010 Final study: August 31, 2010
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training in Leadership in Higher Education for women faculty and staff through RETRIDAL, West Africa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of women who were promoted as a result of the training as will be evidenced through a tracer study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training : June 2010 Tracer study: 2015
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sensitisation sessions during VUSSC workshop on gender related matters especially on materials development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in the number of women and men participants in areas that is predominantly dominated by the opposite gender (e.g., more women in professional fields) Materials that are gender sensitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
Livelihoods and Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outputs and Outcome statements are being developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance Indicators are being identified. 	

Programme Level Gender Indicators

Sector	Initiative	Outputs & Outcomes	Performance Indicators	Milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Learning for Farmers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enhanced Participation Rate of Women in L3F. ○ Development of Gender-Sensitive Learning Materials. ○ Longitudinal Assessment of Gender in L3F ○ Development of Gender-Class Empowerment Index 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ At least 50% of the participants in L3F in three activities in three countries in three commonwealth regions are women. ○ Building the capacity of three institutions in three Commonwealth regions developing gender-sensitive learning materials. ○ A longitudinal study conducted for a period of three years in one activity to assess the differential impact of L3F in terms of gender using quantitative and qualitative data. ○ Based on the longitudinal study developing an empowerment index in one activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ During 2009-2010, more than 95% of the participants are women in three activities in two countries in two Commonwealth regions. ○ Built the capacity of one institution in developing gender-sensitive learning materials. ○ A longitudinal study is being conducted in one activity in India. Two sets of data (one for 2009 and the other for 2010) have been collected and collated. ○ A workshop was organised to discuss the empowerment index and the variables have been identified.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Healthy Communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Capacity building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New awareness and skills, including gender-related, among community groups to use non-formal ODL in community development, including a minimum percentage of women. ○ Gender-sensitive community ODL programming <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community ODL programme development processes initiated, including a strong focus on gender, women's and youth issues. ○ Knowledge sharing & policy development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preliminary findings, including gender considerations, from applied research shared with relevant constituents. ▪ Policy feedback about community ODL, including gender considerations, shared with relevant policy and programme decision-makers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Capacity building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 100+ learning intermediaries trained; 30% women. ○ Gender-sensitive community ODL programming <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 30% of community ODL programmes focus on women as learners. ▪ 50% of community ODL programmes include clear gender considerations. ○ Knowledge sharing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1 set policy recommendations drafted, including gender considerations. ▪ Longitudinal study includes gender considerations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Capacity building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 353 learning intermediaries trained; 117 (33%) women. ▪ 1 training module on gender available as open content on-line. ○ Gender-sensitive community ODL programming <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 8 ODL programmes developed: 2 (25%) focus on women as learners; 3 (38%) include some gender considerations. ▪ 3000+ women learners engaged. ○ Knowledge sharing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Longitudinal study plan includes gender considerations.

Programme Level Gender Indicators

Sector	Initiative	Outputs & Outcomes	Performance Indicators	Milestones
	○ Integrating eLearning	○ Outputs and Outcome statements are being developed	○ Performance Indicators are being identified.	