

**Regional Consultation
Gaborone, Botswana
October 7, 2004**

The group split in 4 focus teams and raised the following:

Group 1

Access

COL should work to increase access to education and training

Quality

Training teachers – COL should use ODL to:

Train untrained teachers

For capacity building

To upgrade e teachers

COL should also work in the areas of:

Using ICTs in the expansion of education

Technical/vocational education

General comments on COL's work:

Follow up actions on initiatives that are being promoted by COL

Avoid duplicating efforts already present in region

Group 2

Capacity building

COL should work to train local staff in ODL methods

General comments:

STAMP materials have not been integrated into local programmes

Junior secondary level materials developed through the *Increasing Access to Secondary Education* initiative – some countries have decided to use them not only for ODL but also in the conventional system.

COL future activities:

Vocational education – should be included in the plan

1. Increase activities with policy makers and advocacy
2. clearing house – for ODL materials – to make them available (or information about them available)
3. suggested that COL should have a workplan for seminars/workshops/institutes, etc. for the next three years

Group 3

It is anticipated that COL will:

1. Coordinate ODL programmes
2. Promote ODL activities/successes
3. Create awareness about COL activities
4. Assist in infrastructures for ODL – so countries have a minimum basic infrastructure
5. Promote research on ODL, especially related to data banks
6. work to minimize disparities in access to educational opportunities between men and women
7. Facilitate awareness about HIV as a cross cutting issue – examine how ODL can usefully be used to facilitate HIV knowledge and training.
8. Ensure government COL programmes and pilots can be extended once they are demonstrated to be successful (if Ministers endorse, there should be a way they can be replicated)
9. Build capacity in the region to promote the use of ODL in the region – so expertise is available in the region
10. promote the use of the toolkits that are in place –so more countries can make use of these
11. continue to enhance networks, build partnerships and facilitate collaboration
12. advocate for ODL so governments take advantage of ODL as one way to increase access to education and training

Group 4

COL should – in the next 3 years:

1. facilitate capacity building in:
 - a. management and administration
 - b. materials development
 - c. use of ICTs
 - d. provision of equipment
2. have a broader focus and seek funds for new projects. COL should also solicit resources from other organization and institutions
3. develop HIV materials for advocacy through ODL programmes
4. get more involved in the establishment of ODL institutions
5. work more as an more advocate for the use of ODL as an alternative to conventional education
6. develop a generic ODL policy that can be customized for specific countries
7. establish a database on the institutions providing ODL – materials available, areas of expertise, areas of support, facilities that would be available for use
8. facilitate a process to enable the sharing of materials
9. facilitate the development of new programmes

10. facilitate the collaboration among institutions working in similar areas
11. facilitate research in ODL
12. establish resource centres in ODL institutions

Advocacy needed – that ODL is just as good as conventional education.

ODL systems – clarify how mechanisms are put in place to ensure quality in all aspects of an ODL system.

Governments should treat ODL as part of its education system, not as an alternative.