

**REGIONAL CONSULTATION FOR COL's THREE-YEAR PLAN (2006 – 2009)
Two meetings held in Sri Lanka on 23 September 2004 (Ahungalle) and 3
November 2004 (Colombo). Both reports appear below.**

1) AHUNGALLE, SRI LANKA – 23 SEPTEMBER 2004

A consultative meeting of a one-hour duration was held on the 23rd September with 26 participants. The suggestions were as follows:

1. COL must advise countries on issues related to transnational education.
2. COL must support development of materials in paramedical sciences—OUSL is putting in a proposal for the development of a diploma in pharmacy.
3. COL must facilitate access to online library resources.
4. COL could facilitate access to open source materials such as MIT courseware with mirroring provision so that these are available to Sri Lankan students on their intranets.
5. Need for capacity-building in e-learning.
6. Need for consultant to be sent on site for selected universities to evolve into dual-mode.

Observations

1. COL needs to sustain a proactive approach in the country especially in light of the ADB Distance Education Modernisation project which continues until 2009.
2. There is a need for a concerted advocacy effort re ODL as the conventional universities still view DE with suspicion.
3. Training in the use of the COL Knowledge Finder can be given in January 2005 when CEMCA is scheduled to conduct an e-learning workshop in partnership with OUSL.
4. Sri Lanka could have some role in the development of the CVUSS—on account of the infrastructure that will be put in place under the ADB project as well in terms of their stated need for content.

2) COLOMBO, SRI LANKA – 3 NOVEMBER 2004

About 25 persons from Teacher Education Institutions, Open Universities, Ministries of Education and other agencies concerned with or involved in teacher education and development were present. (A list of participants is given) This consultation happened as part of the first meeting of the South Asian Consortium for Teacher Education and Development (SACTED). The venue was Hotel Taj Samudra in Colombo.

Mohan made a presentation based on the powerpoint presentation developed by Rod. John who inaugurated the SACTED meeting made some observations mainly about development as perceived in MDGs and the need for systematic and judicious use of

technology in addressing educational and training needs in various sectors of development.

This was followed by a discussion and expression of views. A summary of that is given below:

- There is a need for using technology and ODL for increasing access and improving quality in education especially in the school sector.
- COL's help needed in providing on-going professional support to teachers.
- Need to make teachers aware of MDGs and EFA goals so that they could be more focused.
- Globalise while continuing to be locally relevant and effective is the challenge. Can ODL and ICT help in this - How can COL support?
- COL's work in bringing together relevant organisations and institutions within countries, regions and across Commonwealth should continue.
- Organisations and institutions should work together in addressing problems of common interest - COL could facilitate this process.
- Teacher education curriculum itself is obsolete. How can this be renewed? How can COL help in this as it is trying to link education with development?
- Need to develop courses of common use by the Consortium. ODL material and systems should be developed.
- Quality of teacher training is an issue. There is need to put together best practices of use of all.
- How can COL help in making available courses developed with COL support in one country (such as MATE course)? Can COL support enrolment in such courses for developing countries?
- There is need to work towards better material and systems using ODL for children/learners who are physically and mentally challenged? How can COL help in this?