



COMMONWEALTH *of* LEARNING



Learning for Development
www.col.org

The Virtual University

Fact or Fiction?

What can it do?

Paul West

Director, KM & IT

Sir John Daniel

President & CEO

Greetings from Sir John Daniel



John Daniel

President & CEO

Commonwealth of Learning

“In the spirit of the 21st century I suggest that it will be a network rather than an institution – a network with multiple nodes of activity. We are not trying to create a new institution with its own brand name but to find ways to reinforce the institutions and the developments that are already taking place in your countries. A common theme of the responses of ministers to my request to tell me about their priorities was the ambition of strengthening their existing post-secondary institutions.”

Sir John Daniel

*“We need to help institutions
and education systems
to leapfrog their use of technologies
in much the same way that
cellular phone companies are
helping countries to expand access to
telephones and the internet.*

*This will involve educators working
and collaborating online with colleagues
from across the globe on a daily basis.”*

Our aim

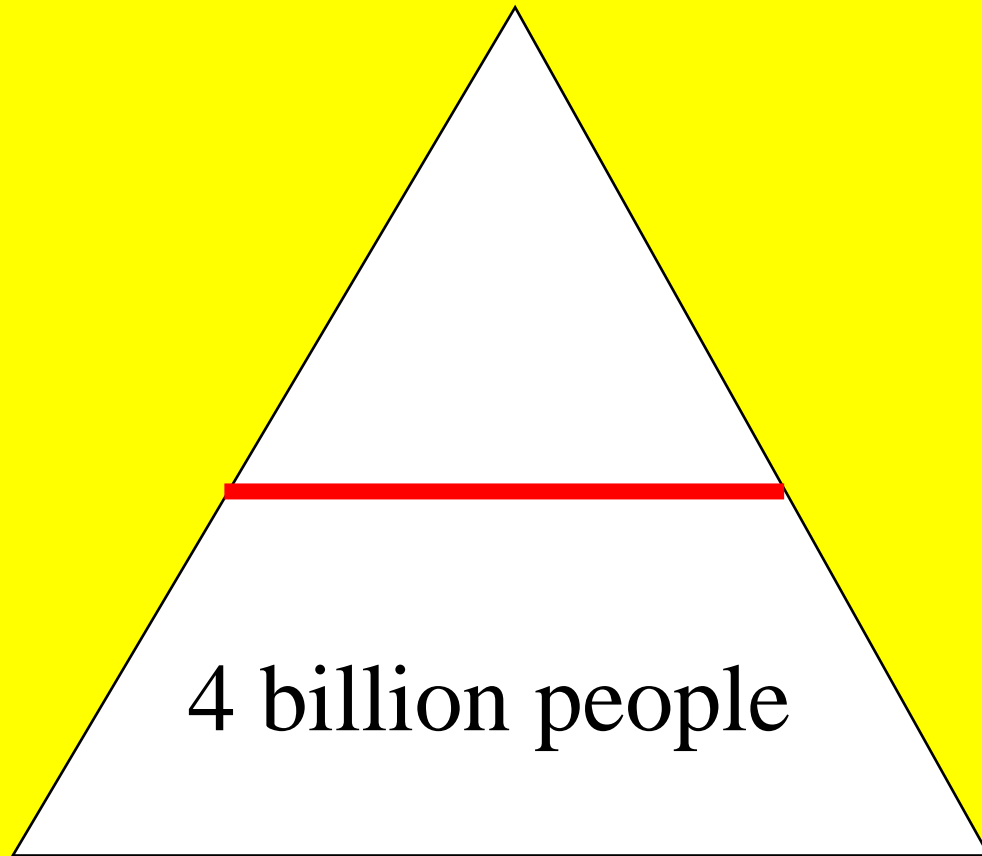
How can we give billions
of people living in
poverty, access to learning
and training?

The Challenge

1. Demography:
7-8 billion (50% young) in developing world by 2025
2. Discrepancy:
Developed = Post-secondary participation are **40% plus**
Developing = Post-secondary participation are **10% minus**

The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid

C. K. Prahalad



C.K.Prahalad

The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid

‘for companies with the resources and persistence to compete at the bottom of the world economic pyramid, the prospective rewards include growth, profits and incalculable contributions to humankind’

C.K.Prahalad

The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid

A post-secondary participation of 35% within this group would yield 150 million additional learners, far more than total current enrolments worldwide.

C.K.Prahalad

The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid

‘radical innovations in technology and
business models’

‘an ideal of highly distributed small scale
operations married to world-scale
capabilities’

C.K.Prahalad

The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid

‘helping people improve their lives by producing and distributing products and services in culturally sensitive, environmentally sustainable and economically profitable ways’

Does eLearning fit the bill?

We are not just talking about
online learning, but rather
online collaboration by
educators

Technology

Communication links are dramatically altering the way that poor villages in the developing world function.

What more could it do for educators who embrace the online world?

Can educators take
advantage
of the opportunity???

The most promising innovation

OPEN EDUCATIONAL
RESOURCES (OERs)

Open educational resources,
open source software
and tools

The most promising innovation

OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES (OERs)

We need to apply to teaching and learning, the same basic principle of sharing that underpins academic research

Barriers to sharing courseware

- ‘Not invented here’
- Copyright issues
- Non-digital formats

Three Generations of Open Educational Resources

1. MIT Open Courseware
2. UKOU Self- instructional
3. VUSSC Collaborative OERs

THE WILLIAM AND FLORA HEWLETT FOUNDATION

A major supporter of these developments

The Virtual
University is
not
donor-driven
development

Cost of this Project:

Approx USD130,000

The way to provide sufficient added value

- Form an online community
- Grow that community
- Make VUSSC part of your normal job
- Schedule time for VUSSC every week

Role of governments in eLearning

DO

create the right context to
support education initiatives

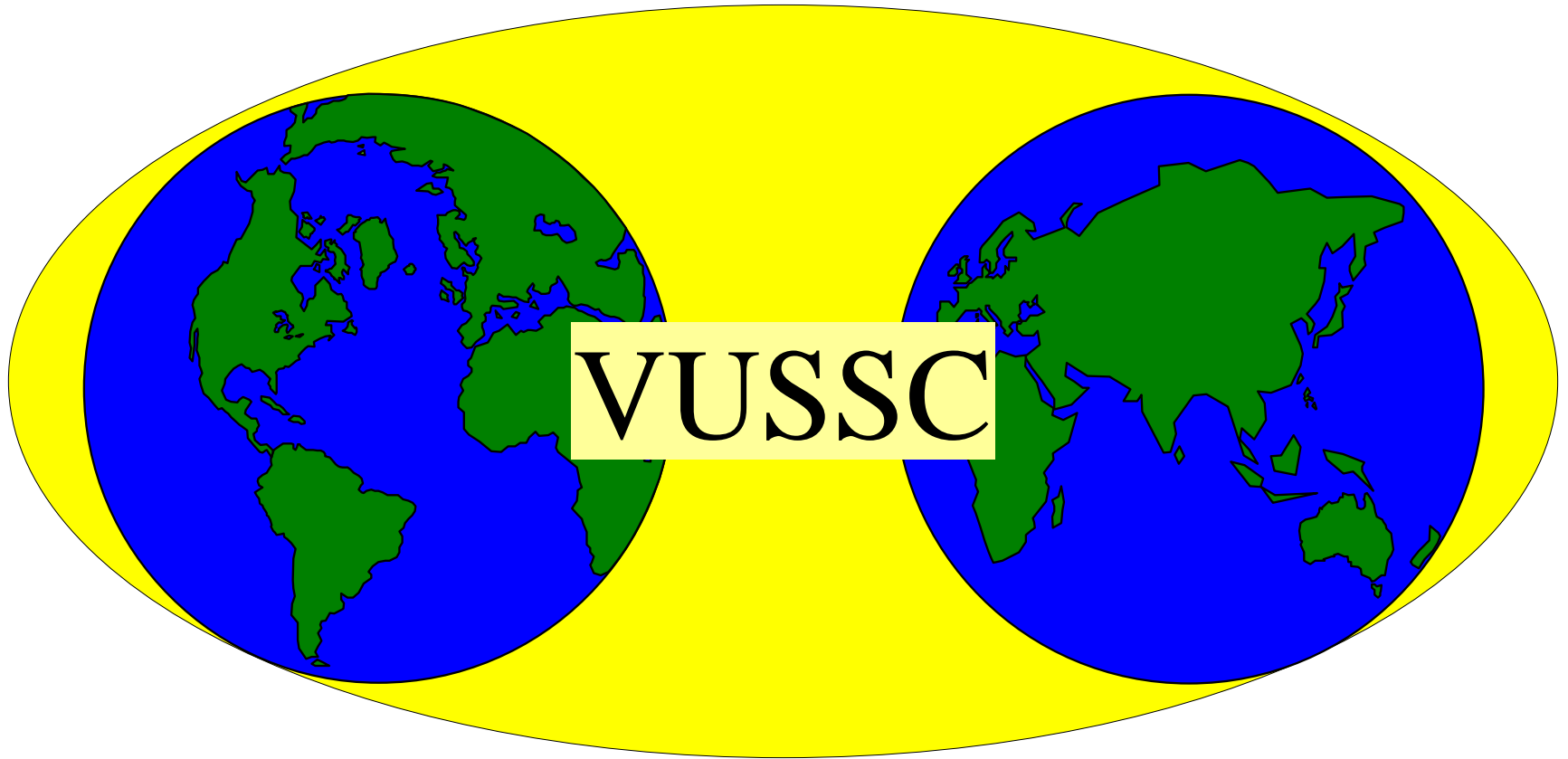
DON'T

block education initiatives

A Barrier to Learning – Bandwidth limitations

*“developing country institutions
can pay over 100 times
more for Internet access
than in the
industrialised world.”*

Can partnerships and collaboration



help developing countries develop their HE systems?

“our aim must be to combine connectivity with learning resources so as to create a global intellectual commons, accessible to the whole of humankind”

Sir John Daniel

“you are engaged in
something very
important”

Sir John Daniel

Thank you!

**Paul West
& Sir John Daniel**

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