

**International Literacy and Livelihoods Experts Meeting:
Learning for Life in a Changing World**

**Vancouver, Canada
November 15-17, 2004**

Summary Report

Organised by: Commonwealth of Learning (COL), Vancouver, Canada

Supported by: Department for International Development (DFID),
London, United Kingdom
Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA),
Ottawa, Canada

Report Written by: Dr. Glen Farrell, Vancouver, Canada



BACKGROUND

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) is renewing its commitment to the enhancement of literacy in the developing countries of the Commonwealth by establishing a programme area focused on Literacy and Livelihoods. While the programme activities will build on the work COL is already engaged in, they will also be informed through consultation with policymakers and practitioners experienced in the area of literacy development.

In light of the above, COL organised an International Literacy and Livelihoods Experts Meeting, November 15-17, 2004 in Vancouver, BC. The purpose of the meeting was to elicit advice and recommendations regarding initiatives that COL might take up or "add value" to with respect to the provision of integrated literacy and livelihoods learning in Commonwealth countries. A cross section of 26 international experts, representing governments, development agencies, NGOs, international organisations and education institutions participated in the meeting, along with a number of COL staff members. This report provides an overview of the inputs and outcomes of the meeting as well as a recommendation for a strategic framework that is based on a synthesis of the suggestions put forward by the international experts.

ORGANISATION AND EVALUATION OF THE MEETING

The first part of the meeting was designed to provide participants with:

- Background information about COL and the issues and challenges involved in enhancing literacy and livelihoods programmes;
- A general picture of "current reality" with respect to literacy and livelihoods education in the regions of the Commonwealth.

Sir John Daniel, COL President & CEO, provided the COL background information in his leadoff keynote address titled "Learning for Life in a Changing World". This was followed by four other keynote presentations that focused on literacy and livelihoods development in the broader global context:

- UNESCO's Adult Literacy Initiative: "Literacy Initiative for the Excluded (LIFE)" by Dr. Qian Tang, Director, Executive Office, Education Sector, UNESCO, Paris, France;
- "Literacy and Livelihoods for Youth at Risk – the SERVOL Experience" by Mr. Martin Pacheco, Executive Coordinator, Service Volunteered for All (SERVOL Ltd.), Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago;



- “Conceptualisation of Education Reform in the Pacific from a cultural Perspective with particular Reference to Literacy & Livelihoods” presented by Mr. Mahendra Singh, Project Manager, Pacific Regional Initiatives for the Delivery of Basic Education (PRIDE), Suva, Fiji;
- “Meeting the Literacy and Livelihoods Agenda in Sub-Saharan Africa” by Mr. Arvil Van Adams, Senior Advisor for Social Protection, Africa Region, The World Bank, Washington, DC, USA.

Time was provided for questions and debate following each of the presentations. Additional inputs came from the many other participants who accepted the invitation to prepare background papers on literacy and livelihoods initiatives in their respective countries or on a related topic. These were posted on the meeting website (<http://www.col.org/programmes/conferences/literacyandlivelihoods.htm>) and provided a wealth of additional “current reality” information for all participants.

The second part of the meeting was focused specifically on eliciting advice and recommendations for initiatives that COL could take in the area literacy and livelihoods development. Participants divided into four working groups for this task (See Appendix A for a listing of all participants according to Working Group).

The first question they were asked to address was:

Given the context of COL, and your perception of the “current reality” of literacy and livelihoods programmes, what are the opportunities for COL to “add value”?

Each group provided a summation of their recommendations to a plenary session.

The working groups then reconvened to address the central task of the meeting, which was to:

- *Consider the range of opportunities that have been presented;*
- *Select up to five that you believe are of top priority;*
- *Develop recommendations regarding how COL might pursue these priority opportunities including:*
 1. *Objectives/outcomes*
 2. *Target groups;*
 3. *Resources required;*
 4. *Stakeholders and potential partnerships;*
 5. *Implementation strategies.*

Each working group reported its recommendations to a plenary session. A summary of each of these reports is included in Appendix B.

The general programme for the Meeting is included in Appendix C.



The evaluation of the meeting was managed by Dr. Cathie Dunlop from Simon Fraser University. Dr. Dunlop designed an evaluation process that provided both feedback to the organizers and facilitator during the meeting as well as summative feedback at the end of the meeting. Participants rated the meeting as having been very successful in terms of achievement of the goals and also, felt that the administrative arrangements and management of the meeting were well handled. The questionnaire along with Dr. Dunlop's full evaluation report are included in Appendix D.

SUMMARY OF KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS

President Daniel

The COL President set the tone for the meeting by addressing the following four points.

- **What is COL?**

COL's mission has a tight focus, which is to help the member states of the Commonwealth use technology to increase the scope, scale, quality and impact of their education and training systems.

COL has a special focus on open and distance learning because it is an application of technology that has been shown to be useful in many countries.

- **Learning and Livelihoods and COL programmes**

The question for COL is, 'Can we use technology-mediated learning to increase literacy and, at the same time, to improve livelihoods'? If the answer is yes, what are the policies, systems and applications that we can recommend to governments to achieve this?

At COL we interpret technology widely. It covers ways of approaching problems as well as gadgets that plug into the wall. We define technology as the application of scientific and other organized knowledge to practical tasks by organizations consisting of people and machines.

- **Relations between literacy and livelihoods**

Is literacy education or development? If literacy is education then schooling for adults is the obvious approach. This makes possible good organisation, a national curriculum and good learning materials. However, since even children see school as somewhat isolated from the rest of life, so adults can easily find literacy as schooling isolated from their daily concerns. This is less of a problem if we start from literacy as development and root it in the social and economic development of the community." But we must not get so carried away by a utilitarian approach to literacy and livelihoods that we neglect the importance of literacy in sustaining the freedom of the human spirit.



- **The special mission of COL**

COL's task is to get greater leverage on the challenge of preparing people for life in a changing world by using technology intelligently. We shall do this by bringing together our organised knowledge and by being very sensitive to the social systems in which we are operating.

President Daniel concluded his remarks to the meeting participants by stating that: *The challenge before you in the next few days is to advise us how we might combine the potential of technologies with what we know about literacy and livelihoods to achieve impact at scale. The fundamental purpose, let us remember, is to reduce poverty and hunger through such interventions.*

Current Reality

As previously mentioned, four papers were commissioned for presentation during the first day of the Meeting. These were intended to provide illustrations of the current state of literacy and livelihoods programmes in various regions of the Commonwealth. In addition, all other non COL staff attending were invited to prepare a paper focusing particularly on literacy and livelihoods programmes in their own countries.

The following is a summary of the points made by the four keynote speakers who addressed literacy and livelihoods in the broader context, as well as by the authors of the 16 additional country papers that were prepared and posted on the meeting website:

Growing Number and Diversity of Providers

One of the striking aspects of the current reality of literacy development programming is the diverse range of agencies and organizations involved. They include:

- National Governments – usually the non formal education divisions of ministries of education;
- NGOs;
- Churches;
- International Organisations;
- Limited, but growing, private sector organizations.

Emerging National, Regional, and Global Programmes

There has not been, with a few notable exceptions, a great deal of coordination among the various providers; however, that seems to be changing as illustrated by the following examples:

- Nigeria, Malawi and Bangladesh have all initiated national programmes that provide both the architecture and the content focus for future literacy development;



- The Pacific island countries have adopted a common framework to guide this area of development in their respective countries;
- African leaders, under their New Programmes for African Development (NEPAD), have launched a pan African e-Schools Initiative;
- UNESCO has announced a global project which provides a comprehensive framework for literacy and development.

Increasing Emphasis on the Linkage between Literacy and Development

The growing realization that there are many “literacies” besides reading and numeracy that are essential to socio economic development is propelling the trend toward the inclusion of literacy learning opportunities as part of development strategies. Data cited in the paper by Arvil Van Adams of the World Bank clearly indicates the positive impact of an integrated approach.

Nation states are recognising the importance of linking learning for livelihoods with the development of literacy skills. This is mentioned by the authors of both the Bangladesh and Solomon Islands country papers.

Increasing Collaboration Across Sectors

Historically, literacy education has been the purview of the education sector with little involvement with other sectors more related to livelihoods learning. However, several of the country papers indicate that this isolationism is breaking down through involvement with the health and agriculture sectors particularly.

Increasing Focus on Target Learners

The papers clearly indicate that the emerging national priorities for literacy learning are:

- Out of school youth – many of whom have had to leave schooling because of war, famine, loss of parents, etc.
- Women – whose central role in economic development is being realized;
- Neo literates – as it becomes understood that literacy skills erode if not used.

Limited Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT’s)

To date, with the exception of radio which has been used creatively in many contexts for a long time, there has been little use of ICT. However, there is evidence that this is changing rapidly as ICT infrastructure becomes more accessible – particularly in rural areas.

- There are some notable projects that illustrate the growing application of ICT in literacy and development education in Bangladesh (Boat Schools); the work of the M.S. Swaminathan Foundation in Tamil Nadu; Action Aid; and the Tata Group project (Andhra Pradesh);



- Many countries have plans in place to guide future application of ICT in literacy education (e.g. Botswana, Nigeria, The NEPAD project)

Development of New Conceptual Frameworks

New conceptual models that offer more comprehensive definitions of literacy, and which promote literacy learning as an essential ingredient in the development process, are providing useful frameworks for planning more integrated literacy and livelihoods programmes, for research, and, for applications of technology. The papers by Dr. A. Rogers and Dr. K. Balasubramanian are examples.

Inter-dependent and Persistent Constraints

The forces constraining the progress of literacy and livelihoods development and training are inter-related. Solutions must be comprehensive and programmatic rather than piecemeal and project based. Taken together they describe the reality that challenges both policy makers and practitioners as they plan and implement literacy and livelihoods initiatives. Some of the more frequently mentioned constraints were:

- Lack of funding;
- Poverty;
- Cultural beliefs;
- Lack of Appropriate Materials;
- Low worker morale;
- Lack of ICT infrastructure

PERCEIVED OPPORTUNITIES

The first task of the working groups was to identify opportunities for COL to add value to current literacy and livelihoods initiatives within the Commonwealth. Several of the groups prefaced their comments on this topic by emphasizing the need for COL to have clarity about how an emphasis on literacy and livelihoods fits within its general mandate of open and distance learning, and, how programmatic initiatives can “add value” to COL’s current activities. Further cautionary comments underlined the importance for COL to understand the issues and national priorities of Commonwealth countries in the area of literacy and livelihoods – and, to ensure that the resource requirements are in place to avoid what some called “over promising and under delivering”!

The following is a summary of the suggestions made by the working groups:

Policy Development

There is a significant void in terms of policies that encourage, enable and facilitate the integration of literacy and livelihoods. The explanation offered by some of the groups was that literacy development in many countries is the responsibility of the Ministry of



Education, whereas economic development is typically the responsibility of other ministries.

Several examples were put forward regarding ways that COL might contribute to aiding the development of more integrated policies. These included fostering dialogue across ministries, undertaking policy research, collecting and sharing examples of effective policies and, providing policy analyst services.

Linking Functions

Most group members felt that this is one of the things that COL has demonstrated expertise in carrying out – and, they feel it is essential in the context of a developing focus on literacy and livelihoods. Some of the specific linking activities proposed included the following:

- Link communities of practice through networking;
- Link policy makers to foster awareness of the need to integrate literacy and livelihoods initiatives;
- Foster communication across ministries within governments, and, within specific ministries such as education, to ensure synergy among those with responsibility for literacy, economic development and formal education;
- Catalyse multi-stakeholder involvement in policy and program development through information dissemination, conferences and partnerships.

Research & Evaluation

These were seen as essential activities in support of the literacy & livelihoods initiative. For example, group members argued that COL initiatives will need to be supported by data that provides:

- A basis for program development;
- Evidence of the benefits of integrating literacy learning with livelihoods development initiatives;
- Aggregation of “best practice” examples;
- Assistance to the development of policy.

Several groups felt that COL’s research and evaluation activities should be based on “action research” that is grounded in the reality of specific COL initiatives. Other necessary forms of research will involve the use of case studies, literature/web searches, and empirical analysis. They urged COL to partner with stakeholders in these activities and support them with training, information management, and the dissemination of results.



Technology Applications

The question posed by the COL President in his keynote address to the Expert Group, “Can we use technology-mediated learning to increase literacy and, at the same time, improve livelihoods”?, sparked considerable discussion. There were many suggestions regarding ways that ICT’s could be used in the context of “information management”. These included:

- The use of websites and electronic discussion groups to link stakeholders and to disseminate information;
- The development of a portal focused specifically on literacy & livelihoods;
- The creation of one or more databases consisting of training materials, “best practice” examples and policy materials.

It was acknowledged that, while the use of digital technologies in the direct provision of learning opportunities in this area remains limited, there will certainly be explosive growth in such applications as the issues of access to electricity and connectivity are resolved.

However, the discussion tended to remain within this more narrow definition of technology rather than the more comprehensive one proposed by the COL President. **It seemed apparent that concepts such as systems and task analysis, evidence-based planning, and, the potential for new learning paradigms that arise from the incorporation of new media into traditional models of instruction, are not usually thought of as being included within a discussion about technology.**

Information Management

One of the most frequently mentioned opportunities was that of gathering, organizing, and disseminating information. The various ways that ICT might be used to do this are described in the previous Technology Applications section, however, several groups pointed out that COL has developed an excellent information retrieval capacity that would enable it to provide a dedicated information service for stakeholders concerned with literacy and livelihoods activities. It was felt that this service would logically be linked to the development of the portal previously described.

Training

Group members felt that capacity building through training will be essential in all aspects of a literacy and livelihoods initiative – and, they clearly feel that this is another of COL’s strengths! The following list is indicative of the areas in which capacity will need to be developed through training:



- Policy analysis and development;
- Program facilitator skills;
- Research and Evaluation;
- Technology applications;
- Development of learning materials.

Content/Materials Development

One of the most seemingly obvious opportunities for COL to “add value” to literacy and livelihoods education would be to create a database of learning materials, gleaned from a global scan of programmes and canvassing of practitioners, that would be readily accessible electronically.

However some working group members were cautionary on this point. They pointed out that the integration of literacy and learning requires that literacy learning materials be relevant to the context of the livelihoods education or socio economic activity in which learners are engaged. They also pointed out the need for learning materials to be available in local languages as well as in formats that enable their use in a variety of physical and cultural environments.

As an alternative to the development of a database of “generic” learning materials, they suggested that a more useful approach would be to focus on building capacity in the area of the skills needed to develop quality learning materials – such as instructional design, using technologies appropriately and curriculum planning. A database that combined these types of training materials, along with “best practice” examples would, they argued, be more helpful.

Niche Opportunities

Several suggestions were made that would see COL identifying a “niche market” opportunity and focusing its activities accordingly. For example, the growing rural to urban migration is resulting in many more illiterate women in large cities. This could be a focus for COL. Related to this was the notion that the focus could be on “excluded” people in a broader sense, including the disabled. Another suggestion was that COL might focus its contribution, in Commonwealth countries, within the framework of the UNESCO LIFE initiative by assuming responsibility for some aspect of it.

A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

As described previously, the core task of the meeting was to set priorities among the opportunities suggested, and, to recommend the actions, strategies and resources that COL should consider in order to realize the opportunities.

Each working group addressed this task and their reports are included in Appendix B.



This section of the report is an attempt to synthesise the suggestions and recommendations put forward by the discussion subgroups within a framework that is consistent with the Results Based Management model that COL uses to develop its three year plans.

Guiding Principles

There was unanimous agreement among the groups that the acquisition of literacy skills needs to be integrated with learning for livelihoods in both formal and non formal contexts. The development of literacy skills, they argued, must have a practical application in the context of the lives of the learners. And for policy makers, it must have a demonstrably positive impact on national socio economic objectives.

The group therefore strongly supports the COL initiative to establish a programme area that focuses on this challenge.

They did, however, preface their recommendations with several principles they felt should guide COL as it moves forward:

- Activities must be consistent with the open and distance learning (ODL) and technology mediated learning mandate of COL.
- Activities must be within the human and fiscal resource capacities of COL in order to avoid “over promising and under performing”!
- Activities should lead to sustainability and scalability of applicable outcomes.
- Activities must be needs-based and linked to the poverty reduction strategy plans (PRSP’s) of target countries.

A Primary Focus for Literacy and Livelihoods Initiatives at COL

The Expert Group was virtually unanimous in recommending that **COL should focus on assisting policy makers to develop and implement policies that foster the integration of literacy skills acquisition with livelihoods development initiatives.** This focus is consistent with two sub-programmes of the current COL Three Year Plan, namely Policy Development for Basic and Secondary Education, and, ODL Applications for Poverty Reduction. It warrants consideration as a sub-programme in its own right for the next Three Year Plan.

The rationale for this recommendation is that literacy development programmes generally suffer from a lack of clear coordinating policy and, further, that the role of literacy in development is not well understood. Group members felt that efforts that bring policy makers from ministries of education together with those from ministries responsible for economic development are urgently needed. They expressed the view that COL is well positioned to contribute because of its current activities.



Required Initiatives

The groups made a number of recommendations concerning the initiatives that COL would need to take in support of the policy development focus described above. The initiatives suggested clustered in the following four areas:

- Research and Evaluation related to literacy and livelihoods policy analysis and development;
- Stakeholder Advocacy through Linking and Networking activities;
- Capacity Building through both formal and non formal Training;
- Knowledge Management through Collection and Dissemination of Information.

These four Initiatives are clearly not discrete. Indeed they are highly interactive and interdependent. For example, stakeholder advocacy will need to be informed with information generated from research and evaluation initiatives; capacity building will require access to information; and, feedback from stakeholder networking will provide evaluation information concerning needs and priorities in the areas of training, information and learning materials.

It was noted that these initiatives are essentially an affirmation of those already underway at COL in the context of its current three year plan. The recommendation is that these now be expanded to include strategies that focus on the development and implementation of policy concerning literacy and livelihoods.

Implementation Strategies – Some Options

A variety of strategies were suggested for implementing the recommended initiatives, some which are obviously relevant to more than one initiative. While no attempt was made during the plenary session to prioritise the proposed strategies, some criteria for doing so were suggested. These were:

- Strategies should build on ones that COL is currently implementing;
- COL should optimize the use technology mediated learning models to demonstrate applications and to support scalability;
- COL should be alert for partnership opportunities in the context of larger initiatives such as the UNESCO LIFE project.



The following list is illustrative of the strategies suggested:

- Conduct pilot projects in order to accumulate information to support integrated literacy and livelihoods policy development. Several groups felt that it will be important for COL to be able to support its advocacy with empirical data that support the linkage between development and literacy.
- A more specific recommendation on the point of pilot projects was that COL should conduct a comprehensive environmental scan in four countries – including needs and priorities such as those contained in national PRSP’s, current activities, guiding policies, etc, - and produce four “evidence-based” papers for policy makers in each of the countries. The papers would provide a comprehensive literacy and livelihoods policy framework based on the findings from the environmental scan. The countries would need to be selected through a process based on criteria that ensured the full cooperation of the selected countries and their commitment to the development of an integrated literacy and livelihoods programme.
- A variety of suggestions were made concerning the nature of the information COL will need to gather and make available to stakeholders. These suggestions included the development of databases in areas such as current policies, programme evaluation models and studies, learning materials, and, “best practice” examples.
- Linking mechanisms among stakeholders that are both electronic and “face-to face” will be essential in order to advocate policy and foster discussions regarding implementation of initiatives and strategies.
- COL should develop a comprehensive information management plan to support stakeholders involved in the various linking mechanisms that will emerge. The plan should include:
 - A process for identifying the types of information that is required;
 - A capacity to search and disseminate information to specific groups through a literacy and livelihoods portal;
 - An annual stakeholders conference;
 - A series of regular newsletters.
- Training that enhances the capacity of policy makers and practitioners should be a core activity for COL. Training opportunities, supported by appropriate technology, in the areas of policy analysis, programme evaluation, ICT applications, instructional design and information management are examples of the needs identified by the working groups.
- Partnerships should form a core component of COL’s implementation strategies. The possibility of COL collaborating with UNESCO in the context of the LIFE project was an example that was frequently mentioned.



NEXT STEPS

Meeting Participants gave a unanimous endorsement of COL's intention to enhance its programming activity in the area of literacy and livelihoods, and recommended a framework for planning how this can be incorporated into incorporation into the next three year plan for 2006-2009. However, this is not yet a plan! The Participants offered several suggestions they feel are essential "next steps" that COL undertake over the next year. These are:

- Validation of the recommended framework.

This needs to occur both internally and externally. The internal activity should take the form of an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) facing COL as it move to develop this area of its programme activity. Some participants were concerned that current COL resources may be inadequate.

The external part of the validation should involve discussions of the proposed framework with more stakeholders – perhaps on a regional level.

- Build on current activities.

Participants repeatedly pointed out that most of the Initiatives and Strategies are ones COL is already implementing. Their suggestion is that activities related to literacy and livelihoods be added to them in a way that is needs-based. By doing so, COL will be able to demonstrate practice and to gather data that will inform its planning.

- Start to develop the details for the next three year plan - specifically to define the outputs and outcomes that will be expected, the inputs that will be required, and, the indicators that will be used to measure success.



APPENDIX A

WORKING GROUP 1

First Name	Surname	Title	Organisation	Country	Category
<i>Rapporteurs: Vis Naidoo, Education Specialist, Educational Technology, and Professor Asha Kanwar, Education Specialist, Higher Education, COL</i>					
Ar. A.H.M.	Rezwan	Executive Director	SHIDHULAI SWANIRVAR SANGSTHA (SSS)	Bangladesh	Practitioner
Ms. Madeleine	Woolley	Executive Director	Department of the Premier and Cabinet	Australia	Policymaker
Mr. Sydney R.	Namagonya	Director Community Development	Ministry of Women, Children Affairs and Community Development, National Centre for Literacy and Adult Education	Malawi	Policymaker
Mr. Martin	Pacheco	ICT Coordinator	SERVOL LTD.	Trinidad	Practitioner
Dr. Clare A.	Ignatowski	Consultant	USAID	USA	Policymaker
Dr. Charles	Joyner	Director, International Programs	SFU Distance Education Centre	Canada	Practitioner

WORKING GROUP 2

First Name	Surname	Title	Organisation	Country	Category
<i>Rapporteurs: Helen Lentell, Education Specialist, Training and Materials Development and Avril Edwin-Boxill, Governance & Programme Officer (Ag.), COL</i>					
Mr. Reza	Salim	Associated Director	Bangladesh Friendship Education Society (BFES)	Bangladesh	Practitioner
Dr. Emma	Kruse Vaai	Academic Director/Deputy CEO	Samoa Polytechnic	Samoa	Policymaker
H.E. Michael	Omolewa	Ambassador/Permanent Delegate	Nigerian Permanent Delegation to UNESCO	France	Policymaker
Dr. Esi	Sutherland-Addy	Research Fellow	Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana	Ghana	Practitioner
Mr. Arvil	Van Adams	Senior Advisor for Social Protection, Africa Region	The World Bank	USA	Policymaker
Dr. Felicity	Binns	Executive Director	International Extension College	UK	Practitioner



WORKING GROUP 3

First Name	Surname	Title	Organisation	Country	Category
Rapporteurs: Mohan Menon, Education Specialist, Teacher Training and Susan Phillips, Education Specialist, Basic Education, COL					
Dr. K.	Balasubramanian	Project Director	JRD Tata Ecotechnology Centre	India	Practitioner
Mr. Mahendra	Singh	Project Manager	PRIDE	Fiji	Policymaker
Prof. Veronica	McKay	Director	Adult Basic Education and Training Institute	South Africa	Policymaker
Ms. Marian L.	Adams	Lecturer	University of Education/Home Economics Department	Ghana	Practitioner
Dr. Humberto N.F.F.	Muquingue	Consultant	Consultant	Mozambique	Practitioner
Prof. James E. (Jim)	Page	Literacy Specialist	Adjunct Research Professor	Canada	Practitioner
Dr. Qian	Tang	Director, Executive Office, Education Sector	UNESCO	France	Policymaker

WORKING GROUP 4

First Name	Surname	Title	Organisation	Country	Category
Rapporteurs: Krishna Alluri, Education Specialist, Food Security & Environment and Angela Kwan, Development Manager, COL					
Ms. Jenny	Williams	COL Project Manager Pacific Region	The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand	New Zealand	Practitioner
Dr. Nafisatu D.	Muhammad	Executive Secretary	National Commission for Nomadic Education	Nigeria	Policymaker
Mr. Patrick	Maphorisa	Director NFE	NFE Department, MoE	Botswana	Policymaker
Dr. Ulrike	Hanemann	Consultant	UNESCO Institute of Education	Germany	Practitioner
Prof. Alan	Rogers	Reviews Editor	School of Education and Lifelong Learning, University of East Anglia	UK	Practitioner
Dr. John F.	Morris	Senior Advisor - Education, Social Development Policies Division	CIDA	Canada	Policymaker



APPENDIX B

WORKING GROUP REPORT SUMMARIES

WORKING GROUP 1

Goal

To provide expertise to increase literacy and livelihoods programming in selected COL countries.

The Group identified five primary opportunities for COL re this objective:

- Advocacy and policy formulation for multi-stakeholder support of literacy and livelihoods (L&L) programs;
- Research and needs assessments in selected COL member countries;
- Capacity building for delivery of L&L programs;
- Development of knowledge management systems (resources, data bases);
- Pilot programs to demonstrate multi-stakeholder best practices;

The Crosscutting Tenets are:

- All opportunities are interwoven and interdependent;
- Value added initiatives will build on existing expertise and resources at COL and elsewhere;
- Economic analysis and links to development indicators will be an integral part of planning, monitoring and evaluation (Poverty Reduction Strategies etc.)

1. Advocacy and policy formulation for multi-stakeholder support of literacy and livelihoods (L&L) programs. The outcomes of this would be to:

1. Show the economic and social value-added advantages of improving L&L;
2. Demonstrate how policies may either hinder or support L&L;
3. Describe the impact of policy on the efficiency and effectiveness of L&L programs.

Partners and Resources

- Development agencies;
- NGOs;
- Private sector firms;
- Trade and professional associations;
- Government Ministries;
- Faith-based groups, community groups and self-help groups;



- Media firms or agencies (radio, television, print);
- Multi-lateral agencies and bilateral donors;
- Foundations aligned with causes / issues;
- Associations and civic groups (e.g. Rotary);
- Institutional partners.

2. Research and needs assessments in selected COL member countries. The objectives would be to:

- Examine conditions in 4 COL regions to determine the most appropriate settings (location, target groups, partners) for adding value through L&L programming;
- Research the most effective models and examples of the appropriate use of ICT;
- Build on existing resources and practices of COL and various partners.

Partners and Resources

- Identify other agencies and institutions involved in provision of L&L;
- Obtain samples of materials, best practices and lessons learned in previous initiatives;
- Link to digital resources while expanding the information base at COL

3. Capacity building for delivery of L&L programs. The objectives would be to:

- Build capacity of policy makers to act as local advocates of L&L;
- Strengthen the capacity of local practitioners and partners to conduct effective L&L training;
- Develop networks of facilitators, information systems (EMIS), materials, monitoring and evaluation procedures.
-

It was noted that COL may need to strengthen its Internal capacity in order to be able to provide these services.

4. Development of knowledge management systems. This would require:

- The Design of reliable systems to capture all data and information supporting L&L;
- Linking with existing resources and other players;
- Providing mechanisms to disseminate and share information.



5. Pilot programs to demonstrate multi-stakeholder best practices. The following steps are suggested:

- Select 2 locations for to pilot implementation of the strategy (number of locations subject to review);
- Assist local partners to design, develop and deliver literacy programs;
- Document and disseminate results to prove that theories and models work;
- Strive to increase literacy among the marginalized.

WORKING GROUP 2

This group also proposed a tri-part framework that focused on Policy Development with two supporting initiatives in the areas of Capacity Building and Linking Communities of Practice. They too stressed several criteria:

- Initiatives should be consistent with COL's open and distance learning mandate;
- Initiatives should not exceed the capacity of COL to deliver and should therefore build on current initiatives. It is recommended that COL first do an internal SWOT analysis and assess its corporate advantage;
- Need to develop performance indicators.

Policy Development

This should focus on policy makers and practitioners. The emphasis should be on identifying "best practice" examples that offer useful transfer opportunities and advocating adoption. This will be aided by the identification strategies to guide implementation.

Capacity Building

The following strategies were identified as illustrative of this initiative:

- Learning events arranged/conducted by COL to develop requisite skills in policy development and implementation;
- Development of learning materials;
- Consulting assistance to countries wanting to develop integrated literacy and livelihoods programmes;
- Development of an information database to support the strategies.

Networking Communities of Practice

Examples of strategies to implement this initiative would include:

- Convening event such as conferences, workshops, etc.;
- Regular stakeholder consultations;
- Virtual networking.



A Stakeholder Framework

The group proposed that this be comprised of the following:

- Clients – including Commonwealth governments, employers and sector associations;
- National and international providers – with expertise in literacy and livelihoods programme development;
- Financial organizations – including multi and bi-lateral donors as well other public and private sector organizations;
- Civil society – particularly NGO's

WORKING GROUP 3

The recommendation is that COL focus primarily on policy development and promotion and support this by emphasizing the use of ICT and other tools, and by developing a supporting knowledge base.

Policy Goal

To promote an understanding of the socio-economic benefits of COL's policy commitment to a Literacy and Livelihoods approach among policy and decision makers.

Strategies, Resources and Potential Partners

- Primary strategy would be to select four pilot countries based on a set of criteria that would ensure representitiveness across the Commonwealth. Enviroment scans would be conducted in each country to identify priorities, opportunities, and, assess effectiveness of current efforts;
- Potential resources would include the UNESCO and WORLD BANK databases;
- UNESCO is a potential partner through its Literacy Assesemnt & Monitoring Programme (LAMP) initiative.

Outputs

Four evidence-based papers (one per country) that provide an assessment of the current state and potential for raction.

Success Indicators

- Inclusion of literacy and livelihoods in PRSp's (WORLD BANK);
- Inclusion of literacy in EFA national plans (UNESCO);
- Integration of literacy and livelihoods in operations of COL and Commonwealth.



Note: A key step will be for COL to present this proposal to the next meeting of the CCEM.

The group also recommended that the Policy Goal will need to be supported by two other major initiatives:

- Promotion of the use of ICT-based and other tools;
- Development of a knowledge base that can inform initiatives.

Both initiatives will be important to enable scalability and achieve sustainability. It was felt that COL has particular strengths in both areas.

The objectives regarding the development of a Knowledge Base are to:

- Use COL's capacities to collect information on policies, practices and activities related to literacy and livelihoods developments;
- Create dissemination networks and strategies for sharing information among Commonwealth countries;
- To assist Commonwealth countries to use this Knowledge

Outputs from the Knowledge Base initiative would include the issuance of reports (both country and aggregate) to Commonwealth countries on activities, issues and prospects for advancement of literacy and livelihoods.

Assumptions

The group stressed that its proposals were based on several assumptions that COL would need to validate. These were:

- An integrated literacy and livelihoods approach is positively co-related with socio economic development;
- Proposed partners are committed and willing to contribute;
- COL has sufficient resources (Human and financial);
- While the lead will be Education Ministries, other Government Departments and Agencies, as well as NGOs and the Private Sector, can and should be involved;
- This initiative is compatible with country ICT policies;
- Data will be available and reliable.

Risks

- Could overpromise and underdeliver;
- Resources will not be available

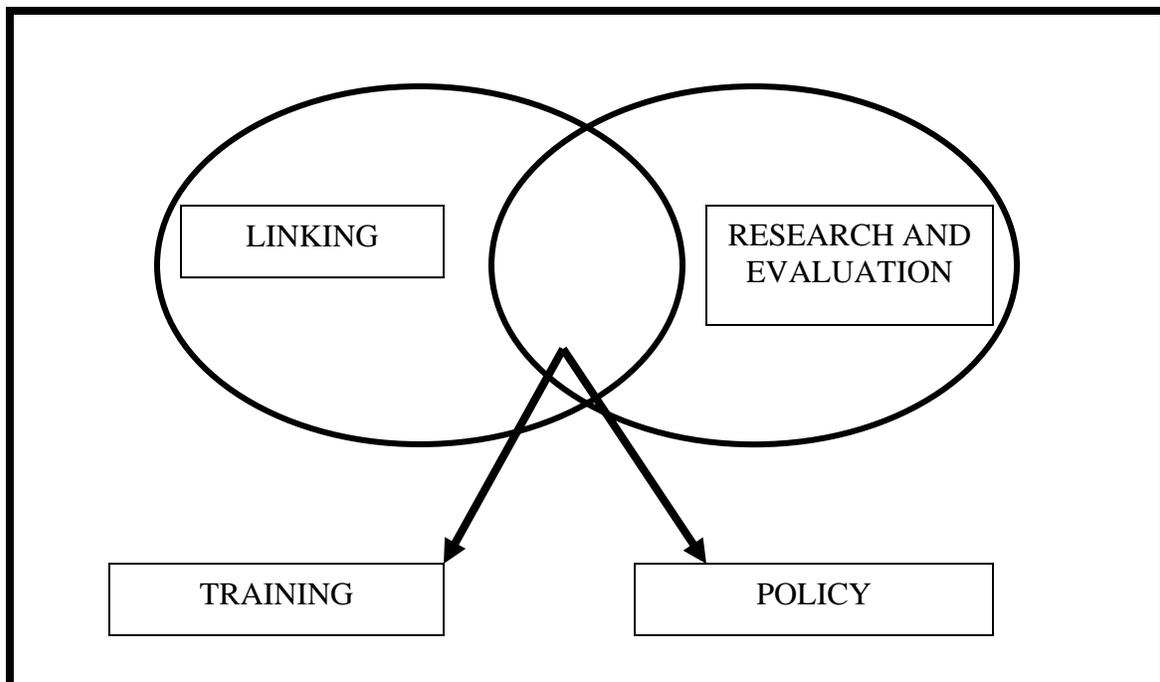


WORKING GROUP 4

The group began its report with several warnings:

- COL must not lose TVET in its new concentration on Literacy and Livelihoods; indeed, some cross fertilisation between the two may be productive;
- There may be a danger of concentrating too much on 'literacy'. We would like to see 'literacy' incorporated within a wider concern for Learning, and Livelihoods, and, within a wider concern for Life Skills. We note the sub-title of this consultation, Learning for Life, and wonder if this would provide a good context for literacy learning.
- We have a concern about an ill-considered assumption that livelihoods education is suitable for southern (so-called 'developing') countries while Lifelong Learning is the discourse used for northern/western societies. This discrimination needs to be replaced with a shared concern for Lifelong Learning for All, north and south.

The group began its discussions by looking at the need for Research and Evaluation of Literacy and Livelihoods projects and programmes; it then linked this to the existing role of COL in 'Linking'; and out of this came two key areas, Policy and Training. We saw the relationship between these activities as shown in the following diagram:





Research and Evaluation

The purpose of this activity is to produce bottom-up evidence-based policy and training. The strategies will include:

- Identification of good practice understood within its own context (i.e. the nature of the local issue being addressed through the practice);
- A database of such activities;
- Linking, networking and sharing among such cases (e.g. a newsletter etc);
- It should be participatory research with local agencies contributing directly to the research findings and sharing in the research activities;
- Case studies could be taken for research and evaluation;
- Review of existing evaluations, published and unpublished;
- COL undertaking its own evaluations;
- Helping local organisations to evaluate their own programmes;
- Identifying how technology mediated learning (TML) can help such programmes;
- Literature searches.

COL can draw the generalities and the specificities from these evaluations, taking care, while offering common concerns and valuable experiences, to identify the local from the global. It should be participatory research.

Linking

COL is already uniquely engaged in linking. The existing networks should be built upon and expanded.

The purposes for such linking are to:

- Enhance the programme by sharing experiences;
- Assess value added, especially in TML;
- Avoid duplication and waste;
- Identify opportunities for 'piggy-backing'.

The activities of such a programme would include:

- Bringing various agencies together;
- Arranging exchange visits and other forms of contact at field level;
- Promoting national forums for Literacy and Livelihoods;
- Networking, sharing information and experiences;
- Identifying opportunities and limitations of scaling up.



A Commonwealth FORUM for Literacy and Livelihoods could be created using such tools as:

- A database of activities;
- The creation of a portal to enable project leaders to search for other experiences and at the same time place their own experiences on the site..

Partnerships will need to be created for this that include not only stakeholders and participant agencies, but also the media (press, radio and television etc).

Policy

The purposes of developing policy in the field of Literacy and Livelihoods include:

- Developing awareness of the potential of integrating Literacy and Livelihoods (and its limitations);
- Identifying the appropriate ways in which TML can enhance Literacy and Livelihoods programmes.

Required Resources

- Human, especially the technical expertise of ODL;
- Materials and technical;
- Information;
- Financial

Stakeholders

Will include the providing agencies (government, non-governmental, and private sector), member governments, donor agencies, international agencies etc. The group felt it wise to start with those already providing Literacy and Livelihoods programmes in order to learn from their experiences, and, to use their expertise.

It was pointed out that Livelihoods is a much wider concept than Literacy with its 'educational' connotations. The issue was raised of the appropriate *gateway* into the various countries involved. COL has credibility with Ministries of Education but it may not be easy to work with other Ministries, however involved they may be in livelihoods promotion, poverty reduction and social development.

Training Required

The purposes include:

- Capacity building in the development of integrated literacy and livelihoods programmes;
- The use of TML and open and distance learning (ODL).



The activities will include:

- Identifying training opportunities at local and regional levels;
- Sharing and widening access to existing training activities;
- Involving the training agencies as stakeholders.

Partnerships will include NGOs and some private sector bodies.



APPENDIX C

MEETING PROGRAMME

Accommodation: Pan Pacific Hotel, 300-999 Canada Place, Vancouver, BC, Canada
Telephone: 1+ 604 662 8111 / Facsimile: 1+ 604 685 8960

Meeting Venue: Pan Pacific Hotel, Governor General Suite D

Meeting Facilitator: Dr. Glen Farrell

Saturday, November 13, 2004

Delegates arrive and check-in.

Sunday, November 14, 2004

18:00 – 20:00 Welcome Reception – Canada Suite, 23rd Floor, Pan Pacific Hotel

Commonwealth of Learning's New Strategic Plan

Mr. Rod Tyrer, Programme Director

Monday, November 15, 2004

09:00 – 09:30 Official Welcome – Mr. Joshua Mallet

Introduction of Delegates – Mr. Joshua Mallet

Overview of the Programme – Dr. Glen Farrell

09:30 – 10:30 Keynote Speech: “Learning for Life in a Changing World”

Sir John Daniel, President & CEO, Commonwealth of Learning

10:30 – 11:00 Refreshments served in Governor General Suite D

11:00 – 12:30 “UNESCO’s Adult Literacy Initiative: Literacy Initiative for the Excluded (*LIFE*)”

Dr. Qian Tang, Director, Executive Office, Education Sector,
UNESCO, Paris, France

12:30 – 14:00 Lunch served in Governor General Suite B

14:00 – 15:30 “Literacy and Livelihoods for Youth at Risk – the Servol Experience”

Mr. Martin Pacheco, Executive Coordinator, Service Volunteered
for All (SERVOL Ltd.), Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago



Monday, November 15, 2004 - *continued*

- 15:30 – 16:00 Refreshments served in Governor General Suite D
- 16:00 – 17:30 “Conceptualisation of Education Reform in the Pacific from a cultural Perspective with particular Reference to Literacy & Livelihoods”
Mr. Mahendra Singh, Project Manager, Pacific Regional Initiatives for the Delivery of Basic Education, Suva, Fiji
- 19:00 Dinner at Canada Suite, 23rd Floor, Pan Pacific Hotel

Tuesday, November 16, 2004

- 09:00 – 10:30 “Meeting the Literacy and Livelihoods Agenda in Sub-Saharan Africa”
Mr. Arvil Van Adams, Senior Advisor for Social Protection, Africa Region, The World Bank, Washington, DC, USA
- 10:30 – 11:00 Refreshments in Governor General Suite D
- 11:00 – 12:30 Summation and Discussion of Presentations - Themes, Issues, Constraints and Opportunities by Meeting Facilitator, Dr. Glen Farrell
Venue: Governor General Suite D
- 12:30 – 13:30 Lunch served in Governor General Suite B
- 13:30 – 15:00 Working Groups – Identify Potential Opportunities for COL to “Add Value” to Current Initiatives
Venue: Harbour Mountain Parlours (breakout rooms # 839, 939 and 12) and Governor General Suite D - four Groups
- 15:00 – 16:00 Plenary Session – Working Groups Reports
Venue: Governor General Suite D
- 16:00 – 16:20 Refreshments served in Harbour Mountain Parlours (breakout rooms) and in Governor General Suite D - four Groups
- 16:20 – 17:30 Working Groups – Prioritise Opportunities and Propose Actions
Venue: Harbour Mountain Parlours (breakout rooms) and Governor General Suite D - four Groups
- 19:00 Dinner at Canada Suite, 23rd Floor, Pan Pacific Hotel



Wednesday, November 17, 2004

- 09:00 – 11:00 Working Groups continued
Venue: Harbour Mountain Parlours and Governor General Suite D
(four Groups)
- 11:00 – 11:30 Refreshments served in Governor General Suite D
- 11:30 – 13:30 Plenary Session – Working Group Reports
Venue: Governor General Suite D
- 13:30 – 14:30 Lunch served in Governor General Suite B

Closing comments - Mr. Brian Long, Vice President, COL
- 15:00 – 17:30 Visit to COL offices and special interest meeting opportunities
- 19:00 Farewell Dinner at Canada Suite, 23rd Floor, Pan Pacific Hotel

Where do we go from here? Mr. Joshua Mallet



Comments:

1a. To provide a broad overview of current literacy issues in various regions.

- A lot more, but time did not permit. (20)
- Not enough presentations (country) on literacy issues. (26)

1b. To generate dialogue around types of literacy delivery models being used.

- Presentations provided excellent basis for discussions. (15)
- Positive. (20)
- Not enough focus on various country situations. (26)

1c. To provide background information on specific country case studies through written papers.

- They were well circulated – if delegates checked web. (15)
- Good. (20)
- The case studies were very comprehensive. However, having more case studies would have been a lot more beneficial. (26)

1d. To increase the potential for partnerships through discussion of inter-agency collaborations and the roles of the state, NGOs and private sector in literacy initiatives.

- This goal was achieved – we look forward to this being a long-term goal. (15)
- There was very little representation of international & bilateral agencies which is very important. (26)

1e. To gather advice on effective linkages between literacy and livelihoods.

- Achieved in meeting. Strategy suggested outlines long-term strategy. (15)
- Not enough feedback was obtained on the effective linkages. (26)

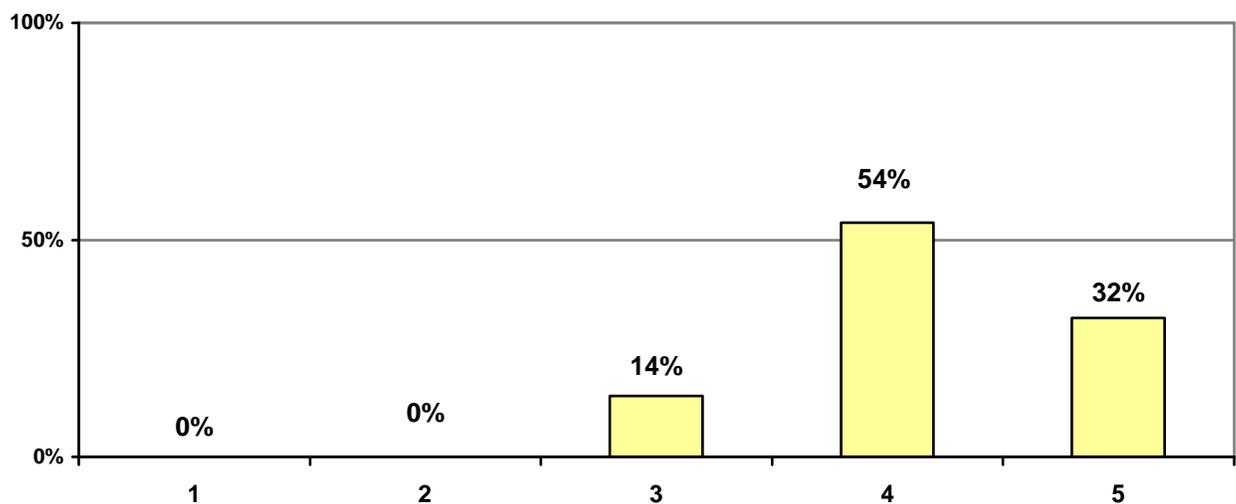


1f. To discuss recommendations regarding specific programme initiatives that COL might implement or facilitate.

- COL needs to also play a lobby/pressure role on governments. (15)
- Most of the recommendations were very general. (26)
- Not so much recommendations but an identification of COL's strengths or areas of possible work. (27)

2. Overall, how do you rate the success of this Meeting?

Rating scale: Not at all successful 1 2 3 4 5 Extremely successful



Average Rating = 4.2 (based on 28 respondents)

Comments:

Rating of 3

- Look at this questionnaire, especially Q1 and reconsider what/how the discussions were about. (7)

Rating of 4

- This meeting provided an opportunity for experts in this field to discuss the new approach in L/LH. It provided suggestions for COL to implement in future. (10)
- Very successful. A lot was achieved in 2 days. (20)
- To advise COL at a broad level. It worked well. (27)
- There should have been more opportunity for more participants to present their experiences. (28)



Rating of 5

- Achieved objectives. (15)

3. What changes would you recommend, if any, to improve this Meeting?

- Perhaps a more active beginning, e.g. reducing number of oral presentations in the 1st day and spreading them over time. (1)
- Have interaction between participants on the 1st day. (2)
- Development of a discussion paper with data on various components of the theme – L & LL. (3)
- Choose a warmer climatic condition. (4)
- Video-conferencing so that many could participate. (6)
- More country input to assist COL not country input on COL. (7)
- We may need an additional plenary session to discuss or brain-storm the recommendations for COL. (10)
- Smaller group & more intensive discussion of basic issues before embarking on policy & action plans. (11)
- Tasks were not quite clear. Written tasks for groups would have been better. (12)
- More detailed presentation on COL activities at the beginning. (13)
- Have scheduled time to look at real examples & practice. (14)
- [no recommended changes] Patricia's organization was excellent both in the months running up to the meeting – but also during workshop. COL's staff all played very supportive role. (15)
- Provide written task/instructions for group work. (18)
- Have adequate breaks in between. (19)
- Use of electronic recorders – lap tops. (20)
- More time in working groups. Consolidation of findings for greater focus. (21)
- There must be free time allotted during the conference. The schedule was too packed. (22)
- Provide a template of data for authors to use in describing regional L&L activities. (23)
- One participant has expressed one difficulty in hearing, not catching half of what was said. Breakout rooms too spread out. The tensions emerging in group discussions: academic vs. practice based, policy vs. practice. So what works best in group context? Heterogeneous or homogenous? (25)
- More practitioners. (27)



- Have two presentations in a 1½ hr session. (28)
- More tightly structured agenda. Could have been completed in 2 days. More practitioners could have been involved. (29)

4. In the context of your own involvement in literacy and livelihoods, please describe any gaps in the information resources currently available to you.

- Availability & quality, representativeness (1)
- Practical models, options and scope for developing cross-sectoral linkages. (3)
- Alternative TML facilities appropriate & suitable to the target population – lack of adequate access to information. (4)
- Authenticated correlations. (6)
- Not enough books or technological means through which literacy can be achieved. (7)
- It may be helpful if COL can provide an overall review of the global trends on literacy as the background paper for the participants. (10)
- Resources such as capacity building and funding. (12)
- Definition. What is happening in other countries? Funding agencies involved. (13)
- Need more examples of best practices from other countries/continents. (15)
- Information sharing. (19)
- Lack of accurate data on target groups in different countries. (20)
- Lack of solid project evaluations. (23)

5. What comparative strengths does COL have that will add value in the field of literacy and livelihoods?

- Commitment, flexibility, tradition on ODL. (1)
- Strong, valued reputation. Good resource base. Experienced personnel/experts. (2)
- COL's programs and experiences in TVET, Poverty Reduction, Open Schooling, Health and Policy, Teacher Education. (3)
- Its network of partners and information base on technology mediated learning facilities. (4)
- Its ODL orientation and its C'wealth focus. (5)



- Multi-stakeholder approach. Technology-mediation. Standing in the national government. (6)
- ODL, networking, policy dev. (7)
- Evaluation of Best Practice. (8)
- As identified by our group. (9)
- The experience gained in Commonwealth countries by COL can be a good contribution to the whole international community. (10)
- This needs lots of reflection – not possible to answer like this!
Networking/TML/reputation (international), etc, etc, etc. (especially staff). (11)
- Research and personnel. (12)
- Ability to assemble information. Access to expertise. COL mandate among policy makers. (13)
- Access at ministry level. ODL expertise. Some field experience of its own. Access to info. Ability to develop knowledge levels, materials, etc. (14)
- COL: works in range of countries – especially developing countries. Has influence with education ministers and CHOGM. Has internal organizational capacity & partnerships. Has clear ODL vision. (15)
- Part of Commonwealth Secretariat. Publications record – tools for ODL. Convening regional/hemispheric meetings. (17)
- Expertise in different fields like gender, agriculture (food security), environment. Expertise in the use of ICT for advancement of open & distant learning opportunities. Expertise in TVET & ODL. (18)
- Its proposal to work with national states. (19)
- ODL, all speak English. (20)
- Networks, country info. (21)
- Knowledge and experience. TVET and technology experience. (23)
- The feedback from the small groups covered this well. (27)
- We have specialists from various sectors who could contribute and COL has good networking. (28)
- Close networking & collaboration skills. Effective capacity building skills in ODL & ICTs. (29)



6. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by circling one number for each row.

**Rating scale: 1 = strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=neutral 4=agree
5=strongly agree**

	Average Rating	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	#
a. The duration of the Meeting was appropriate.	4.4	0% (0)	7% (2)	7% (2)	24% (7)	62% (18)	29
b. The Meeting venue was satisfactory.	4.8	0% (0)	0% (0)	3% (1)	11% (3)	86% (25)	29
c. Accommodation was satisfactory.	4.9	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	12% (3)	88% (22)	25
d. The overall Meeting programme was well-planned.	4.3	0% (0)	0% (0)	21% (6)	24% (7)	55% (16)	29
e. The overall Meeting programme was well-facilitated.	4.6	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	38% (11)	62% (18)	29
f. Participants were given an equal opportunity to speak during Meeting discussions.	4.5	0% (0)	3% (1)	7% (2)	28% (8)	62% (18)	29
g. Summaries of working group discussions were effectively communicated.	4.4	0% (0)	0% (0)	14% (4)	31% (9)	55% (16)	29
h. The mix of participants was appropriate.	4.3	0% (0)	0% (0)	14% (4)	45% (13)	41% (12)	29
i. The supporting materials were applicable to the objectives of the Meeting.	4.2	0% (0)	4% (1)	11% (3)	50% (13)	34% (9)	26
j. The supporting materials were of high quality.	4.3	0% (0)	0% (0)	8% (2)	58% (15)	35% (9)	26
k. Meeting presentations were insightful.	4.3	0% (0)	0% (0)	14% (4)	41% (12)	45% (13)	29
l. Recommendations gathered through the Meeting were relevant to current needs in the field of literacy and livelihoods.	4.1	0% (0)	4% (1)	7% (2)	63% (17)	26% (7)	27
m. I have acquired new information / tools / models that could be useful in my own work / community.	4.0	4% (1)	7% (2)	15% (4)	33% (9)	41% (11)	27



n. I have increased my understanding of COL and the unique role it can fill as a result of this Meeting.	4.4	0% (0)	4% (1)	12% (3)	28% (7)	56% (14)	25
o. The Meeting met my expectations for attending. (See below for comments provided on expectations)	4.2	0% (0)	4% (1)	12% (3)	42% (11)	42% (11)	26

My expectations were (please specify):

Rating of 5 (item Q6o)

- Networking with peers working on L&L. Getting to know COL’s vision and endeavors. Collaborate in COL’s future plans. Getting the situation in my country known to a selected expert audience. (1)
- Integrating L&L in policy. (6)
- Exchange of ideas – learning and information gathering. (12)
- To share my organization’s experience and to widen my knowledge of happenings in other countries. (22)
- To obtain recommendations regarding COL’s approach to L&L. (26)

Rating of 4 (item Q6o)

- To make specific contributions particularly reflecting the challenges of meeting the needs of marginalized groups that formed an important perspective/component to the focus of the meeting. (4)
- Discussion and development for ideas for COL’s positioning in the field of literacy & livelihood. (14)
- Sharing experiences. Gathering information on COL. Clarified understandings on “livelihoods”. Have exposure to L&L projects. Learn how to up-scale L&L projects. Identify NB stakeholders. (15)
- To become more clear about the measuring of L&L, to learn from others’ experiences, to exchange with experts from different backgrounds, to meet interesting persons. (18)

Rating of 2 (item Q6o)

- Practitioner approaches from different countries of COL to literacy & livelihoods. (7)

No rating given (item Q6o)

- Know the different models. Understanding of ‘Best Practice’. (8)



7. Please indicate your category of participation in the Meeting (check one):

Respondent Categories	Percentages	Survey Numbers
Participants	68% (19)	1-20
Presenters	18% (5)	21-25
COL Staff	11% (3)	26-29

Note: 28 respondents completed this question

SUMMARY OF PARTICIPANTS FEEDBACK - INTERPRETIVE NOTES

- The Meeting was rated as effective in furthering all the goals listed (3.7 or higher on a 5-point effectiveness scale). The goal with the highest average rating is:
 - *To discuss recommendations regarding specific programme initiatives that COL might implement or facilitate* (average rating 4.1; with accompanying comments that recommendations were very general or more focused on identifying COL's strengths)
- The success of the Meeting was rated 4.2 on a 5-point scale where "5" is "extremely successful". All participants gave ratings of "3" or higher.
- Suggestions for improving the meeting include: incorporating more interaction on the first day and more group work throughout, development of a discussion paper, incorporating video-conferencing to widen the circle of participation, more detailed input from countries, more discussion of basic issues, more breaks and free time, and clearer criteria on how groups were formed and how they should function on specific tasks.
- Gaps in information resources identified by participants include: practical models for developing cross-sectoral linkages, correlation data, review of global trends, database of funding agencies involved and specific initiatives in various countries, best practice examples, and solid project evaluations.
- COL's comparative strengths mentioned by participants include: reputation/tradition, network of partners and multi-stakeholder approach, information and knowledge base, experience across Commonwealth, research expertise, access at a ministry level, publications record, common language of English, and sector level expertise.
- Positive descriptive statements focusing on various aspects of the Meeting all gathered high levels of agreement on a 5-point scale where "5" is "strongly agree."



The highest levels of agreement were for the following three statements:

- *Accommodation was satisfactory.* (average rating 4.9)
- *The Meeting venue was satisfactory.* (average rating 4.8; all “4”s or “5”s)
- *The overall Meeting programme was well-facilitated.* (average rating 4.6; all “4”s or “5”s).