

THE BAHAMAS

COL activities in 2003-2006

BACKGROUND

A small state of the Commonwealth, The Bahamas is a regular contributor to COL's budget.

SUMMARY

In 2003-2006, COL's partnership with The Bahamas supported a number of initiatives. In this period, 24 Bahamian students graduated in the Technical/Vocation Education and Training teacher training programme jointly developed by COL and the University of Technology in Jamaica. The Bahamas was involved in the preparation of a book on "Foreign Tertiary Education Providers in the Anglophone Caribbean." At the request of the Minister of Education, COL also aided The Bahamas in jump starting the process of planning for the implementation of an educational television channel.

POLICY AND SYSTEMS ENHANCEMENT

Working in Partnership to Strengthen National Systems

The Minister of Education, Science and Technology invited COL to aid in jump starting the process of planning for the implementation of an educational television channel for The Bahamas. A visit was undertaken by COL's Education Specialist, Educational Technology and the outline for an educational television channel plan was completed during his one- week visit (i.e. staffing, costs, mission, interaction with the other government players and organisations, technology, etc.) and presented to the Ministry staff and the major players. In addition, a suitcase FM radio station with a 100 watt transmitter was presented to the Ministry of Education for the purpose of communications and education. Training was provided and a test run was undertaken.

Strategic Planning

In July 2005 the President of COL, Sir John Daniel, attended the Ministers of Education for the Caribbean and Canada Mid-Term Review of the Action Plan of the 15th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (15CCEM) in Nassau.

Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)

The Bahamas was invited to participate in a meeting to discuss the creation of the VUSSC in Singapore in September 2005. (For more details of VUSSC see section on Pan-Commonwealth initiatives).

Preparation and use of learning materials

The Bahamas was represented in a three-day meeting of the authors of the proposed book on “Foreign Tertiary Education Providers in the Anglophone Caribbean” in Trinidad & Tobago in October 2005. The book is due to be launched at the 4th Pan-Commonwealth Forum in October 2006 and it will be available in hard copy, eBook, CD-ROM, PDF and on COL and UNESCO websites.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Bahamas was represented at the Chief Education Officers (CEOs) meeting on open and distance learning as well as the meeting for small states which were held during the 3rd Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning in Dunedin in July 2004. The meetings provided opportunities for professional development and served as a forum for COL to receive advice and guidance from CEOs.

COL sponsored one delegate from The Bahamas to participate in the 3rd Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning in Dunedin, New Zealand from 4-8 July 2004.

The Bahamas is currently piloting the Technical/Vocational Education and Training (TVET) teacher diploma programme jointly developed by COL and the University of Technology, Jamaica for technical/vocational teachers in selected countries in the Caribbean. There were 24 Bahamians in the first cohort of students. The first graduates of the TVET diploma programme (from The Bahamas) received their degrees at the graduation ceremony of the University of Technology in Jamaica on 5 November 2005.

LOOKING FORWARD

COL’s successful partnership with The Bahamas in 2003-2006 will continue to yield positive results in the next planning period 2006-2009. In this period the focus of joint working will be on activities within the health and education sectors. COL will also provide advice to The Bahamas on the sustainability of the educational television channel, The Bahamas Learning Channel. There is scope for The Bahamas to become more actively involved in VUSSC.