



COMMONWEALTH of LEARNING

*Learning for Sustainable Development*

---

## **Digitalisation and Future Learning Webinar**

**25 September 2024: Pacific Focus**

### **About the Commonwealth of Learning**

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) is an intergovernmental organisation created by Commonwealth Heads of Government in 1987 to promote the development and sharing of open learning and distance education knowledge, resources, and technologies.

Hosted by the Government of Canada with headquarters in Burnaby, British Columbia, COL is the world's only intergovernmental organisation solely concerned with the promotion and development of distance education and open learning.

The organisation is governed by a distinguished Board of Governors who represent countries from around the Commonwealth and bring leadership and expertise in a wide range of areas. Led by Professor Peter Scott, COL's fifth president, it remains committed to an enduring vision — to be the foremost global agency that promotes learning for sustainable development.

COL's greatest impact is in supporting efforts to provide Commonwealth citizens greater access to quality education and training through open, distance and technology-enabled learning, thereby allowing them to benefit from improved livelihoods, greater gender equity and overall economic, social, and cultural development leading to sustainable development.

COL is committed to promoting equitable access to quality lifelong learning for all – believing, in effect, that access to learning opportunities will lead to progress in achieving sustainable development. COL values and maintains an organisational culture that is respectful, ethical, and fair.



**Digitalisation and Future Learning**  
**Webinar 1: Caribbean and Indian Ocean**  
**18 September 2024**  
**07:00 – 08:30 PST**  
**Zoom Link 1**

**Webinar 2: Pacific**  
**25 September 2024**  
**17:00 – 18:30 PST**  
**Zoom Link 2**

### **Background**

The proposed webinars follow up on Session 8D at the CCEM meeting held during the 22<sup>nd</sup> Commonwealth Conference of Education Ministers meeting held in London in May 2024.

The session was chaired by:

Hon Ismail Shaffeeu, Minister of Education, Maldives

Hon Dr Justin Valentin, Minister of Education, Seychelles.

Participating countries included Barbados, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Samoa, Seychelles and Sri Lanka.

### **Overview of Session 8D**

- Discussed the limitations and challenges to traditional education systems, and explored how technology could help mitigate this.
- Discussed the digital divide and its impact on various Commonwealth member states
- Reflected on positive experiences in deploying appropriate technology, and how discussed how these initiatives were scaled
- Discussed the need to establish a Digitalisation Working Group.

### **Key questions:**

- How can we overcome traditional limitations in education systems.?
- How can we ensure equitable access to technology-enabled learning in a sustainable way?
- How can we learn from the experiences from member states in implementing technology at scale?

### **Summary of discussion:**

- Continuous training of teachers was emphasised, as some member states raised concerns about gaps, capability and skill



- The importance of creating strong policies and legislation to govern the integration of AI in the sector. Emphasis was also made on data protection policies.
- Working to eliminate the digital divide is vital, and much can be done by leveraging key partnerships with organisations such as COL.

### **Recommendations:**

- Establish a Digitalisation Working Group.
- Collate a collection of reflective case studies of practice and advance a research agenda.
- Support greater collaboration between member states in terms of addressing digitalising processes, digital content and overcoming the digital divide.

### **Rationale and Methodology**

The two regional webinars are seen as a first step in taking the above agenda forward.

Each session will take the form of a panel discussion followed by a more open discussion. Each panellist will be invited to make a short 10-minute presentation. The discussion will then be opened to participants for comments and questions. The panellists will each then make short closing remarks. Participants will be invited to share a reflective case study of practice.

### **The format of the session is as follows:**

1. Opening remarks by Chair.
2. Panel Discussion. Key questions for panel members to address:
  - a. What has been done to overcome the limitations of the campus-based educational system?
  - b. What has been done to ensure equitable access to technology-enabled learning in a sustainable way?
  - c. What has been learned from the experiences of implementing technology at scale?
  - d. What should we do, together, going forward?

### **Expected Outcomes of the session:**

1. The identification of countries and institutions for possible future support.
2. Sharing of a template to assist with the development of a country-level case study.
3. Agreement on a timeline for follow-up after the session.