



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

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Antigua & Barbuda, a small twin island state of the Commonwealth has a population of about 88,000. Tourism, and to a lesser extent investment banking and financial services dominate the economy with agriculture production focusing on local markets. Tourism accounts for most of the economic activity and the millennium development goals help to shape priorities of the country. This report outlines the use of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) in Antigua and Barbuda, the top priorities of the country and what the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) can do to support the national agenda.

Use of ODL

Antigua and Barbuda has been offering ODL for over 30 years through the University of the West Indies distance education programmes: UWIDITE, UWIDEC and now the Open Campus, our premier tertiary institution. UWI Open Campus offers a variety of courses including, Continuing and Professional Programmes, Undergraduate and Graduate Programmes as well as short courses. Other tertiary institutions use ODL to a lesser extent. Antigua and Barbuda International Institute of Technology (ABIIT) offers one course online, the Antigua State College and the Ministry of Education have been engaged in using Open Education Resources (OER) for training purposes. While individuals from the Ministry of Agriculture have been involved in VUSSC boot camps, it is only the educational institutions that have harnessed the use of OER and ODL to train its staff.

Through the support of the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), a number of educators (representing individuals from the primary, secondary and tertiary levels as well as persons in the Ministry of Education in Antigua and Barbuda) began the online Commonwealth Certificate for Technology Integration (CCTI) course in November 2011. Twenty-five completed the first four modules while 22 persons completed the tutor training in June 2012. With a local consultant to coordinate the delivery of the final two modules of the CCTI, and continued tutorship provided by SchoolNet South Africa, 24 persons continued to pursue the course of study and should have completed the final module by February 28, 2014.

Currently, teachers of mathematics, representing schools that will pilot the use of Canvas, an open source Learning Management System (LMS) are being trained by COL to use the software. This LMS will serve as a repository for OERs to support students who will be pursuing the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) examinations.

Antigua and Barbuda is also collaborating with the Caribbean Knowledge and Learning Network (CKLN) to develop strategic plans to introduce and use distance education. In July of 2013, a key focus of the workshop was capacity building for the development and use of

open educational resources and the adoption of ODL policies. Additionally in 2013 COL (in conjunction with UNESCO) reviewed ICT in Education Policy.

Top priorities

- Curriculum development for TVET teachers (including visual and performing Art).
- Training for PE teachers.
- Tourism education and awareness programmes for secondary school children and hoteliers.
- Nutrition and health status of the population.
- Food security.

What COL can do to further support the national agenda?

- Continue to support teacher training with regards to ICT integration.
- Provide technical assistance / training in the development of course-ware and quality assurance strategies to assist in the expansion of the LMS.
- Expand the OER prototype to other subject areas, to provide training in ICTs to pre-service and in-service teachers.
- Provide training in Curriculum development.
- Assist in the development of a policy approach for Nutrition, Health and Physical education in the school setting in light of the increased childhood obesity and increase in chronic non communicable diseases.
- Develop training courses focused on Hotel Management and Operations for small hoteliers.
- Develop training modules for the development of management and supervisory skills for tourism industry employees at appropriate levels.

To further ensure that Antigua and Barbuda is strategically positioned to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, COL can provide technical support/training for all ministries in the following areas:

- Strategic Planning.
- Policy Development.
- Monitoring and Evaluation.
- Human Resource Management.

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