COL in the Commonwealth

2012–2015
Solomon Islands
Acknowledgements

All COL Education Specialists and their Programme Assistants as well as CEMCA colleagues have contributed to the development of the country reports which make up the volume *COL in the Commonwealth: 2012-2015 Country Reports*. This country report is an excerpt from the volume. The following people are thanked in particular for their role in the design and publication of these reports.

Alena Kovar, Receptionist/Secretary
Alex Hennig, Consultant
Alicia Swinamer, Stakeholder Relations Manager
Denise Tremblay, Design/Production Coordinator
Georgina Montgomery, Consultant

**Compilation and Coordination**
Alexis Carr, Project Assistant

**Direction and Editing**
Professor Asha S. Kanwar, President and Chief Executive Officer
COL in the Commonwealth: 2012-2015 Country Reports summarises COL’s activities over the last three years (2012-2015) and captures what we have achieved in each Member State and across the Commonwealth.

This volume is the result of a collaborative process that began in 2011 with extensive partner consultations. Following these consultations, a Country Action Plan was developed to guide COL’s work in each country. The reports contained in this volume describe the implementation of these plans and highlight COL’s achievements during this three year plan.

The reports cover all Member States of the Commonwealth, showing not only what COL has done in developing countries but also how its work aligns with the international development priorities of Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. The reports are grouped under four regions: Africa and the Mediterranean, Asia, the Caribbean and the Pacific. Each regional section contains a brief regional report as well as the reports for each country within that region. The Pan-Commonwealth section describes COL’s Initiatives, under the two sectors: ‘Education’ and ‘Livelihoods and Health’. The reports for this triennium categorise COL activities according to our five core strategies: partnerships, capacity, materials, models and policy, in order to better present how our work contributes to outcomes. ‘COL in Action’ highlights real life examples to illustrate how COL’s work impacts on people, groups and institutions in developing countries.

Most of the initiatives that COL pursued during this triennium are showing demonstrable results in expanding and improving opportunities for education and training, building healthier communities, helping rural communities achieve greater prosperity, and contributing to skills development. As the external Impact Evaluation report states: ‘COL has had a major impact on individuals including farmers…faculty members, institutional leaders in formal and non-formal learning, selected policy makers and educational administrators’ (S. Murgatroyd with J. Tully, 2015). The external Outcome Evaluation concludes that ‘all the Initiatives moved successfully forward, on time and within budget’ (N. Kemp and G. Farrell, 2015). Both evaluations confirm that COL is highly respected and well regarded in the field.

The production of COL in the Commonwealth: 2012-2015 Country Reports was made possible through collective effort and collaboration. Partners on the ground have diligently provided updates to COL. COL staff have tracked and assessed results obtained from partners through a thorough monitoring and evaluation process. COL’s advanced knowledge management systems have enabled us to capture information from numerous sources and synthesise this into the reports that make up this volume. I must particularly commend Alexis Carr for her diligent work in filtering the masses of raw data and converting them into a coherent and meaningful narrative.

Professor Asha S. Kanwar
President and Chief Executive Officer
Commonwealth of Learning
SOLOMON ISLANDS

CONTEXT

Solomon Islands is a small state of the Commonwealth consisting of nearly 1,000 islands with a population of about 560,000. It faces significant development and educational challenges and is a major focus of the New Zealand Aid Programme support. The University of the South Pacific (USP) has a campus on the Solomon Islands. The nation contributes to COL’s budget.

COL’S WORK RELATED TO MDG TARGETS

National MDG Targets Addressed by COL
► Make available the benefits of new technologies, especially for information and communications
► Address the special needs of small island developing states

COL’s Work on Solomon Islands’ MDG Targets
► Training and materials provision in OER, ICTs, ODL and eLearning are underway
► Support provided for Technical and Vocational Skills Development
► VUSSC is committed to the collaborative development of open content resources for education, training and capacity-building, and the use of information and communications technologies (ICTs) to broaden access to education

AGREED PRIORITIES

► Support basic education, including education for out-of-school youth and those with disabilities
► Include practical subjects, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) courses, and information and communication technology (ICT) knowledge in junior secondary school curriculum
► Revise senior secondary school curriculum
► Develop new programmes and modules, such as computing studies, for training centres

OUTCOMES ACHIEVED BY COL

► Audio content for the Pacific Literacy and Numeracy in Basic Trades course developed
► Support provided for Community Learning Programme (CLP) development in Isabel Province
► COL Vocational Literacy open educational resources (OER) in use in 25 Rural Training Centres
► A draft ODL plan and 12 draft ODL course units completed at Solomon Islands National University
► 11 new VUSSC courses made available

QUICK NOTES

COL Focal Point:
► Dr. Franco Rodie, Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development

Areas of COL’s Work in Solomon Islands:
► Open Schooling
► Higher Education
► Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC)
► Technical and Vocational Skills Development (TVSD)
► Healthy Communities
In the lead-up to the 2014 Regional Focal Points Meeting, COL’s Focal Point for Solomon Islands was asked to identify the country’s top priorities and what COL can do to further support the national agenda of Solomon Islands. The following areas were identified:

- Reviewing of the content of courses being developed for the Certificate in Teaching Primary programme
- Rolling out of the delivery of the Certificate in Teaching Primary in the remaining provinces of Central Islands: Isabel, Rennell and Bellona, Western, Honiara and Choiseul
- Designing and developing of professional development modules for school leaders and teachers
- Incorporating and strengthening of the Community Education Department in the restructuring programme currently being implemented by the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development
- Developing of a design, programme specifications and modules for delivery to the population who left formal schooling

COL has identified five core strategies to achieve outcomes and impact: partnerships, capacity, materials, models and policy. In practice, most COL activities incorporate more than one of these strategies and, in some cases, all five. However, for ease of reference, activities have been classified in only one of the five categories.

**PARTNERSHIPS**
COL partners with government agencies, public institutions, civil society and other organisations to improve and extend teaching and learning services to people in the developing Commonwealth.

- Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development
- University of the South Pacific (USP)
- Solomon Islands National University (SINU)
- Isabel Provincial Government (IPG)
- PACFOLD regional centre

**CAPACITY**
Capacity development pervades all COL activities and COL focuses primarily on human resource development.

- Cost and Financing for Open Schools
- Monitoring and Evaluation for VUSSC
- Flexible Approaches to TVET
- Community Learning Programme (CLP) Developer’s Certificate

**MATERIALS**
Materials refer to learning and teaching resources including course materials, toolkits and frameworks. Materials are produced through collaboration with partners, or by partners themselves with COL support.

- Legislative Drafting Programme
- 11 new VUSSC courses made available
- Draft ODL Plan and courses for Solomon Islands National University (SINU)
- Pacific Literacy and Numeracy in Basic Trades course
- COL Vocational Literacy OER

**MODELS**
A model is a coherent set of structures and processes that has been shown to work in more than one context to achieve specific results. Models can range from broad approaches to more specific instruments.

- Transnational Qualifications Framework
- Healthy Communities model
Appendix: COL’s Activities in Solomon Islands

PARTNERSHIPS

VUSSC (Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth)

Solomon Islands is a member of VUSSC.

Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development: TVSD

COL met with the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development in Solomon Islands in September 2014 to discuss the COL programme and possible collaboration with TVSD.

Flexible Learning Audit at University of the South Pacific, Honiara

The President and CEO of COL visited the Solomon Islands 25 August 2014 to conduct an audit of the Flexible Learning provided at the USP Regional Campus in Honiara.

Pacific Centre for Flexible and Open Learning for Development (PACFOLD)

COL and the University of the South Pacific (USP) agreed to establish a regional centre to strengthen the use of open and distance learning (ODL) in formal, non-formal and informal learning, particularly in skills development, health and agriculture. The aim is to add value to the development process in the region. The centre is based at the Regional Centre for Continuing & Community Education (RCCCE) at USP in Suva. However, the Pacific Regional Centre for ODL is designed to meet the needs of the whole region and makes extensive use of technology to reduce distance between stakeholders. The launch of PACFOLD took place at the Pacific Focal Points meeting in Samoa in September 2014 and included the introduction of the PACFOLD learn online community.

PARTNERSHIPS: MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

Regional Focal Points Meeting

Mr James Bosamata represented Solomon Islands at the meeting.

Pacific TVET Open, Distance and Flexible Learning Forum 2013

With Central Gippsland Institute of Technical and Further Education (GippsTAFE), Australia, COL facilitated the Pacific TVET Open, Distance and Flexible Learning Forum in Tonga from 22 to 25 March 2013. The forum was attended by 26 participants from government ministries, NGOs, faith based organisations (FBOs) and TVET institutions in seven Pacific countries: Tonga, Samoa, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Tuvalu. Development partners NZAID and AusAID also attended. The outcome of the forum was a road map for collaboration between TVET institutions in the region and a plan for COL capacity-building support for open, distance and flexible learning approaches. Attending the forum on behalf of the Solomon Islands were Mr John Wate, Director of TVET, Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, and Mr Cyriano Nuake, Board Member, Solomon Islands Association of Rural Training Centres (SIARTC).

Regional Workshop on Teacher Education in the Pacific

COL attended the regional workshop on Teacher Education in the Pacific hosted by the National University of Samoa from 20 to 25 May 2013. The meeting’s participants included 21 representatives of teacher education departments in the ministries of education and teacher training institutions from seven countries. Discussed at the meeting were the challenges facing teacher education in the region, and the plans and priorities for 2013–2015. As well, three projects were identified with COL support envisioned:

Project 1: Upgrading Mathematics and Science Teachers

COL will collaborate with teacher training institutions to:

► design and implement special programmes for the training and upgrading of Science and Math teachers; and
► organise continuing professional development workshops for Math and Science teachers so as to update the teachers’ knowledge and skills.

Project 2: Capacity-Building in ODL

COL will provide technical support to institutions in the region to build their capacity in ODL and in the use of appropriate technology (with COL using expertise available in the region).

Project 3: Provision of support to the Pacific Association of Teacher Educators (PATE)

COL will be asked to consider providing support to PATE so that PATE’s objectives can be achieved, in particular those relating to:

► professional development of teacher educators in the region;
► research and publications; and
► support for PATE as a forum for the exchange of ideas and experiences on teacher development.

It was agreed that concept notes should be submitted to COL on the three projects before 30 June 2013. It was also agreed that the National University of Samoa should develop and submit the concept note for Project 1; Solomon Islands for Project 2; and Tonga for Project 3, on behalf of the participating countries and institutions.
VUSSC Interlocutors Meeting

The VUSSC Interlocutors meet every three years to review developments, achievements and lessons learned. The VUSSC Interlocutors Meeting coincides with the Pan-Commonwealth Forum (PCF). PCF7 was held in Abuja, Nigeria, from 2 to 6 December 2013. At this meeting, Interlocutors participated in a half-day impact evaluation workshop with COL’s impact evaluators, Dr Stephen Murgatroyd and Ms Janet Tully. Highlights of the Interlocutors Meeting included a discussion of the post-MDGs (Millennium Development Goals), current VUSSC resources, and the importance of gender in the VUSSC initiative. At the close of the meeting, the following countries expressed interest in offering VUSSC courses: Barbados, Vanuatu, Namibia, St. Lucia, Antigua & Barbuda, Maldives, Grenada and Dominica.

Ms Christina V. Bakolo of the Solomon Islands National Commission for UNESCO represented Solomon Islands at the meeting.

CAPACITY

Cost and Financing for Open Schools

COL facilitated a regional Cost and Financing (for Open Schooling) workshop in Vanuatu on 19 November 2012. The workshop trained the participants about issues of concern in establishing and maintaining open schooling. Participants from Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Kiribati participated in the workshop. Mr Allen Keti of Honiara High School, Mr James Iroga of the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, Solomon Islands, and Ms Irene Anigafutu of the University of the South Pacific (USP) Solomon Islands attended the workshop.

Monitoring and Evaluation for VUSSC

A workshop was organised in Male, Maldives, from 3 to 7 March 2013 specifically for the Asia Pacific region to build the capacity of implementers in designing and implementing the VUSSC M&E framework. It was supported by the Ministry of Education and the Maldives Villa College. Ms Christina V. Bakolo, Secretary of the Solomon Islands National Commission for UNESCO, Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, and Mr Noel Silvernus Galasau, System Administrator and Computer Literacy Tutor of the Solomon Islands National University (SINU), attended the meeting.

Flexible Approaches to TVET

In May 2014, COL facilitated a workshop in Fiji for 26 participants from nine Pacific countries, including Solomon Islands, to build capacity in flexible approaches to TVET and develop plans for new courses according to country context. As a result, 17 new flexible TVET courses are in development from 12 Pacific TVET institutions or NGOs. Mr Solomon Pita and Mr Jeremy Enaly, both from SINU, participated in the workshop.

Community Learning Programme (CLP) Developer’s Certificate

Two regional distance training and mentoring courses have been developed and delivered through a partnership between COL and its Healthy Communities partners in the Commonwealth.

Two editions of the 5-week “Communication for Development (C4D): Why. How. Now.” e-course were run in 2013/2014. In October to November 2014, five participants (one woman and four men) from Solomon Islands participated in the training from government and civil society organisations. In February to March 2014, one participant (male) from Solomon Islands participated in the training.

In the 10-week “Research for Planning” e-course run in April to June 2014, two participants (male) from the country were engaged in the training and mentoring course, resulting in comprehensive plans for CLPs based on formative research.

MATERIALS

Legislative Drafting Programme

The Legislative Drafting Programme, developed jointly with the Commonwealth Secretariat, London, is offered by COL through partner universities in the Commonwealth. The courses were revised in 2002 and were revised and completely updated again in 2013. The student version of the programme has been converted to open educational resources (OER) and is freely downloadable from the COL website for use by institutions, academics, learners and professionals who want to develop competencies in legislative drafting.

Thirteen of 15 candidates at USP from five Member States, including Solomon Islands, successfully completed the Legislative Drafting Programme in 2013. Fifteen candidates from five Member States, including Solomon Islands, were sponsored for the 2014 intake. Another fifteen are currently enrolled in the programme and expected to complete by the end of 2015.

New VUSSC Courses

During 2013–2014, 11 VUSSC courses were completed including: Master’s in Educational Leadership, Bachelor’s in Business and Entrepreneurship, Diploma in Agriculture, Linux for IT Managers, Facilitating Online Instruction, and Sustainable Tourism. Courses are available to all VUSSC member states on
the VUSSC website. Approximately 49,000 people have been reached or trained, including senior officials, educators and over 1,300 learners enrolled in VUSSC-developed courses and programmes.

**VUSSC Postgraduate Diploma in Education**

Senior officials of the small states identified a need to develop a teacher education programme, especially at the postgraduate level, to help address the acute shortage of teachers in most of the small states and the lack of training programmes in most teacher training institutions. COL therefore facilitated a workshop, in collaboration with the National University of Samoa, to develop a Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE). It ran from 17 June to 3 July 2013 in Samoa, with 28 participants from 14 countries.

Much of the course was developed using OER.

**Draft ODL Plan and Courses for SINU**

As a follow-up to the regional workshop on Teacher Education in the Pacific, COL held a three-day consultative/planning meeting 19 to 23 May 2014 at SINU. A draft plan was developed for integration of ODL at SINU.

Another workshop held at SINU in July 2014 resulted in the drafting of 12 course units for five schools (Education and Humanities, Business and Management, Technology and Maritime Studies, Nursing and Allied Health Sciences, and Natural Resources and Applied Sciences).

**Pacific Literacy and Numeracy in Basic Trades Course**

Audio content for the Pacific Literacy and Numeracy in Basic Trades course was developed by the Communications Department at National University of Samoa. In September 2014, the course materials were revised to integrate the audio content and the updated course was introduced to stakeholders at the Pacific Focal Points meeting in September 2014. An evaluation study of the 2012 delivery of this course in Nauru was completed in 2014.

**COL Vocational Literacy OER**

In 2014, Solomon Islands reported the use of COL Vocational Literacy OERs in 25 Rural Training Centres. These qualifications will be recognised at both the regional and international levels.

**Healthy Communities Model: Isabel Province**

Consultation with local stakeholders concerning development of Community Learning Programmes (CLPs) in Isabel Province was conducted between July and September 2012.

An advocacy workshop on Communication for Development facilitated by COL’s consultant, Dr. Jerry Watkins of the University of Western Sydney, was held in Isabel Province on 24 September 2012. At the workshop were 22 participants from the Isabel Provincial Government (IPG), civil society and the private sector, including the Hon Michael Meredi, Deputy Premier/Minister of Health, the Hon Peter Tugunau, Minister of Education and Human Resource Development, the Hon J. Votu, and the Hon Dick Daoleni, Minister of Community Affairs. The workshop resulted in plans for CLPs and recommendations for IPG to consider in moving forward with the network of community media outlets in the province.

**OTHER**

**Speeches and Presentations**

The President and CEO of COL gave a keynote address at the Forum Education Ministers’ Meeting (FEdMM) in the Cook Islands on 31 March 2014 and two presentations about COL’s work in the Pacific. The Minister of Education and Human Resources Development of the Solomon Islands was present, and received an Aptus device from COL.
LEARNING FOR DEVELOPMENT

COL is an intergovernmental organisation created by Commonwealth Heads of Government to encourage the development and sharing of open learning and distance education knowledge, resources and technologies.

VISION: To be the foremost global agency that promotes learning for development

MISSION: To help governments and institutions to expand the scale, efficiency and quality of learning by using open, distance and technology-based approaches

CORE STRATEGIES: Partnerships, capacity, materials, models and policies

COMMONWEALTH of LEARNING (COL)
4710 Kingsway, Suite 2500
Burnaby, BC V5H 4M2 Canada
Phone + 604 775 8200 / Fax + 604 775 8210
info@col.org / www.col.org