



eLearning Africa  
Nairobi, Kenya  
May 2007

## STORY IDEAS

### **COL's New Three-year Plan for 2006 – 2008:**

COL has launched work on its new Three-year Plan for 2006 – 2008 (*Learning for Development*). It is the result of the most comprehensive planning exercise in COL's history. The plan addresses an agenda that includes the UN's Millennium Development Goals, the goals of Education for All (Dakar), and Commonwealth's objectives of peace, democracy, equality and good governance. Increasing and improving human learning is the key to fulfilling most aspects of this development agenda. Conventional instructional approaches simply cannot expand quickly enough to meet the challenge. COL's role is to help countries use a range of appropriate and available approaches and technologies to foster learning at scale.

[www.col.org/3yp0609](http://www.col.org/3yp0609) and [www.col.org/colweb/site/pid/2876](http://www.col.org/colweb/site/pid/2876)

### **Virtual University for Small States:**

COL is helping over 25 small Commonwealth countries to build capacity to meet the high demand for training through eLearning. It is facilitating the development of the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC). VUSSC will be an important bridge over the digital divide. In empowering educators with ICT skills COL is helping them use technologies for leading-edge online collaboration to share open educational learning content and resources. VUSSC was first conceived by Commonwealth Education Ministers when they met in Halifax, Canada in December 2000. The Government of Singapore, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC) are funding partners.

[www.col.org/colweb/site/pid/4149](http://www.col.org/colweb/site/pid/4149) and [www.col.org/vussc](http://www.col.org/vussc) and [www.col.org/WikiEducator](http://www.col.org/WikiEducator)

### **Lifelong Learning for Farmers:**

Lifelong Learning for Farmers is a COL initiative aimed at giving farmers easier access to the information, knowledge and financing that could improve their livelihoods. Officially launched in December 2004 in two rural areas in South India, the programme is now active in Africa and is spreading spontaneously as word of its success becomes known.

[www.col.org/colweb/site/pid/3993](http://www.col.org/colweb/site/pid/3993)

— more —



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**Commonwealth Computer Navigator's Certificate:**

COL has announced plans to institute the Commonwealth Computer Navigator's Certificate (CCNC). This initiative to help bridge the digital divide will widen access to Information and communications technologies (ICT) skills training using free software and will be distributed as free content for anyone to use, modify and distribute.

[www.col.org/colweb/site/pid/4070](http://www.col.org/colweb/site/pid/4070)

**Media empowerment:**

COL's Media Empowerment model creates health messages — such as HIV/AIDS prevention and stigma — that have an impact on behaviour. Conducted in collaboration with the World Health Organization and various NGOs, the model is now being extended to more countries. [www.col.org/colme](http://www.col.org/colme)

**More about COL:**

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) was created by Commonwealth Heads of Government to encourage the development and sharing of open learning and distance education knowledge, resources and technologies. COL helps developing Commonwealth countries to increase access to learning using distance education and appropriate technologies.

Through its own resources and its extensive networks, COL provides a wealth of services and collaborative opportunities for policy makers, institutions and distance education practitioners. COL promotes policies and systems to make innovation sustainable and works with international partners to build models, create materials, enhance organisational capacity and nurture networks that facilitate learning in support of development goals.

COL's mission focuses on helping Commonwealth member states to use technology as a means of increasing the scope, scale, quality and impact of their education and training systems. The application of technology through ODL techniques has shown its power and value in many countries and for many purposes.

COL's work is grouped into three sectors of activity: education, learning for livelihoods and human environment: [www.col.org/education](http://www.col.org/education) [www.col.org/learningforlivelihoods](http://www.col.org/learningforlivelihoods)  
[www.col.org/humanenvironment](http://www.col.org/humanenvironment)

**Further information:**

COL's website: [www.col.org](http://www.col.org)

Quick Picks for the media: [www.col.org/media](http://www.col.org/media) (*this document is also available here*)

COL and the MDGs: [www.col.org/mdgs](http://www.col.org/mdgs)

COL in Africa: [www.col.org/COLinAfrica](http://www.col.org/COLinAfrica)

News releases: [www.col.org/newsreleases](http://www.col.org/newsreleases)

COL Clippings: [www.col.org/clippings](http://www.col.org/clippings)

**Contacts:**

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Other spokespersons:

Sir John Daniel, President and C.E.O.: [www.col.org/jdaniel](http://www.col.org/jdaniel) and [www.col.org/speeches](http://www.col.org/speeches)

Professor Asha Kanwar, Vice President: [www.col.org/akanwar](http://www.col.org/akanwar)

Dr. Lewis Perinbam, O.C., Chair, Board of Governors: [www.col.org/lperinbam](http://www.col.org/lperinbam)