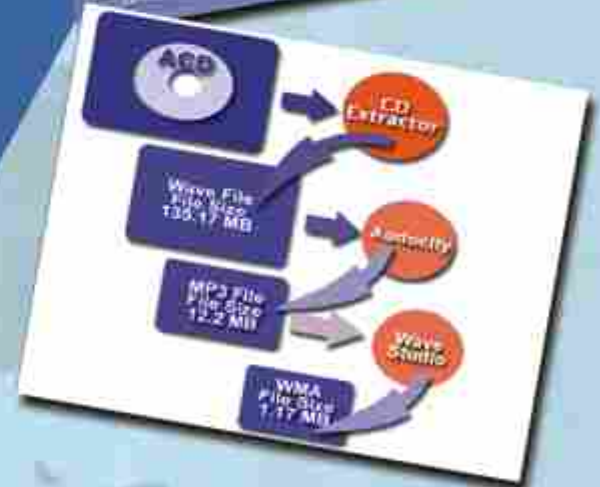


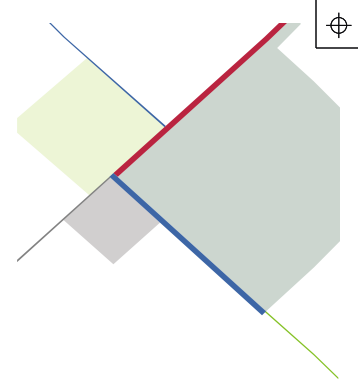


EasyNow

A VIRTUAL CAMPUS INITIATIVE



EasyNow is a system developed by Mr V Krishnamoorthy in association with CEMCA



COMMONWEALTH OF LEARNING
Commonwealth Educational
Media Centre for Asia

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2008

As a force contributing to social and economic development, open and distance education is fast becoming an accepted and indispensable part of the mainstream of educational system in both developed and developing countries, with particular emphasis for the latter.

Sir John Daniel

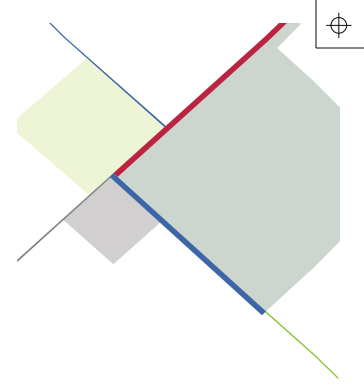
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The concept of EasyNow has been designed and maintained by Mr V Krishnamoorthy, Consultant, CEMCA
He is the IT Expert for these workshops.

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EasyNow: An Innovative Approach

In view of the philosophy of open and distance education to provide wider access to education to a large number of learners who could not be accommodated in the conventional system due to paucity of infrastructural facilities, academic institutions have been adopting newer technologies and alternative strategies. We need a system that is flexible from the point of view of time and space and equally good if not better. The use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has come in handy in the production of efficacious learning materials that are suited for self-instruction.

Though laudable, the new technologies have not been able to make a dent in the resources crunch due to many factors. The prohibitive cost of the production of multimedia software for educational purposes has deterred many academic institutions from going in for new technologies. The teachers, especially in the developing countries do not have enough exposure to the ICT tools for the same reason. The votaries of the poor have held the opinion that computer related development leads to digital divide and creates further deprivation.

The CEMCA Initiative

In introducing the multiple-media delivery through EasyNow, CEMCA has tried to find a solution to all the problems cited above. It has already demonstrated that the use of the new approach of EasyNow, using open source product, is least expensive and is quite affordable for any academic institution, provided it encourages its own academic staff to undertake the production. The teaching community need not be overawed by the intricate technical details; CEMCA has demonstrated successfully at many places in India and abroad that the programme is really easy to use with a little hands-on practice. It has created a ready-to-use platform that enables every teacher to create his/her courseware in a multiple-media mode, online and offline, on CDs and VCDs that can be heard and seen on inexpensive players connected to the home TV, the audio lessons can also be broadcast over digital radio systems and the community radio networks. Finally, the ever popular print information can be had in the form of a book or as multimedia lessons on the NET. In

addition to these factors that indicate the nature of digital bonding, the CEMCA initiative also aims at catering to the needs of visually handicapped persons with the provision of Braille printouts and Text-to-Speech facilities. It has taken care that all aspects of delivery oral and visual, textual and graphic are covered; all possible techniques of ICT are tapped in imparting knowledge. CEMCA has conducted so far many workshops in Indian universities and in Asian countries such as Bangladesh, Maldives and Sri Lanka.

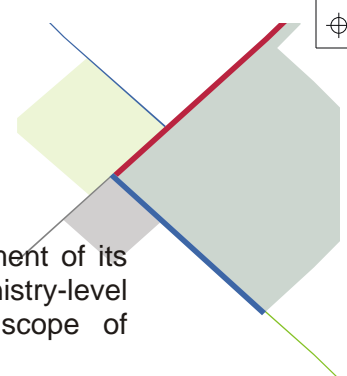
EasyNow: A Collaborative Venture

CEMCA will provide to any institution willing to join the venture and start its virtual campus the following:

- It will provide the platform to run academic programmes on virtual mode and the Knowhow for handling all the tasks
- It will give hands-on training to the select group of academics of the university
- It will help the institution in uploading on the NET
- It will monitor the academic administration as and when necessary
- It will help in troubleshooting and provide strategic help

The collaborating institution needs to provide the following:

- It should identify the programmes that it wants to run initially on virtual mode
- It should identify a core group for each programme in each discipline comprising
 - An Academic
 - A Media Person
 - An IT Person
- It should have decent computer centre with networking facilities
- It should be willing to spend some money on a few inexpensive gadgets
- It should have the infrastructural facilities for facilitating the tasks of CEMCA



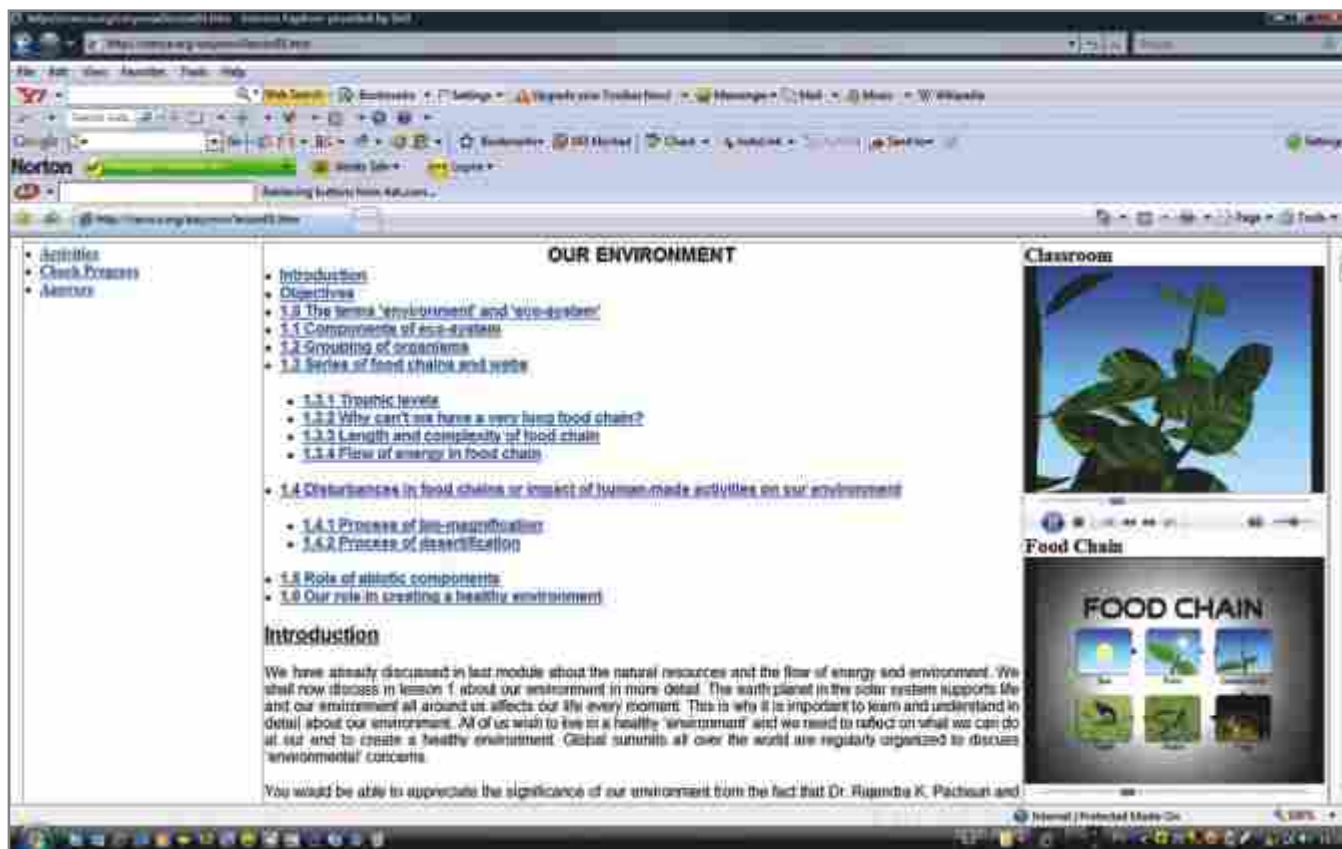
CEMCA has provision for undertaking the collaboration only to a limited number of institutions every year due to constraints of time and money. The institutions are finalised on a 'first come first served' basis.

The Agreement

CEMCA is a non-governmental international body with a mandate to work for the development of education in Asia. It is neither an educational institution nor a funding agency. The joint venture shall have no financial implications on either side. The host university does not have to pay anything to CEMCA for the collaborative efforts, nor will CEMCA give any financial grant for this venture. The host institution should view this project as an opportunity for value addition for them and for widening their area of operation. It may contact donor institutions or the Ministry of Education or the

Ministry of Human Resource Development of its country for funding. Making efforts for ministry-level action is unfortunately outside the scope of EasyNow project.

In conclusion, we would like to state that this is a WIN-WIN situation for everyone in this venture. For CEMCA, this fulfils the objectives of outreach and academic excellence in the developing countries of Asia for which it has been created and meets the goal of educational opportunities for all. For the host institutions, it is quality education that suits the advancement in the area of ICT at affordable costs, tapping the latent talents of the academic community and the possibility of administering varied programmes to a vast majority of learners that need them. Of course the ultimate gainer is the learner for whom the entire enterprise of using ICT and providing alternative strategies has been gaining ground.



A sample page from the EasyNow programme

EasyNow

From Multimedia to Multiplatform digital divide to digital Stand-alone Content based learning leading to social ca

The Commonwealth Of Learning (COL)

The **Commonwealth of Learning** is an intergovernmental organisation of the Commonwealth of Nations with its Headquarters in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Founded in 1987 at a Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, COL's mandate is to promote and develop the use of open learning and distance education knowledge, resources and technologies throughout the Commonwealth's 53 member states. COL has evolved into one of the world's leading distance education provider and led the international development in distance education along with UNESCO. COL is the only intergovernmental organisation solely concerned with the development of distance education.

COL's activities are grouped under three sectors: education, learning for livelihoods and human environment. COL helps nations increase access to quality education at all levels by focusing on quality assurance, teacher development, new approaches to higher education and the creation of expertise in Electronic learning. It helps countries to identify where livelihoods can be improved, and to create matching learning opportunities.

India is one of the five founders of COL, along with the United Kingdom, and is represented on COL's Board of Governors. The current President and CEO of COL is Sir John Daniel, who was formerly Assistant Director-General for Education at UNESCO and Vice Chancellor of the Open University from 1990 to 2001.

COL's overall approach and the focus, scope and type of specific programmes and projects is directed by a guidance document referred to as the Three-year Plan, revised with each funding cycle. Revisions are based on input and feedback from Commonwealth member governments and organisations, and are informed by the changing development needs of Commonwealth member nations. **Learning for Development** is the theme of COL's Three-year Plan 2006-2009. The goal of the plan includes the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Education for All (EFA) declarations and the Commonwealth's priorities of peace, democracy, equality and good governance.

COL is also coordinating the development of a Virtual University for Small States of the

Commonwealth (VUSSC), a network focused on collaborative development of open educational resources. It is also supporting Wiki Educator, a community resource for the development of free educational content with contributions from enlightened users. It is turning the digital divide into digital dividends using open networks.

The outputs and outcomes of COL's activities can be grouped into three categories:

- **Policies**

COL advises on, and facilitates, policy development by governments, agencies and institutions in the use of educational technology.

- **Systems**

COL aims to enhance capacity and capability as the surest way of nurturing organisations to achieve greater impact in the implementation of technology-based learning systems.

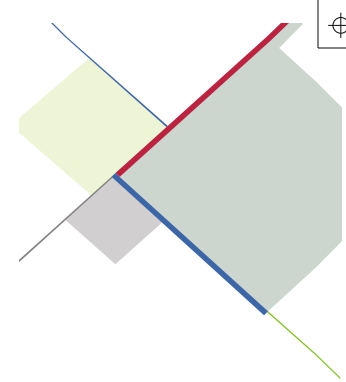
- **Models and Materials**

COL develops and promotes models for the use of technology in learning that are self-replicating and sustainable. It fosters partnerships for developing learning materials and extending their use around the Commonwealth.

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 to enhance and encourage the development of, the use of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) policies, systems, models and materials.

The COL helps governments and institutions to expand the scope, scale and quality of learning by using new approaches. 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 Mission Statement (Three Year Plan 2006-2009)



The Commonwealth Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA)

CEMCA operates as a regional media service of COL. It works for achieving the objectives laid down by COL for the development of education in the region. In consonance with the mission of the COL, it strives to promote meaningful, relevant and appropriate use of information and communication technologies to serve the educational and training needs of the Commonwealth countries in Asia. CEMCA functions through networking and information transfer. An advisory Council consisting of representatives from major open learning institutions in the region guides CEMCA for broad policy formulation, monitoring and evaluation. CEMCA's services are available to all developmental and educational institutions and agencies in Commonwealth Asia. It is headed by Dr R Sreedher, Director, CEMCA.

Programmes

Learning for Development is the theme of COL's Three-year Plan for 2006-2009. Conceiving of development as a process of increasing the freedom that people can enjoy, the plan addresses an agenda that includes the UN's Millennium Development Goals, the goals of Education for All, 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.

CEMCA has many programmes and projects in pursuit of these goals.

Community Radio

It helps institutions build capacity for Community Radios, which is a powerful medium of communication and an affordable proposition for networking academic resources at the regional level. Four workshops have been conducted in the cities of Lucknow, Kolkata, Pondicherry and Baramati so far by host institutions with the help of and in collaboration with CEMCA.

Science For Women (SFW)

CEMCA catalysed and supported by *Rashtriya Vigyan evam Praudyogiki Sanchar Parishad* (RVPSP), Department of Science and Technology, Government of India has embarked upon a pan-Indian project to evaluate the understanding of and to encourage the application of science in everyday life of women. 13 colleges/universities have organised workshops so far under this.

Medlib

An Electronic Media Library Management Software which automates cataloguing, classifying, storage and retrieval of audio/video programmes including stock shots. CEMCA in collaboration with EMPC, IGNOU had taken the initiative to create specially designed software for non-print audio/video resources. INFOTEL, India has prepared MEDLIB, software specially designed on Windows platform, fully Y2K compliant. It is easy to use and enables search on a large number of parameters, like title, content, subject, producer, scriptwriter, etc.

Workshops

CEMCA organises training programmes and workshops in the area of educational technology to build the capacity of educational institutions and human resources to use information and communication technologies effectively.

Over the years, CEMCA has conducted a series of workshops in the following areas:

- Development of Multimedia Courseware
- Internet and Education
- Management of Non-Print materials
- Research methods for media
- Broadcast technology
- Production of Audio and Video Programmes

While some of the workshops are conducted exclusively for institutions on request, most of the training programmes are planned, designed and delivered by CEMCA in collaboration with leading institutions in the region.

Some of the partner institutions of our past training programmes include:

- Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi
- National Centre for Software Technology, Mumbai
- Osmania University, Hyderabad
- Bangladesh Open University, Dhaka
- Open University of Sri Lanka, Colombo

Databases

Media Database: As ongoing project of CEMCA, the database has information about audio and video programmes developed by educational institutions in the region. You can search the database through title, keywords, subject,

producer, institutions and many other fields. Constantly updated, every year the database is made available offline to participating institutions twice through CD-ROM services

Consultant Database: A database of experts available in the region for exchange and sharing of human resources in the field of media and educational technology. You can send your resume to us online for inclusion in the database. Or else download the form to send it by post to us.

CEMCA organises a media library on its website, where one can have access to materials of quality. The details these and various other projects and activities of CEMCA can be had at www.cemca.org.

EasyNow is one of the major projects of CEMCA. We will go into the details of this project hereunder.



Science for Women's Health and Nutrition Workshop



Workshop on education for people with special needs



EasyNow Workshop at New Delhi



EasyNow Workshop at Tamil Nadu