# COMMONWEALTH EDUCATIONAL MEDIA CENTRE FOR ASIA
## NEW DELHI

**Minutes of the 16th Meeting of the Advisory Council of Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA) held at 9.30 A.M on Monday, 5 December, 2016 at New Delhi, India.**

**The following were present:**

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| Prof. Asha Kanwar<br>President and CEO<br>Commonwealth *of* Learning (COL) | Chairperson |
| Dr.K.Balasubramanian<br>Vice President,<br>Commonwealth *of* Learning (COL) | |
| Mr.S.P.Goyal<br>Joint Secretary<br>Technology enabled Learning<br>Department of Higher Education<br>Ministry Of Human Resource Development<br>Government of India, New Delhi<br>India | Member |
| Mrs. Shahnaz Samad,<br>Deputy Secretary,<br>Sector 19, Ministry of Education<br>Government of Bangladesh<br>Dhaka, Bangladesh | Member |
| Mr.S.U.Wijerathne,<br>Additional secretary,<br>Planning and Performance Review,<br>Ministry of Education,<br>Sri Lanka,<br>(Represented by Ms.Nirmala Paranavitna of<br> Sir Lanka High Commission at New Delhi) | Member |
| Prof. Madhu Parhar<br>STRIDE<br>Indira Gandhi National Open University<br>Maidan Garhi<br>New Delhi, 110 068<br>India | Member |
| (Mr..Chandra Mohgan,<br>Department of Higher Education,<br>Malaysia)<br>(Deputed by Government of Malaysia in the place of<br>Y.Bhg.Dato'Professor Dr.Asma Binti Ismail) | Member |

Prof. Nageshwar Rao                                      Member
Vice Chancellor
Uttarakhand Open University,
Haldwani(Nainital) 263 139
Uttarakhand

Prof. Ashok Ogra                                        Member
Director,
APJ Institute of Mass Communication,
Sector 8, Dwarka,
New Delhi

Dr. Shahid Rasool,                                      Member
Director, CEMCA
New Delhi

Mr. R.Thyagarajan
Head, Admin. & Finance
CEMCA                                                   Secretary
New Delhi.
Apologies:
Prof. Dr. Shahid Siddiqui, Vice Chancellor, Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), Islamabad, Pakistan, could not attend the meeting due to some other pressing engagements.

CEMCA wishes to record its appreciation to Smt. Nirmala Paranavitana, Minister Counsellor, High Commission of Sri Lanka, Delhi, for participating in the Advisory Council meeting despite getting the message from the External Affairs of Sri Lanka just that morning.


**Item No. 1:    Chairperson's introductory remarks**

Prof. Asha Kanwar welcomed the new members and appreciated the contributions made by the members whose terms had expired. Prof Kanwar thanked all representatives from the Asian Member States for their continued financial and intellectual contributions. She pointed out that the Advisory Council is mandated to review the progress of Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA), New Delhi, during 2015-2016 and to suggest ways and means for effecting further improvements during the subsequent years of the Six Year Plan 2015-2021.

Prof. Kanwar traced the history of Commonwealth of Learning (COL) for the new members in which she pointed that it was created by Commonwealth Heads of Governments, during their meeting in Vancouver in 1987, to promote education and training through Open and Distance Learning (ODL) and Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).

Prof. Kanwar informed the members that COL's strategic plan, 'Learning for Sustainable Development', is aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),  particularly SDG 4, which aims to promote inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all. She stressed that COL will focus on two key areas; education and skills

development while gender is the cross cutting theme underpinning all activities.  She then briefed members about the evolution of CEMCA and its relationship with COL.

Prof. Kanwar further said, that one key highlight of the previous year had been that the Department for International Development (DFID) has rated the performance of COL/CEMCA as A++. Getting this grade proves that COL/CEMCA had exceeded targets but sustaining the rating requires further enhanced effort.  CEMCA is the only regional unit funded directly by COL and the other regional centres are hosted by the respective countries.

The President apprised members about the recently-concluded Pan Commonwealth Forum 8 (PCF8), held in Kuala Lumpur from 27-30 November, 2016 which resulted in the KL Declaration. The theme of the conference was 'Open, Online and Flexible Learning: the key to Sustainable Development'.

The President then requested members to introduce themselves as some of them were attending the meeting for the first time.

After introduction of the members, the Vice President, Dr. K. Balasubramanian, thanked the support extended by various governments to CEMCA and COL. While underlining the salient and significant role of CEMCA and COL in promoting Open Education Resources (OER), Open and Distance Learning (ODL) and technology blended learning, in Commonwealth Asia, he pointed that COL and CEMCA should not be complacent and rest on laurels.   The educational activities should be linked to sustainable development. Interesting and challenging initiatives should be taken up to support the stakeholders.

Thereafter the agenda was taken up for the discussion.

**Item No. 2:    Confirmation of the Minutes of the 15ᵗʰ Meeting of CEMCA Advisory Council held on December 4, 2015.**

Prof. Kanwar proposed that the minutes could be confirmed as CEMCA had incorporated the comments received from members.

Prof. Madhu Parhar and Mr.S.P.Goyal seconded the proposal of the Chairperson in favour of confirmation of   the minutes. The minutes of the fifteenth meeting were, therefore, confirmed unanimously.

**Item No. 3: Action taken on the decisions in the 15ᵗʰ meeting**

Mr. R.Thyagarajan presented the "Action Taken Report" on the decisions of the 15ᵗʰ CAC meeting as under:

1.  **Undertaking capacity building of ODL teacher educators for integrating ICT.**

    CEMCA published a book, titled: "Resource book on ICT integration in Education", for assisting the teachers and teacher educators towards implementation of technology plan and integration of ICT in teaching and learning.

    Principals of District Institutes of Educational Training of Karnataka, were given

training by CEMCA on usage of web based institutional work plan using an Android App, named Calendar.

CEMCA organised a Capacity Building Workshop for the Teacher educator of National Institute of Education, Maldives to develop mobile applications relevant to their curriculum. The training led to the development of 10 mobile Apps by the teacher educators.

2. **Bringing out Community of Platform (CoP) for teachers for adoption of best practices.**

Educational leaders from State Council of Educational Research and Training from southern states attended the brainstorming workshops organised by CEMCA, for developing a plan of action for integrating ICT in teacher education and evolving a Community of Practice (CoP)

3. **Building capacity of special teacher educators.**

Special Teacher Educators, of Odisha state of India, were trained as Master trainers in the use of ICT tools. They also learnt accessing online resources as OER, to make teaching and learning more interesting and joyful.

4. **Popularising the OER among ODL institution and different Governments.**

Because of CEMCA intervention, ten Higher Education Institutions in India adopted OER policy using CEMCA template.

Capacity of ODL teachers, numbering 187, was enhanced through workshops. The teachers were trained  to use, re-use, and create OER for learning that will have incremental benefit for  achieving sustainable development goals.

CEMCA supported the development of self-learning materials as OER for diploma and post graduate diploma programme in cyber security for Uttrakhand Open University and Odisha state Open university respectively.

5. **Assisting Ministry of Human Resource Development, GOI in evolving regulatory framework for PhD for ODL institutions.**

Two meetings of Vice Chancellors of Open Universities in India were organised by CEMCA, after conducting a study on the status of state open universities. The meetings came out with recommendations that the Open Universities should be allowed to offer Ph.D. and engineering programmes, following the guidelines of  the University Grants Commission of India. The recommendations were forwarded to MHRD, Govt. Of India.

Copies of regulatory framework of different Open Universities in the Commonwealth countries were also submitted to the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India to support the efforts of the Ministry in strengthening research and technical education in Open Universities.

6. **Implementation of National Skills Qualification Framework in ODL Institutions and Directorates of Distance Education.**

CEMCA supported Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad, Pakistan, to develop two course curricula and textual content for flexible skill development, namely: "Audio recording and Editing" and "Non-linear Editing". These programmes were aligned to the International Skills Qualification Framework.

CEMCA helped to align the vocational courses of Netaji Subhas Open University (NSOU) to the National Skills Qualification Framework of India; and also in creation of content for diploma courses on Tailoring and Dress making as OER.

7. **Monitoring and Evaluation activity to assess the impact of activities.**

Since CEMCA is only in 2$^{nd}$ year of its 6-year Strategic Plan, Monitoring and Evaluation will be conducted in two phases. The first review will be done on completion of first three years in June 2018 and second one on completion of Six-year plan, in June 2021.

The feedback obtained from primary stakeholders, secondary stakeholders and the evaluation report submitted by the external evaluators, after first three years. will be reviewed and the course correction, if needed, will be effected.

**Item No. 4 & 5: CEMCA Annual Report 2015-16 and CEMCA Activity Plan 2016-17**

Dr. Shahid Rasool, Director, CEMCA presented the Annual Report for the year 2015-16 and presented CEMCA's 2016-17 plan. Through a power point presentation, he described the range of activities done by CEMCA during the past one year and highlighted the fresh initiatives.

About the activities done by CEMCA during 2015-16, he informed the Advisory Council as:

- Supported development of an online portal using Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment (MOODLE), Learning Management System, to provide learning opportunity for secondary and senior secondary students.

- Conducted Workshop for ICT integrated teacher education, for teacher educators and special teacher educators.

- Organised national level contest for Community Radio (CR) stations to showcase skilling stories from their communities.

- Organised national level contest for students of journalism to showcase their talent in production of video programmes on the topic: "Addressing Disasters, Saving Lives".

- Helped Capacity building of CR stations in Bangladesh and production of Community Learning Programmes in Bangladesh.
- Supported production of community videos on issues affecting underprivileged communities in Sri Lanka.
- Granted Awards for best female student of ICT/ Mass Communication and New Media Studies of Open Universities of Tamil Nadu (India) and Malaysia (USIM)
- Granted cash awards to 12 meritorious students of National Institute of Open Schooling in India.
- Organised an exploratory meeting on "Science For Women's Health And Nutrition" and "Radio Mathematics" supported by Department of Science and Technology, Government of India.
- Organised two CR Awareness workshops, at Tirupati and Nagpur, supported by Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.

Apart from briefly touching upon Six-year Strategic Plan of CEMCA, Dr.Shahid proposed that CEMCA will focus on the following during 2016-17:

i. Promot implementation of OER policy in three Open Universities and one Conventional University to deliver quality learning opportunities for students.

ii. Assist Government of India to develop capacity for Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) on SWAYAM using OER and also develop a quality assurance toolkit for MOOCs for SWAYAM.

iii. Support recognising prior learning, by supporting evaluation and certification in various skill sectors.

iv. Support Training, Assessment and Certification of vocational trainers.

v. Develop and implement a "Transition from Listener to Learner" programme in CRs in India and Bangladesh.

vi. Organise baseline/end line Surveys, Capacity building and Content Creation for 14 CR stations creating a database of 14000 women and integrating financial literacy with health and nutrition.

vii. Make serious efforts for mobilization of additional funds for various activities.

After briefing the council as above, Dr.Shahid unveiled the future vision of CEMCA as an educational media centre; proposing development of a CEMCA multimedia template for packaging of knowledge, involving best teachers/institutions for content creation and increasing visibility of CEMCA initiatives across Commonwealth Asia, for optimum use of the resource for uniform sustainable development of the region

After Director's presentation of Annual report and plan for the year 2016-17, the Chairperson opened the floor for discussion and suggestions. The following observations were made by the memebers.

**Prof.Nageshwar Rao** advised that a comprehensive policy on OER be developed and circulated for implementation by all universities in India. He felt that the MHRD, GOI, should issue guidelines for this purpose. He informed that the Government of Uttrakhand has taken initiatives for establishing Information Technology Academy that would serve as nodal agency for all the programmes. He expressed his concern that the Open universities are not allowed to offer technical and vocational education programmes in India even though they have the human resources and infrastructure for such courses. This is due to the fact that NSQF is not applicable for higher education. He advised CEMCA to help in finding a solution to this issue.

**Prof.Madhu Parhar** opined that instead of developing individual OER policy for the universities, it would be better that the Government of India could come up with National OER policy for higher education which would be binding on all institutions including conventional universities. She informed that Open Schooling would be of much help to Jammu and Kashmir state of India, especially keeping in view the present circumstances.

**Dr. Chandra Mohgan** informed that Malaysia has a Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) policy. Four programmes and sixty courses have already been developed. The courses developed by one university can be utilised by other universities. He indicated that Malaysia will access the resources available in COL/CEMCA websites and use them effectively for Malaysian Universities.

**Prof. Ashok Ogra** appreciated that CEMCA could do various activities in different fields but in doing so it could lose the focus. He desired that CEMCA should choose a few areas and make concerted effort to achieve the objectives which would benefit students at large.
Further, he suggested that the Video challenge contest and CR Audio contest shall be restructured so that there could be some incentive for the regions which are not very active in CR activities.

**Mr.S.P.Goyal observed that :**
the activities of capacity building of ODL Teacher Educators should not be limited to the teachers of the School Education system only and should be expanded to the ODL Teacher Educators of the University system also and IGNOU along with State Open Universities should necessarily be covered under this.

with respect to capacity building of Special Teacher Educators and the efforts made by CEMCA in the State of Odisha, an assessment of the efficacy of this training and adaptation of ICT Tools by the trained teachers in actual teaching be assessed and put up before the Advisory Council in one of its subsequent meetings.

with respect to popularizing OER among ODL Institutions and different Governments, the conventional educational Institutions should also be taken but priority be given to the ODL Institutions like IGNOU and the State Open Universities; moreover, there should be a single portal with cataloguing and adequate search facilities for all the OER resources created by or with the support of CEMCA for being used by interested stakeholders.

CEMCA should draft a policy on OER for higher educational Institutions for being used by MHRD, GOI; involving Prof. Nageshwar and Prof.adhu Parhar along with

other eminent academic persons. This draft policy should be prepared and submitted to MHRD by the end of March, 2017.

CEMCA should prepare draft Regulations for offering of Ph.D and Engineering/Professional programmes by ODL Institutions in India.

CEMCA should give more importance to ODL Institutions as that has a huge potential for the students who could not pursue their academic interest in the regular system due to several constraints.

Mr.R.Thyagarajan informed the council that the observation made by Shri.S.Goyal were incorporated in the minutes of the previous advisory council meeting, though not verbatim. Regarding regulatory framework of different open universities in the Commonwealth countries, it was informed that Dr.Sanjaya Mishra had sent them through mail. However, it was assured that physical copies would be sent to MHRD shortly.

**Ms.Shahanaz Samad** opined that ICT must be integrated in OER, for which a comprehensive policy is essential. She informed that if a draft policy is developed for India, it would be helpful for Bangladesh too.

**Dr.K.Balasubramanian** noted that OER policy in place with 10 Universities (Seven Open Universities and three conventional Universities) is good but these policies should not remain just on paper. They should be activated in such a manner that the universities' materials are converted into OER and future content creation should be only in OER. Besides, every University should first access and assess the existing material and their utility before proceeding to create content further. He informed that the second OER World Congress will be held in 2017 and all countries have to show commitment to action. India should take this in its stride for the advantage of student community. While drafting policy on OER and regulations for Ph.D, CEMCA should study the regulatory framework available with countries like, Sri Lank and China. CEMCA should also choose appropriate partners, like BOSCH, for skill development initiatives as that kind of companies operate at large scale level.

**Item No.6 Action to be taken by CEMCA during the current period.**

| 1. | Draft national OER Policy for MHRD in consultation with MHRD, Government of India |
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| 2. | Draft regulations and guidelines for Ph.D and Engineering/ programmes applicable to ODL institutions. |
| 3. | Encourage and impress upon Universities for implementing OER practices. |
| 4. | Making available all OER materials in one portal with a catalogue for guiding the students for easy navigation. |
| 5. | Initiate research on effects of OER on students. |
| 6. | Scaling up Skills activities to reach the students at large scale |
| 7. | Monitoring and Evaluation activity to assess the impact of activities. |

**Conclusion:**

While appreciating the efforts of CEMCA during the current year, Prof. Kanwar directed CEMCA to scale up its activities in a coordinated and systematic manner for promoting sustainable development in the region. She said the New Education Policy of the Government of India had touched upon OER but much more needs to be done for wider implementation. As desired by Mr. Goyal, CEMCA should take up the drafting of a national policy on OER on priority and this should be ready by March 2017.

Referring to research, Prof. Kanwar said that the use of OER had reduced costs and improved standards. Regarding MOOCs the next step was quality assurance and credentialing. The framework developed by Malaysia could be a useful blueprint for different countries. All the countries have similar priorities: increasing access to quality education and providing skills training at large scale.

Prof. Asha Kanwar thanked the members for sparing their valuable time and participating actively in the deliberations. She promised that CEMCA should pay attention to the suggestions made by the members, Fast track the development of a draft National OER policy for MHRD and regulations for Ph.D and Engineering/Professional  programmes through ODL.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair and to the members.