COMMONWEALTH EDUCATIONAL MEDIA CENTRE FOR ASIA, NEW DELHI

Minutes of the Ninth Meeting of the CEMCA Advisory Council held at 14:00 hours on Tuesday, December 01, 2009 at Male, Maldives.

The following were present:

Sir John Daniel, President & CEO, COL	Chairperson
Prof. Asha Kanwar, Vice President,COL	Dy. Chairperson
Dr. Mustafa Lutfi, Hon'ble Minister of Education, Maldives	Member
Mr. N.K. Sinha, Jt. Secy., MHRD, nominee, Govt. of India	Member
Prof. Rafiqul Islam Muhammad Aminur Rashid VC, BOU, Bangladesh	Member
Dr. S.S. Jena, Chairman, NIOS, India	Member
Dr. R. Sreedher, Director, CEMCA	Member
Mr. Dalip Kumar Tetri, Head Admn. & Finance, CEMCA	Secretary

Prof. Rajasekharan Pillai, VC, IGNOU, Prof. Dr. Mahmood Hassan Butt, VC, AIOU-Pakistan, Dato' Professor Ir Dr. Radin Umar bin Radin Sohadi, Director General, Department of Higher Education, Malaysia and Mr. Kiran Karnik members regretted their inability to attend the meeting.

The Hon'ble Minister of State for Education, Govt. of Maldives, Dr. Ahmed Ali Manik also attended the meeting as special invitee.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Mustafa Lutfi, Hon'ble Minister of Education expressed profound thanks for organizing the meeting at Male and appreciated the role played by CEMCA in establishing "iRadio" at Male and the training provided to the technicians for manning "iRadio". He emphasized that Maldives is concerned about development of its human resource in technology and it will be very helpful to Maldives and other developing countries if programmes for skill

up-gradation are developed for which Open Source Software can be used to minimize cost implications.

The Chairman mentioned that Maldives is an important partner of the Commonwealth and expressed his happiness over organizing the meeting at Male. He informed that COL operates on a cycle of Three Year Plan, which is approved in the triennial meeting of the Commonwealth Education Ministers. In the last such meeting held at Trinidad & Tobago, the report of COL for the past three years and the plans for the next three years were presented to the Foreign Ministers by him and Burchell Whiteman, Chairman, Board of Governors, COL. They got extremely encouraging response on the report and the Foreign Ministers complimented the performance of COL in the last three years particularly the development of a Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC), Preparation of Material and for considering a simplified and focused Plan for the next three years. Under the Three Year plan COL will pursue eight initiatives in two sectors: *Education* and *Livelihoods & Health and* will scale up and extend its successful models for the application of technology to learning. COL will develop country action proposals in consultation with Focal Points and partners to link this strategy to each country's priorities. Through this plan, COL will help governments and institutions advance development more effectively by expanding opportunities for learning.

COL will support the expansion and improvement in the formal education sector-areas like Open Schooling particularly Secondary Schooling, Teacher Education, Skill Development to improve livelihood, Life Long Learning for formers, helping communities in Community Media to improve life, Training in eLearning etc.

After initial remarks by the Chairman, Prof. Asha Kanwar informed that in the year 2007, three targets were set for CEMCA as under:

i)   To enhance CEMCA's Regional presence.
ii) To become preferred partner to the Government of India in Community Radio movement.
iii) To raise additional contributions

CEMCA had made significant progress in all the above areas. CEMCA increased its presence in almost all countries in the region by conducting activities or building partnerships except with Brunei, which has not been participating and

Pakistan where the situation has not been conducive. CEMCA firmed up its partnership with Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Govt. of India for Community Radio, which designated it as a preferred partner for helping in the licensing process for community radio. CEMCA played a lead role in strengthening the community radio movement in India and provided active help in establishing about 50 CR Stations. In addition to its normal planned activities in India, it worked in partnership with Ministries of Education, Malaysia, Sri lanka and Maldives, NIE Singapore, Wawasan Open University, NGOs in Bangladesh, NIOS and Assam State Open School, India and made significant presence in the areas. There was considerable balance of activities in various sectors starting from programme development and training to initiatives for low cost communication technologies, Community radio as well as implementation of programmes in various countries.

Further, CEMCA generated Additional Contributions of about 80% of its programme budget for conducting the programmes sponsored by Ministry of Information & Broadcasting and Department of Science & Technology, Govt. of India and UNESCO.

In the last year the important projects executed by CEMCA were Quality Assurance in Multimedia Materials, Regional Data base of ODL experts and Development of EasyNow.

The activities planned for the last year were completed successfully. "iRadio" has been established at Male, Eduframe was successfully demonstrated as a low cost delivery device and its final version is expected to be delivered by April, 2010, 17 video programmes were recorded on 'Respect and Understanding-Civil Paths to Peace' after interviewing eminent scholars and personalities as against the target of 12 programmes set at the time of initiation of the activity. To ensure sustainability on long term basis CEMCA proposes to work with institutions rather than individuals. It will work with NIOS and State Open Schools for production of quality materials. Dr. Jena suggested that COL/CEMCA can also help State Open Schools in developing infrastructure and human resource.

Referring to the issue of innovations the Vice-president observed that innovation is always an encouraging phenomenon but to sustain and scale up innovations to make these part of the general thrust is a bigger challenge. She emphasized that evidence based report with impacts achieved must be attempted by CEMCA.

Dr. Sreedher informed that the professionals from Sri Lankan Educational TV Channel, who had undergone training in India, got confidence in running educational television channel. An International Base Camp is being organized in Madurai in February 2010 to do extensive testing of the QAMLM Version and to make the result a base for preparation for the next phase. Eduframe, a standalone cheaper computing device having net facility, Audio-Video streaming etc. was successfully displayed as an educational delivery mechanism. After the final version is commissioned in early 2010, it is proposed to put the version on the net as Open Source document so as to be available for free use. It was also amplified that COL/CEMCA is not primarily a technical development agency and the idea is to get an inexpensive educational computing device. Appreciating the attempt Prof. Rashid mentioned that a product like this will be a very useful educational delivery tool for remote areas. Dr. Manik Hon'ble Minister of State for Education also emphasized the potential use of Eduframe for inter-active video lectures and added that it will be particularly useful for delivery of programmes to remote islands. He informed that Maldives proposes to acquire about 30 Eduframes for experimental purposes and added that "iRadio" will certainly complement the efforts.

Participating in discussion Mr. Sinha stated that CEMCA should continue to play a greater role to raise the demand for the countries of the Commonwealth and efforts to suggest low cost technologies. The need is to have all kind of inter-connectivity, video, animation, simulation etc. and added that MHRD is close to achieving such device at US$ 40-30. However, CEMCA should continue to work in the direction and refine results. He mentioned that the Govt. of India could consider placing orders for Eduframe if the cost is not more than US$ 30. He mentioned that if the product is proved through field trials, it can be put as Open source. He also suggested CEMCA to broaden and strengthen the pool of consultants, experts to ensure sustainability of its efforts. He would like CEMCA to consider the possibility of becoming a content clearing agency to validate the contents. He wanted a template or framework to be developed.

Mr. Sinha made a detailed presentation of plans and programmes from Sakshat portal developed by MHRD and the areas where the scope for collaboration exist. He added that capacity of human resource should be built to generate contents and duplication of efforts should be avoided. He suggested COL/CEMCA to become plethora of eContent for educational material to be loaded on the net. He informed that the Govt. of India has allocated Rupees 200 crores for standardization of quality in education. CEMCA should get the quality assurance guidelines field tested and MHRD is willing to consider additional funding for the purpose if definite results are expected. Similarly, a model suitable for radio based content delivery which is an alternative to DTH should

be attempted. An experimental based model tailor made to suit the countries requirements should be developed and that radio power can be used for substantive educational intervention. Dr. Sreedher intervening in the discussion said that the world is becoming digital. Working on DTH radio will be substitute to World Space Radio for which experts are needed. Mr. Sinha suggested that CEMCA should engage the experts for the purpose.

Dr. Jena emphaisised that 'Universalization of Secondary Education' and 'Education for All' are the priorities of the Govt. of India. COL/CEMCA should work to build the capacity of Open Schooling system. The strategy may be to develop print material for 4-5 Open Schools each year. Further, Open Schools hardly use technology. CEMCA should put more focus on developing capacity of State Open Schools to generate contents and use of technology for delivery of programmes. NIOS has only 250 Video and 300 Audio programmes, which are quite inadequate. CEMCA should focus on developing media related material and development of skills. Dr. Jena also made a request to COL for seed money for establishing studios at NIOS. Sir John mentioned the potentials of Eduframe as a media for delivery of programmes and the proposal of the Govt. of Maldives to use Eduframe on experimental basis for the purpose.

Prof. Rashid emphasized the need for convergence as campuses do not belong to ODL institutions. Teacher training, standardization of quality Assurance of contents, certification and automation of certificates may be some of the key areas.

Thereafter, Dr. Sreedher explained CEMCA's priorities in the next Three Year Plan and Action Plan for 2009-10 as under:

- To operationalise EasyNow to some more centres in the region such as Advanced EasyNow to OUSL, Sri Lanka and introductory EasyNow to D.Net-Bangladesh
- To conduct 10 State level Consultations on Community Radio Awareness funded by the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Govt. of India and aims to assist setting up of many more CR stations in India thereby reaching and motivating more than 1,000 institutions both from the educational and civil society sectors
- To take CR and iRadio initiatives to Bangladesh and Sri lanka and organize awareness workshops.
- To support two Open Schools to create Self-learning Materials, their conversion into Multimedia and hosting these on the World Wide Web. Stand alone deliverables are also proposed to be created.

- To support IGNOU to upgrade its 'Certificate Course in Community Radio' to a 'Diploma Course in Development Media'.
- CEMCA Awards for the Best ODL Student in Information and Communication Technologies or Electronic Media and Mass Communication Studies to be extended to 10 more institutions in the region.

Professor Rashid spoke about the possibility of regional cooperation and training of Bangladeshi experts in India. Dr. Sreedher informed that 150 scholarships offered by CEMCA for IGNOU 'Certificate Course in Community Radio' can also be availed of by Bangladesh and qualified manpower can be used for the Community Radio in Bangladesh. Prof. Rashid offered local hospitality for organizing Community Radio and Community Nursing programmes in Bangladesh.

Prof. Ramanujam speaking on the regional co-operation emphasized the relevancy of sharing of programmes developed in Bangla for West Bengal and Bangladesh as the medium of instructions is same in both the places. This can also be useful for state of Assam for the same reason. There are enough opportunities for better use of Educational Channel and the School of Media Studies, IGNOU, which can be discussed.

The Advisory Council appreciated the performance of CEMCA and unanimously endorsed the priorities for the 2009-12 Three Year Plan and the Action Plan 2009-10 as presented by CEMCA.

Action list on the decisions taken in the meeting is attached.

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

-Sd-
(Sir John Daniel)

Action items

	Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia, New Delhi		
	Action list on the decisions taken in 9ᵗʰ meeting of CEMCA Advisory Council held on December 01, 2009 at male, Maldives		
Item No.	Action item	Time line	Responsibility
1.	Release of final version of Eduframe after international quality certification	April, 2010	Dr. Sreedher
2.	To operationalise EasyNow to more centres in the region such as Sri lanka and Bangladesh	December, 2010	Ms. Rukmini
3.	To conduct 10 State level Consultations on Community Radio Awareness.	March, 2010	Dr. Sreedher
4.	To support two Open Schools to create Self learning Materials, their conversion into Multimedia and hosting on the World Wide Web. Stand alone deliverables are also proposed to be created.	November, 2010	Dr. Pema
5.	To take CR and iRadio initiatives to Bangladesh and Sri lanka.	December, 2010	Ms. Rukmini
6.	To support IGNOU to upgrade its 'Certificate Course in Community Radio' to a 'Diploma Course in Development Media'.	May, 2010	Dr.Pema/ Dr. Sreedher
7.	To test the quality of e-Material and recognition of standards in QAMM by various countries.	May, 2010	Dr. Sreedher and Ms. Rukmini
8.	CEMCA to hold discussion with various groups for third party quality certification. .	May, 2010	COL/CEMCA
9	To take measures for voluntary adoption of QAMLM version 1.0 by higher education institutions and for school education.	December, 2010	Ms.Rukmini and Dr.Sreedher
10	To record and produce more programmes on 'Respect and understanding ' and to bring out a comprehensive video series.	December, 2010	Dr. Sreedher
11	Extension of CEMCA Awards for the Best ODL Student in Information and Communication Technologies or Electronic Media and Mass Communication Studies to 10 more institutions in the region.	September, 2010	Mr. Dalip

12	150 Scholarships offered for the "Certificate Programme in Community Radio" launched by the IGNOU.	July,2010	Mr. Dalip