

COL-CEMCA UPDATES

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COMMONWEALTH of LEARNING
Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia

COL-CEMCA and CBSE Take the First Step Towards Building India's Skills Community of Practice (CoP)

The Commonwealth of Learning-Commonwealth Educational Media Centre (COL-CEMCA), in collaboration with Dr. The Commonwealth of Learning-Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (COL-CEMCA), in collaboration with the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), convened a one-day Consultative Workshop on "Strengthening Skill Education through Community of Practice (CoP) in India" at CBSE Headquarters, New Delhi.

This workshop marked the first formal step towards establishing a structured, educator-led peer network for vocational and skill teachers across India, a Community of Practice where educators can learn from one another, share resources, engage with experts, and collectively strengthen skill education delivery in schools.

During the opening session Dr. B. Shadrach, Director, COL-CEMCA, articulated the core purpose of the Community of Practice with clarity, describing it as a platform for peer connection, peer mentorship, and just-in-time support among teachers who too often work in professional isolation. He noted that peer-driven

continuous professional development and crowdsourcing of solutions are well-established practices in many countries, and that the Skill's CoP is India's opportunity to build that culture at national scale.

The workshop concluded with a shared institutional commitment from CBSE and COL-CEMCA to proceed to the design and establishment of the CoP, informed by the day's findings. Plans were discussed for a sustained online engagement platform and periodic expert-led interactions with the long-term ambition of connecting Indian skill educators with the global network of skill educators.

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Glimpses from the workshop,

COL-CEMCA and IGNOU Conduct Workshop on Graduate Employability and Course Enhancement

COL-CEMCA, in collaboration with the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), organised a three-day Workshop on Implementation of the Graduate Employability Framework using the Results-Based Management (RBM) Approach and Course Enhancement with Employability Attributes and Guidelines from 3–5 June 2026 at the IGNOU campus in New Delhi.

Delivering the keynote address, B. Shadrach, Director of COL-CEMCA, highlighted the need for competency-based curricula, integration of future skills such as artificial intelligence and data literacy, work-integrated learning opportunities, authentic assessment practices, and stronger industry partnerships. He emphasised that institutions such as IGNOU, with their extensive reach and learner base, are uniquely positioned to align education with labour market needs and become leading pathways for graduate employability and human capital development in line with the goals of the National Education Policy 2020.

The workshop brought together over 20 faculty members from IGNOU and called for a transformative shift in Open and Distance Learning (ODL) from a focus on access to a focus on employability and lifelong career readiness.

The initiative forms part of COL-CEMCA's ongoing efforts to support higher education institutions in strengthening graduate employability and ensuring that learning pathways lead to meaningful career opportunities and lifelong success.

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Proceedings during the workshop,

Regional Workshop Strengthens Graduate Employability and Career Readiness in Northeast India

A three-day Regional Workshop-cum-Capacity Building Programme on “Boosting Graduate Employability in Northeast India” was conducted at the City Campus of Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University (KKHSOU), Khanapara, Guwahati, from 4–6 June 2026. The programme was jointly organised by COL-CEMCA, and KKHSOU, Assam.

The workshop brought together around 40 faculty members, academic leaders, and practitioners from higher education institutions across Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and other states of Northeast India. The initiative aimed to strengthen institutional capacities for enhancing graduate employability and career readiness through curriculum transformation, skill-based learning, and industry-aligned educational practices.

In his keynote address, Dr. B. Shadrach, Director, COL-CEMCA, highlighted the COL-CEMCA Graduate Employability Model and elaborated the different phases of its implementation in the Higher Educational Institutions. Referring to the large number of

graduates who still need employability and career readiness skills, particularly in the NE region, he encouraged participating institutions to develop draft institutional employability frameworks based on the COL-CEMCA model during the workshop and take it forward in their respective institutions.



Pictures from the workshop.

The workshop marked an important step towards building a regional network of higher education institutions committed to improving graduate employability and career readiness. The deliberations and institutional frameworks developed during the programme are expected to contribute to future collaborative initiatives and support the advancement of outcome-based and skill-oriented higher education across Northeast India.

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COL-CEMCA and NIE Launch Landmark Workshop to Bridge TVET Access Across the Maldivian Atolls

COL-CEMCA and the National Institute of Education (NIE), Ministry of Education, Maldives, organised a five-day Hybrid TVET Consultation and Development Workshop on 7 June, 2026 in Malé, bringing together curriculum specialists,



Pictures from the workshop.

industry representatives, TVET educators, and lead teachers drawn from regional atolls across the country.

The workshop held from 7 to 11 June 2026, aimed to produce a validated Hybrid TVET Implementation Framework for higher secondary education — one that confronts a structural challenge at the heart of Maldivian education: how to deliver quality vocational training across 187 inhabited islands when the physical infrastructure to do so on every island remains financially and logistically out of reach.

Speaking at the inaugural session, Dr. B. Shadrach, Director of COL-CEMCA, framed hybrid TVET not as a pedagogical experiment but as a national imperative, underscoring the need for delivery models that utilise online learning and virtual simulations to reduce dependence on physical infrastructure, whilst establishing regional cluster hubs for hands-on practical training.

The framework emerged from the workshop is expected to align A-Level TVET modules with the Maldives National Qualifications Framework (MNQF), enabling credit transferability and improving pathways to formal employment. A central objective is ensuring that students in the

outer atolls gain access to the same quality of vocational education currently available at the Malé Vocational High School — without requiring relocation to the capital.

The workshop concluded on 11 June with the in-principle adoption of the draft framework by participating institutions.

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COL-CEMCA Convenes National Consultation on RPL and Faculty Development

COL-CEMCA convened a two-and-a-half-day National Stakeholder Consultation on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Pathways in Open and Distance Learning (ODL) and Dual-Mode Institutions from 8-10 June, 2026 at Hotel Lemon Tree, Aerocity, New Delhi. The consultation brought together faculty coordinators, academic administrators, and institutional leaders from 22 open and dual-mode universities across India to address one of the most consequential unresolved questions in higher education: how to formally recognise learning that takes place outside the classroom.

Delivering the welcome address, Dr. B. Shadrach, Director of COL-CEMCA, underlined that India's policy architecture—including the National Education Policy (NEP 2020), the National Skills Qualification Framework, the National Credit Framework, and the Academic Bank of Credits—had created the conditions for RPL to work at scale across the partner institutions that COL-CEMCA has supported over the past two years. What remained, he noted, was the challenge of converting policy intent into credible institutional practice.

The consultation was structured around the specific demands that RPL places on ODL institutions, including developing fair assessment methods for learning acquired through work and lived experience, establishing quality assurance mechanisms, addressing questions of evidence validation and learner identity, and creating digital workflows capable of handling diverse and large-scale applicant pools. Participants engaged in nine substantive sessions facilitated over the two days by Prof Jeetendra Pande, Consultant COL-CEMCA, generating institutional inputs towards RPL policy templates, assessment frameworks, credit guidelines, and quality assurance protocols.



Pictures from the workshop.

The consultation also included a coordinated review of Faculty Development Programme priorities for 2026–27, with discussions focusing on emerging areas such as AI-enabled pedagogy and opportunities in the Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comics (AVGC) sector.

The consultation concluded with a shared commitment among participating institutions to advance the implementation of Recognition of Prior Learning within their respective contexts. The deliberations and recommendations emerging from the workshop will contribute to the development of first-ever Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Implementation Framework specially tailored for Open and Distance Learning (ODL) and Dual Mode Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

[Click here to read more](#)

COL-CEMCA, P.N. Panicker Foundation and Community Radio Association Launch National Reading Mission 2026

COL-CEMCA in partnership with the P.N. Panicker Foundation and the Community Radio Association (CRA), launched the National Reading Mission 2026 on 19 June, 2026 to promote lifelong learning, reading habits, and digital literacy through the extensive network of community radio stations across India.

The Mission was launched online in presence of Dr. B. Shadrach, Director, COL-CEMCA, along with Sri N. Balagopal, Vice Chairman of the P.N. Panicker Foundation, and representatives of the Community Radio Association. The initiative builds on the spirit of National Reading Day and supports the vision of creating a knowledge-driven society through accessible and community-based learning.

The National Reading Mission seeks to harness the grassroots reach of community radio to promote a culture of reading and knowledge sharing, particularly among underserved and rural communities. By integrating open and distance learning resources with locally relevant

programming, the initiative aims to strengthen literacy, encourage critical thinking, and foster lifelong learning.

As part of the initiative, several community radio stations, including Salaam Namaste Community Radio (IMS Noida), Radio Chitkara, and Radio Kanchenjunga, have joined the campaign by broadcasting dedicated reading awareness programmes and community engagement activities.

The launch also marked the beginning of the National Reading Month 2026, observed from 20 June to 20 July under the theme "Read and Grow" Throughout the month, participating community radio stations will organise discussions, storytelling sessions, listener engagement programmes, and awareness campaigns to celebrate reading and promote lifelong learning within their communities.

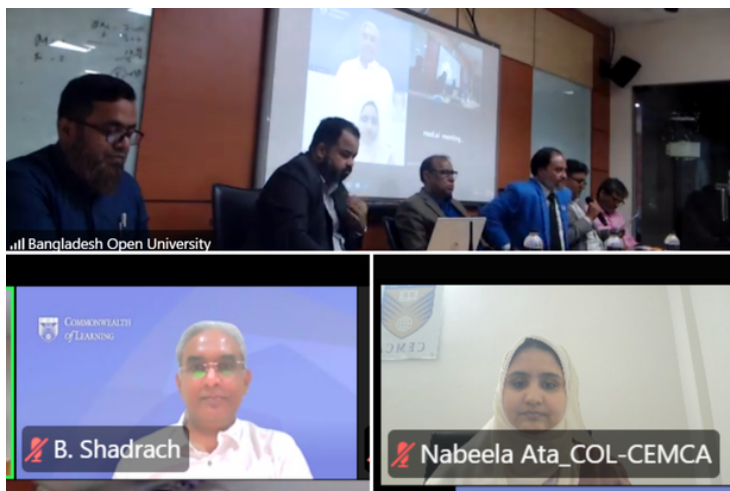
The National Reading Mission represents a collaborative effort by COL-CEMCA, the P.N. Panicker Foundation, the Community Radio Association, and community radio broadcasters across India to build an inclusive learning ecosystem where reading promotes lifelong learning and knowledge remains accessible to all.

COL-CEMCA and BOU Hold Stakeholder Consultation to Validate Blended TVET Curricula

COL-CEMCA, in collaboration with Bangladesh Open University (BOU) hosted a day-long Stakeholder Consultation Workshop on Needs Assessment and Curriculum Design on 17 June, 2026 at its E-Learning Centre in Gazipur, Bangladesh.

The workshop, marked a significant milestone in the development of three competency-based blended certificate programmes: Disease Diagnosis, Garments Technology, and Advanced ICT Blended Pedagogy for Technical Teachers. The initiative is part of a broader effort to address the skills gap between educational outcomes and industry requirements in Bangladesh.

Delivering remarks on behalf of COL-CEMCA, Dr. B. Shadrach, Director, joined the proceedings online from India and underscored the significance of blended TVET for Bangladesh's development trajectory. He noted that with over 120 million people of active working age and a government target of reaching 2.6 million young people through TVET by 2030, the demand for flexible, technology-enabled skills training had never been more urgent. Dr. Shadrach acknowledged COL-CEMCA's ongoing partnerships across Commonwealth Asia — with BOU in Bangladesh, the Ministry of Education in the Maldives, the Open University of Sri Lanka, Allama Iqbal Open University in Pakistan, and the National Council for Vocational Education and Training in India.



Photographs from the workshop.

Outputs from the workshop will inform the finalisation of competency-based curricula across all three certificate programmes, with BOU and COL-CEMCA working toward their adoption within BOU's Institute of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (ITVET) as part of a wider Commonwealth-supported initiative to expand blended TVET access across Asia.

[Click here to read more](#)

Maldives Takes a Major Step Towards Inclusive Education with Stakeholder Validation of SLD Screening Tool

COL-CEMCA, in collaboration with The Department of Inclusive Education (DoIE), Ministry of Education, Maldives convened a two-day National Expert Conclave on SLD Screening and Intervention on 20–21 June 2026 at Shaheed Ali School, Maldives. The Conclave brought together 47 participants, including inclusive education teachers, special educators, psychologist, and Ministry officials, from Malé and atolls across the Maldives to validate a draft Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) Screening Tool and build participant capacity for its national rollout.

The event was the culmination of a structured preparatory process that included a comparative analysis of SLD identification tools used in Maldives and across Commonwealth Asian countries, a national situation analysis of school and teacher readiness for SLD screening, and the development of draft screening parameters aligned with Maldivian curriculum standards. Findings from these studies were presented at the Conclave by Ms. Hafsa, DoIE, Maldives.



Glimpses from the workshop.

Key outcomes included the validation of the SLD Screening Tool, refinement of screening indicators based on practitioner feedback, and the development of a capacity building programme. Participants recommended piloting the tool in selected schools before nationwide rollout, and called for the development of user manuals and comprehensive teacher training programmes. Travel and participation costs for atoll-based participants were supported under the COL-CEMCA initiative.

The validated tool and agreed implementation roadmap represent a significant step towards building an inclusive, responsive, and equitable education system that ensures early identification and timely support for all learners in the Maldives.

[Click here to read more](#)

COL-CEMCA and KKHSOU Organise a State-Level Workshop on Graduate Employability

COL-CEMCA, in collaboration with Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University (KKHSOU), organised a one-day State-Level Workshop-cum-Sensitisation Programme on “Boosting Graduate Employability and Career Readiness in Higher

Education” at the University's City Campus, Khanapara on 23 June, 2026.

The workshop brought together 24 participants, including principals, IQAC coordinators, faculty members, placement and career guidance officers, and representatives from higher education institutions across Assam to deliberate on strategies for enhancing graduate employability and aligning higher education with evolving industry and societal needs.

Addressing the participants, Dr. B. Shadrach, Director, COL-CEMCA, highlighted that graduate employability is a pressing concern for Assam, where a large youth population and rising aspirations are often met with limited employment opportunities and a mismatch between academic qualifications and industry needs.

During the technical sessions, participants were introduced to the concept of graduate employability and explained the COL's Graduate Employability Model and Employability Scorecard, a framework designed to help institutions assess and strengthen employability outcomes. Participants were also provided with the Employability Scorecard for institutional self-assessment.



Glimpses from the workshop.

The programme concluded with a valedictory session and participant feedback, reaffirming the commitment of COL-CEMCA and KKHSOU to strengthening employability-focused reforms in higher education in the north-eastern part of India.

[Click here to read more](#)

COL-CEMCA and JSOU Organise Workshop on Graduate Employability and RBM Framework

COL-CEMCA, in collaboration with Jharkhand State Open University (JSOU), Ranchi, organised a two-day workshop on "Graduate Employability and the Results-Based Management (RBM) Framework" on 24–25 June 2026.

The workshop focused on strengthening graduate employability by integrating the Results-Based Management (RBM) approach into the university's employability framework. Faculty members participated in sessions on results chains, work plans, activity tracking, and Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning (MERL), alongside practical exercises on curriculum enhancement, competency mapping, job and entrepreneur readiness, employer engagement, alumni relations, and work-integrated learning.

The programme also emphasised competency-based and blended learning, encouraging participants to redesign courses by integrating employability attributes, Open Educational Resources (OER), and gender-responsive teaching practices to better prepare graduates for the evolving world of work.

National Consultation Shapes India's First Employability Framework for Youth with Learning Disabilities

A major national consultation has advanced India's first-ever National Inclusive Employability Framework (IEF), establishing a definitive roadmap to transition an estimated 75 million youth with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLDs) into high-growth sectors. Co-convened by COL-CEMCA and the Changelnkk Foundation at the Civil Services Officers' Institute, the event successfully translated practitioner realities into actionable policy inputs. The primary outcome of the convention is a refined, comprehensive blueprint that connects early identification, inclusive education, flexible assessments, skilling, and internships into a seamless employment pathway. These finalized inputs will now be presented to government stakeholders for policy influence and large-scale national adoption.



Pictures from the consultation.

The framework directly addresses a massive talent pool, as India is home to millions of young people with SLDs recognized under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016. Research highlights that the cognitive strengths associated with SLDs, such as pattern

recognition, creative problem-solving, and big-picture systems thinking, collectively termed “dyslexic thinking,” map precisely onto the skills driving India’s future economy. To harness this potential, the consultation emphasized moving beyond basic awareness toward systemic reforms. Delegates explicitly called for the creation of robust data systems to inform policy and monitor long-term career outcomes for these learners, ensuring evidence-based planning and stronger partnerships between educational institutions, government, and industry.

This initiative aligns closely with major national mandates, including Viksit Bharat 2047, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, and Skill India. The framework identifies eight priority growth sectors where the work itself inherently rewards the unique cognitive strengths of individuals with SLDs. These areas include cybersecurity, urban planning and architecture, media and entertainment, healthcare innovation, and electric vehicles, with artificial intelligence, entrepreneurship, and research and development acting as cross-cutting enablers. Experts at the event underscored the importance of targeting skilling specifically toward these emerging domains to promote inclusive recruitment and workplace practices.

The consultation brought together over 30 high-level delegates from government, higher education, industry, and civil society, including senior representatives from NITI Aayog, the Capacity Building Commission, IGNOU, NIEPA, FICCI, CII, Nasscom, Deloitte, and Capgemini. Dr. B. Shadrach, Director of COL-CEMCA, opened the proceedings by contextualizing the framework within inclusive employability lessons learned across Commonwealth nations. Grounding the discussions in reality, an experience-sharing panel featured students, an

entrepreneur, and a serving civil servant with lived experiences of SLDs, followed by a data presentation from Ms. Noopur Jhunjhunwala, Founder and Trustee of the ChangeInkk Foundation.

During his keynote address, Prof. (Dr.) Nirmaljeet Singh Kalsi, IAS (Retd.) and former Chairman of NCVET, championed the cause by calling for diverse pathways for minds that think differently. The deliberations concluded with a strong reflection of COL’s commitment to gender equality, as women constituted approximately two-thirds of the participants working to shape this landmark national framework

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COL-CEMCA Participation in Regional Events

International Conference on "Strengthening BIMSTEC's Role in Connectivity, Culture and Cooperation" , Gujarat, 6-7 June 2026

Dr. B. Shadrach, Director, COL-CEMCA, was invited as an Expert at the International Conference on "Strengthening BIMSTEC's Role in Connectivity, Culture and Cooperation" organised by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University in collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. Dr Shadrach addressed the conference on "Educational Exchanges within the BIMSTEC Framework."



New Publication

Empowering Youth in Global AI Governance

Mini-Innovation Workshop Report

On 18 February 2026, the Mini-Innovation Workshop on Empowering Youth in Global AI Governance was convened in New Delhi, India, as an official satellite event of the India AI Impact Summit 2026. The workshop was organised by the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) through its South Asian regional centre, the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA), in partnership with the Expert Centres of the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI), the Montreal International Center of Expertise in Artificial Intelligence (CEIMIA) in Canada, the Center of Expertise for the International Cooperation on AI affiliated to the GPAI (INRIA) in France, and the GPAI Tokyo Expert Support Center (NICT) in Japan as well as the Council of Europe.

This report documents the full-day Mini-Innovation Workshop of 18 February 2026 and associated activities, which brought together students, policymakers, researchers, and experts from India, France, Canada, Japan, Kenya, Lebanon and Mexico

Access the full resource here:

<https://cemca.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/Mini-Innovation-Workshop-Report.pdf>

UPCOMING EVENTS

15-16 July 2026

**Workshop on Research Incubation and Advanced Training:
Enhancing Academic Research in the Digital Era, Consortium
for Educational Communication, IUAC Campus, New Delhi**



COL-CEMCA, a Regional Office of the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) Vancouver, Canada, is an international agency.

COL-CEMCA's mission is to promote meaningful, relevant and appropriate use of ICTs to serve the educational and training needs of Commonwealth Member States of Asia.

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