

DEVELOPING THE COMMUNITY: THE ROLE OF UNIVERSITIES & OPEN & DISTANCE LEARNING

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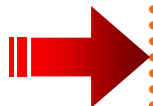
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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

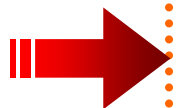
- **Growth & improvement** in conditions
- Communities as the **ends & means** in a process for improvement
- Focusing on **human capital development**
- People with the ability to use education & knowledge to **create a public good**
- Universities & ODL as a means to:



- Assist community development
- Address issues in education
- Promote lifelong learning

THE ROLES OF HIGHER EDUCATION:

- **Assure continuity** for people with basic education
- Generate knowledge to **drive & transform** the community
- As a **public interest**: improve lives, raise wages & productivity, cultural & political benefits, etc
- Answer to both **governments & communities**
- Widen **access** & create **equity** in higher education
Address **global pressures** (e.g. digital divide, gender disparity)
- Work with communities:



- Create, mobilise & apply knowledge
- Manage & create sustainable community initiatives

DEMOCRATISING EDUCATION VIA OPEN & DISTANCE LEARNING (1/3)

ODL as a means to →

- Create **more opportunities** for more knowledge
- **Add value** to community development
- Delivery for **better access, ensure inclusion & equity**, especially in isolated & remote areas
- Promote **lifelong learning** to create a learning society

Developments in ODL →

- Education that is **open, accessible, flexible & equitable**
- Founded on need for **skills upgrading, retraining** & based on **technologies** to teach & learn at a distance
- Target: **working adults**
- **Mega universities** (Table 1): **success stories** of ODL & the Commonwealth

DEMOCRATISING EDUCATION VIA OPEN & DISTANCE LEARNING (2/3)

Table 1: Mega Universities in the Commonwealth

University	Established	Enrolment
Allama Iqbal Open University, Pakistan	1974	3.2 million
Indira Gandhi National Open University, India	1985	3.0 million
Bangladesh Open University, Bangladesh	1992	600,000
Dr B R Ambedkar Open University, India	1982	450,000
Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University, India	1989	300,000
University of South Africa, South Africa	1873	250,000
Open University, United Kingdom	1969	203,744
Madhya Pradesh Bhoj Open University, India	1991	150,000

Other up-and-coming open universities:



DEMOCRATISING EDUCATION VIA OPEN & DISTANCE LEARNING (3/3)

ODL's Contribution in Community Development

1. INCLUSIVITY:

- Recognise & reach all individuals & accommodate concerns

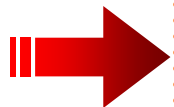
2. ACCESS & EQUITY:

- Through e-learning & a learner-centred approach
- New concept: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

3. INTERNATIONALISATION:

- Reaching other countries & the wider community

ODL can stimulate & add value to community development →



- Democratisation of education
- Leveraging on technologies
- Constant innovation
- Linking government, private sector & industry
- Diversifying academic programmes

LIFELONG LEARNING FOR HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

- Lifelong learning as an **important strategic focus**
- Creating **knowledgeable, responsible & skilled people** for economic growth
- Learning **as a lifestyle** to build a more progressive nation
- Incorporate **creativity & innovation**
- Leverage on **ICTs**

Lifelong learning as **the third pillar** in human capital development



- ODL in the Commonwealth:

- Prominent ODL institutions:



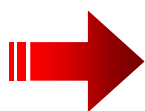
- 2006: **300 million** distance education learners

- 2009: almost **30** open universities

- **Kampala Declaration 2007**: creating an equitable society with the help of universities

- **COL** in helping Commonwealth states

- Some of COL's efforts:



- **VUSSC**: Developing the Transnational Qualifications Framework
- **L3 Farmers**: ODL beyond formal schooling



WAY FORWARD: OPEN EDUCATION FOR THE COMMUNITY

- Bonk (2009):

- “Audiences of an open world”
- “**WE-ALL-LEARN**” framework based on technologies & ODL

- ODL for an open community:

- Improve **teaching & learning**
- Reinforce the **academic community**
- Deliver **relevant courses**
- Provide efficient **services** to many learners



- 1 Higher education important to **create knowledge** necessary in community development
- 2 ODL as an **innovative approach** to expand access to higher education
- 3 Many modern **challenges** (e.g. GATS, IP rights) & new **approaches** (e.g. CSR)
- 4 COL as a **driving force** in Commonwealth ODL

THANK YOU