

**Minutes of the Seventh Meeting of the CEMCA Advisory Council held at 11:00 A.M on Monday, December 03, 2007 at New Delhi -110016**

The following were present:

Sir John Daniel, President & CEO, COL	Chairperson
Prof. Asha Kanwar, Vice President & Programme Director, COL	Deputy Chairperson
Mr. N.K. Sinha, Jt. Secy., MHRD, Govt. of India's nominee	Member
Prof. Rajasekharan Pillai, VC, IGNOU	Member
Prof. Dr. Mahmood Hassan Butt, VC, AIOU, Pakistan	Member
Y. Bhg. Dato Prof. Hassan Said, Director General, Dept of Higher Education, Malaysia	Member
Dr. M. Farid Ahmed, VC, Bangaldesh Open University, Dhaka	Member
Mr. M.C. Pant, Chairman, NIOS, India	Member
Mr. Kiran Karnik, President, NASSCOM, India	Member
Dr. R. Sreedher, Director, CEMCA	Member
Mr. Dalip Kumar Tetri, Head Admn. & Finance, CEMCA	Secretary

Mr. Ahmed Ali Didi - Hon'ble Dy. Minister, Ministry of Education represented Mrs. Zahiya Zareer, Hon'ble Minister for Education, Maldives and Member, CEMCA Advisory Council. Mr. Ahmed Shafeeu, Director, Ministry of Education, Maldives accompanied the Hon'ble Deputy Minister as observer.

The Chairman welcomed the members and said that the reconstituted body represents a very eminent group of regional experts. He briefly apprised the members of CEMCA and the role of the Advisory Council. He specifically expressed his whole hearted appreciation and thanks to the Government of India for the increase in its contribution to COL by 63% and for the constant support and encouragement extended to COL. He also informed the members that following the Indian announcement, UK and Nigeria have also expressed the intention to increase their contributions.

Thereafter, at the request of the Chair, the members introduced themselves.

Prof. Asha Kanwar presented an overview of CEMCA and briefed the members of the historical background of its establishment, its structure, its evaluation by Prof. B.N. Koul, an eminent expert in Open and Distance Education and the change in the strategic direction following the recommendations made in the evaluation report. She also mentioned the three major challenges that need to be addressed.

- (i) A more prominent regional presence of CEMCA in which, ownership rests with all the Member States.
- (ii) To be considered the preferred partner in the development of Community Radio in alignment with the policies of national governments.
- (iii) To maintain a balance between Secondary and Tertiary education as well as Formal and Non-formal education within the context of lifelong learning.

She apprised the members of the other centres of COL established in Africa mentioning that the CEMCA model is unique in itself. Prof. Kanwar also informed the members of the COL's Focal Points in 53 countries to ensure better co-ordination and recognized that two of COL's focal points namely Prof. Butt from Pakistan and Y. Bhg. Dato Prof. Hassan Said from Malaysia were present at the meeting. She further explained that CEMCA activities had been integrated in COL's Three Year Plan and that Extra Budgetary Funding was being proactively sought.

## **Item No. 2**

Dr Sreedher presented CEMCA's Annual Report 2006-07 and the Broad Strategic Plan 2007-08 briefly highlighting the activities undertaken in the previous and the current years. He also informed the members of the Extra Budgetary Funding Activities like "Community Radio awareness" undertaken on behalf of and likely to be fully funded by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and "Science for women's Health and Nutrition" supported by the Department of Science & Technology, Govt. of India. Funding had also been received from UNESCO, Paris for developing multimedia course materials in three countries of the region.

### **Quality assurance in Educational Multimedia**

After extensive discussions the Council decided that the guidelines for Quality Assurance in Educational Multimedia should be developed urgently in order to improve the quality of material under development and to assess the quality of existing material. A core group will be set up which will work out the modalities. The members suggested that the initial set of guidelines and standards should be ready within the next 3 months.

Mr. Sinha proposed that CEMCA may suggest a good interactive model of Community Radio rather than the one way broadcasting approach so that the quality of teaching and learning in higher education is improved. He also suggested that CEMCA should become a laboratory and model for innovative use of educational media so that teaching can be used to scale up both access and quality. He assured full support of the Ministry of Human Resource Development in any such initiative by CEMCA. The MHRD was requested to take up the issue of deregulation of CR waves with the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Govt. of India so that value added services like web browsing and interactivity would become easier to access through convergence.

Mr. Sinha made a strong plea for an urgent initiative to be undertaken for the training of teachers in ICT as 5 million additional teachers were required in India alone. He further stated that the technology is changing fast and CEMCA-IGNOU should consider the development of capacity building courses.

Mr. Kiran Karnik observed that capacity building is critical to development. Educationists must be able to handle media and media people must be able to handle education. CEMCA can play a vital role in this area.

### **Item No. 3 Emerging issues in ODL and ICT priorities**

After extensive discussion, the following views emerged:

#### **Bangladesh**

Dr. Farid suggested that the practice of using Moving Boat School to reach to the un-reached could be adopted by other countries facing similar situations. BOU is also using SMS questions at secondary school stage which can be used by others and that CEMCA could help with training in Multimedia.

#### **India**

Prof. Pillai suggested that CEMCA could adopt the School of New Media Studies of IGNOU. IGNOU will take active role in the Multimedia Assessment Project. CEMCA may also join IGNOU's endeavour to offer a course on Community radio management. He also observed that -CEMCA needs more physical facilities and IGNOU is prepared to extend help.

Mr. Pant suggested that CEMCA could assist NIOS in Skills Training for School Teachers in Multimedia and also in Pre- primary Teacher Training using ODL. Massive inputs are needed in teacher education. CEMCA may support NIOS in developing training and courses in School leadership Management for senior level teachers and prospective principals. CEMCA may consider helping NIOS in skills development projects through CR initiatives.

#### **Maldives**

Maldives would like to experiment with the Boat Schools Concept of Bangladesh called the 'Moving Schools'. Maldives is universalizing Secondary Education by 2010 and most of the teachers are expatriates. CEMCA can assist in continually upgrading the teachers' skills.

#### **Pakistan**

VCR (VC-Controller-Registrar) model in Universities is to be replaced with a viable one which needs attitudinal changes. It was also suggested that CEMCA could consider organizing leadership training courses for the Vice Chancellors and potential Vice Chancellors. AIOU, which has two campus Radio stations is planning to establish four more low power radio stations. This is an emerging challenge and CEMCA could get involved in this venture.

#### **Item No. 4 Regional Profile of CEMCA**

##### **Bangladesh**

Dr. Farid suggested that CEMCA could give training in Community Radio, which is an emerging field in Bangladesh. Only one radio station has been in operation so far and BOU would like to have one more.

##### **Maldives**

The Education Ministry will bring all the probable stake holders together when Director, CEMCA visits them in January 2008 for a dialogue. This includes members from the Gender Ministry, those who handle Virtual University Initiative and the members who are using the media facilities. Director, CEMCA will also study the role of low power radio stations in small islands of Maldives. He could also suggest ways and means of integrating their broadband centres with the low power radio stations. The education department has started its own radio station, which is different from State Radio. CEMCA can help to further develop the same.

##### **Malaysia**

Prof. Hassan suggested that a meeting of a few stakeholders will be organized by the Education Department, Malaysia with Director, CEMCA in the wings of the forthcoming GKP3 meeting in Kuala Lumpur. CEMCA could help the 'Community colleges' in Malaysia to establish Community Radios. He also suggested that CEMCA could make use of Malaysian experts in content development. He further suggested that Cross-border certification is a field worth considering.

He also informed that Malaysia is preparing for the Commonwealth Educational Ministers Conference scheduled to be held in April 2009 in Kuala Lumpur.

##### **Pakistan**

CEMCA could urgently develop a data base of ODL experts in the region and Prof. Dr. Butt offered his cooperation in generating names. The names of the Asian regional consultants can be drawn from the existing COL database. Additional names can be suggested by all members. The meeting of the Advisory Council could be held in different countries in the region.

While discussing the space requirements for CEMCA, a suggestion was made that the President & CEO, COL may write to the Hon'ble Minister for HRD, Govt. of India requesting for provision of accommodation to CEMCA.

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