

The Commonwealth Education Partnership for Sustainable Development

Education is critical in shaping individual and collective knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes. It builds equitable, prosperous, secure societies, and can lift entire communities out of poverty. The Commonwealth Secretariat, the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU), and the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) pledge to work together to support all member states in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals through education.

The Commonwealth Secretariat recognises the great importance of education, learning and training as an indispensable condition of development. It is the main intergovernmental agency of the Commonwealth, promoting democracy, rule of law, human rights, good governance, and social and economic development. It supports decision and policy makers to think differently and plan for long-term outcomes while tackling complexities at local, regional, and global levels, including through the development of policy toolkits and frameworks.

COL is an intergovernmental organisation that helps member states and institutions in strengthening their education policies and programmes. It promotes learning for sustainable development and is working with partners to achieve the targets of SDG 4 in education and skills, with gender as a crosscutting theme. Its work includes secondary schooling, teacher education, higher education, and technical and vocational skills development. The Virtual University for Small States in the Commonwealth focuses on the needs of all small states. COL is an acknowledged world leader in open educational resources and renowned for its innovations in educational technology.

The ACU is the voice of higher education in the Commonwealth. With over 500 member universities across the globe, it believes in the power of higher education to drive sustainable development. The ACU is a bridge between the higher education sector and Commonwealth governments – engaging constructively to foster a supportive and informed policy environment for higher education domestically and internationally. It connects and convenes member institutions – bringing them together to share best practice, build institutional capacity, and develop long-term partnerships. The ACU supports the exchange of knowledge and skills – through managing international scholarship schemes and innovative higher education programmes.

Gathered together at the 20th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers, and in response to calls for partnerships to achieve our common aims, these three partners pledge to work in partnership as one Commonwealth and harness the potential of our organisations to support member states to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, by:

- Developing joint collaborative knowledge building and sharing programmes through research and technical support
- Providing a forum for the discussion, dissemination and scaling up of good practice
- Strategically leveraging each organisation's niche and comparative advantage
- Nurturing policy dialogue and implementation at national, regional, and global levels

The partners are committed to remaining responsive to the evolving needs of member states and their citizens, in particular the young people of the Commonwealth, to ensure that no-one is left behind.