

**ABSTRACT  
PARALLEL WORKING SESSION**

**OUTREACH & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

**Sir John Daniel, President & CEO  
&  
Dr Krishna Alluri, Education Specialist, Food Security & Environment  
Commonwealth of Learning**

**University-Community Links for Rural Prosperity**

The three traditional elements of universities' missions are teaching, research and service to the community. If they are candid, however, most universities admit that the service function usually places a distant third behind the other two. Yet linking universities to rural communities at the grassroots level can be an important vehicle for improving rural prosperity, which is the single most important development task. The Commonwealth of Learning has developed a successful model, Lifelong Learning for Farmers, that links universities and village communities so that vital information can travel the last mile to farmers and help them improve their livelihoods. The model will be explained, detailing the involvement of universities in India, Sri Lanka and Uganda.