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Technology and Values - Driven Transformation in Education

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ABSTRACT

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Topic: Leave No One Behind: The Solution to an Inclusive Future

As educational technologies excel towards achieving a better and advanced future, it should be on the pillar of 'leave no one behind', a transformative promise sealed in the 2030 Agenda of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The 40th UNESCO General Assembly in its 2019 UNESCO Recommendation on Open Educational Resources (OER) called upon member states to 'encourage inclusive and equitable quality OER' in one of its mandates. Additionally, it includes leveraging open educational practices to make educational content more freely available, allowing for greater access to educational materials and resources. Inclusive Open Educational Resources (iOER) recently has been an important discussed topic among stakeholders, especially with the implementation of a national-level policy statement by Malaysia on the development and use of iOER for its higher learning institutions nationwide. iOER is a form of educational resources that is designed to be accessible and usable for learners with disabilities and usable regardless of their specific needs or abilities. This type of environment can include materials and resources that are in accessible formats, such as Braille or audio, and also include features that make the resources easier to use and navigate, such as adjustable font sizes and contrast levels. There are many misconceptions and barriers to the adoption of iOER, and many are from within the community of OER advocates themselves. iOER including a lack of awareness of the existence and availability of iOER, a lack of understanding of the value of iOER, a lack of technical skills and knowledge needed to find and use iOER, and a lack of support from educational and policy makers. Additionally, issues of cost, copyright, and quality can also be barriers to adoption of iOER. Hence, iOER-enabled environments are designed to be flexible and adaptive, allowing learners to adjust their educational experience as needed and sharing of content in various formats and across multiple platforms. Through structured implementation approaches and strong support by stakeholders, this iOER initiative can be successfully implemented. SEAMEO SEN being the regional centre for Disability-Inclusive Education expresses its commitment to be a referral center for iOER among its eleven (11) SEAMEO Member Countries and beyond.

Keywords: iOER, educational technology, learners with disabilities, disability-inclusive education, OER