

# COL-CEMCA UPDATES

July 2024



COMMONWEALTH of LEARNING  
Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia

## EDUCATION



### **COL-CEMCA and NSOU Organised Workshop on Blended Learning at Durgapur RC in West Bengal, India**

COL-CEMCA and Netaji Subhas Open University (NSOU), West Bengal, India, have collaborated to promote the 'Implementation of Blended Learning in Educational Institutions including HEIs in West Bengal' in Phase 3 of their joint project. The HEI teachers trained during the first two phases are successfully implementing these approaches in their respective institutions.

The main aim of this initiative is to equip educators with the skills to integrate blended teaching methods and advanced technologies into their classroom teaching to enhance the learning experience of their students. The third and final workshop in this series was held from 6 to 8 July 2024 at Durgapur Resource Centre (RC) of NSOU.

In his address, Dr B. Shadrach, Director of COL-CEMCA, mentioned that blended learning extends beyond combining online and offline instructions, incorporating emerging technologies like Generative AI. He highlighted the National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET) initiative, which will allow NSOU to certify and assess skill-based/vocational courses. This would enable them to provide tailored courses aligned with the local industry/job market needs.

Mr. Prosenjit Bhattacharya, Deputy Director of Durgapur RC opened the session with a welcome address. Professor Anirban Ghosh, Project Director, followed with a brief overview of the project and the workshop's agenda. He emphasised the workshop's focus on building academic capacity and fostering a collaborative community. This initiative aligns with SDGs and India's NEP 2020, providing educators with the necessary tools, knowledge, and skills to lead educational improvements.

The technical sessions of the workshop were conducted by Dr Papiya Upadhyay, Project Coordinator; and Mr. Purandar Sengupta, workshop facilitator. One of the major outcomes of this project over three phases is that NSOU has trained 600 educators from various academic programmes in West Bengal. The facilitators are also keen to share the training modules created and used by them in these workshops as open training resources.



Dr. B. Shadrach addressing the participants at the workshop.

### **Bridging the Knowledge and Access Gap through OER Training**

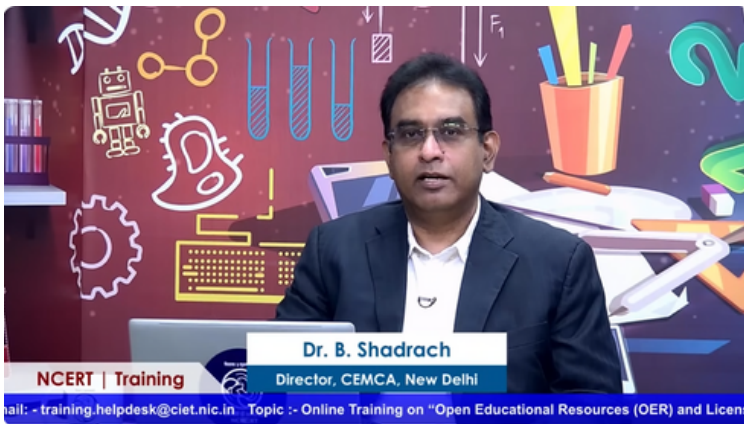
COL-CEMCA collaborated with the Central Institute of Educational Technology (CIET) at the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) in New Delhi, India, to offer a comprehensive online training programme on Open Educational Resources (OER) and Licensing. This five-hour training was conducted in both English and Hindi languages to cater to a diverse audience.

The English sessions were held from 15 to 19 July 2024, followed by the Hindi sessions from 22 to 26 July 2024. The training was broadcast live on NCERT's YouTube channel, along with several other platforms. The training sessions were led by eminent subject matter experts including Dr B. Shadrach, Director, COL-CEMCA, and Professor Amarendra P. Behera, Joint Director, CIET-NCERT, New Delhi. The English version of the training garnered approximately 87,000 views, while the Hindi version attracted around 9,500 views.

The programme aimed to enhance understanding of the potential of OER in improving the accessibility and quality of education by utilising high-quality, free, and easily accessible learning materials. It was designed to empower teachers and educational stakeholders with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively leverage OER.

The participants gained insights into the foundational policies and advancements shaping OER, practical strategies for sourcing and integrating these resources into their teaching practices, and methods for developing OER-based courses and micro-credentials with appropriate Creative Commons licences. The training also highlighted the numerous benefits of OER, such as improved access to diverse educational materials and innovative teaching approaches. Additionally, it provided guidance on navigating OER repositories and licensing to enhance the quality and accessibility of education.

These OER training sessions will also be available as a course on DIKSHA, where teachers can receive training and certification, thereby maximising its impact.



Dr. B. Shadrach speaking during the training session.

# SKILLS

## COL-CEMCA and FFSC Collaboration

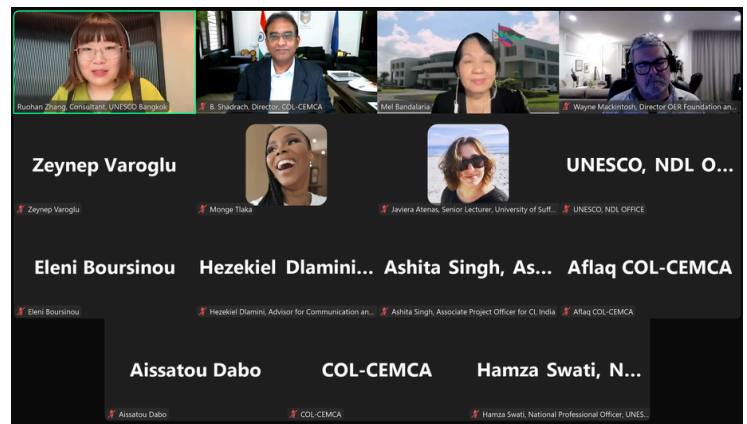
COL-CEMCA and the Furniture and Fittings Skill Council (FFSC) are going to sign an MOU to leverage their courses, for example, COL-CEMCA's Bamboo Furniture Making multi-media course, for training and livelihood generation. In the coming months, COL-CEMCA would share more information on this collaboration.

# COL-CEMCA Participation in Regional Events

## Dr. B. Shadrach Represents COL-CEMCA at Regional Consultation on UNESCO OER Implementation, Highlights Initiatives in Asia-Pacific Region

Dr B. Shadrach, Director, COL-CEMCA, was invited as a panellist at the online Regional Consultation on the Implementation of UNESCO 2019 Recommendation on Open Educational Resources (OER) for the Asia-Pacific region on 30 July 2024, in preparation for the 3rd UNESCO World OER Congress.

Dr Shadrach shared COL-CEMCA's OER activities in the region in the areas of OER policy – both national and institutional, and capacity building of educators on OER and AI enabled OER creation and dissemination. He also talked about the initiative spearheaded by the Vice Chancellors of Indian Open Universities to promote OER use and build a common OER repository.



Dr. B. Shadrach with the panellists during the meeting.

# COL-CEMCA Impact

*“The workshop on AI was a transformative experience for me,” Dr Arosha Mediwake*

Dr Arosha Mediwake, a participant in a recent AI workshop, shared her positive experience, expressing gratitude to COL-CEMCA for a valuable and insightful event. The workshop, organised by COL-CEMCA and the Ministry of Education, Sri Lanka, at Colombo on 25-27 June 2024, provided a deep dive into various cutting-edge technologies such as Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR), Merge Cube, ChatGPT, and Google Tools. Each session was designed to offer a comprehensive understanding of these tools and their potential applications in education. The hands-on activities and practical demonstrations were particularly impactful, allowing participants to apply AI principles directly to their teaching practices. This approach not only enhanced their learning experience but also equipped them with the skills to effectively integrate advanced technologies into their classrooms.



Dr. Arosha Mediwake

The collaborative environment was another highlight of the workshop. Engaging with fellow educators, sharing insights, and discussing ethical considerations in AI usage provided a well-rounded perspective. The emphasis on the responsible and ethical use of AI in education was a crucial takeaway, aimed at creating a more personalised and efficient learning experience for students.

The workshop inspired participants to innovate their teaching strategies and broadened their horizons significantly. Aroha and her colleagues are eager to disseminate the knowledge gained and train other school teachers, amplifying the workshop's impact. Aroha was particularly appreciative of the resource person who led the sessions, praising her holistic approach to teaching.

Additionally, Dr Mediwake shared photos showcasing how the teachers have returned to their schools and started teaching what they learned during the workshop. These images reflect their enthusiasm and commitment to applying the new knowledge to make a meaningful impact in their educational institutions. Aroha thanked the organisers for the incredible opportunity, noting that the workshop was a transformative experience.



Participants at the workshop.

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JULY 2024



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## UPCOMING EVENTS

Name: Workshop on Introduction to Micro-credentials  
and Best Practices

Date: 7-9 August 2024

Venue: Tamil Nadu State Open University, Tamil Nadu

Name: Workshop on Community Radio Awareness

Date: 29-30 August 2024

Venue: Agartala, Tripura

COL-CEMCA, a Regional Office of the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) Vancouver, Canada, is an international agency.

COL-CEMCA's mission is to promote meaningful, relevant and appropriate use of ICTs to serve the educational and training needs of Commonwealth Member States of Asia.

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