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Republika ng Pilipinas
Kagawaran ng Edukasyon
Tanggapan ng Pangalawang Kalihim

AIDE MEMOIRE

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“Commons in the olden days means cultural and natural resources are accessible to all members of society. These resources are held in common, not owned privately, and so is DepEd Commons.”

- Secretary Leonor Briones

**TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE AND WORKING DEPED COMMONS
PART II: A FRAMEWORK**

I. Introduction

The Department of Education (DepEd) finds itself in a most challenging situation as it is forced to move out of its comfort zone, from the delivery of its services through traditional face-to-face classroom instruction to finding new and unconventional ways of ensuring the continuity of education in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

One of the mechanisms the Department is working on to boost the distance learning delivery modality in response to the health crisis is the **DepEd Commons**—an online platform to support the continuous delivery of basic education to Filipino learners. Originally a “response” to the 2012 Paris Open Education Resources (OER) Declaration to support the harvesting of and giving access to free online instructional supplementary materials, it is now rapidly evolving into a portal that will support multiple learning delivery modalities.

II. Purpose

The DepEd Commons is envisioned to be a constantly evolving portal that provides students and teachers access to free and quality learning resources in a sustainable manner. **The ultimate goal is to have teachers and learners actively creating original content and improving these for the DepEd Commons.**

It seeks to address the question of how teachers, learners, and this government agency can become proactive users and contributors to the growth of local OERs



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and eventually, to the global OER movement. As such, they too are envisioned to directly participate in the sustainability of the DepEd Commons, its principles and objectives, consistent with the DepEd values and mandate.

Institutionalizing DepEd Commons as envisioned will be a contribution to actualizing *Sulong Edukalidad*, DepEd’s recently articulated thrust to close access gaps while pivoting focus towards the quality dimension of education delivery. Four key areas are the highlight of *Sulong Edukalidad* - K to 12 Review and updating; Improvement of learning facilities; Teachers and school heads’ upskilling and reskilling through a transformed professional development program; and Engagement of all stakeholders for support and collaboration. DepEd Commons directly contributes to the upskilling and reskilling of DepEd personnel and engagement of stakeholders, through the continued development and quality assurance of OERs.

Sulong Edukalidad in English is “Together, we move forward for quality education,” and its goals are coined KITE.

While numerous articles, documents, and OER materials can be found and read in the public domain or have alternative license that specifies how a learning resource may be reused, remixed, adapted, and shared, these are rather ambiguous and are in themselves insufficient in addressing practical use, broader sustainability, and ethical questions for DepEd. The time has come for the whole DepEd community to take on the ownership of DepEd Commons, and, as a local OER community, to flourish and be more explicit and purposeful in the ways OERs are searched, curated, produced, and delivered to benefit both teachers and learners.

III. Open Educational Resources

OERs are “teaching, learning, and research materials in any medium – digital or otherwise – that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open license that permits no-cost access, use, adaptation, and redistribution by others with no or limited restriction.”¹

OERs are preferred as it makes possible the following:

1. **Increased availability** of high quality, relevant learning materials that can contribute to more productive learners and educators.
2. The principle of **allowing adaptation of materials** provides one mechanism amongst many to transform learners from being just users of learning materials to becoming active participants in educational processes, who learn best by doing and creating, not by passively reading and absorbing.



¹UNESCO *Open Educational Resources* <https://en.unesco.org/themes/building-knowledge-societies/oer>

3. It has **potential to build capacity** by providing institutions and educators access, at low or no cost, to the means of production to develop their competence in producing educational materials and carrying out the necessary instructional design to integrate such materials into high quality programs of learning.

The development of OERs is a growing global movement that seeks to address the digital divide while maximizing the potential of the digital environment to contribute to accessible, equitable and quality education. While DepEd's efforts may initially focus on developing materials to meet local needs, in time, DepEd shall see itself participating in the global OER movement, one way of actualizing its participation in the global arena.

IV. The DepEd Commons and Open Educational Resources

Conceived to deliver a strategic approach to connect the unconnected by using OERs, the DepEd Commons operates on the following principles:

1. **Access.** Teachers and students can easily find and discover learning materials for their needed topics and interests.
2. **Collaboration and Sharing.** Mentors/teachers are in a collaborative venue to share best practices geared to prepare learners and hone their skills to become better citizens towards nation-building.
3. **Continuous Development/Improvement.** It is a platform where education officials and stakeholders can derive insights and reports on the efficacy of the portal in order to continuously enhance it.

DepEd Commons shall serve as the main platform in the access, development and curation of OERs primarily to address the education needs of the nation's learners of all ages and backgrounds.

At its initial stage, the OERs in the DepEd Commons will be curated from existing OER materials.

In the long run, however, to achieve the goal of teachers and learners creating original content for the DepEd Commons, DepEd shall:

- **develop and adopt an OER policy** in order to institutionalize the initiative and pave the way for a more sustainable path; and
- **invest in improving the use, creation, reuse, remix, and distribution of OER** and other courseware components.



V. The DepEd Commons Stakeholders and Ecosystem

The DepEd Commons stakeholders are: students/learners, teachers/mentors, education officials, parents, education service providers, civil society organizations, international education agencies, and others committed to quality and relevant basic education for all Filipinos. They all make up the DepEd Commons Ecosystem.

These stakeholders shall commit to relevant practices that demonstrate their responsibilities to the DepEd Commons and to the broader OER movement:

1. **Contribute** - DepEd Commons stakeholders to actively **Contribute** to the efforts in advancing awareness, improving and sustaining the platform and enriching the OERs. OER contributors practice conspicuous attribution, ensuring that all who create, reuse or remix OER contents are properly credited for their contributions.
2. **Open** - **Open** themselves to ask questions. Openness is necessary when adapting new, emerging, and evolving ideas, methods, and processes to be flexible and be abreast with the changing times, and be a lifelong learner.
3. **Motivate** - Be **Motivated** by the values, ethics, and principles of sharing, collaboration, accountability, and continuous growth that DepEd Commons espouses.
4. **Maximize** - **Maximize** the potential of the DepEd Commons; the programs and trainings that will be provided to acquire the skills to be digitally competent and confidently contribute to the ecosystem.
5. **Own** - When someone **Owens** something, they take care of it. They value and nurture it. DepEd Commons belongs to DepEd Commons stakeholders. DepEd Commons stakeholders should think of it as their Own!
6. **Navigate** - **Navigate** each one's role and each one's way in the DepEd Commons ecosystem to plan, devise, and act according to the learning goals and desired learning outcomes for the learners.
7. **Support** - **Support** the DepEd Commons in any way possible, big or small. This way, all efforts when combined will create a huge impact in each one's lives and in the lives of the learners. Be part of a support system



that invokes honesty, trust, empathy and the ability to connect & help others.

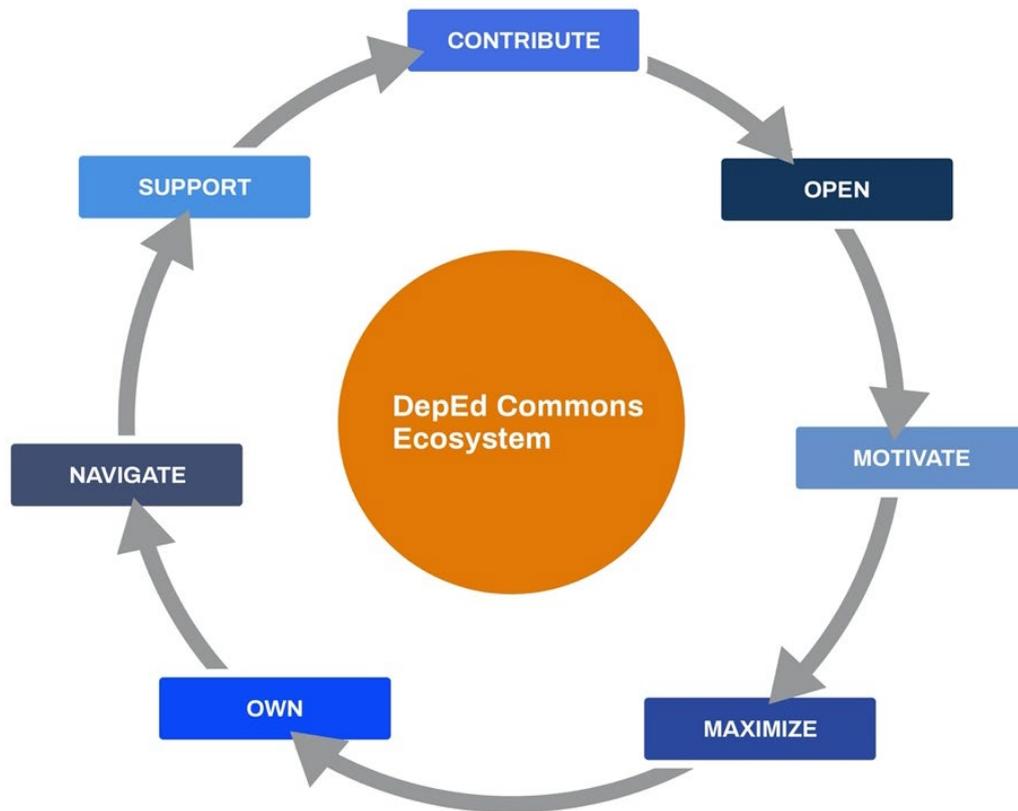


Figure 1: The DepEd COMMONS Ecosystem Framework

If the seven disciplines/practices that comprise the DepEd Commons Framework—**C**ontribute, **O**pen, **M**otivate, **M**aximize, **O**wn, **N**avigate, **S**upport—are widely adopted, the ecosystem of the DepEd Commons will diversify. The use and adoption of OERs will grow, and the future of education and learning will benefit via greater access, equity, and relevance.

VI. Enhancing the Portal (IT System) and its Roadmap

The DepEd Commons is not only a repository. It is sustainable by design and will also serve as a mechanism to acquire and enhance teacher competencies in developing learning resources that will lead to enjoyable and meaningful learning experiences for learners. For the students, it is a catalyst to transform and adopt digital learning, guided by a community of teachers all over the archipelago.



The DepEd Commons will have the following components:

A. DepEd Commons as a **Robust and Reliable Repository**

1. Repository of learning resources for both teachers and learners
2. Curated Materials that can be reused, remixed, and redistributed by teachers
3. Existing Materials
4. Donated Materials from DepEd Commons Partnership Alliance that are free to use

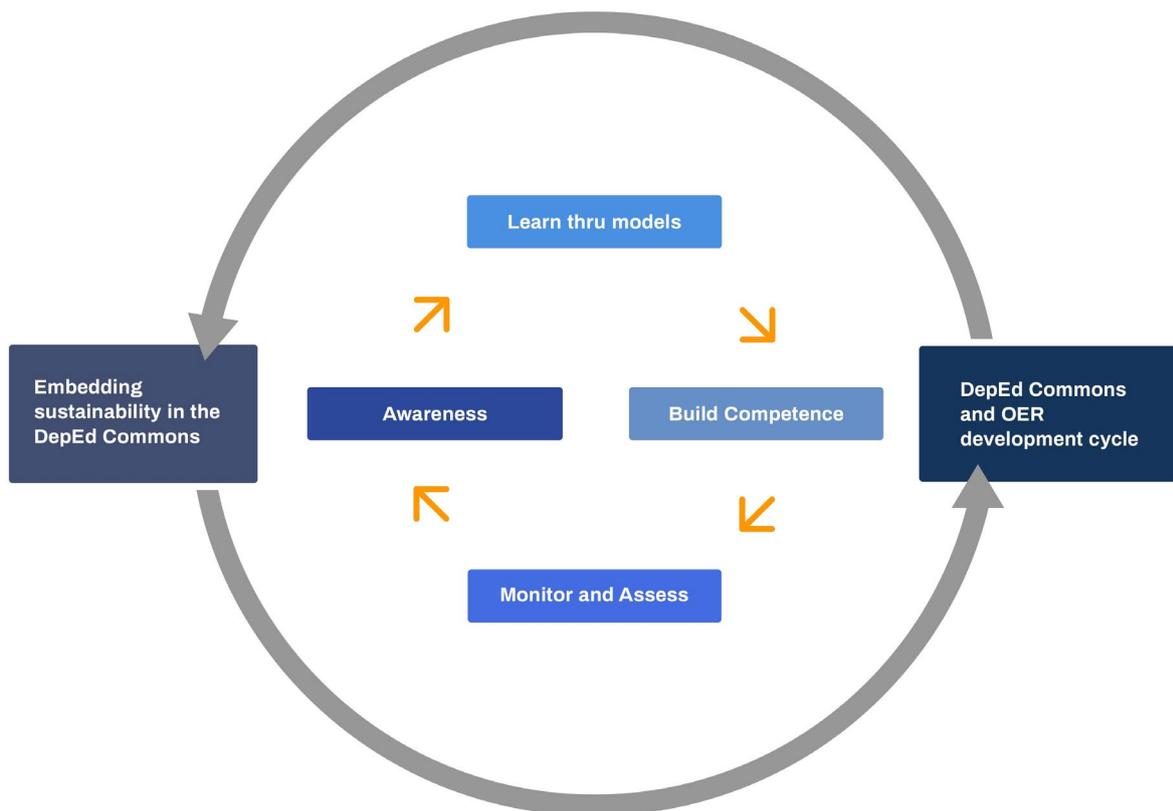


Figure 2: Embedding sustainability in the DepEd Commons

B. DepEd Commons as a **Discussion Board**

1. Technical discussion/forum
2. Policy discussion and vetting
3. Course Content Design
4. Design and Facilitation of group & activities
5. Guidelines & Strategies

C. **Teachers Portal**

1. Access and Download
2. Teaching and Learning Plan
3. Checklist of Resources



4. History Monitoring of Activities
5. Monitoring results of Learning Outcomes

D. Students Portal (and Parents and Guardians Portal)

1. Access and Download
2. Learning Plan
3. Rate Learning Resources
4. Student performance

E. Collaboration Portal

1. Trained and Certified Teachers who can
 - a. curate
 - b. create
 - c. reuse
 - d. remix OERs
2. Co-teachers are able to contribute to the learning material being developed
3. Facility for legal strand and ethics team to approve that no copyright was violated
4. Facility for the curriculum strand to determine the applicability of the resource

F. The existing DepEd Commons platform will gather data points that can integrate to an **Analytics System that will provide insights for improvement on:**

1. Skills
2. Learning Outcomes
3. Activities
4. Cohort Analysis
5. Performance and Progress
6. Locational, Divisional, Regional
7. Movements
8. Resources & Facilities
9. Comparatives
10. Needs Analysis

VII. Developing OER for the Commons

Developing OER for the DepEd Commons will entail the following activities:

A. OER Awareness Building

1. Seminar for DepEd Officials
2. Seminar/Workshop for Master Teachers – who are seen as early adopters and contributors

B. Curating Materials

1. Seminars on how to curate existing OERs
2. Searching for, reusing, designing, and disseminating OER



3. Selecting materials from existing OER repositories that are aligned with the DepEd Curriculum
4. Initially, Health, Science, and Math subjects for Grades 1 to 3

C. Capacity Building

1. Developing Audio and Multimedia Learning Resources for teachers at the basic, intermediate, and advanced levels

D. Certifications and Rewards

1. To ensure quality learning materials and as an incentive to contribute to the DepEd Commons

The proposed OER capacity building sessions must include **four fundamental skills of (1) searching, (2) reusing, (3) designing, and (4) disseminating OER**, in a coherent approach, integrating educational and technological dimensions. Mastering such skills can enable contribution and participation in the innovation and improvement of the quality and equity of education, and thus working together towards a dynamic DepEd Commons ecosystem, with global reach, rooted in local realities, needs, culture, and social perspectives.

“Digital competency clearly involves more than knowing how to use devices and applications, which is intricately connected with skills to communicate with ICT, as well as information skills. Sensible and healthy use of ICT requires particular knowledge and attitudes regarding legal and ethical aspects, privacy and security, as well as understanding the role of ICT in society and a balanced attitude towards technology.” (Janssen et al. 2013, p. 480)

VIII. Towards a Sustaining and Working DepEd Commons

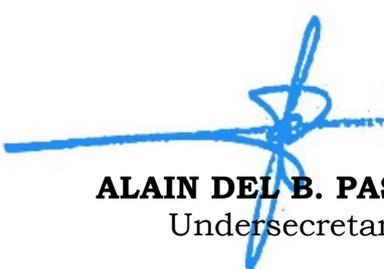
The DepEd Commons is **a work in progress**. It evolves together with the quickly changing pace of the world and rises up to challenges, especially in times of crisis such as pandemics and natural disasters, all for the benefit of Filipino learners wherever they may be.

The DepEd Commons will be in full support of the operationalization of the Department’s Learning Continuity Plan (LCP) in preparation for School Year 2020-2021, a key component of which is the multiple learning delivery modalities to be implemented by schools around the country customized in their contexts.

The DepEd Commons is one of the concrete ways the Department is coping with the demands of the times. Guided by its Framework, it is a consolidated effort within the Department to see to fruition the vision for creating an online platform to meet the requirements of a good e-learning modality and to offer a creative solution to make learning accessible anytime, anywhere for all types of environments and situations.



Still taking into consideration the reality of the present that the DepEd Commons is not yet accessible to all teachers and learners, the Department nevertheless continues its work towards achieving the dream of bridging the gaps and in persevering to connect with the unreached.



ALAIN DEL B. PASCUA
Undersecretary

** With substantial contributions from
ICTS, DRRMS, PS, BLD, IPSEO, PAS,
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