COL-CEMCA UPDATES

June 2025

COMMONWEALTH of LEARNING
Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia

Empowering Educators through Open Educational Resources

In a significant collaboration aimed at transforming classroom teaching through accessible and innovative learning tools, COL-CEMCA, the Central Institute of Educational Technology-National Council of Educational Research and Training (CIET-NCERT), and Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women jointly conducted a five-day residential training programme on Open Educational Resources (OER): Innovating Education in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India, from 2-6 June 2025.

Designed specifically for teaching faculty in the education sector across southern states, the programme brought together 50 participants representing SCERTs, SIEs, and RIE from Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka, Lakshadweep, and Andaman and Nicobar Islands to explore the philosophy, application, and creation of OER. The training equipped the educators with practical knowledge to integrate OER into their teaching practices, enhancing both learning outcomes and educational inclusivity.

Inaugurating the programme, Professor V. Bharathi Harishankar, Vice-Chancellor of

Avinashilingam University, stated, "Educators often spend significant time preparing content. OER provides a solid base for reference and adaptation, offering flexibility and innovation in teaching."

A glimpse from the training programme.

Dr B. Shadrach, Director of COL-CEMCA, noted, "OER is no longer new, but technology has revolutionised how we create, access, and use these resources. OERs support the aims of NEP 2020 and SDG 4 by promoting affordable and inclusive education."

Professor Amarendra P. Behera, Joint Director, CIET-NCERT, reiterated the importance of blending education and technology. "OER and technology together help overcome linguistic, geographical, and financial barriers, making education more equitable," he shared.

During the five days, the participants engaged in a dynamic mix of lectures, hands-on sessions,

and collaborative projects. From understanding the principles of open licensing to navigating OER repositories and developing context-specific resources, the training covered a broad spectrum.
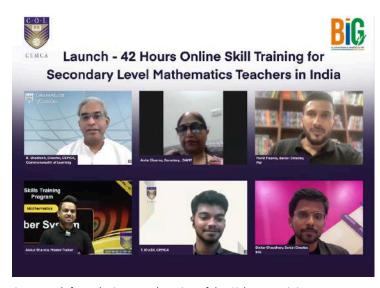
Visit the link for more insights: https://www.cemca.org/news/empowering-educators-through-open-educational-resources

COL-CEMCA and BIG Launch National Maths Teacher Training

COL-CEMCA, in collaboration with Bharat Innovation Global (BIG), officially launched a 42-Hour Online Skill Training Programme for secondary-level mathematics teachers across India on 2 June 2025. The programme, designed to support innovative, technology-enabled, and student-centred teaching practices, saw an overwhelming response with over 6,000 registrations from educators spanning various regions of the country.

This six-week training initiative would enhance teachers' conceptual understanding, capacity to use digital tools, develop engaging classroom strategies, and make mathematics instruction more relevant and application-oriented. It combines live sessions with self-paced learning to ensure flexibility, depth, and sustained engagement.

The inauguration of the training programme brought together key voices from education and edtech. Dr B. Shadrach, Director of COL-CEMCA, delivered the keynote address, offering insights into the vision and intent behind the programme and reaffirming CEMCA's commitment to inclusive, technology-driven teacher development. Dr Shadrach described the launch as a celebration of educators excelling in mathematics and STEM teaching.

Screengrab from the inaugural session of the 42 hours training programme.

Mr. Mohit Poonia, Senior Director at Physics Wallah, spoke on the transformative role of digital platforms in scaling up effective teacher training. Ms. Anita Sharma, Secretary of the Delhi Association of Mathematics Teachers (DAMT), shared her thoughts on the evolving role of math educators in today's classrooms. The session was moderated by Mr. T Khalid, Consultant at CEMCA, who guided the proceedings of the day. It concluded with a vote of thanks by Mr. Dinker Chaudhary, Senior Director at BIG, who acknowledged the contributions of all stakeholders and the teachers.

The academic segment of the programme was introduced next, led by Mr. Ankur Sharma, Master Trainer, and his team. They facilitated the academic journey of participants through the course of the training.

Visit the link for more insights: https://www.cemca.org/news/transforming-stem-education-tomorrow-col-cemca-and-big-launch-national-maths-skill-training-tea

Colloquium Explores AI's Transformative Role in Higher Education

COL-CEMCA and the Embassy of Israel jointly hosted a high-impact colloquium on Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) at the Dr Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi. The event brought together Vice Chancellors, experts, and AI practitioners to examine the evolving role of AI in teaching, learning, and academic governance.

In his welcome address, Dr B. Shadrach, Director of COL-CEMCA, emphasised that AI is no longer a distant concept—it is shaping the future of education. While AI offers tools for lecture preparation, course design, and assessment, he urged educators to adopt it responsibly.

The technical session on Artificial Intelligence for Academic Leadership, Decision-making, Governance, and Daily Efficiency, led by Dr Kshma Swarnkar, explored how AI is being used to personalise learning, automate grading, enhance workplace efficiency, and address cybersecurity risks. Shri Mrutyunjay Behera, Economic Advisor (Higher Education), Ministry of Education, described AI as a "tamed tiger"—useful yet unpredictable—and called for a balanced, human-led approach to its application.

Photographs from the event.

Panellists pose for a picture with Ms Maya Sherman.

The second session on AI in HEIs, moderated by Ms Maya Sherman, Innovation Attaché, Embassy of Israel, featured distinguished Vice Chancellors from select Indian open universities as panellists. Ms Sherman set the context by inviting insights on how AI is reshaping the higher education landscape; VCs' perspectives on AI adoption in their institutions, the associated opportunities and challenges, and how AI is redefining the concept of intelligence.

A central theme that emerged during the panel discussion was that AI is not a replacement for human educators but a powerful assistive tool that can enhance teaching, learning, and institutional efficiency. From personalising student experiences and automating assessments to supporting curriculum alignment with industry needs, AI offers immense potential—provided it is guided by human oversight and ethical intent.

Visit the link for more insights: https://www.cemca.org/news/colloquium-explores-ais-transformative-role-higher-education

COL-CEMCA and IGNOU Lead National Effort to Enhance Graduate Employability

COL-CEMCA, and Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) organised a landmark three-day national Capacity Building Workshop on Implementing Graduate Employability and Understanding Skills Qualification Packs at IGNOU headquarters in New Delhi, India. Held from 4 to 6 June 2025, the workshop brought together Vice Chancellors and senior officials from 17 open universities across India, and provided them an opportunity to engage with NCVET officials, industry leaders, experts, and other stakeholders.

In the concluding session, Dr B. Shadrach, Director of COL-CEMCA, provided a comprehensive summary of the workshop, and welcomed the formation of the national-level open university consortium, the Indian Public Open Universities Association (IPOUA), evolving from earlier consultations in Nashik. "The association will foster collaboration, joint action, and unified policy advocacy on skills and employability," Dr Shadrach stated.

A glimpse from the session at the workshop.

Dr B Shadrach, Director COL-CECMA speaking at the inaugural session.

Throughout the workshop, the participants engaged in dynamic discussions on embedding skill-based learning into academic curricula. The Sessions covered critical themes such as industry-academia collaboration, inclusive education for learners with disabilities, and development of qualification packs.

ChangeInkk and COL-CEMCA's Building University Inclusion for Learners with Disabilities (BUILD) initiative was prominently featured, reinforcing its dedication to inclusive education. The panel discussions stressed the importance of aligning academic outcomes with industry demands to ensure that graduates are job-ready. The participants also gained valuable insights into the processes and best practices involved in developing Qualification Packs, as shared by Ratan Tata Maharashtra State Skills University, Pune.

The key recommendations from the workshop included the introduction of credit-based modules in emerging sectors like solar and wind energy, enhanced faculty training, and stronger career services. The speakers advocated for a research-led, outcome-based curriculum tailored to real-world needs.

Visit the link for more insights: https://www.cemca.org/news/col-cemca-and-ignou-lead-national-effort-enhance-graduate-employability

COL-CEMCA and TNOU Host Workshop on Micro-Credentials to Enhance Youth Employability

In alignment with national education priorities, COL-CEMCA and Tamil Nadu Open University (TNOU) jointly organised a three-day workshop titled "Online Content Creation for Micro-Credentials" from 9-11 June 2025 at the TNOU campus in Chennai.

The workshop aimed to build faculty capacity in designing learner-centric, digitally delivered micro-credential courses that support youth employability. Over 50 faculty members from diverse disciplines participated in hands-on sessions covering instructional design, e-content development, video production, LMS integration, and digital credentialing.

The event was inaugurated by Professor S. Arumugam, Vice Chancellor of TNOU, who underscored the potential of micro-credentials in closing skill gaps and fostering lifelong learning. The keynote address by Professor K. Narayanasamy, Vice Chancellor of Dr M.G.R. Medical University, highlighted the need for modular, outcome-based education aligned with industry needs.

A glimpse from the session at the workshop.

A highlight of the workshop was a virtual session by Dr B. Shadrach, Director of COL-CEMCA, on the significance of micro-credentials in democratising access to education. Sessions led by Dr H. Srimathi and Dr V. Shanmuganeethi focused on pedagogy, digital assessments, video tools like OBS Studio, and interactive content using Moodle, H5P, and Edpuzzle.

The participants developed micro-credential course prototypes and explored the use of digital badges and learning analytics. The workshop concluded with a valedictory address by Professor R. Velraj, who commended TNOU's leadership in digital innovation. In his closing remarks, Dr B. Shadrach lauded TNOU for taking a strategic lead in implementing micro-credentials and emphasised the need for learner-centric approaches in course design. This initiative reinforces TNOU's commitment to inclusive, flexible, and employability-driven online education.

Visit the link for more insights: https://www.cemca.org/news/col-cemca-and-tnou-host-workshop-micro-credentials-enhance-youth-employability

Vice Chancellors Lead the Way in AI-Ready Higher Education

With the aim towards building AI readiness in Indian universities, COL-CEMCA, and the Association of Indian Universities (AIU), jointly conducted an AI Masterclass for 60 Vice Chancellors (VCs) from Indian Universities on 11 June 2025 in New Delhi, India. The event aimed to foster a deeper understanding of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its transformative potential across education, research, and administration.

The conference commenced with a welcome address by Dr Pankaj Mittal, Secretary General,

Photograph from the masterclass on AI for VCs

AIU. In his address, Dr B. Shadrach, Director of COL-CEMCA, underscored the vision of equipping university leaders with the necessary knowledge to navigate the rapidly evolving AI landscape, which translated into the AI Masterclass for VCs. "It is essential that our Vice Chancellors not only understand AI's capabilities but also lead strategic integration of AI into institutional frameworks," he stated. Professor Vinay Kumar Pathak, President of AIU, set the tone for the session by describing AI as "the new normal for universities, industries, and civilisations."

The Masterclass continued with an engaging presentation on practical applications of AI, including generative AI and virtual reality-based solutions. A significant focus was placed on prompt engineering, offering hands-on guidance to help participants craft effective prompts for optimal outcomes. Another segment explored the role of AI in academic leadership, decision-making, governance, and everyday efficiency, supported by a real-life case study demonstrating how AI was leveraged to enhance institutional operations. This was followed by a discussion on reimagining higher education through digital transformation, data, and AI. The final session highlighted innovations in personalised learning and the impact of generative AI within the higher education landscape.

Visit the link for more insights: https://www.cemca.org/news/vice-chancellors-lead-way-ai-ready-higher-education

Empowering Educators in Maldives to Support Learners with SLD

To support inclusive education, COL-CEMCA, in collaboration with the Department of Inclusive Education (DoIE), Ministry of Education, Maldives, and ChangeInkk Foundation, India, organised a three-day training programme titled "Mainstreaming Students with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)" in Malé from 14–16 June 2025.

The training brought together educators, policymakers, and specialists to enhance their understanding of SLD and build capacity for inclusive practices. The programme was inaugurated by senior government officials, with a keynote by Dr B. Shadrach, Director, COL-CEMCA.

A highlight from the inaugural session of the training programme.

Over three days, participants engaged in sessions on identifying learning disabilities, understanding intersectionality, implementing classroom accommodations, and developing Individualised Education Plans (IEPs). A practical school visit provided insight into existing inclusive practices, while discussions on national challenges encouraged collaborative planning for sustainable inclusion strategies.

Facilitated by experts from COL-CEMCA and ChangeInkk, the sessions offered hands-on guidance and evidence-based teaching tools. The programme concluded with the announcement of a new online course on

"Mainstreaming Inclusive Initiatives" and a certificate distribution ceremony.

Key outcomes included improved knowledge of SLD identification, enhanced teaching competencies, and a stronger policy commitment to inclusion. The training marked a significant step toward building a more inclusive education system in the Maldives, with participants pledging to implement inclusive strategies in their institutions.

Visit the link for more insights: https://www.cemca.org/news/empowering-educators-maldives-support-learners-sld

Strengthening India–Sri Lanka Educational Exchange through Leadership Development

A two-week Capacity Development Programme for Educational Administrative Service Officers from Sri Lanka concluded on 20 June 2025 at the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), marking a significant stride in regional collaboration. Jointly organised by COL-CEMCA and NIEPA, the initiative brought together 20 mid-career Sri Lankan officers involved in school supervision, management, and policy planning.

Held from 9 to 20 June 2025, the programme addressed a key professional development gap by offering international exposure to contemporary educational leadership, systemic reforms, and strategic planning. The training featured a blend of expert-led lectures, interactive sessions, case studies, and institutional visits.

In his inaugural address, Dr B. Shadrach, Director, COL-CEMCA, underlined the critical role of educators in nation-building and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. He highlighted the value of decentralised school-based management and called for deeper Indo-Lanka cooperation in digital innovation and educational reform.

Participants engaging in a group discussion at the workshop.

Participants engaged in thematic sessions on leadership, policy planning, digital integration, inclusive education, and change management. Visits to premier institutions such as CBSE, SCERT, CIET, and NIOS offered valuable insights into India's education system. At CBSE, senior officials briefed participants on governance and operations.

The programme concluded with a memorable valedictory ceremony on 20 June 2025, followed by a dinner reception hosted by COL-CEMCA. Her Excellency Mahishini Colonne, High Commissioner of Sri Lanka to India, graced both the valedictory and the reception as the Guest of Honour, alongside other distinguished dignitaries, including Shri Mrutyunjay Behera, Economic Advisor (Higher Education), Ministry of Education, Government of India. The ceremony featured heartfelt participant testimonials reflecting on their transformative experiences, the distribution of certificates, and inspiring addresses by Dr B. Shadrach, Director, CEMCA, and Shri Surya Narayan Mishra, Registrar, NIEPA.

The programme reflected a shared commitment to empowering education leaders with strategic capabilities to drive systemic improvements in

Participants pose for a group picture post completion of the training.

their home countries. With strong networks and a global perspective, the participants are now poised to implement transformative practices within Sri Lanka's evolving educational landscape.

Visit the link for more insights: https://www.cemca.org/news/strengthening-educational-ties-col-cemca-facilitates-india-sri-lanka-knowledge-exchange

More photographs from the programme.

COL-CEMCA Participation in Regional Events

**COL Board Retreat, 26 June 2025
Vancouver, Canada**

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Dr B. Shadrach, Director, COL-CEMCA, participated in the Board Retreat Meeting, held on 26 June 2025 in Vancouver, Canada.

Graduate Employability Workshop Flip Book

COL-CEMCA, and Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) jointly organised a landmark three-day national Capacity Building Workshop on Implementing Graduate Employability and Understanding Skills Qualification Packs at IGNOU headquarters in New Delhi, India. Held from 4 to 6 June 2025, the workshop brought together Vice Chancellors and senior officials from 17 open universities across India, and provided them an opportunity to engage with NCVET officials, industry leaders, experts, and other stakeholders.

Dr Randhir Roopchund has created a small flip-book of pictures captured during the workshop. Please take a moment and enjoy the moments captured in the event.

Click here to view the flip-book:
https://heyzine.com/flip-book/9c521abcd7.html#page/1

PCF11

Gaborone Botswana

10–12 September 2025

COMMONWEALTH of LEARNING

REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Botswana Open University

Innovative Open Education: Fostering Resilient Societies for Sustainable Economic Development

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Join PCF11 to discuss how Open Education drives equity, resilience and innovation across the Commonwealth.

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PCF11 promotes open education to address key challenges such as educational inequity, stratification, and barriers to access. It fosters collaboration, innovative models, and solutions that build social resilience and adapt to global changes.

The theme of PCF11 is **Innovative Open Education: Fostering Resilient Societies for Sustainable Economic Development** and is accompanied by the following sub-themes and special focus areas:

Sub-Themes:

- Changing mindsets for innovative open education
- Gender, technology and innovation in innovative open education
- Skills development through innovative open education
- Sustaining communities of learning and practice in innovative open education

Special Focus:

- Emerging technologies for education and training
- Education for girls and women
- Youth

Important Dates

10 October 2024 — Call for abstracts and proposals

30 January 2025 — Last date for submission of abstracts and proposals

01 March 2025 — Notification of abstract/proposal approval

15 April 2025 — Last date for full paper submission

01 May 2025 — Notification for full paper submission

10 September 2025 — PCF11 commences

Contact: info@pcf11.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

**42 Hours Online Skill Training Program for
1000 Secondary Level Mathematics Teachers**
Date: 1-18 July 2025
Venue: Online