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THE CURRENT STATUS OF OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES (OER) IN ASEAN

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Like education in the rest of the world, education in the Southeast Asian sub-region is profoundly affected from the technological advancements that started at the onset of the 21st century. Open Educational Resources (OER) has come a long way and is continuing to evolve with the emergence of other ICT-based educational innovations. In terms of OER, however, information on OER in Southeast Asia remains largely unidentified, loosely collected and structured, despite OER having gained traction and international acceptance. What further compounds the issue is that most of the ASEAN member states are developing countries and hence do not yet have the technological and human resource capacity to effectively and optimally use ICT in education let alone establish mechanisms for OER access, use, and production.

The main research question paves the way for secondary research questions on OER in ASEAN member states, to include: policies governing OER; available OER; how OER is being made available; how academe and students use OER; barriers to accessing, using, sharing and creating OER; steps undertaken towards the regionalization of OER. The research, being one of three cooperative research sub-topics for the ASEAN Cyber University – Open Educational Resources (ACU-OER) project between the ACU Project Secretariat (ACUS) and ASEAN University Network, intends to activate the ACU-OER for the common use of ASEAN member states, and address the aforementioned research questions.

An analysis of existing documents relevant to the research topic has been performed. The review covered materials on ICT profile; government policies on OER; existing OER repositories; existing research on OER in ASEAN member states; and inter-OER initiatives. Additionally, an online survey has been conducted to complement the document analysis in gathering quantitative and qualitative data. The survey was intended to gather OER information through respondents from each of the ten member states of ASEAN. The documents analyses and online survey were intended to articulate on the research questions and gather data on: government policies of OER (availability, salient points); availability of OER (producer/creator, course/subject, type, media, language); accessibility and usage of OER (access points, frequency of access and usage, perception of academe and students).

Research findings point to the possibility that the educational environments of ASEAN member states are not yet fully conducive for OER initiatives to thrive. Legislative and technological infrastructures are not fully in place. OER activity of academic staff and students are mostly limited to accessing available OER and less on contributing to the pool of educational resources, whether customized or entirely new. These concerns, on the other hand, present a great opportunity for collaboration towards healthy intra and inter OER ecosystems. ASEAN education stakeholders will benefit from collaborative platforms for best practices and lessons on the development and implementation of OER initiatives, including on policy, content development, capacity building, and research. On the regionalization of OER, It is essential for ASEAN countries to be in the same page on what it defines as OER, given the various OER definitions of various proponents. Building the knowledge base on OER in ASEAN will enable member states to develop and

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implement evidence-based and effective nationwide and ASEAN-wide OER initiatives.

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