DECLARATION ON THE
DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF EDUCATION SYSTEMS IN ASEAN

WE, the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) namely Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand, and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, on the occasion of the 40th and 41st ASEAN Summits in Phnom Penh on 11 November 2022;

REAFFIRMING the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 key aspiration for "a resilient community with enhanced capacity and capability to adapt and respond to social and economic vulnerabilities, disasters, climate change as well as emerging threats and challenges";

EMPHASISING our commitment in the ASEAN Leaders' Statement on Advancing Digital Transformation in ASEAN adopted at the 38th ASEAN Summit to deepen cooperation across ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and Community Pillars for a strategic and holistic coordinated approach to enable inclusive and accelerated digital transformation;

RECOGNISING the work done to foster regional digital transformation through the implementation of the ASEAN Digital Masterplan 2025, Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025, ASEAN Consolidated Strategy for the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and the Bandar Seri Begawan Roadmap;

RECALLING our commitment in the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Education for Out-of-School Children and Youth adopted at the 28th ASEAN Summit, that underscore the rights to education and the crucial importance of ensuring equal opportunities in education of all types (formal and non-formal, basic, vocational, and higher) and lifelong learning, consistent with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities, to which our Member States are parties to;

REITERATING our commitment in the ASEAN Declaration on Human Resources Development for the Changing World of Work to equip ASEAN's human resources with the competencies[1] that will prepare them to be future-ready, thereby enabling them to contribute to the sustainable development, competitiveness and resilience of ASEAN; protecting them from potentially negative impacts of disruptive technologies; enabling them to manage just transition, and ensuring that no one is left behind in this changing world of work.

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[1] including digital literacy for students, teachers, school leaders and education administrators –

RECOGNISING the ASEAN Education Ministers' Joint Statement on the Digital Transformation of Education Systems throughout ASEAN on 15 October 2020 which highlights the need to improve access to safe digital learning[2] opportunities, foster digital literacy[3], and develop transferable skills[4] among all ASEAN Member States;

COGNISANT of the varying degrees by which education has been digitalised among the ASEAN Member States and the need to address challenges from the digital divide, digital readiness of education systems and institutions, digital infrastructure and investment, intellectual property rights, cyber security and cyber wellness, as well as the development of a safe, inclusive and equitable digital eco-system for the peoples of ASEAN;

INSPIRED by the three principles of 2021 UNESCO's RewirEd Global Declaration on Connectivity for Education, that digital initiatives should "center the most marginalised," that investments in free and open education content must be increased, and that digitalisation will require pedagogical changes plus innovation;

NOTING that digital technology has the potential to increase access to and participation in education among marginalised populations, enhance teaching and learning practices, and improve management of education information;

NOTING FURTHER that to realise its transformative potential, digitalisation of education must be accompanied by capacity building among decision-makers, teacher professional development, development of relevant and accessible digital resources, incorporation of pedagogical advances, assessments and digital learning solutions and to promote learning and to inform education policy and practice;

UNDERSCORING that the chief components of any education system are teaching, teachers' skills, learning delivery, learning resources, curriculum, assessment, information management and infrastructure. These elements are addressed in this Declaration and should be considered in any national strategic plan or framework for digital transformation of education.

DO HEREBY AGREE TO:

1. Ensure teachers, trainers and educators of children and young people develop through effective and equitable pre-service and in-service teacher training, communities of practice and peer networks, the relevant learner-centred pedagogical practices, digital literacy skills needed for remote, online, and blended teaching so as to enable learning and skilling, capacity to harness learning innovation in keeping up with the 21st century skills, by all children and youth;

2. Implement appropriate digital pedagogies and formative assessments to improve teaching and learning and to inform central governments, streamlining the flow of information without increasing burdens on teachers.

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[2] Digital learning refers to the practice of learning using technologies. It applies to various types of learning (blended, remote), connectivity settings (no, low, high) and modalities (mobile phones, TVs, laptops, etc.)
[3] Digital literacy refers to knowledge, skills and attitudes that allow learners and teachers to be both safe and empowered in an increasingly digital world. Digital literacy encompasses their play, participation, socializing, searching and learning through digital technologies. What constitutes digital literacy will vary according to the children's age, local culture and contexts.
[4] Also known as life skills, 21st century skills, soft skills or socio-emotional skills.

3. Develop and promote access to quality digital learning resources in consultation with educators that support in-class use and remote learning, that are open-access, free-to-use, have clear entry points for learners, teachers, and caregivers in support of lifelong learning;

4. Build a shared repository of learning resources including materials and content delivery platforms which can be easily adapted to varying national and local contexts by ASEAN Member States;

5. Build a shared repository of lesson plans, assessments, templates, classroom activities and/or other resources accessible for localisation and adoption by ASEAN Member States;

6. Develop formative digital assessments and item banks, and ensure that those assessments are adaptable and that they effectively measure all learning including, but not limited to, foundational, transferable, digital skills and competencies acquired in formal, non-formal and informal settings;

7. Utilize digital technology to enhance national EMIS - collection, aggregation, analysis and use of data and information in education, including data on individual students as well as teachers, for management and administration, planning, policy formulation, and monitoring and evaluation at both school and administrative levels

8. Develop and adopt policies calling for open education data and transparent statistics at the school and administrative levels, while ensuring the safety and privacy of individuals and the privacy of information about them;

9. Develop and adopt policies calling for interoperability among relevant management information-systems nation-wide (e.g. education, health, social welfare) and, as appropriate, ASEAN-wide, to take advantage of the efficiencies that digitalization can support, to provide holistic multi-sectoral support and social services, and develop 'early warning systems' to identify and support the most vulnerable populations/learners;

10. Develop and observe policies describing data privacy and protection, including how data should be captured, stored and encoded to protect sensitive data;

11. Ensure that the intellectual property of all learning resources and their variations is respected.

12. Ensure the online safety of all children and equip children with knowledge and information to navigate safely online;

13. Proactively address risks to children, including discrimination, child sexual abuse and exploitation, bullying, hate speech, and other harmful content

14. Leverage digital platforms to deliver content on child online protection to teachers, caregivers, and children

15. Support teachers and caregivers to help children stay safe while learning online at school and at home

16. Enable child safety referral services through digital platforms

17. Ensure that education decision-makers, government stakeholders, and school administrators, have the opportunity to acquire understanding of and participate in the digital transformation of education

18. Build capacity and develop standards to improve the monitoring and evaluation systems of ICT initiatives undertaken in education,

19. Develop and implement communication strategies, media and advocacy campaigns, and outreach programs to facilitate, inform and encourage engagement in the digital transformation of education towards communities, families, and young people;

20. Establish an environment that supports the development of policies and strategic plans which enhance the digital transformation of education mechanisms and encourage the funding of policies and plans at all levels of government to school and institutional levels;

21. Develop and fund policies that connect the digital transformation of education with national and ASEAN-wide vision statements and/or plans for digitalization that link learning and new competencies needed for school, work and life, especially those that prioritise marginalized groups, and increase policy linkage between education and other relevant sectors

22. Develop and share templates of policies addressing digital transformation of education, equity, intellectual property, inclusivity, devices and connectivity, among others;

23. Introduce new and innovative funding mechanisms within member states that support national investments in ICT and education;

24. Strengthen partnerships with the private sector, mobile network operators (MNOs) to support connectivity and affordable or free access to data, content, platforms, and tools for learning

25. Cultivate a broad ecosystem approach for sustained collaboration on digital transformation of education which is conducive to partnerships and engagement of relevant ministries, including at least Ministries of Education, Finance, ICT/Telecommunications, and Infrastructure;

26. Assess and ensure that the capital and recurrent costs related to ICT in education are transparent, accommodated and accountable;

27. Consider and plan for long-term funding needs for digital transformation of education

28. Ensure the negative environmental consequences of digital transformation of education are minimized;

29. Utilize digital learning solutions to support the development of a full range of skills for life, work, and sustainable development

30. Share resources and expertise to support and facilitate connectivity in schools and communities;

31. Leverage existing devices and online and offline initiatives to support learning for children and young people

32. Provide offline digital learning solutions to schools that are not yet connected to the Internet;

33. Provide e-learning devices to schools and ensure free or affordable devices are available for learners' use at home.

34. Extend internet and electrical infrastructure through collaboration with relevant ministries such as ministries of ICT, to ensure that all learners can participate in digital learning.;

35. Ensure that schools and all learners can access low-cost or free internet for education platforms, learning resources and other relevant resources and tools;

36. Encourage and support public and private partnerships to enable infrastructure and connectivity for e-learning.

WE TASK the ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting (ASED) to oversee the overall implementation of this Declaration, with the support of the ASEAN Senior Officials' Meeting on Education (SOM-ED), and in collaboration with other relevant ASEAN Sectoral Ministerial Bodies.

ADOPTED in Phnom Penh, on this Eleventh Day of November in the year Two Thousand and Twenty-two in a single original copy, in the English language.