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Minister of Education and Skills Development Hon. Dr Douglas Letsholathebe

BOTSWANA OPEN UNIVERSITY HOSTS OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES POLICY (OER) WORKSHOP

Botswana Open University hosted a two-day Open Educational Resources Policy workshop in Gaborone, for the Commonwealth SADC member states. The main objective of the workshop was to promote the adoption of the Open Educational Resources (OERs) through the development of OER National and Institutional Policies. The workshop capacitated attendees to engage in intellectual exchanges that were targeted at ensuring that the education sector truly meets the needs of people and is facilitative of their total emancipation.

While giving welcome remarks The Vice Chancellor of Botswana Open University Dr Daniel Tau said that they have engaged an expert in Open Educational Resources Policy, Mr. Neil Butcher as a consultant to facilitate. He further stated that it is important to note that for inclusivity they have also engaged people living with disabilities. "COL is indeed an inclusive organisation, as I pick that it largely promotes the welfare of the marginalised members of our societies; the girls, women, and people living with disabilities. A quick scan around the room shows that we have more women in attendance, and I would like to congratulate the organisers of this workshop for this" said Dr Tau.

Honourable Minister of Education & Skills Development Dr. Douglas Letsholathebe performed the official opening of the workshop. Giving his keynote address he stated that the workshop will give participants a platform to explore the requirements needed for ensuring effective adoption of OER, as well as unpacking the policy environments needed to support their use, at both institutional and national levels. The Minister said over and above these, he had been reliably informed that at the end of the workshop the University will be in a position to determine the requirements for, and scope of effective OER policies, as well as being able to assess the extent to which existing policies support educationally effective adoption of OER". Participants were also expected to develop a 12-month agenda to strengthen institutional and national OER policy environments in the SADC region.

Open Educational Resources have proved to be very crucial during crises, of late during the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced the closure of schools globally. Most institutions shared study materials online. The key strengths of OERs lie in the fact that they are scalable and can reach large numbers of users over a short period of time.



Mr Neil Butcher



Deligates and the workshop



PS Ms Maroba, Minister Hon Dr Letsholathebe, VC Dr Tau and DVC Prof Moahi