GSENet Beijing declaration on Smart Education Strategies

Preamble

The founding members of Global Smart Education Network (GSENet) and their collaboration partners met in Beijing, China at the Global Smart Education (GSE) conference held on 18-20 August, 2023,

Aiming at promoting follow-up actions of the UN Transforming Education Summit (TES) in 2022 and achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) and UNESCO Education 2030 Agenda,

Recognizing that cutting-edge technologies and tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Metaverse, Digital Twin), when integrated with smart education planning and practice, will be an important engine to reshape teaching and learning and transform the education system,

Taking into account the collective work and research outcomes coordinated by Beijing Normal University and UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education (UNESCO IITE) jointly with other GSENet founding members and global partners on the national smart education strategy and relevant issues,

Defining Smart education as the educational behaviors (system) provided by schools, regions, or governments, with the characteristics of the high learning experience, learning content adaptation, and teaching efficiency. Modern science and technologies are used to provide diversified support and on-demand services for students, teachers, and parents, the data of participants and learning and teaching processes are recorded and used to promote the quality and equity of education.

Recommending that to promote the adoption and implementation of smart education worldwide, the following recommendation should be considered:

Recommendation 1

Governments, according to their governing structures and specific conditions, should develop smart education from three key leverage points of transforming teaching and learning methods, building smart digital learning environments, and implementing forward-thinking policy. The overarching considerations of equity, continuous improvement, and multi-sector cooperation for the above leverage points should be fully considered.

Recommendation 2

Policy makers are encouraged to review, analyze and rebuild policies on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in education from the policy themes of ICT infrastructure, digital education resources and platforms, curriculum and pedagogy, skills and competencies, governance, educational management and administration, toward smart education.

Recommendation 3

Local authorities and school leaders need to design and employ smart campus and new learning environments in the effectiveness of learning, efficiency of schooling, efficacy of digital tools & resources, and innovate and monitor the new model of learning and teaching enhanced by technology in personalized learning and differentiated teaching, at all levels of education and skills development.

Recommendation 4

Researchers and practitioners in collaboration with policy-makers, educators, university leaders, etc., should extend the joint work on smart education, hence further promoting it and also contributing to the UNESCO call on Futures Education.

Recommendation 5

All relevant stakeholders are urged to promote and reinforce their cooperation driven by smart education strategies to build public services of smart education, such as access to compulsory curriculum, learning and technical supports, and learning analytics in the large-scale learning platforms and open education practices across regions. In this context, GSENet is committed to

collaborating with global partners to promote the adoption and implementation of smart education worldwide.

Also noting with concern that smart education systems should focus on the following challenges:

Challenge 1

Smart education systems and environments should be responsible and human-centered to ensure safe and effective teaching and learning processes.

Challenge 2

Technology should be used as a facilitator, and augment teachers' competencies rather than replacing them.

Challenge 3

Smart education systems and environments should go beyond digital resources to use Open Educational Resources (OER) and Open Educational Practices (OEP), hence providing inclusive and innovative pedagogy.

Challenge 4

With the rapid evolution of technology (e.g., ChatGPT, metaverse), teachers, students and administrators should keep up with these technologies by continuously upskilling their competencies accordingly.

GSENet is committed to networking more global partners from different regions and sectors to promote smart education practices for achieving SDG 4.

Founding members of GSENet:

Beijing Normal University (BNU)

UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education (IITE)

Commonwealth of Learning (COL)

International society for Technology in Education (ISTE)

Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO)

Southeast Asia Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO)