



Open Educational Resources:

From Commitment to Action



The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) is an intergovernmental organisation created by Commonwealth Heads of Government to promote the development and sharing of open learning and distance education knowledge, resources and technologies.

© 2017 by Commonwealth of Learning.



Open Educational Resources: From Commitment to Action is made available under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License:

https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/.

For the avoidance of doubt, by applying this licence the Commonwealth of Learning does not waive any privileges or immunities from claims that they may be entitled to assert, nor does the Commonwealth of Learning submit itself to the jurisdiction, courts, legal processes or laws of any jurisdiction.

ISBN: 978-1-894975-90-2

Cited as:

COL (2017). Open Educational Resources: From Commitment to Action. Burnaby: COL.

Cover Photo Credits:

- 1 Retrieved from https://www.pexels.com/photo/man-notebook-notes-macbook-7063/ (CC0)
- 2 Retrieved from https://www.pexels.com/photo/3-women-caught-on-dslr-camera-40909/ (CC0)
- 3 Retrieved from https://www.pexels.com/photo/2-kid-s-in-gray-concrete-container-during-daytime-70336/ (CC0)
- 4 Retrieved from https://www.pexels.com/photo/adult-blur-business-close-up-267447/ (CC0)
- 5 OER logo by Jonathas Mello, available at http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/access-to-knowledge/open-educational-resources/global-oer-logo/ (CC BY 3.0)
- 6 Retrieved from https://thenounproject.com/search/?q=world%20map&i=597572 (CC BY 3.0)
- 7 Retrieved from https://www.pexels.com/photo/woman-wearing-red-hijab-behind-person-wearing-black-jacket-156921/ (CC0)
- 8 Retrieved from https://www.pexels.com/photo/adult-apple-device-business-code-340152/ (CC0)

Published by:

COMMONWEALTH OF LEARNING

4710 Kingsway, Suite 2500 Burnaby, British Columbia Canada V5H 4M2

Telephone: +1 604 775 8200

Fax: +1 604 775 8210 Web: www.col.org Email: info@col.org

Contents

Ac	know	ledgements	i\	
		3		
Fo	rewoi	rdb	٠١	
1	Intro	oduction	1	
	1.1	Regional Consultations	1	
	1.2	From Commitment to Action	2	
	1.3	The Power of Open Educational Resources	3	
		·		
2	Concrete Actions			
	2.1	Intergovernmental Organisations		
	2.2	Governments		
	2.3	Educational Institutions		
	2.4	Quality Assurance Agencies		
	2.5	Private Sector		
	2.6	Civil Society Organisations		
	2.7	Research Agencies and Consortia		
	2.8	Teachers and Librarians		
	2.9	Learners		
۸۰	nov 1	· Matrix of Stakeholders! Priorities for Concrete Action	1/	



Acknowledgements

We acknowledge the contributions of all the participants and co-hosts of the six regional consultations on OER held between December 2016 and May 2017. In particular, our acknowledgements are due to the collaborating partners: UNESCO and the Government of Slovenia. We are thankful to The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation for their generous financial support in organising the regional consultations. Special thanks are due to Dr. Barbara Chow and Dr. TJ Bliss for facilitating the process. We also acknowledge the support provided by the members of the Steering Committee: Professor Asha Kanwar (Chair), Dr. David Atchoarena, Dr. K. Balasubramanian, Dr. Indrajit Banerjee, Mr. Gasper Hrastelj and Mr. Mitja Jermol; and the Task Team: Dr. Venkataraman Balaji (Chair), Dr. Ishan Abeywardena, Dr. Cable Green, Mr. Joe Hironaka, Mr. John Lesperance, Dr. Fengchun Miao, Dr. Sanjaya Mishra, Dr. David Porter and Ms. Zeynep Varoglu for guiding the planning and organisation of the regional consultations.

NOTE

Three documents have been developed in the framework of the 2nd World OER Congress. The two documents: *Open Educational Resources: From Commitment to Action and the Open Educational Resources: Global Report 2017* provide the outcomes of the six regional consultations and global surveys conducted prior to the 2nd World OER Congress. The third document, *Ljubljana OER Action Plan 2017*, will be the outcome document of the 2nd World OER Congress and is based on the outputs of the regional consultations, a global online consultation of the document in the months leading up to the Congress and the deliberations of the 2nd World OER Congress. All three documents are complementary and provide a framework for both understanding the current status of OER worldwide and identifying concrete actions to mainstream OER to achieve SDG4.

Foreword

Access to quality educational materials is a challenge in many parts of the world, including in some developed countries. The emergence of open educational resources (OER) is a landmark development in the history of education. OER support the notion of knowledge as a social product and education for all as a human right. The Commonwealth of Learning believes that knowledge is our common wealth and that OER have the potential of putting a book in the hands of every learner.

In 2012, COL and UNESCO organised the first World OER Congress, which led to the adoption of the Paris OER Declaration. Our main objective then was to foster governmental support for OER internationally. Today, we want to involve many more stakeholders so that OER can be mainstreamed and implemented at all levels. Five years ago, the focus was on promoting policy development, but as we know, that is not enough — we need strategies for implementing policies. At that time, the primary objective was to seek commitment to OER. Now, we have moved beyond commitment to concrete action so that Member States can accelerate progress towards achieving their education and training goals.

COL organised six regional consultations in the lead up to the 2nd World OER Congress. The theme of these consultations was "OER for Equitable and Quality Education: From Commitment to Action." It is important to note that the regional consultations are an important and integral part of the 2nd World OER Congress organised by UNESCO and the Government of Slovenia. These consultations not only engaged a vast diversity of stakeholders but also captured the voice of the people in the field. Over 250 stakeholders from 105 countries participated in the process. The values underlying the regional consultations are closely aligned with the fundamental principles of OER:

- Equity and inclusion: OER, to be successful, must be a people's movement. Involving people at the grassroots is key to the sustainability of OER. Listening to the needs and challenges of those involved in teaching and learning is critical in determining the concrete actions required to mainstream OER.
- Collaboration and partnership: Through collaboration and partnership, more
 content can be developed at speed and scale. This creates a win-win situation for
 all parties.
- Regional diversity: The regional consultations provided opportunities to understand regional diversities, needs and aspirations. In addition to regional bonding



amongst the stakeholders these events highlighted the need to adapt and localise OER according to specific linguistic and cultural contexts.

Participants across the regions have identified nine stakeholder categories and suggested concrete actions that each group must undertake to mainstream OER. This document, along with the *Global Report on OER*, which is based on surveys of governments and stakeholders, will form the background documents to the 2nd World OER Congress.

I take this opportunity to thank The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, without whose generous financial support the regional consultations would not have been possible. Thanks are also due to our partners, UNESCO and the Government of Slovenia, to the ministries and regional organisations for hosting these events, to the OER Chairs and to the participants for making these events so intellectually and socially rewarding.

I look forward to the success of the $2^{\mbox{\tiny nd}}$ World OER Congress.

Professor Asha Kanwar

President and CEO

Commonwealth of Learning, Canada

Amashamar

Introduction

Open educational resources (OER) are materials that may be freely accessed, reused, modified and shared to support teaching and learning at all levels of education. The term OER was coined at a UNESCO forum in 2002, and ten years later the Commonwealth of Learning and UNESCO jointly organised the World Congress on OER. The Congress adopted the 2012 Paris OER Declaration, which recommends that governments create enabling environments for OER through appropriate policy, capacity building, research, advocacy, collaboration and above all encouraging the open licensing of educational materials produced with public funds.

1.1 Regional Consultations

Since the 2012 Paris OER Declaration, more countries and institutions have adopted OER. The Commonwealth of Learning, in collaboration with UNESCO and the Government of Slovenia and with funding from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, organised six regional consultations from December 2016 to May 2017. The objectives were to:

- identify the current status of the recommendations made at the World OER
 Congress amongst key stakeholders, namely governments, policy makers, the
 OER community and the wider education community;
- initiate discussions regarding the identified challenges to mainstreaming OER;
- build awareness amongst key stakeholders about the objectives of the 2nd World OER Congress and make recommendations for consideration; and
- encourage more governments to commit to the adoption of open licensing policies for educational materials developed with public funds.

The six regional consultations were held in the six regions of the world indicated in Table 1. These consultations were attended by 257 participants from 105 countries (Table 2), comprising government officials, civil society organisations, intergovernmental organisations, experts, teachers and administrators.



Table 1: Regional Consultation Venue and Schedule

Region	Date	Venue
Asia	1–2 December 2016	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Europe	23–24 February 2017	Valletta, Malta
Middle East/North Africa	27–28 February 2017	Doha, Qatar
Africa	2–3 March 2017	Port Louis, Mauritius
Americas	3–4 April 2017	São Paulo, Brazil
Pacific	29–30 May 2017	Auckland, New Zealand

Table 2: Regional Participation in the Consultations

Region	Countries	Participants
Africa	23	46
Asia	20	48
Europe	24	65
Latin America and Caribbean	18	32
Middle East and North Africa	13	42
Pacific	7	24
Total	105	257

1.2 From Commitment to Action

With the theme of the regional consultations being "OER for Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education: From Commitment to Action," each of the workshops was designed to engage the stakeholders to generate responses about possible concrete actions the key stakeholders need to take to mainstream OER. The approach was to have open, informed discussions and to capture the suggestions emerging from each region. These have been synthesised for presentation at the 2nd World OER Congress. Hence, this document is the outcome of the collective wisdom of a wide range of stakeholders engaged in the regional consultations. These concrete actions recommended for different stakeholders will enable us to "fully realise the potential of OER to expand access to lifelong learning opportunities and achieve quality education" and support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4): Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

1.3 The Power of Open Educational Resources

During the regional consultations, the stakeholders agreed on the power of OER to transform teaching and learning at all levels of education. Several examples of OER in practice were shared, and the benefits accrued indicate the need for enhanced attention to OER. Some of the benefits and advantages of OER discussed include:

- Improved access to textbooks: In many countries, access to textbooks and quality teaching and learning materials is a challenge. Using available openly licensed materials would significantly improve access.
- *Improved quality:* There are many examples of OER that follow standard publishing practices to ensure quality. Studies indicate that OER use improves the quality of student learning.
- *Improved teacher professional practice:* As OER are materials that can be adapted and remixed by teachers, they provide an opportunity for teachers to design and develop appropriate learning materials rather than simply adopting existing texts. The development and sharing of the materials produced by teachers improves their professional practice.
- Increased access to non-English language resources: OER have the potential
 to improve access to resources in local languages by promoting the creation of
 teaching and learning materials in mother tongues and by translating materials
 from other languages.
- *Cost savings for learners:* Learners and parents spend huge sums of money buying educational materials, whereas with the use of OER, this money can be saved.
- Support for lifelong learning: As OER are openly available in more and more subject areas, anyone can learn using these materials at anytime and anywhere, making lifelong learning possible.
- *Cultural diversity*: The use of OER improves the understanding of cultural diversity amongst learners by giving them access in multimedia formats to information from different cultures.

The use of open licences ensures that teaching and learning materials are rich not only in terms of the quality of the content, but also in terms of the possibility for the materials to be retained, reused, remixed and redistributed in other situations, thereby optimising the impact of educational funding and providing opportunities for unexpected innovation and creativity to occur.

The next section outlines the concrete actions identified by the stakeholders. The annex on page 14 presents a matrix of priorities for concrete actions that can be taken by various stakeholders.



Concrete Actions

2.1 Intergovernmental Organisations

The OER movement has from the beginning been supported by intergovernmental agencies such as UNESCO and COL, and their role in further strengthening OER is crucial. The regional consultations also highlighted several other regional instruments of co-operation, which also focus on improving the quality of and access to educational opportunities in the countries in their region. The actions recommended for international and regional intergovernmental organisations are:

- Strengthen regional co-operation on OER. Every region in the world has specific groups of countries with common interests. Some of these are SEAMEO and APEC (in Asia), ALECSO and GCC (in the Arab countries), SADC, ECOWAS and the African Union (in Africa), the European Union (in Europe), OECS and CARICOM (in Latin America and the Caribbean) and PIFS (in the Pacific). These agencies need to embrace OER and take action to foster regional co-operation.
- Focus on regional co-operation. Organisations such as UNESCO and COL, working across the regions, need to focus on strengthening regional co-operation and working in collaboration with regional agencies to achieve greater impact.
- Support advocacy, policy and capacity building. Intergovernmental agencies
 and regional agencies must focus on advocacy, policy development and capacity
 building for OER through their activities and programmes in Member States.
- Create a normative instrument around OER. A normative instrument for OER, adopted by UNESCO Member States, would accelerate the mainstreaming of OER in teaching and learning.



Encourage international foundations and donor agencies to support OER.
 Intergovernmental and regional organisations can influence many donor agencies currently not active in this field to support OER. Influencing new donors to support OER will help the movement to expand.

2.2 Governments

The role of governments in improving access to quality educational opportunities in a country is significantly higher than that of all other stakeholders, as through political will and administrative efficiency, governments reform existing practices. While governments are committed to supporting SDG4 and channelling resources to achieve it, understanding OER and their role in supporting national education agendas is limited, so the participants in the regional consultations emphasised that governments need to take strong action to support OER. Many countries also realised that achieving the goal of lifelong learning will not be possible with current educational practices; we need a paradigm shift to accommodate anytime, anywhere learning. There is a strong call for governments to embrace more OER-enabled learning so as to meet the needs of 21st-century citizens in relevant, appropriate and timely ways. In this context, the recommendations for concrete action by governments are::

- Create an enabling environment for OER through policies. To help citizens
 become lifelong learners, it is necessary to develop enabling policies to promote
 open education and OER. Governments must adopt and implement effective
 open licensing policies and ensure all publicly funded teaching and learning
 materials are released under an open licence to allow anyone to retain, reuse,
 revise, remix and redistribute those resources.
- Ensure access to ICTs and connectivity. To reap the benefits of OER, it is important to have access to an ICT infrastructure and connectivity to the Internet to find and use OER. Governments need to make strategic investments to improve access to appropriate tools, and negotiate with ISPs to provide low-cost and/or free Internet for educational purposes.
- Create national OER repositories. Creating a national infrastructure for sharing
 OER is necessary to make these resources available to all. The setting up of
 national and domain-specific OER repositories is an important step in making it
 easier to search for and discover OER.
- Encourage all educational institutions to adopt OER policies. Whilst
 governments should adopt OER policies, it is also important for them to
 encourage their educational institutions to adopt OER. To this end, governments
 may institute schemes to support OER advocacy, capacity building and open
 content development in educational institutions through government funding
 and appropriate incentives.
- Establish OER-based procurement policies. Many countries procure educational materials for distribution amongst schools and students or publish their



own educational materials through dedicated textbook production agencies. Governments need to require that any content acquired through the national procurement process, including textbooks and teaching resources, be openly licensed. It is also important that government-supported textbook production agencies adopt OER.

- Create a clearing agency for clarification on OER. OER respect and credit the rights of the author. There is widespread misunderstanding about copyright and low awareness about OER in relation to copyright. It is important for the public to consult a public agency and clarify doubts on this subject. Governments may create an OER clearing house or nodal centre to provide advice to authors, teachers, learners and publishers about copyright, best practices in open licensing, and author rights.
- Encourage public-private partnerships for OER. Several types of private partners
 are involved in the delivery of education. Publishers and telecommunications
 providers are two important private partners that may need government support
 to offer products and services for OER and open education. To encourage
 the private sector, governments may consider reduced tax or import duty for
 educational materials and equipment used in the production and distribution
 of OER.
- *Professional development of teachers.* Governments must invest in the professional development of teachers and provide appropriate incentives.

2.3 Educational Institutions

The impact of OER is visible at the level of educational institutions. While OER are currently more available at the higher education level, they are being used at all levels — primary, secondary and higher. In fact, there are OER projects even at the level of early childhood education. The following recommendations are not specific to any level of education, and it is expected that different educational institutions will take appropriate actions to mainstream OER. The recommendations for concrete action by educational institutions are:

- Develop and implement an institutional OER policy. Many education
 institutions (especially higher education institutions) are autonomous and do
 not require government permission to take up activities that are useful to the
 mission and vision of the institutions. Therefore, educational institutions taking
 note of the enormous advantages offered by OER should develop and implement
 institutional OER policies.
- Create institutional mechanisms for OER quality assurance. Assuring the quality of OER helps build institutional reputation. It is important that OER released by educational institutions be educationally effective. To ensure this, educational institutions must create internal mechanisms for quality assurance.



- Recognise faculty contributions to OER. To mainstream the use of OER and
 encourage teachers to adopt OER in their pedagogical practices, it is important
 to recognise the contribution of faculty during promotion and tenure reviews by
 providing incentives for OER work as curricular innovation.
- *Institute an award for best OER*. Educational institutions may consider instituting an annual award to recognise good practice in OER.
- Create an institutional repository for OER. Whilst OER are developed in
 institutions, it is necessary to share them effectively for wider use. This is possible
 only through the establishment of an institutional repository that allows easy
 discovery of OER by anyone, anywhere in the world. The existence of these
 repositories must be well advertised.
- Regularly organise capacity-building programmes for teachers. Capacity building to understand, find and integrate OER in teaching and learning is important for mainstreaming OER. The capacity to curate and use OER is as important as creating or remixing them. While most teachers will not be involved in creating or remixing OER, everyone should be an effective user of available OER. There are many resources available for training teachers about OER.
- Conduct and support research on OER. Research and development on OER are
 important to build models and good practices. As this is a new area of research, it
 is important that educational institutions focus on cost-effectiveness, sustainability
 and the exploration of new tools and technologies for the creation and sharing
 of OER.
- Collaborate with other institutions to avoid reinventing the wheel. The
 main objective of OER is cost reduction through the use of openly available
 materials. Economies of scale can be achieved through collaboration in content
 development.
- Take steps to improve the institution's ICT infrastructure. Using OER in teaching and learning, as well as developing OER in the educational institution, depend on the availability of an accessible ICT infrastructure and Internet connectivity. In many schools where ICT and connectivity cannot be ensured, it is important to use technologies that allow offline access to OER, such as Aptus.¹
- *Develop accessible OER*. It is important to develop OER using accessible, editable formats and technologies to enable their use and reuse by people with disabilities.

2.4 Quality Assurance Agencies

Quality assurance (QA) and recognition of qualifications have become central in educational discourse. Many countries have developed national qualifications frameworks, and there are quality assurance agencies that accredit these courses and qualifications. While many quality assurance agencies have robust frameworks for

¹ https://www.col.org/services/knowledge-management/aptus



8

assuring quality, most consider issues related to infrastructure, availability of teachers, teaching—learning practice, assessment of learning outcomes and employment of graduates. Usually there is no discussion about the type of teaching materials; discussions on educational materials are limited to library resources. Therefore, it is important for quality assurance agencies to consider including OER in their frameworks. The recommendations for concrete action are:

- *Include OER in QA frameworks.* Consider including OER integration in teaching and learning within the QA framework.
- Improve the capacity of QA professionals to understand OER. QA agencies need to take steps to help QA professionals understand the use and integration of OER in teaching and learning.
- Develop quality standards/benchmarks at the national level. Whilst many
 frameworks and guidelines are available for OER QA, it is important to develop
 national standards or benchmarks. These will then serve as guidelines for teachers
 and publishers to develop course materials designed to achieve the learning
 outcomes defined in the national qualifications framework.
- *Disseminate good OER practices.* QA agencies can track the use of OER in educational institutions and develop case studies of good practices to be shared with all.

2.5 Private Sector

Some private publishers and entrepreneurs have considered the emergence of the OER movement a threat. However, experience in the open access field shows that many private publishers have invested in building platforms and businesses around the concept of "open." It is important to build awareness of the possible business models around OER. Some of these have already started to emerge, with free content and additional paid services, in the "freemium" model. There are many innovative actions the private sector can take, especially telecommunications providers and publishers. Telecommunications providers can play an effective role in mainstreaming OER by providing subsidised access to educational resources. The recommendations for concrete action in the private sector are:

- Provide zero-rating services for educational applications. Telecommunication
 companies can provide zero-rating services for educational applications and
 OER platforms.
- *Use corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds for OER*. Most of the world's private-sector companies have substantial CSR funds. These can be utilised to develop OER and provide services around the use of OER.
- Provide additional services around OER. Publishers who release materials with
 an open licence generate resources by selling services associated with assessment
 and mastery learning. Question banks and associated multimedia resources that
 are value added can be sold, whilst the open textbook remains available for
 free download.



- Release print materials digitally and sell hard copies. Many publication houses
 are adopting the practice of making available free digital copies of the book online
 whilst selling the hard copy.
- Explore new business models. New business models are emerging. It is important
 for the private sector to be proactive, react appropriately to the digital revolution
 and explore new possibilities. Whilst providing access to educational materials for
 all is necessary, exploring new business models to sustain OER is also important.

2.6 Civil Society Organisations

OER is a mass movement, a people's movement, with many associated civil society organisations. The leading one is Creative Commons² (CC), which freely provides standard open licences used throughout the world to openly license educational resource materials so everyone can retain, reuse, revise, remix and redistribute them as OER. There are also many foundations and philanthropic organisations supporting the development of OER policy, capacity and content. The recommendations for concrete action by civil society organisations are:

- Continue funding OER. The resources available for the OER community are shrinking as international funding for education decreases. Not many donor agencies (foundations) support OER, so it is important that existing foundations continue supporting the movement worldwide.
- Encourage new funding agencies. It is important that donor agencies be made aware of OER's potential to support all the SDGs. New donors will enlarge the resource base and circle of influence.
- Advocate for OER. An important role for civil society organisations is to advocate for OER and "openness" as part of their commitment to society. Many have started using open licences to release their publications and website content.
- Scale up innovative projects on OER. Many civil society organisations are
 engaged in innovative projects on the use of OER to build teacher capacity and
 create resources for children and young people. It is important to scale up the
 implementation of such projects to create awareness and increase their impact.
- *Use OER for lifelong learning.* Civil society organisations must promote the use of OER for non-formal and formal learning in a variety of mother tongues.

2.7 Research Agencies and Consortia

Many research agencies and consortia are now using open licences to share their research results. The use of research materials released as OER is important for post-graduate education and further research. It is important that many more research agencies and consortia adopt open licences when releasing their research results.

² https://creativecommons.org/



10

The recommendations for concrete action by research agencies and consortia are:

- Release research results with an open licence. All research agencies and consortia should commit to releasing research results with open licences.
- Communicate research evidence in accessible language. Whilst research agencies
 communicate research results in peer-reviewed publications, their language makes
 most of them not accessible to the general public. Therefore, it is important that
 these agencies also make efforts to release their research results in alternative
 formats and in language accessible to all.
- Gather evidence of the use of open-licensed materials. It is important for research institutions to provide evidence of how their research results are utilised.
 Collecting evidence of the use of open materials provides support for the OER movement.
- Encourage researchers to publish in open access journals. Research agencies can
 mandate their staff to release research results through open access journals or
 open access repositories.
- Conduct research on OER. Research agencies can engage in analysing the impact
 of OER on different aspects of education, including but not limited to student
 performance, cost savings, quality improvement and educational transformation.

2.8 Teachers and Librarians

Teachers and library professionals are the backbone of the education system. Without quality teachers and librarians, it is difficult to imagine having a quality education and a quality educational institution. While teachers play a critical role in adopting OER in teaching and learning and in taking the steps toward pedagogical transformation, the role of librarians is complementary to that of teachers. Librarians help find and curate appropriate OER and manage repositories. Much of teachers' motivation to use OER depends on the environment their institution provides for OER use. However, it is also important to note that teachers' personal disposition towards and understanding of OER impact their adoption of OER for teaching and learning. The recommendations for concrete action by teachers and librarians are:

- Commit to developing your personal skills for using OER. Every teacher
 must be aware of what is available in their discipline at the level(s) they teach.
 Spending time to learn new skills for using OER is an important attribute of
 a successful teacher.
- Collaborate with peers to develop OER. It is important to collaborate with peers
 within and outside your institution to take advantage of this network's collective
 efforts to create new resources.
- Help learners find and use OER appropriately. Providing students with digital literacy skills training as well as the skills to find and use OER in their assignments and projects is important for mainstreaming OER.



- Engage in the creation and repurposing of OER. Teachers as subject matter experts are in the best position to develop OER and repurpose existing OER to meet their learners' requirements.
- Ask retired teachers to create OER. In many places, senior and retired teachers
 are best placed to develop OER in their area of subject expertise. Teachers can tap
 into this local expertise.
- *Be a change agent.* Teachers and librarians can be change agents through their professional practice by using OER appropriately and ethically. Teachers and librarians can encourage, inspire and motivate learners to engage with OER.
- Take steps to develop suitable metadata for OER. Librarians can generate
 appropriate schemata for organising OER and develop workflow mechanisms that
 help teachers easily upload OER to institutional repositories.
- *Evaluate the quality of OER*. Teachers and librarians can help evaluate available OER in terms of their suitability for specific grades and learning outcomes.
- *Curate and create portals for OER.* Librarians can curate and create OER portals within their institutions in subject areas of interest.

2.9 Learners

Learners are the most important stakeholders in OER, as OER are developed for them. Currently, learners in developed and developing countries still face challenges when trying to access quality educational materials. The problem is the same for learners all over the world: the costs of educational materials exceed affordability. In addition, the available materials often do not fit learners' needs. However, learners in the 21st century can become producers of knowledge rather than just passive consumers. Learners need to know how to learn throughout their lives. Rapid changes in the employment market and in technologies demand that people constantly learn, unlearn and relearn to remain competitive. OER open up opportunities for everyone to learn anytime, anywhere and on any topic. The recommendations for concrete action by learners are:

- Attend and participate in OER advocacy and training. It is important that learners understand the potential of OER, so they should attend advocacy and training programmes organised by their educational institutions.
- Use OER appropriately. To critically engage in assignments and projects during
 their course of studies, learners must use OER appropriately. Such usage helps
 learners become critical thinkers and collaborative workers. Using wikis in the
 classroom helps support this practice in schools.
- *Review existing OER.* Learners can review existing OER and provide feedback to improve quality.



- Participate in student networks promoting OER. Learners can participate in networks of students at the local, regional and global levels to promote the use of OER, including open textbooks.
- Engage with parents about the benefits of OER. For learners to make use of OER effectively, it is important that parents also be sensitised to the benefits of OER. Many parents think free means poor quality; hence, parent sensitisation at least at the primary and secondary levels through learner engagement is important.
- Develop skills for lifelong learning. As more OER become available, it will be
 possible to learn anything, anytime, anywhere without spending money. This
 will require that learners be equipped with the skills for self-directed learning,
 including self-regulation and critical evaluation.

Annex 1: Matrix of Stakeholders' Priorities for Concrete Action

Advocacy Policy	Intergovernmental *** Organisations	Governments **	* * *	Quality Assurance	Private Sector ★ ★ (Publishers)	Civil Society *** *	Research Agencies * **	Teachers and ★ ★ ★	*
Capacity	* *	***	* * *	*	*	*	*	* *	**
Quality	*	**	* * *	* *	* *	*	*	* *	*
Content	*	***	* *	*	* * *	*	* *	* *	***
Funding	*	***	*	*	* *	*	*	*	*
Sustainability	*	**	*	*	* * *	*	*	*	*
Collaboration	* *	***	*	* * *	*	* *	*	*	*

★ Low ★★ Medium ★★★ High

Prepared based on the matrix developed by the participants at the European regional consultation.







COMMONWEALTH OF LEARNING

4710 Kingsway, Suite 2500 Burnaby, BC, CANADA V5H 4M2

Tel: +1(604) 775-8200 Fax: +1(604) 775-8210 Email: info@col.org http://www.col.org

September 2017