

# Promoting OER in the Caribbean: COL's Key Activities Since 2019



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Many countries have large and growing numbers of NEETs.

Traditional schooling cannot meet the needs of these learners so open schooling approaches are needed.

This can help make schooling systems more resilient when physical schools need to close and learning needs to be managed digitally.

A key value-add for open education provision is the development and sharing of curriculum-based OER. COL has therefore promoted OER quite extensively in the Caribbean.

For example, In January 2020, over 30 representatives from 14 countries in the Caribbean gathered in Saint Lucia for a regional Capacity-Building Workshop on OER organised by COL in partnership with UNESCO and The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

In July 2020, COL presented a session on Teaching and Learning with OER to 135 participants in the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology's annual Summer Institute in Antigua and Barbuda.

COL has supported curriculum-based OER content development to support the schooling system in Belize. The content is currently being deployed in 15 rural centres and an evaluation of the pilot will happen in 2023. It is planned that the resources will be shared on the Ministry's 501 Academy website by March 2023.

COL has supported capacity-building of teachers to develop OER-based curriculum course materials through Moodle for the Adult Education Association Guyana. The 14 subjects are currently being piloted with over 100 learners.

In the aftermath of Cyclone Dorian in 2019, COL extended support to The Bahamas for restarting schools by providing 30 Aptus devices and 300 tablets. Aptus, a COL innovation, is a low-cost micro-server for digital learning materials that does not require grid power or data connectivity to support tablet-based learning. Aptus comes pre-loaded with a variety of OER.

A typical OER trajectory is:

- from capacity-building (Years 1-2)
- to piloting inclusive, accessible, and multilingual OER (e.g. for secondary level teachers and learners) (Years 2-3)
- to sharing nationally for sustainability and systemic resilience (Years 3-4)
- and through international collaboration on shared curricula e.g. vocational courses (Years 4+)

In Trinidad and Tobago, COL supported a capacity-building exercise in curriculum-based OER content development during 2019-2020; and a total of 8,334 teachers also benefited from the Using Open Educational Resources for Online Learning: An Introduction (OER4OL) MOOC in 2020.

A micro-course called Understanding Open Educational Resources (OER) is available to anyone interested in the Caribbean or elsewhere – it can be accessed at <https://colcommons.org/welcome/coursedetails/1>

While 2,659 curriculum-based OER created by teachers in Trinidad and Tobago can be accessed at: <https://notesmaster.com/library/guest>

COL will continue to promote OER with its partners in the Caribbean and elsewhere.

Thank you.