



**WORLD OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES (OER) CONGRESS
UNESCO, PARIS, JUNE 20-22, 2012**

2012 PARIS OER DECLARATION

Preamble

The World OER Congress held at UNESCO, Paris on 20-22 June 2012,

Mindful of relevant international statements including:

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 26.1), which states that: “Everyone has the right to education”;

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Article 13.1), which recognizes “the right of everyone to education”;

The 1971 Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works and the 1996 WIPO Copyright Treaty;

The Millennium Declaration and the 2000 Dakar Framework for Action, which made global commitments to provide quality basic education for all children, youth and adults;

The 2003 World Summit on the Information Society, Declaration of Principles, committing “to build a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society where everyone can create, access, utilize and share information and knowledge”;

The 2003 UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Promotion and Use of Multilingualism and Universal Access to Cyberspace;

The 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression, which states that: “Equitable access to a rich and diversified range of cultural expressions from all over the world and access of cultures to the means of expressions and dissemination constitute important elements for enhancing cultural diversity and encouraging mutual understanding”;

The 2006 Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (Article 24), which recognises the rights of persons with disabilities to education;

The declarations of the six International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA) Conferences emphasising the fundamental role of Adult Learning and Education.

Emphasizing that the term Open Educational Resources (OER) was coined at UNESCO’s 2002 Forum on Open Courseware and designates “teaching, learning and research materials in any medium, digital or otherwise, that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open license that permits no-cost access, use, adaptation and redistribution by others with no or limited restrictions. Open licensing is built within the existing framework of intellectual property rights as defined by relevant international conventions and respects the authorship of the work”;

Recalling existing Declarations and Guidelines on Open Educational Resources such as the 2007 Cape Town Open Education Declaration, the 2009 Dakar Declaration on Open Educational Resources and the 2011 Commonwealth of Learning and UNESCO Guidelines on Open Educational Resources in Higher Education;

Noting that Open Educational Resources (OER) promote the aims of the international statements quoted above;

Recommends that States, within their capacities and authority:

- a. *Foster awareness and use of OER.*
Promote and use OER to widen access to education at all levels, both formal and non-formal, in a perspective of lifelong learning, thus contributing to social inclusion, gender equity and special needs education. Improve both cost-efficiency and quality of teaching and learning outcomes through greater use of OER.
- b. *Facilitate enabling environments for use of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT).*
Bridge the digital divide by developing adequate infrastructure, in particular, affordable broadband connectivity, widespread mobile technology and reliable electrical power supply. Improve media and information literacy and encourage the development and use of OER in open standard digital formats.
- c. *Reinforce the development of strategies and policies on OER.*
Promote the development of specific policies for the production and use of OER within wider strategies for advancing education.
- d. *Promote the understanding and use of open licensing frameworks.*
Facilitate the re-use, revision, remixing and redistribution of educational materials across the world through open licensing, which refers to a range of frameworks that allow different kinds of uses, while respecting the rights of any copyright holder.
- e. *Support capacity building for the sustainable development of quality learning materials.*
Support institutions, train and motivate teachers and other personnel to produce and share high-quality, accessible educational resources, taking into account local needs and the full diversity of learners. Promote quality assurance and peer review of OER. Encourage the development of mechanisms for the assessment and certification of learning outcomes achieved through OER.
- f. *Foster strategic alliances for OER.*
Take advantage of evolving technology to create opportunities for sharing materials which have been released under an open license in diverse media and ensure sustainability through new strategic partnerships within and among the education, industry, library, media and telecommunications sectors.
- g. *Encourage the development and adaptation of OER in a variety of languages and cultural contexts.*
Favour the production and use of OER in local languages and diverse cultural contexts to ensure their relevance and accessibility. Intergovernmental organisations should encourage the sharing of OER across languages and cultures, respecting indigenous knowledge and rights.
- h. *Encourage research on OER.*
Foster research on the development, use, evaluation and re-contextualisation of OER as well as on the opportunities and challenges they present, and their impact on the quality and cost-efficiency of teaching and learning in order to strengthen the evidence base for public investment in OER.
- i. *Facilitate finding, retrieving and sharing of OER.*
Encourage the development of user-friendly tools to locate and retrieve OER that are specific and relevant to particular needs. Adopt appropriate open standards to ensure interoperability and to facilitate the use of OER in diverse media.
- j. *Encourage the open licensing of educational materials produced with public funds.*
Governments/competent authorities can create substantial benefits for their citizens by ensuring that educational materials developed with public funds be made available under open licenses (with any restrictions they deem necessary) in order to maximize the impact of the investment.