OPEN LICENSING IN EDUCATION

What are open licences?

Open licences modify copyright to **enable copying, adapting, translating, and distributing** without permission or payment.

Content creators and copyright holders still **retain some of their copyright protections** when open licences are used.

Openly licensed educational materials are known as Open Educational Resources (or OERs).
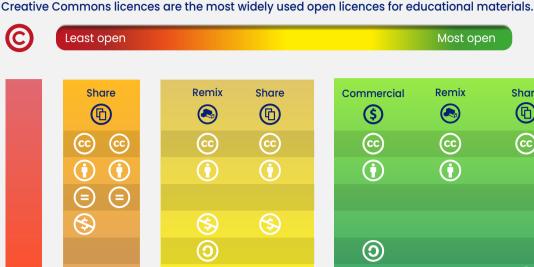
All member states unanimously approved the **UNESCO OER Recommendation** in 2019 and must report every four years on their progress in implementing it.

Creative Commons licences

Creative Commons licences are the most widely used open licences for educational materials.

Least open — Most open
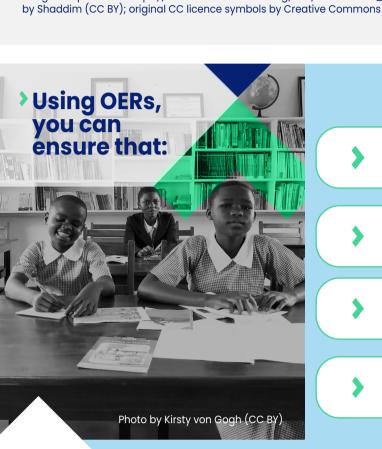
| Share | Remix | Share | Commercial | Remix | Share |
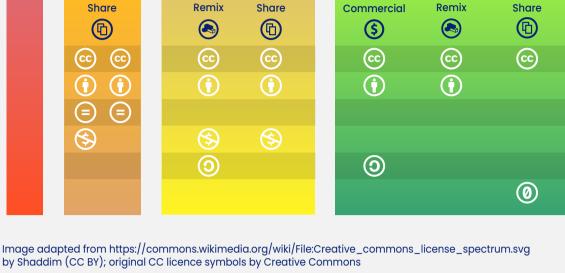
All rights reserved

Public domain

Creative Commons

Attribution (BY)

No derivatives (ND)

Non-commercial (NC)

Share alike (SA)

No rights reserved

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Using OERs, you can ensure that:

Educational materials remain **legally accessible** to all potential users forever.

Copying, distribution, and sharing educational materials can be done at the lowest possible cost, with no hidden licensing fees or administrative costs.
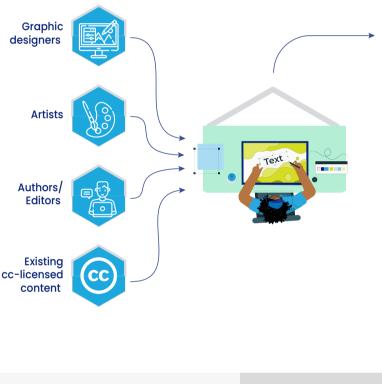
Initial investments in educational materials can have a much higher return as material can be freely **adapted, translated, and reused** in additional contexts.

Costs of content creation are reduced by **starting with existing OERs** and adapting where good quality and relevant materials already exist.

Photo by Kirsty von Gogh (CC BY)

Open licensing in education

Content creators → **Design & layout** → **Outputs**

Graphic designers

Artists

Authors/ Editors

Existing cc-licensed content

Book 1
EPUB
ePub
Printed book
PDF

Translation 1 Translation 2 Translation 3

Remix 1 Remix 2 Remix 3

You can reuse images, text, and digital elements to save time and money.

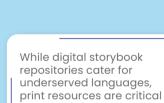Multiple outputs for multiple contexts can save time and ensure maximum reach.

Remix and translate content without additional costs to save time and money.

OERs in early literacy

While digital storybook repositories cater for underserved languages, print resources are critical for almost all children in low- and middle-income countries.

Teacher/parent guides and early readers developed using open licences can be reprinted, translated into multiple languages, and adapted, changed or modified for additional contexts.

Access to DTP files and print-ready PDF files under open licences ensures cost-effective repeat large print runs and cost-effective adaptation of content.

Small publishers can customize content for their local market.

Modification can be quick and easy as curricula are updated as lessons learned through evaluations.

Awala Kum Kim pliki sakan

Details

CC BY print-ready PDF for this Room to Read title available at https://www.earlyliteracynetwork.org/content/awala-kum-kim-pliki-sakan. Cover illustration by Wendy Marena (CC BY)

Open licences can ensure that provision of well-designed books is cost effective by:

Expanding the pool of content creators who participate in book development.

Enabling governments to contract content development and printing separately to lower costs.

Allowing for translation into multiple languages and adaptation of educational materials.

Enabling free sharing of materials online in content repositories such as the **Early Learning Resource Network, StoryWeaver,** and **Bloom Library.**

Giving content creators the ability to integrate openly licenced educational materials, including textbooks and storybooks, to reduce costs.

Ensuring that content creation investments remain accessible to governments and other users after projects are finished.

What is required?

1. Explicitly embed use of open licences into projects at the design phase (in Intermediate Targets, Results Frameworks, Disbursement-Linked Indicators, etc).

2. Work with governments to ensure that use of open licences is clearly stated in all steps of the procurement process (EOIs, RFPs, tenders, etc) and in all contracts with service providers.

3. Verify that all materials are openly licensed prior to paying content development or design fees.

4. Upload all project-funded content to the www.earlylearningnetwork.org and other global or regional platforms to guarantee that it will remain accessible after projects.

5. Support capacity development of all key stakeholders to use open licences effectively in all the above processes.

6. Work with governments to ensure that use of open licences is clearly stated in all steps of the procurement process (EOIs, RFPs, tenders, etc) and in all contracts with service providers.

7. Verify that final payments for contracts are linked to full handover of all intellectual property to government or other appropriate agency under open licences.