A BRIEF SUMMARY OF SOME OF THE ISSUES AND POINTS MADE DURING THE FORUM DISCUSSION

(Word Cloud generated from the 50 most significant and frequently used words)

Some of the issues raised and points made by discussants and forum members:

1. Those universities that are serious about teaching and learning will need to **invest** in developing and improving curricula, ongoing programme and course design, planning of contact sessions with students, development and procurement of quality teaching and learning materials and design of effective assessment activities.

2. Commitment to OER implies increased **investment** in teaching and learning and promises to increase efficiency and productivity by harnessing new ways of developing better programmes, courses and materials.

3. There is anecdotal and statistical evidence to show that the publishing industry is undergoing **transformations** not dissimilar from the challenges faced by the music industry. They are grappling with maintaining market share in a rapidly changing digital world.

4. There is a growing need to **re-consider business models** in education that respond to changing realities. An example cited indicates that in the US the sale of content in college bookstores is a significant revenue source for many colleges and universities, making it more difficult for OERs or other lower-cost alternatives to gain a foothold.

5. It is important to **design systems and processes** that help the learners to learn and that allow reuse of existing materials by re-purpose and re-mix.

6. Some institutions **duplicate material development** across their own departments in some areas, as they do not have a digital repository or a policy to re-use. This points to the need for HEIs to review their policies.

7. Students choose to study at institutions which provide high quality **learning support** and **opportunities** to interact with a community of scholars actively engaged in research and not necessarily on the prescribed texts and study guides.

8. There are significant shifts taking place in favour of OER that will effect real social change. Digital technologies now make it possible for the creators of knowledge to wrest control of distribution away from the publishers - this represents a change back to the **core values of education**, viz. to share knowledge freely

9. In days gone by the teacher "stood between" the information and the learner, now they "face the information together"!

10. *Free and Open Access* should be part of the mix! It is inconceivable that OERs in cyberspace are not available to the learners and teachers at schools, colleges and universities in developing countries because of connectivity costs.

11. Open content can be used for **collaborative professional development** in helping educators around the world in improving their skills and knowledge and to become co-creators of OER for their own educational needs.

12. As teachers have many equally important initiatives competing for their time the introduction of OER needs to shift **teacher practices** towards the creation of textbook readings.

13. "*What is important is the teaching and learning (support), and not the learning material alone*" - the real issue is, therefore, about better teaching and learning practices whether using closed or open resources. Openness fosters innovation and collaboration!

14. There is a need to **change mindsets** amongst educators and education authorities towards the acceptance of using OERs to reduce costs so that the savings can be used elsewhere in the system.

15. "*There is a need for **integrating OER** into the technologies used by institutions for delivery of their elearning*"

16. In developing countries it seems as if the focus is on access to the Internet and to providing necessary hardware and infrastructure, without attending to **supporting the learners** for them to become engaged and persistent in using OER for online learning.

17. "*OER ... is essential to **optimizing knowledge development, exchange and sharing** (some for free, some for fee) which is the major function of (higher) educational institutions*"
18. How does one convince teachers that a **culture of sharing** OER can decrease their workloads over the long term? If this can be done, then both administration and teachers would be much more likely to adopt OER.
19. "***Institutional policy** (usually) takes place in a three-layered environment, the other two layers being national policy and international policy*" – this points to the need for national/regional/ provincial governments to take the lead in developing enabling policies.
20. "*In many Ministries of Education there is little appreciation of the whole publication paradigm opened up by new technologies*" – this again points to the need to **promote OERs** amongst the education authorities
21. There is a need to not only focus on how OERs impact on the students currently in HEIs but also on the growing number of **students outside of formal institutions** who access learning via the Internet.
22. "*Building communities around open learning and teaching resources is as important for supporting release as it is for encouraging reuse. A **community repository approach** has been successful at promoting shared development and the release of well-described, usable resources that meet known user needs.*"
23. "*In the subject strand, the most significant capacity building has taken place in **subject centres** and their close partners, who now have the expertise to support others in developing and releasing OERs.*"
24. "*All stakeholders should review their responsibility towards the social and economic development of any given country. It is not only the **government's responsibility** to provide HE in a country but the private sector has an equally important role to fulfil in the provision of HE.*"
25. "*A dire need for national **government policies** in respect of teacher education to be radically updated.*"
26. **Attitudinal changes** are the key to the acceptance of OERs by all spheres in education, from learner through teacher up to Ministries of Education.
27. In order to overcome the "**resistance to change**" that many educators might have an appropriate sensitization strategy will be required that includes sharing successful OER experiences.
28. "*There is simply no replacement for a truly **inspirational** lecture*"
29. "*A key change that can be readily facilitated by growing access to openly licensed content is **re-design of teaching and learning approaches** in all education programmes*"
30. "*The OER community can have its greatest impact on the world at large by changing the **business models** of both education and resources.*"

Some proposals made by discussants and forum members:

1. HEIs will need to review their policies pertaining to intellectual property, staff remuneration and incentives, development of materials across departments, especially as these relate to OERs.
2. There is a definite need for the economics of the traditional publishing model to be re-visited.
3. Establish a network of cooperation around OER learning
4. There is a need to improve the currently available tools (e.g. MediaWiki) by adding OER specific requirements
5. "*We need to infuse OER in teacher training programs across the world. Just as a teacher may go through a module on student assessment they too should be given modules on content production, content sharing and content adaptation.*"
6. Donors should insist on Creative Commons licensing for all publications they fund and, ideally, they should be developed using OER principles
7. When government (tax payers) money is spent on the development of resources this should be done in accordance with OER principles and under Creative Commons licensing

Some of the websites referred to during the discussion:

1. http://wikieducator.org/Athabasca_University/Case_study
2. http://wikieducator.org/BCcampus/Case_study
3. http://wikieducator.org/Otago_Polytechnic/About
4. http://wikieducator.org/OERNZ
5. http://wikiwijsinhetonderwijs.nl/over-wikiwijs/english/
6. http://wikieducator.org/Open_Textbook_Tweet
7. http://wikieducator.org/Otago_Polytechnic:_An_IP_policy_for_the_times
8. http://www.e.govt.nz/policy/nzgoal
9. http://en.wikieducator.org/User:JimTittsler/Sandbox/Quiz
10. http://wikieducator.org/OERF:WikiEducator_remix_experiments
11. http://www.spreadwide.weebly.com/language-learning-resources.html
12. http://scienceoftheinvisible.blogspot.com/2010/09/my-mini-rant-about-oers-at-reps10.html#disqus_thread
13. http://www.widernet.org/egranary/
14. http://peoples-uni.org
15. http://www.earthconnected.net/earthconnected/eGaia.html
16. http://kairosnews.org/grow-the-oer-commons-from-witin-the-academy
17. http://oro.open.ac.uk/17513/
18. http://sloanreview.mit.edu/executive-adviser/articles/2008/6/5067/lessons-learned/
19. http://www.oerfoundation.org
20. http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/xpert/attribution/
21. http://www.aca2k.org
22. http://labspace.open.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=5732
23. http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/elearning/oer.aspx
24. http://www8.open.ac.uk/score/fellows
25. http://unescochair-elearning.uoc.edu/blog/2010/08/06/metaoer-project-open-repository-on-open-educational-resources-on-open-educational-resources/
26. http://www.fhsst.org/
27. http://siyavula.org.za/downloads/
28. http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/teachingandlearning/oer/phase1?tabIndex=1&#tab2
29. http://www.caledonianacademy.net/spaces/oer/index.php?n=Main.PilotProgrammeSynthesisAndEvaluationReport
30. http://www.openaccessweek.org/
31. http://www.tessafrica.net
32. http://rea.aprendemasonline.com/
33. www.ignou.ac.in
34. http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/toolkits/play_2588