



COMMONWEALTH *of* LEARNING

**Taking OER beyond the OER Community:
Ensuring that Open Content Builds Educational Quality in Africa**

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

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SUMMARY REPORT

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ABBREVIATIONS

AeU	Asia e university
AU	Athabasca University
AVU	African Virtual University
CBT	Computer-based teaching
CMS	Content Management System
COL	The Commonwealth of Learning
HE	Higher Education
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
INQAAHE	International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education
LMS	Learning Management System
MERLOT	Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching
MIT	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
OCW	OpenCourseWare
ODL	Open and Distance Learning
OER	Open Educational Resources
OpenLearn	Open Learning repository at the UK's Open University
SAIDE	South African Institute for Distance Education
SIM	Self-instructional Module
UK	United Kingdom
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WCHE	World Conference on Higher Education

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The OER workshop held in Dar-Es-Salaam, Tanzania on 25 May 2011 highlighted the potential benefits of OER through examining a number of different case studies and focused on the draft UNESCO/COL Guidelines for OER in Higher Education. The workshop coincided with the 2011 eLearning Africa Conference, held in Dar-Es-Salaam from 25 – 27 May 2011, and formed part of the “*Taking OER beyond the OER Community: Policy and Capacity*” initiative being driven by the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

Article 13 of a communiqué released after the World Conference on Higher Education (WCHE) held in Paris in July 2009 argues that “*ODL approaches combined with ICT present opportunities to widen access to quality higher education particularly when OER are shared*”. This workshop, along with four held during 2010, is a direct result of the WCHE communiqué and is aimed at broadening an understanding of OER, discussing their impact in higher education and contributing to the policy debate.

OER is not the “silver bullet” to all of education’s problems – rather it can be seen as one of the means to reviewing and revising the current educational practices in higher education. It is suggested that the days of a lecturer standing in front of a class delivering content are rapidly disappearing as more and more quality content becomes freely available – mainly on the Internet. Higher education institutions will urgently need to consider their value proposition if they are to retain students – this could be done, for example, by providing greater support to students.

The spirit of sharing is embedded in the ideals of OER. More and more open-licensed material is becoming available on the Internet. Higher education courses can and are now being “assembled” from a range of readily and freely available materials. These include resources from YouTube and other contributors to the OER Community including MIT and OpenLearn.

Work at the Asia eUniversity in Malaysia, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) in Ghana, the University of Malawi and Athabasca University in Canada have shown what can be achieved through judicious use of OER. These case studies served to provide guidance on how to go about developing accredited courses using existing materials.

The draft Guidelines for OER in Higher Education highlight some of the issues relating to the use of OER by a range of different stakeholders (including governments, higher education providers, teaching staff, student bodies and quality assurance agencies) and provide numerous recommendations as to how the potential of OER can be realised by each stakeholder group. The workshop discussed the recommendations and made some suggestions as to how the document could be strengthened. The Guidelines will be finalised by October 2011 in time for them to be presented to UNESCO’s General Conference to be held in October 2011.

Prof Rory McGreal, the recently appointed UNESCO/COL chair for OER, provided insights into his vision for the worldwide development and use of OER and the responsibilities of the OER Chair in promoting OER goals.

What is clear is that OER can broaden access to higher education but in the African context the regulatory environment around access to the Internet urgently needs to be reviewed and revised. OER can facilitate intellectual exchanges that are genuinely multi-directional and multi-national (as

evidenced by the African Virtual University), and their use is on the increase so higher education institutions need to adapt their current policies and practices.

2. BACKGROUND

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) hosted an Open Educational Resources (OER) capacity building workshop on 25 May 2011 as part of their “**Taking OER beyond the OER community**” initiative. The workshop coincided with the 2011 e-Learning Africa Conference that took place from 25-27 May 2011 in Dar-Es-Salaam, Tanzania.

This workshop follows on the four very successful workshops held during 2010 that were organised within the COL-UNESCO initiative **Taking OER beyond the OER community**. The initiative’s aim is to expand the understanding of OER by educational decision makers in order to promote their wider use.

The theme of the workshop was ***‘OER and Impact: Ensuring that Open Content Builds Educational Quality in Africa’***.

The workshop’s aim was to bring university leaders from both developing and developed countries together so as to:

- introduce the concepts of Open Educational Resources (OER) and the open licensing frameworks that make sharing of educational content possible;
- present the Guidelines on OER in Higher Education and to get feedback on the draft version from stakeholders;
- explore how open licensing can help to improve the quality of education in Africa; and
- discuss where and how policies and practices in education need to change in order to harness the potential of OER.

The workshop gave many practical examples and case studies of where OER had been used in support of quality education in the developed and developing world.

3. ORGANISATION OF THE WORKSHOP

A number of invited keynote speakers made presentations on case studies that focused on understanding what OER are, the benefits, opportunities and quality challenges they present to HEIs, how OER have been deployed to improve quality in education, and the role played by technology in taking OER beyond the OER community. A key focus of the workshop was a round table discussion on the draft Guidelines on OER in Higher Education. Here groups brainstormed specific issues relating to recommendations contained in the guideline document and provided valuable feedback for incorporation into a final draft document.

SESSION 1

4. OPENING AND WELCOME (Neil Butcher – OER Africa/South African Institute for Distance Education, South Africa)

In his opening remarks Mr Neil Butcher highlighted that the focus of the workshop would be two-fold:

- Firstly, an introduction to the concepts of OER through presentations and case studies. Participants would be able to engage in a structured manner with the topics.
- Secondly, a discussion on a draft set of guidelines around OER that have been developed by COL and UNESCO. The guidelines are aimed at assisting HEIs around the world to better understand and take advantage of the use of OER. Participants would have a unique opportunity to engage with the draft document and to provide feedback with a view to ensuring that they reflect the needs of the developing world and improving the resulting document.

5. TAKING OER BEYOND THE OER COMMUNITY: A VISION FROM THE COMMONWEALTH OF LEARNING AND UNESCO (Ms Trudi van Wyk, Commonwealth of Learning, Canada)

In her presentation Ms van Wyk highlighted that the workshop was part of an initiative that had been born out of the World Conference on Higher Education (WCHE) that had taken place in Paris in July 2009. The theme of this conference was *“The New Dynamics of Higher Education and Research for Societal Change and Development”*. The WCHE had included delegates and stakeholder groups (including researchers, scholars and students) from large and small countries around the world. This conference was followed by six regional conferences.

Amongst the discussion points at WCHE were issues around quality and access to higher education. There is a growing demand for quality higher education. Statistics provided show that globally the participation rate in higher education has grown from 19% in 2000 to 26% in 2007, with the rate in low income countries growing from 5% to 7% over the same period. Developing countries are increasingly being unable to meet the accelerating demand for quality higher education. The WCHE also debated the quality of the higher education being provided and the changing role of the quality assurance agencies.

As part of the conference COL and UNESCO released a document on the role of ICT in various aspects of higher education, including administration, research, and teaching and learning.

During the OER session at the WCHE, Proff Brenda Gourlay and Barney Pityana highlighted that it was *“imperative to ensure that all developed and developing countries are enabled to contribute to OER”*. Subsequent to the WCHE one of the clauses in a communiqué released by UNESCO stated that *“ODL approaches and ICT present opportunities to widen access to quality education, particularly when open educational resources are readily shared by many countries and higher education institutions”*. These developments proved to be the start of a very significant movement in the use of OER.

UNESCO with collaboration from COL embarked on an initiative *“Taking OER beyond the OER community: Policy and Capacity”*. An OER Dossier was initially drafted based on evidence that the use and adaptation of existing OER would raise the quality of teaching and/or reduce its input costs. This document formed the basis of a number of capacity building workshops that have been held in developing countries – these include India, Mali, Namibia, South Africa and now Tanzania. The workshops were linked to regional and international conferences that included heads of Commonwealth universities, international quality assurance agencies, senior government and ministerial officials, and OER practitioners. The objectives of the workshops were to

- understand OER and acknowledge them as an option for higher education;
- discuss how OER can impact on the development of higher education institutions;

- value the contribution of OER to quality teaching and learning;
- discuss how OER can be included in quality assurance audits and accreditation;
- contribute to the policy debate of OER in higher education; and
- understand how OER impacts on quality in higher education institutions.

The first part of the initiative ended with a Policy Forum at UNESCO's Headquarters in Paris on 3 December 2010. This forum included UNESCO country representatives and other relevant stakeholder groups. One of the recommendations that came out of the Policy Forum was the need to continue with the advocacy and capacity building process. This has led to the workshop in Dar es Salaam. Further workshops will be held in Mozambique in August 2011, Indonesia in October 2011 and Malaysia in October 2011.

In order to broaden access to the debate three online forums were also hosted. These forums discussed broad issues relating to policy, what works in practice and licensing frameworks. Participants were encouraged to visit the <http://oerworkshop.weebly.com> site where various reports and source documents used in the workshops and the online forums could be accessed.

6. UNESCO-COL OER GUIDELINES (Ms Zeynep Varoglu, UNESCO, France)

In briefly introducing the OER guidelines Ms Varoglu indicated that they are a policy tool aimed at helping the higher education stakeholders (including governments, higher education institutions, teachers, students and quality assurance accreditation and recognition bodies) in grappling with OER. The guidelines include some key issues that each stakeholder group should reflect upon as well as recommendations on policies that could be developed. The document does not set out to be a standard setting document but rather one that guides the development of policy.

The process has been consultative in nature. The initial draft, developed by Neil Butcher, was circulated electronically within the stakeholder groups across the regions. The current draft is now being presented in various workshops during which participants are being invited to reflect on the content and to supplement where necessary in order to make them a useful and practical tool.

7. OER – ISSUES AND CHALLENGES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION (Neil Butcher, OER Africa/SAIDE, South Africa)

Mr Butcher prefaced his presentation by stating that he works predominantly in African countries and that despite the numerous challenges that the continent faces OER has been proven to succeed. Many of the concepts about which he spoke have been tested in environments such as the establishment of a new university in North West Uganda.

It is important to note from the outset that OER are not the magical solution to any educational problems that might exist. The concept of what OER entail is, according to Mr Butcher, very simple – it is a legal concept. An OER is an educational resource that has a modified licence that permits others to copy, to share and in some instances to adapt those resources without explicitly requiring permission from the rights holder to do so. An open licence modifies the “all rights reserved” licence that automatically applies to any literary work. An open licence furthermore contains an expectation that the original author will be acknowledged (attribution).

The modified licence does not indicate that OER is a better quality resource than any other educational resource. The quality of any educational resource is largely dependent on who wrote it and how much they understood about developing a good quality resource. Quality is a very complex

issue and could be dependent on the context in which it is to be used or even the way in which it is used. So a poor quality resource in one context could be a good quality resource in another context.

Mr Butcher argued that senior management and academics in higher education institutions tend to be relatively conservative in their approach to change. When the concept of OER is first raised in these circles a defensive position is adopted and there is a resistance to change and to sharing resources. This position has to be carefully worked through by demonstrating the potential benefits that can be derived.

Another key component of using OER, particularly in the modern world awash with digitised resources, is not to remove rights but rather to protect the rights of the author where copying and sharing is so easy. An open licence reduces the incentive of others taking material and presenting it as their own and enhances the reputation of the author who is making their material freely available. Butcher asserted that copyright theft has become a pervasive phenomenon in the online world of the Internet. Open licencing helps authors to find new ways to protect their intellectual property and to retain the right to be attributed as the author of a resource in an environment where copying, modifying and sharing resources is so ubiquitous. The music industry has learnt many hard lessons from working in this environment and has yet to adapt its business model to the changed environment.

In answer to the question *“How do OER differ from normal practices of acknowledging authors in academic research, specifically the idea of sharing?”* Butcher responded by stating that the idea of sharing is not something new. When developing resources one usually looks at what others have done, draws in the relevant sections and, unless one is plagiarising, acknowledges all sources. When materials are openly licensed one does not need to obtain permission for their inclusion in a new work as permission to copy, adapt, share, etc. is provided for in advance.

Mr Butcher cited the example of the Bundu College of Agriculture at the University of Malawi that had produced a 120-page open educational resource for a basic generic course in communication. In developing this resource OER Africa assisted the college by sourcing materials from around the world using a curriculum framework supplied by the university. The college staff then developed the course material by re-mixing the appropriate resources making them relevant to the Malawian context – all sources are clearly referenced (including links) and the adaptations are identified. It is important that the rigour of attribution and acknowledgement still exists as is the case with any academic work.

The spirit of sharing relies on the fact that any work developed using OER is also shared. In the case of the Bundu College the communication resource was recognised as a resource produced by the authors at the college. This product was then shared under an open licence and is now used by a number of other colleges at the University of Malawi and at other universities in Sub-Saharan Africa. This has in effect helped to raise the profile of the University of Malawi.

A concern was raised around the sharing of information, especially where this information sometime provides the competitive advantage between institutions. In addition, the cost of the initial development of resources before they become OER needed to be born in mind.

Why is it important for higher educational institutions to engage with the concept of OER? Educational content is becoming accessible online at an ever increasing rate. Large amounts of this material are of very questionable or poor quality, but there is also a significant volume of very high

quality material. Examples of the latter include the UK's Open University's OpenLearn project or US institutions such as MIT that release integrated lecture materials through iTunesU. Institutions that believe that their competitive advantage lies in the content that they provide to their students will shortly be in very serious trouble as more and more high quality material is released on the Internet under an open licence.

Universities will need to give serious attention to how they go about delivering courses as much of the material presented in lectures will increasingly become more readily available online and in many instances might be better packaged and presented. The real competitive advantage of institutions lies in the quality of the teaching and learning experience they provide their students – the key differentiator will be how students are supported, the kind of interaction that exists between educator and student, and the quality of their assessment practices.

Mr Butcher argued that now that “*content is valueless*” institutions need to develop business models that focus on how they support students to work through content, how teaching and learning pathways are built so that the content coheres into the development of key skills and competences, and how the students are supported in their assessment tasks. This presents a significant challenge to institutions as it is a radical departure from the current “*delivery-and-assess*” model. Although content is necessary it is not sufficient to build a competitive advantage.

Educational publishing is currently facing the same dilemma that the music industry failed to grapple with. More and more university textbooks are becoming “*freely*” available as e-books and the publishing industry is no longer able to control the process. The commercial publishing models are clearly under threat. Across the world governments are starting to realise that textbooks are becoming too expensive and that alternative development and distribution mechanisms are needed. The traditional business models for selling proprietary content are being destroyed by the technology that makes sharing so simple.

A key issue that arises is how one can ensure that the investment of time and effort in producing high quality resources is not only defended but that the investment is expanded. The only way in which this can happen is by making sure that the large-scale public investments being made by governments, universities and schools in the time of people and the money being spent on buying textbooks is re-channelled into ensuring that people are adequately remunerated for the time and effort they put into the production and adaptation of educational materials. The educational policy environments need to be looked at to see how they can more effectively support people producing, adapting and sharing educational content so that one can continue building on common intellectual property.

An important aspect to consider in the African context is to understand what the needs and demands of education in Africa are and what role open content can play in satisfying these. The key driver of educational activities is the classroom or the lecture. The real power of OER is the idea that one can have a more diverse range of communication with students and that resource-based learning can play a much stronger role in educational processes.

Higher education institutions in developing countries face massive constraints. These include overload of the academic staff, the scarcity of up-to-date and affordable resources, and the fact that many curricula have not been overhauled. The use of OER can provide tools to find solutions to these constraints and to support the processes. Butcher cited an example of how the use of OER had

changed the way in which a post-graduate course in veterinary science was being offered. Where previously the students sat through a standard 45-hour lectured course they are now interacting with the local farming community in a problem-based learning approach. The very nature of the course has changed.

SESSION 2

8. CASE-STUDY PRESENTATIONS

8.1 Use of OER and non-OER in Programmes at the School of Education & Cognitive Science (Prof John Arul Phillips, Asia e-University, Malaysia)

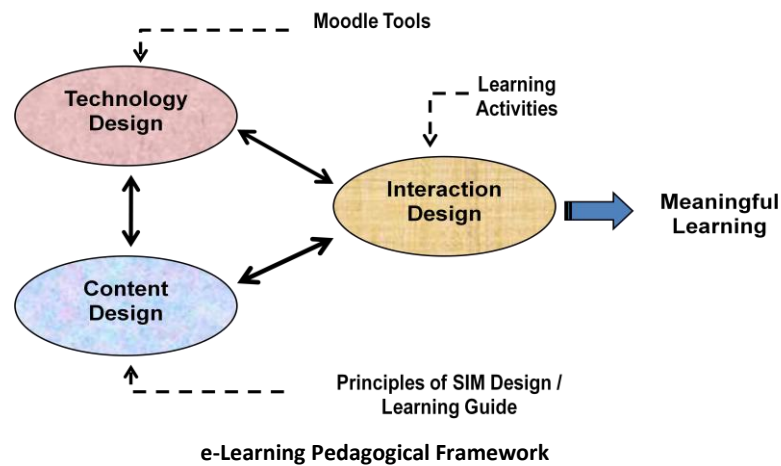
In Malaysia roughly 80% of the workforce only has high school education. This creates the potential that the human capital of Malaysia's neighbours, such as Indonesia, India and China, will grow at a more rapid rate and that Malaysia will consequently become economically less competitive. Malaysia has, therefore, embarked on a process of actively developing the human capital of their workforce.

One of the challenges facing Malaysia now is that whereas in the past all education was conducted through the medium of English it is now conducted in the national language and command of English amongst the population is declining. This has impacted heavily on the availability of suitable resources.

Prof Phillips highlighted that he spends hours on the Internet searching for free content and free tools. The Asia e-University in Malaysia has been tasked with developing and sourcing relevant materials and placing them online. There have been some challenges in getting this to happen, mainly around the reluctance of academic staff to place their teaching resources online. Some of this reluctance has been overcome as similar material and course outlines have been found on the Internet.

The demand for higher education in Malaysia is growing. Resourcing this growing demand has created many challenges. Academic books are very expensive and so universities are becoming reluctant to buy them. Libraries are also virtually non-existent outside of the major cities and in most cases the course content is not in an appropriate language.

The development of good content is time consuming and is often of a low quality. The Asia e-University has adopted a pedagogical framework which guides the development of their teaching and learning resources.



The technology design is based on the use of Moodle. YouTube also forms the basis of some of the course materials. Phillips cited an example of an Advanced Statistics course that had been taught using materials from YouTube and the Khan Academy materials as supporting resources.

The content design is based on both OER and non-OER. Resources, including case studies, are obtained from the Web, and very little use is made of textbooks as they are not affordable. Phillips indicated that for many of the topics he taught he could find equivalent free content on the Web. The design is based on the principles of self instructional modules (SIM) supported by a learning guide. The SIM is supported by hyperlinks to OER and non-OER that have been selected based on the learning outcomes which in turn were informed by the Taxonomy of Significant Learning Outcomes proposed by L Fink.

In another example Prof Phillips cited a course on the philosophy of education that was based extensively on an OER textbook available from the UNESCO website.

Appropriate learning activities are designed to get learners to interact with the materials. Their methodology is based on David Jonassen’s ideas of meaningful learning using technology. The approach is to go beyond regurgitating lecture notes to include problem- and project-based learning. The lecturer becomes a facilitator of the learning process.

Prof Phillips defines non-OER as those resources that cannot be re-used or re-versioned because of possible copyright infringement. In those courses where non-OER are used the materials are hyperlinked. One of the disadvantages is that it is necessary to check that the links are still correct before the course begins.

The School of Education & Cognitive Science at the Asia e University (AeU) offers four programmes as distance learning programmes to adult learners, viz. Graduate Diploma in Early Childhood Education, Master of Education, Post-Graduate Diploma in Higher Education Teaching and a Ph D in Education. The four programmes offered by the School make extensive use of both OER and non-OER.

Prof Phillips outlined three approaches that have been adopted at his institution.

- **Approach 1:** is the use of OER in their original form. Resources have been identified that can be used as is, as they meet the requirements of the courses.
- **Approach 2:** OER that have been re-versioned and re-packaged. Here OER have been identified from a number of different sources (e.g. COL and Connexions) and have been re-

versioned according to the learning outcomes of the specific courses. In these cases the sources have been appropriately acknowledged.

- **Approach 3:** hyperlinking to non-OER. A series of guidelines have been established with respect to hyperlinking. These guidelines include owner's prior consent to use the material, acknowledgement of the resources, terms and conditions of the site in respect of hyperlinking, and a disclaimer regarding content on the hyperlinked site.

The web resources include illustrations, animations, articles, simulations, demonstrations, case studies, online quizzes, video and audio clips, online tutorials, access to digital libraries, definitions, glossaries and dictionaries. Examples of the resources used include video clips to teach specific concepts in educational statistics, audio clips for pronunciation of words, case studies for comparative analysis, and blogs selected to allow learners to view the opinions of others on selected topics.

Prof Phillips concluded his presentation by highlighting five of the challenges that teaching using web resources present. These are the selection of appropriate resources; monitoring of the sites (particularly in respect of "dead links"); the practice of hyperlinking and restrictions that might be imposed on hyperlinking; the paucity of web resources from developing countries; and the need for more powerful and intelligent search engines so that searches are more intuitive and easier.

After the presentation participants raised queries about

- the cost of textbooks
- the legal risks (copyright infringement) entailed in placing pdf versions of textbooks on a learning management system (LMS). Where the material is not licensed under an open licensing framework it is hyperlinked and not loaded on the LMS.
- the use of OER might require a different kind of pedagogy – so what are the next steps? A different pedagogy is adopted to that used in onsite universities and is akin to that used in an ODL university where all materials must be available online.
- the training in the creation and use of OER. The OER Foundation runs regular online courses that address these issues.
- who controls the quality of the materials developed

8.2 OER at Athabasca University (Prof Rory McGreal, Athabasca University, Canada)

All Athabasca University (AU) content is currently being placed in a content management system (CMS) using Alfresco (an open-source product). This CMS is linked to Moodle which manages the learning process and can also be accessed via mobile devices. Inter-operability is built into the systems to enable students to access the content via any appropriate device. The university is also working on the Semantic Web to facilitate online searches based on the semantics of the question posed rather than the lexical features of the question.

Prof McGreal suggested that existing pedagogies that have been shown to work, e.g. the lecture, can still be used even though OER are being used in place of copyrighted materials. There are many different ways of learning and the environment will determine which would be the best pedagogy to adopt.

Athabasca University has 38 000 students, all of whom are online. Prof McGreal's responsibility at AU is to introduce OER into the university. Many of the courses are encumbered by proprietary

digital materials. Restrictions on these materials, such as the copyright collective and the need to destroy all proprietary digital materials once the final examinations have been written, is forcing AU to revisit and move to using OER.

Prof McGreal outlined the course design processes AU follows. These include the following

- (a) Check what is already out there – this includes websites, CBT, video, etc. Don't reinvent or re-develop what is already freely available.
- (b) If good materials are available then use them – instead of building a curriculum and then finding appropriate resources adapt your curriculum to include content that is readily available; in other words build your curriculum around the available resources.
- (c) Consider using games – there are some excellent open educational games available, such as Evony, which can be used for learning. Games could be used for teaching certain concepts in a course.
- (d) Assemble, don't create courses – assemble courses from existing materials/modules that are available. Mix and match excellent open educational resources and licensed materials.
- (e) Adapt, re-use and re-purpose – this avoids the “not invented here” syndrome. There is absolutely nothing wrong with using other people's materials, however, one needs to consider re-purposing it to suit the new context.
- (f) Know the content
- (g) Work to realistic deadlines
- (h) Estimate costs and then double them and double them again
- (i) Schedule and scope – scope the work to fit the deadlines and schedule
- (j) Be flexible – make provision for unexpected events
- (k) Generalisability is important – use of materials across a range of different disciplines could reduce costs.
- (l) Provide alternate learning paths
- (m) Standards and inter-operability are important
- (n) Don't analyse, don't plan – just do it – and keep it simple. Planning often hampers progress!

After the presentation participants commented and raised the following queries:

- the African Virtual University (AVU) has launched an OER website containing a lot of resources developed by Africans
- given the search facilities available on the Web what is the role of the librarian in the development of courses using OER? “Digital librarians”, people who can classify and catalogue, and support searching for information have a critical role especially in respect of information literacy.
- issues around awareness and advocacy – there is a continuing need at multiple levels to highlight the potential of OER
- policy issues around OER at both institution and national level – how do we approach national governments in respect of OER policies?
- issues around quality – as professionals we need to use our own judgement
- in order to facilitate the search for resources it is important that the associated metadata - data about a resource – also be provided
- what constitutes a good teacher?

SESSION 3

9. UNESCO-COL GUIDELINES FOR OER IN HIGHER EDUCATION (Ms Zeynep Varoglu, UNESCO, France)

Copies of the latest version of the Guidelines were circulated to participants. An electronic version had been circulated to participants prior to the workshop.

9.1 Background to document

The guidelines are premised on the UNESCO-COL OER initiative. Broadly speaking if people don't know about OER then they will not use them and they will not, therefore, be very useful for the "greater good". The guidelines emanate from the UNESCO Policy Forum held on 3 December 2010 at which three main recommendations were tabled. These were:

- (a) increased policy support in the area of OER;
- (b) a need to take into account a range of different stakeholders in higher education; and
- (c) a framework for integrating OER into teaching and learning practices.

9.2 Stakeholders

The guidelines concentrated on the following stakeholder groups: governments, higher education providers, student bodies, teaching staff, and quality assurance and accreditation bodies and academic recognition bodies. Although there are potentially many other stakeholders, such as private providers, it was felt that the stakeholders included covered the majority of those groups involved in higher education.

9.3 Overview of the Recommendations

The document provides a broad framework for integrating OER into particular aspects of teaching and learning. For each stakeholder group a number of recommendations in this respect are made. The format of these recommendations for each stakeholder group includes a brief discussion around some of the issues that pertain to that group followed by specific suggestions/recommendations as to how these issues might be addressed. More details are provided in the document.

It should be noted that the document provides suggestions/recommendations because UNESCO and COL are inter-governmental organisations and as such are not in a position to provide standards or prescriptions but rather policy advice.

9.4 Processes

The document is being consulted with all stakeholder groups in each of UNESCO's regions between June and October 2011. The intention is to finalise the document by October 2011 in time for it to be tabled at the UNESCO General Conference being held in October 2011.

9.5 General Discussion

Prior to the group discussions the following general comments and questions were raised by participants:

- Further concrete and practical inputs can be provided but these must reach UNESCO by 10 June 2011.

- Is there a linkage between this document and the work that UNESCO has done in promoting open access publishing, institutional repositories and open-source technologies? There is a need for the various initiatives to be “converged”. It is important also to note that the document should be accessible to people for whom technology might be foreign and so should not place a heavy emphasis on the use of technology.
- OER lean heavily on access to the Internet as a resource. Access to the Internet in Africa is probably one of the most expensive in the world, even with recent developments in the continent. What the document highlights is that higher education institutions that do not have connectivity are at a serious disadvantage. It is necessary to use documents such as this one to change the regulatory policy environment. The document should contain some guidelines on the necessity for access to the Internet.
- What is the involvement of the “real policy makers at government and institutional level” in this process? The document has been sent to all representative associations (e.g. international association of universities), the regional networks for quality assurance and UNESCO member states with an invitation to submit comments.
- Government funding for the development of OER, especially in Africa, could be problematic. How does one persuade governments to take seriously those things that are important for the development of a country? International donor aid is also starting to diminish as the economic pinch starts to affect those that provide the aid and those countries dependent on donor aid are going to have to start taking responsibility for their own financing.
- The document needs to reference the importance of Internet connectivity as a prerequisite for engaging with OER.
- The document provides policy advice in a very fast changing field. The final product will be available in a number of different formats and could be updated as things evolve. It is also intended that there be some accompanying documents that include exemplar policy documents and case studies.
- As a result of a consultative discussion held in Nairobi during May 2011 representatives from Makerere University in Uganda have already initiated discussions on how the recommendations can be implemented in their university. Participants are encouraged to follow similar processes within their own institutions.

9.6 Feedback from the Group Discussions

Workshop participants were divided into four groups and each of these groups was requested to consider the suggestions made for a specific stakeholder group. References to bullet points below are to a specific suggestion made under each of the stakeholder groups.

(a) Group 1 (Governments)

- Bullet 1: this point should be included with the suggestions made for higher education providers as it does not necessarily apply at governmental level.
- Bullet 2: supported. In the last sentence the words “*and intellectual property rights*” should be added after “... *cover the copyright status*”
- Bullet 3: suggested that this point be merged with bullet 2. In addition after the words “... *use of OER*” in the first sentence consider the inclusion of open-licensing frameworks and IPR.
- Bullet 4: supported

- Bullet 5: exclude the words “*previously marginalized learners.*” as this is not generic and might refer specifically to a South African context.
 - Bullet 6: supported
 - General: consider highlighting the action verbs so as to clearly differentiate between the suggestions/recommendations
- (b) Group 2 (Higher Education Providers)
- Bullet 1: it is suggested that some of the aspects around incentives need to be included in HR management policies
 - Bullet 2: the word “*production*” needs to be included along with “*selection and adaptation*”. Also include “*and ensure quality of materials*” at the end of the recommendation. There is a need to clarify the wording of this text as it is open to various interpretations.
 - Bullet 3: supported
 - Bullet 4: include “*and development*” after “*... facilitate more effective use*” and the word “*open*” is missing before “*educational resources*”
 - Bullet 5: add “*at places of convenience (such as offices, staff rooms and lecture rooms)*” at the end of the recommendation
 - Bullet 6: start with “*Design*” so that recommendation starts “*Design, adopt and support ...*”
 - Bullet 7: supported
 - Bullet 8: supported
- (c) Group 3 (Teaching Staff)
- Bullet 1: merge bullet 1 with bullet 6 as they cover the same issues
 - Bullet 2: supported
 - Bullet 3: supported
 - Bullet 4: should include issues around plagiarism, especially around students sharing resources
 - Bullet 5: supported
 - Bullet 6: to be merged with bullet 1
 - Bullet 7: funding should be made available to the higher education institutions to support the professional development of teaching staff
 - Bullet 8: supported
- (d) Group 4 (Student Bodies)
- General: A question was raised as to whether the recommendations referred to student leadership or student bodies?
 - Bullet 1: this point is very general and maybe it should be used to sketch an overview for the remaining points
 - Bullet 2: supported
 - Bullet 3: supported
 - Bullet 4: supported
 - Bullet 5: the suggestion needs to be strengthened as student voices are not always listened to everywhere on the African continent, e.g. Zimbabwe
 - Bullet 6: concerned with the use of the term “*interns*” as it has potential for student misuse; consider the possible inclusion of “*benefits*”

- General: consider the addition of a point that extends the research agenda into OER to students

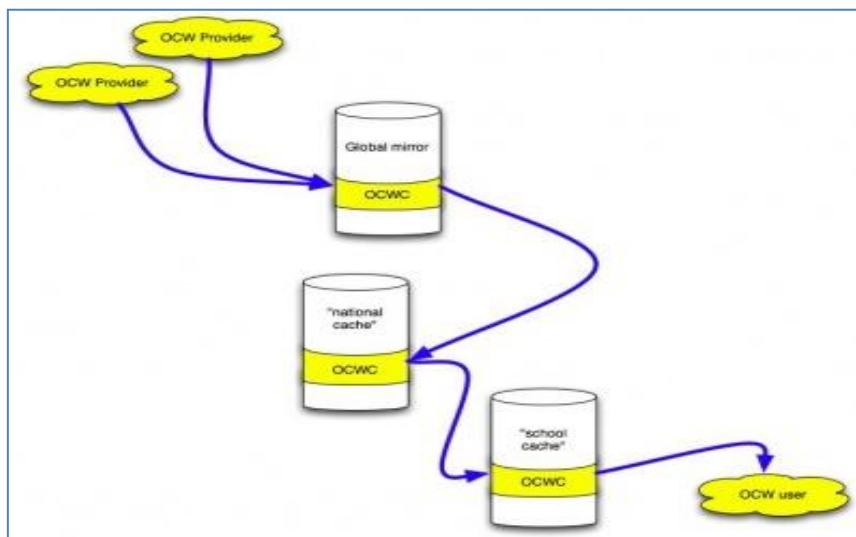
10. INTRODUCTION TO THE UNESCO/COL CHAIR PROGRAMME FOR OER (Prof Rory McGreal, Athabasca University, Canada)

Prof McGreal provided some background to his role as one of the two UNESCO/COL chairs for OER. Prof McGreal represents North America while Prof Fred Mulder, the other UNESCO Chair for OER represents Europe. The programme is supported by a number of international sponsors and partners. The intention is to eventually have an OER chair on every continent.

The responsibility of the chairs is to support UNESCO/COL in all of their OER initiatives. These include promotion of gender equality, youth development, networking, capacity building, research and the support of rural and remote communities.

Currently one of the main tasks is OER mapping which is being led by Susan d'Antoni at Athabasca University. This project aims at establishing exactly what people are doing with OER around the world, who is producing them and who is using them. In addition the OER chair programme supports the Cape Town Open Education Declaration and the Budapest Open Access Declaration.

The model depicted below (from MIT) shows that the intention is that a user can either access OER directly from MIT or they can be downloaded and cached at local level.



Roughly one quarter of the world's population can access the Internet and so the Internet needs to be used to educate the world's growing population. Approximately one third of the world's population access the Internet via a mobile device (e.g. mobile phones or tablets). The world is going mobile and in many parts is already mobile. Developers and assemblers of OER need to take serious account of this fact.

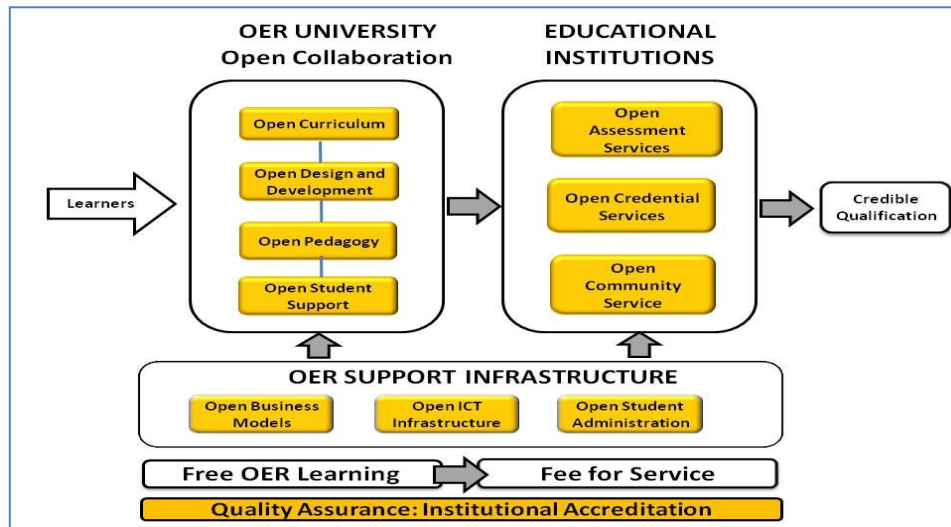
Prof McGreal listed a number of sites where learning content was freely available. These include MIT, MERLOT, AVU, Open Yale Courses and Connexions.

A number of quality measures exist for assessing OER. These include the brand or reputation of the institution developing the OER, peer review, user ratings, sharability, timely, reach, usability, accessibility (including accessibility for disabled people), cost reduction by virtue of sharing, timely updating (OER can be updated whenever), the type of licence and the number of learners engaging

with the materials. The measurement of the quality of the materials is also dependent on the context, the outcomes and the competences it teaches.

The programme is pushing a major initiative with the OER Foundation to allow people to learn on their own using OER and then take an assessment test and be accredited.

The diagram on the next page provides some information on the model being proposed by the OER University.



The possibility of using students as mentors was being mooted. The consideration is that instead of giving 3 credits per course students receive only 2 credits and if they then mentor the course they get an additional credit. McGreal argued that “*you never learn anything better than when you have to teach it*”.

The proposal also includes open curriculums, where the students choose what interests them and what meets their professional development needs; open assessment and open credentialing (possibly with the endorsement of INQAAHE); and open student support and funding.

The original copyright acts were promulgated to “*encourage learning*” (Statute of Queen Anne, 1710) and to “*promote the progress of science and the useful arts*” (US Copyright Act of 1790). McGreal ended his presentation by stating that “*OER is bubbling all around us and if we don’t move (jump) we’ll be too late*”.

11. CLOSING REMARKS (Mr Neil Butcher, Ms Zeynep Varoglu, Ms Trudi van Wyk)

Mr Butcher thanked all participants for their valued contributions and hoped that they all left with a greater understanding of the OER issues.

Ms Varoglu thanked participants on behalf of UNESCO for their feedback on the guideline document.

Ms van Wyk thanked participants on behalf of COL and drew their attention to the documents that would be uploaded to <http://oerworkshop.weebly.com/>