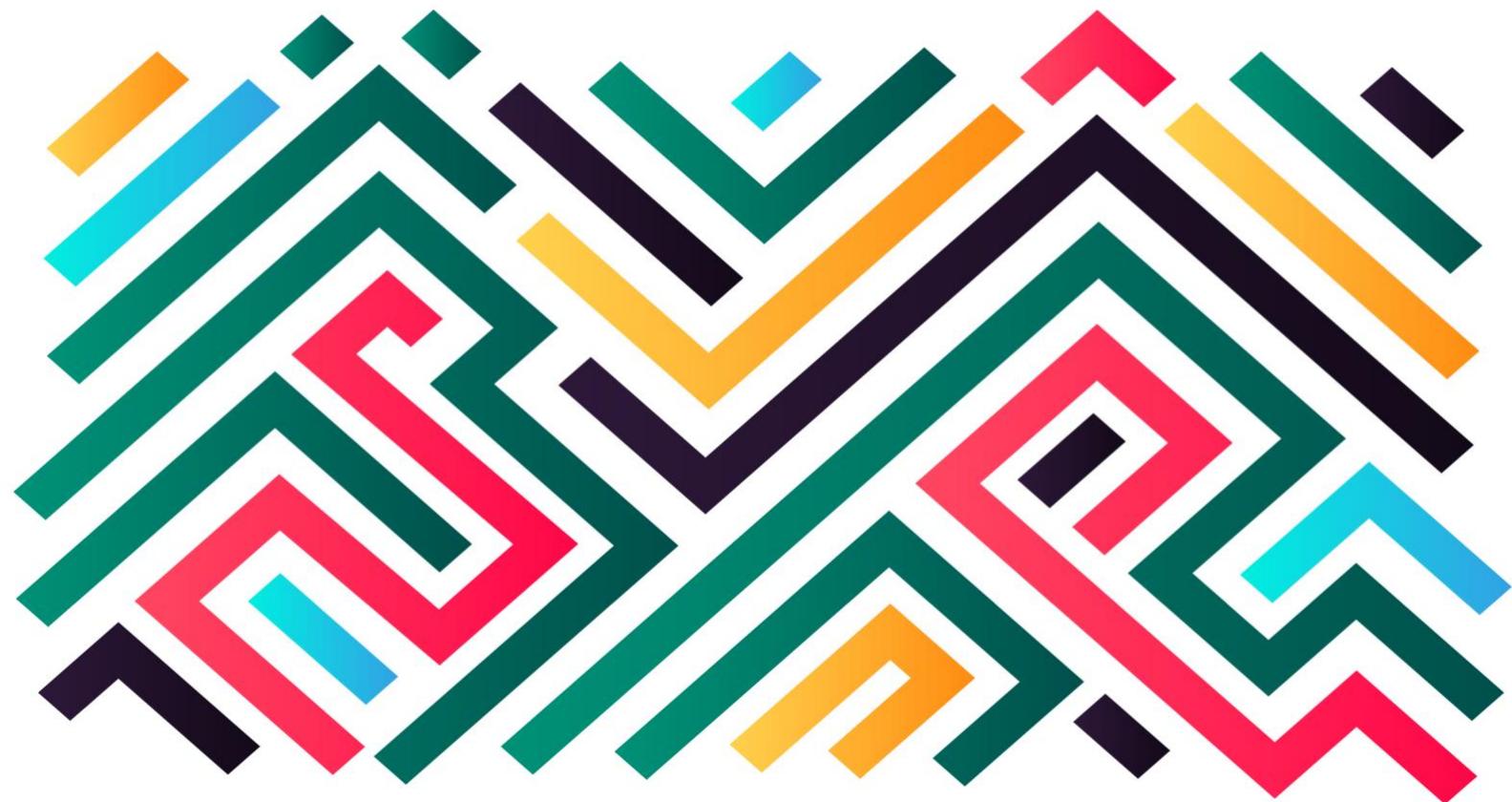


Exploring cases that highlight successes with Open Educational Resources

Summary report for the Network of Open Orgs' Collaborative Project

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List of abbreviations

AVU	African Virtual University
CC	Creative Commons
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
FOSS	Free and Open-Source Software
ICDE	The International Council for Open and Distance Education
ISKME	Institute for the Study of Knowledge Management in Education
LiDA	Learning in a Digital Age
MIT	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OER	Open Educational Resources
OERAC	Open Educational Resources Advocacy Committee
OERF	Open Education Resource Foundation
TAACCCT	Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training
TESS-India	Teacher Education through School-based Support – India
ZTC Degree	Zero textbook cost degree

Introduction

While education systems around the world have made significant gains over the past two decades, they continue to face several challenges – particularly in the developing world. These include unequal access to educational opportunities, the variable quality of educational resources, and below par or inconsistent learner outcomes^{i, ii, iii}. The recent COVID-19 pandemic has brought these challenges into stark view, and even exacerbated them in some cases^{iv, v}. Open Educational Resources (OER) offer viable solutions to many of these issues. Although the concept of OER emerged in the Global North through initiatives like the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT's) [MITOpenCourseWare](#) initiative in 2001, OER are gaining traction globally, with an increasing number of OER initiatives that are expanding capacity in key areas such as OER advocacy, practice and research.

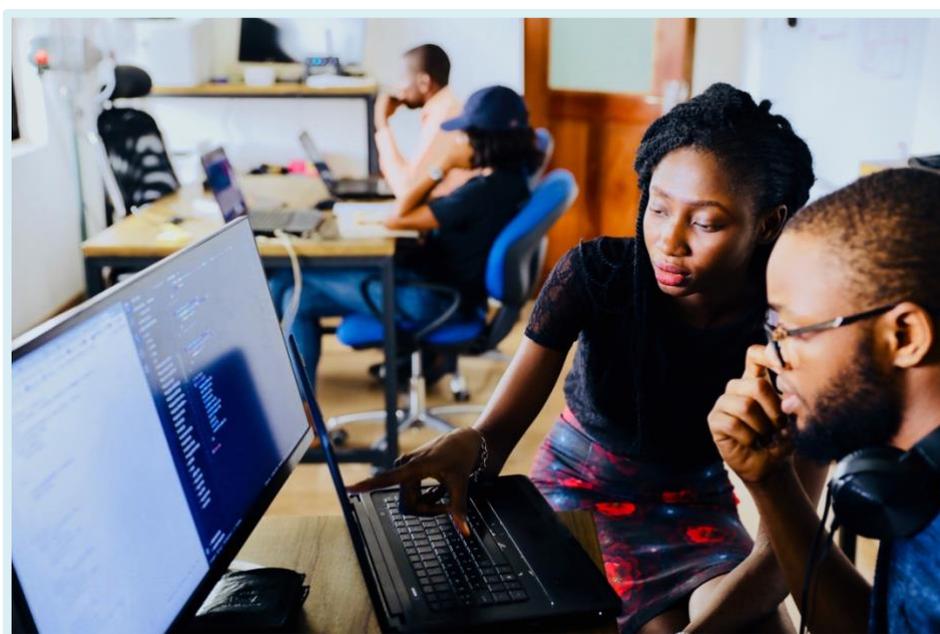


Figure 1 Image courtesy of Mars Sector-6, [Unsplash](#) ([Unsplash licence](#))

Advocates promote OER for its benefits, including increasing access to educational materials; improving scalability and circulation of resources; and providing the opportunity to adapt resources to suit learners' needs and contexts^{vi, vii}. However, ongoing research and evidence is required to gain a comprehensive, measured understanding of such benefits.

Within this context, OER Africa coordinated a project for the Network of Open Orgs.¹ The project involved a collaborative effort among several members of the Network to develop a set of seven case study summaries that collectively explored the success of OER and highlighted the implications of these initiatives for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for OER practices.

The case studies were analysed to produce a set of key findings for this summary report.

¹ The Network of Open Orgs is a coalition of organizations that meet regularly and focus on implementing and supporting the [UNESCO OER Recommendation](#)

Research design

The research involved a review of OER-related publications and material to develop corresponding case study summaries with a view to identifying best practices in four key areas:

1. **Access:** Examples of how OER can assist in increasing access to education and educational materials;
2. **Outcomes:** Cases where OER have helped to improve learner outcomes;
3. **Costs:** Instances where OER have been used effectively to reduce costs; and
4. **CPD:** Cases of CPD activities related to OER, together with areas where capacity building is required and by whom.

Using a comprehensive literature review, the project team compiled a list of 27 potential case studies, each of which had a verifiable evidence base (for example, a dataset or research report). In selecting initiatives, the team considered two elements: first, the scope of each initiative and whether there was sufficient publicly available information available to review it (or whether the information was easily accessible through a representative); and second, how diverse the spread of initiatives was in the overarching research sample.

The project used the following criteria for selecting potential cases:

Qualifying criteria for individual initiatives:

1. Availability of documentation online in English to be able to compile a case study of the initiative (with preference given to initiatives for which there was some kind of evaluation report).
2. Where there was a lack of information available, there should be contact information for at least one representative who could provide information on the initiative and its impact.
3. The initiative should demonstrate how OER have been used to increase access, improve learner outcomes, reduce costs, and/or promote OER-related CPD.
4. The initiative must have been operational for at least two years to allow accurate assessment of its effectiveness.

Criteria for the overall sample:

1. A diverse geographical spread of initiatives (including a balance between the Global North and the Global South).
2. A combination of single-institution and collaborative initiatives between multiple institutions or organizations.
3. A mixture of initiatives led by or involving national governments, universities and other organizations (e.g. Non-Governmental Organizations [NGOs], donors, etc).

Based on these criteria, the team selected eight initiatives. Once selected, these were divided amongst volunteer collaborators within the Network of Open Orgs, who wrote up the case study summaries. Volunteers were selected during a Network of Open Orgs meeting. Subsequently, one of the initiatives was removed from the final list because of a thin evidence base, reducing the number of case study summaries to seven.

OER Africa provided a template to guide the development of the case study summaries (see Appendix One). Collaborators were able to modify the template as appropriate. OER Africa acted as a coordinator for these efforts, providing editorial support, collating the case studies, and writing up the summary report. It undertook this work in collaboration with several initiatives and OER advocates globally:

- TJ Bliss (Idaho State Board of Education);

- Trish Chaplin-Cheyne (The International Council for Open and Distance Education [ICDE] OER Advocacy Committee [OERAC]);
- Paola Corti (SPARC Europe);
- Juliane Granly (ICDE);
- Cable Green (Creative Commons);
- Gerry Hanley (MERLOT and SkillsCommons);
- Cynthia James (Institute for the Study of Knowledge Management in Education [ISKME]);
- Igor Lesko (Open Education Global);
- Anaïs Malbrand (ICDE);
- Ebba Ossiannilsson (ICDE OERAC);
- Lisa Petrides (ISKME); and
- Rosa Leonor Ulloa Cazarez (Sistema de Universidad Virtual - Universidad de Guadalajara).

Findings

Case study description, purpose, and aims

The table below provides a summary of the case studies that were covered in the research. The sample included cases that presented even coverage of all four areas of enquiry. None of the cases were single-institution initiatives, as all had three or more partners (including funders). The sample was diverse in terms of sector representation for the initiatives' lead organization/s, which included NGOs, governments, and universities.

Table 1 Case study description, purpose, and aims

Case study	Brief description	Categorization
<p>OERu: Learning in a Digital Age (LiDA) (Global reach)</p>	<p>Since 2011, the Open Education Resource Foundation (OERF) has been developing innovative approaches to providing free and open media and information literacy education.</p> <p>The Learning in a Digital Age (LiDA) suite is made up of four micro-courses developed by the OERF, which are delivered virtually, with the aim of supporting adults in developing digital and critical media literacy skills for learning online. Courses are at no cost to learners and include optional pathways to certifications, including formal academic credit towards university qualifications.</p> <p>Courses are published and delivered using Free and Open-Source Software (FOSS), so any institution can reuse, remix, and replicate the course materials and delivery platforms for their own purposes.</p>	<p>Access</p>
<p>Teacher Education through School-based Support – India (TESS-India) (India)</p>	<p>Initiated in 2012, Teacher Education through School-based Support – India (TESS-India) is an award-winning programme established to strengthen and transform professional development activities and classroom practices in India. Through a collaboration with 200 Indian and international teachers and teacher education experts, the programme has developed nearly 200 OERs in multiple languages. Indirectly, TESS-India also addresses the need and activities of the Government of India to significantly increase the number of qualified and trained teachers (in pre- and in-service teacher education) at India's elementary and secondary education levels.</p>	<p>CPD</p>
<p>OER@AVU (Kenya)</p>	<p>The African Virtual University (AVU) launched its OER initiative called OER@AVU. The initiative ran from 2011 to 2018, although the OER@AVU platform is still accessible. It was part of a larger project designed to increase access to affordable education at AVU's 27 partner institutions spanning 22 countries. It sought to encourage the collaborative creation and sharing of open, distance, and e-learning resources.</p>	<p>CPD Access</p>

Case study	Brief description	Categorization
African Storybook (South Africa and other sub-Saharan African countries)	<p>African Storybook is a multilingual literacy project working with educators and authors to create and publish openly licensed storybooks for early reading in the languages of Africa. The initiative was launched in 2014 to address the shortage of children’s literacy by providing storybooks in African languages. It is an initiative of Saide, a registered non-profit organization governed by a trust and based in Johannesburg, South Africa.</p>	Access Costs
Zero Textbook Cost Degrees (aka: Z Degrees, OER Degrees, Zed Creds) (United States, Canada)	<p>An OER Degree, sometimes referred to as a Z Degree, a zero textbook cost degree (ZTC Degree), or a Zed Cred,^{viii} is a complete pathway to a degree, certificate, or credential that has no or very low costs for instructional materials (typically less than US\$30 per course per student). All courses in these degree pathways use OER or other instructional materials that are zero or very low cost to students. OER Degrees have been growing in the United States and Canada, particularly at community and technical colleges where textbook costs present a significant percentage of student costs.</p>	Access Cost
Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) (USA)	<p>The US Department of Labour's Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant programme was a major investment to enable US community colleges to address the challenges of today's workforce. Grants were provided to community colleges to create new or redesigned degree programmes to help workers eligible for training under the Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers programme, as well as other adults. TAACCCT targeted high priority industries: manufacturing, healthcare, information technology, energy, transportation, and a dozen other industry sectors. All materials produced by the grant funding were required to be openly licensed using the Creative Commons (CC) Attribution 4.0 licence (CC BY).</p> <p>It was initiated in 2011 and ran until 2018, though the programme also funded the creation of an open library called SkillsCommons to host the TAACCCT-funded OER. It continues to provide free access to workforce training materials.</p>	Access Learner outcomes

Case study	Brief description	Categorization
<p>Harnessing OER Practices to Drive Pedagogical Improvement: The Role of Continuing Professional Development (Ethiopia, Tanzania, Nigeria, and South Africa)</p>	<p>In mid-2017, OER Africa commenced a series of interrelated research activities to explore the relationship between educationally effective use of OER and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) of African academics. The purpose of this work was to move beyond the rhetoric of the OER community to determine what effect the OER movement has had in educational systems and how sustainable this has been. In parallel with this reflection on the impact of OER practices, the OER Africa project team undertook a literature review on CPD needs and practices in African academia, with a focus on developing competencies in teaching and learning.</p> <p>These two lines of enquiry provided a platform for practical work with universities, which had two priorities: first, to learn more about academic CPD needs by conducting surveys amongst academics and collating the results; and, second, to develop and test a range of professional development activities and approaches that might respond to these needs.</p>	CPD

Successes and impact

The research demonstrated that initiatives have achieved notable successes in the four areas of enquiry. They have increased access to education and educational materials by creating new materials and/or reusing and adapting them, and, in so doing, have received various awards. There was also evidence of initiatives enabling CPD and skills development. Regarding learner outcomes, some initiatives demonstrated increased retention rates, increased pass and graduation rates, and an increased rate of employment amongst students. Moreover, cost savings have been experienced by institutions and students.

Table 2 Case study successes and impact

Summary of overarching themes	Findings	Evidence in case studies
Initiatives have increased access to education and educational materials in various ways. Through their activities,	Creating, degrees, modules, courses, storybooks, toolkits, and other materials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OER@AVU • African Storybook • TESS-India

Summary of overarching themes	Findings	Evidence in case studies
<p>initiatives developed educational materials, re-using and remixing them, as well as localizing materials, with many citing large numbers of users.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAACCCT • OER Degrees • LiDA
	<p>Reusing, remixing, localizing, and redesigning educational materials.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAACCCT • African Storybook • TESS-India • LiDA • OER@AVU
	<p>Evidence that access to OER positively impacted instructors' ability to repurpose OER for their local course context and increased access to educational materials.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OER@AVU • LiDA • OER Degrees
	<p>Awards from initiatives' successes and impact.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African Storybook • LiDA • OER@AVU • TESS-India
<p>Initiatives have promoted or assisted in CPD and skills development. This included providing research on CPD and areas for improvement. It also included delivery of skills development interventions.</p>	<p>Conducting research about CPD and framework development to promote CPD related to OER. Such research confirmed that CPD for academics is key to developing OER practices in African higher education, and basic understanding of teaching and learning practices is critical to building effective OER practices; that research itself attracts much more attention in CPD than teaching and learning; and that other types of CPD can effectively complement traditional, more expensive forms of CPD.^{ix} It also showed that instructors who possessed ICT literacy skills were more likely to repurpose, create, and share OER, and that participation in these 'open practices' enhanced their overall interest and skills in course design and in localization of course materials for their unique instructional contexts.^x</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harnessing OER Practices to Drive Pedagogical Improvement • OER@AVU
	<p>Initiatives undertook skills development and training provision at scale, showing evidence of integrating resources into teaching schedules and shifts in teacher professional development amongst policymakers and teacher educators.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAACCCT • TESS-India

Summary of overarching themes	Findings	Evidence in case studies
<p>Initiatives used different approaches to measure^{xi} and improve learner outcomes. There was evidence of improved learner outcomes resulting from access to OER, but the case studies also highlighted a need to study the impact of OER on learner outcomes more comprehensively, particularly regarding their influence on different demographic groups of students. The research was also focused on the global north, highlighting that comparative research on the impact of similar programmes on learner outcomes for those in the global south might yield beneficial insights.</p>	<p>Increased retention and pass rates, increased graduation rates, and an increased rate of employment amongst students following completion of coursework.</p> <p>Students taking OER courses accumulated significantly more course credits than those who had not taken any such courses. However, there is a need to look more deeply into the conditions and practices associated with the level of favourability of outcomes for OER degree implementations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OER Degrees • TAACCCT
<p>There was evidence of initiatives using OER to reduce the costs of materials development and education delivery.</p> <p>The cost savings that such initiatives have enabled because students no longer need to carry the financial burden of paying for expensive educational materials can make quality education more accessible for people from varying socioeconomic backgrounds. Such savings also mean that institutions can use the money that they save to focus investment on course design and delivery.</p>	<p>Cost savings by institutions and students. For students, this included overcoming the need to purchase instructional materials like textbooks.</p> <p>Institutions did not incur any significant course design and development costs, instead making use of existing human resources to review and adapt materials. The use of OER meant that institutions did not need to purchase expensive textbooks or proprietary software licences to access the content</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OER Degrees • LiDA • OER Degrees

Challenges

While there is significant evidence of the successes that these initiatives have had in the four areas described above, they have also faced challenges in achieving their aims, including: ensuring OER adoption and awareness; various operational issues; difficulties with staff and other partners; and problems with developing the requisite skills.

Table 3 Case study challenges

Themes	Findings	Evidence in case studies
The availability of OER was raised as a challenge, which was primarily related to low rates of adoption of OER-enabled online courses for reuse and remix at higher education institutions, as well as a lack of availability of OER in certain subject areas.	There were two key issues regarding OER adoption and awareness. First, the need to advocate for adoption and second, the need to align OER provision with demand. This suggests a need for ongoing advocacy and support for open education in publicly funded institutions, as well as incentives to share materials as OER.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LiDA • OER Degrees
	In some cases, there was limited knowledge about OER amongst the participants, highlighting a need for additional OER advocacy activities to present OER as a viable alternative to all rights reserved copyrighted materials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TESS-India • OER Degrees
Initiatives experienced operational issues which ranged from usability issues on websites to funding.	Problems with website user registrations and internet connectivity. To overcome this, the team would assist users in identifying and solving registration issues in the backend. The team also conducted internal discussions to simplify the registration process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African Storybook
	Some commercial publishers have downloaded resources from the initiative's website and used them without appropriate attribution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African Storybook
	Diminishing interest following initial activities. This sometimes resulted in slower implementation and the need for additional personnel to aid implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harnessing OER Practices to Drive Pedagogical Improvement
	Funding presented a challenge, with some initiatives receiving requests from institutions for larger budgets, and others finding it difficult to sustain access to OER when the grant funded project ended due to the resource requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harnessing OER Practices to Drive Pedagogical Improvement • TAACCCT

Themes	Findings	Evidence in case studies
	For some, the time allocated to workshops of two or three days, which were designed to support the localisation of educational materials, and then to return revised materials to the project, was too short.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TESS-India
Working with staff and other partners created challenges, from getting partners on board to managing dynamics amongst experts or dealing with staff turnover.	Difficulties in getting departments of education on board. Initiatives also experienced issues in collaborating with government officials, subject experts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African Storybook • TESS-India
	Issues with staff turnover. In one case, key staff who had been trained left, and new staff members were inexperienced, presenting difficulties in implementing project activities. University staff also had competing priorities and attending OER CPD initiatives was not always a priority.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harnessing OER Practices to Drive Pedagogical Improvement
Philosophical differences had an impact on implementation of initiatives' aims	Some take a philosophical approach that imposes strict definitional requirements on Z-Degrees, while others take a looser, more practical approach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OER Degrees

Lessons learned

The case study summaries revealed valuable insights on lessons and practices that contributed to initiatives' success. These insights related to OER-related research; CPD; implementation of OER-related initiatives; the quality and relevance of OER; policy; and sustainability.

Table 4 Lessons learned from case studies

Themes	Findings	Evidence in case studies
Initiatives explored how research on OER and related topics is conducted, which topics are covered, and how this is disseminated.	Developing research capacities when engaging with universities is an important addition to CPD in teaching and learning – especially because of the value that academics place on research. Research identified capacity needs such as 'packaging' and disseminating research outputs for different audiences. The case studies also found that universities should conduct comprehensive research on OER-related topics before adopting them, which can also help them to derive lessons for their own implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harnessing OER Practices to Drive Pedagogical Improvement • OER Degrees

Themes	Findings	Evidence in case studies
Initiatives highlighted practices relating to skills and CPD , which included insights around local language expertise, existing knowledge and skills, the use of technology, and CPD provision for academics.	Skills-related lessons stressed the importance of finding partners with local language expertise who can translate, and quality assure in local languages. A related point was aligning content creation and adaptation with demand, so that content development and remixing is purposeful.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African Storybook
	Focus on leveraging university staff's existing knowledge and skills, including skills related to online learning and OER. From there, build additional skills. In addition, find ways to motivate participants to take ownership of their CPD path; focus on in-depth activities instead of broader topic areas; and record lessons, workshops, and activities so that results of CPD activities can be shared, built upon, and applied. ^{xii}	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OER@AVU • Harnessing OER Practices to Drive Pedagogical Improvement • LiDA
	Ongoing OER awareness training can perform a vital function, together with options to pursue deeper training with library and instructional design support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OER Degrees
Initiatives gleaned important lessons regarding implementation of their activities . Key themes that emerged included partnerships and how to manage them; strategic approaches to implementation; the use of champions; and administration.	Building partnerships and continuously seeking out new potential partners (both local and international) is key. Though the examples are quite diverse, they demonstrate the value in casting the net wide when it comes to finding implementation partners for OER initiatives, which has the dual goal of assisting implementation and advocating for the use of OER in different spheres of influence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African Storybook • OER Degrees
	Regarding implementation approaches, there is value in collaborative strategies that decentralize the work across partnering institutions, yet ensure a high degree of ownership by each institution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OER@AVU
	Open education strategies should be required as part of the request for proposals and be specifically outlined within project plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAACCCT
	Create an enabling environment for team members and champions, as well as creating cross-functional teams to aid effective decision-making, development, and roll-out.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African Storybook • OER Degrees
	Focus on fitness for purpose and the relevance of openly licensed content. This includes remaining aware of where participants are located and nuanced linguistic, cultural, and pedagogic needs to choose the best format.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harnessing OER Practices to Drive Pedagogical Improvement • OER@AVU • TESS-India

Themes	Findings	Evidence in case studies
	<p>Policy can be used as a tool to extend the impact of OER. In terms of open licensing policies in particular, integrating OER into broader curriculum policies at an institution is important for creating system-wide impact that goes beyond the level of the individual. Moreover, open licensing policies across government can lead to more efficient reuse of publicly funded grant outputs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OER@AVU • TAACCCT
	<p>In terms of sustainability, leadership development, the use of appropriate technologies, and prioritising sustainability are essential for project success</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAACCCT • OER Degrees

Translating local insights into an international context

Related to the lessons above, the case studies highlighted how they could be translated into relevant insights for other countries. Because some of these insights are particular to the initiatives that produced them, they are summarized in the table below according to the case study they originate from.

Table 5 Translating local insights from the case studies into an international context

Case study	Transferable insights
OERu: Learning in a Digital Age (LiDA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any translation initiative should be led by the language of adoption (ownership of the language localization), to ensure cultural validity. In this case, to adapt an English version of the course into a multilingual context there needed to be a focus on the French localization and the local insights from the French speaking nations that would use the product. In this instance, this was Canada, Francophone Pacific Islands and Francophone Africa.^{xiii} There are bi-directional benefits to customizing the delivery platform. The OERF developed new software for the French localization of the 'Register Enrol' WordPress plugin with capability to interface with the Mautic email plugin that manages campaigns for automatically sending course instructions. Investment in such software localization refinements can facilitate significantly quicker translations to other languages.
TessIndia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align programme objectives with national policy priorities Provide adequate support from and collaboration with key policy stakeholders located within national or state structures Emphasize collaborative localisation approaches to make educational resources contextually relevant.
OER@AVU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support OER discoverability and localization through tools that enable content use across regional and institutional borders Adopt a systems-based approach to the creation, sharing, and use of OER that leverages multiple communities — from state and campus administrators, to instructors, to library staff, to students themselves.
African Storybook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One can adapt and deploy website tools such as the African Storybook Maker and the Reader in different languages and contexts. Most of the storybooks are in English, allowing them to be used in several contexts to teach a second language or improve English reading skills. Use frameworks for the Storybook Maker, which are universal and not attached to a particular pedagogical or theoretical framework. This characteristic enables the easy adaptation of the tool to other educational contexts and levels.

Case study	Transferable insights
Zero Textbook Cost Degrees (aka: Z Degrees, OER Degrees, Zed Creds)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The benefits of OER Degrees are applicable in any context where college students are expected to pay for instructional materials. • Consider the use of OER Degrees in all postsecondary education contexts throughout the world – both in contexts where cost is a key factor and those where cost is not the driving factor
Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translation into the users’ native language is very important. MERLOT provides Google Translation and has used UTF8 in coding the application so the user can type in any language and it will be correctly represented in the library. • When governments require publicly funded educational resources to be openly licensed, the reuse of those OER are significantly larger than if the resources were not openly shared.
Harnessing OER Practices to Drive Pedagogical Improvement: The Role of Continuing Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the context within which CPD occurs as these factors could be external to CPD but affect it, such as duration of contracts, technological equipment, and facilities. • Consider measures to align the level of CPD participants, such as ensuring that previous knowledge and skills are bolstered for those in need before starting any new learning path. • Ensure that career paths build on both research and teaching results. • Adopt open approaches and flexible facilitation, together with careful planning and quality checks. • Where relevant, prioritise scalability and develop granular resources to address different levels of involvement, accounting for the particularities of each context.

Key takeaways

Ultimately, this project provided valuable insights into the impact that OER-related initiatives have had on access to education, learner outcomes, costs, and CPD. Although the sample is small relative to the number of OER initiatives globally, it highlights the importance of reflecting on such initiatives across different contexts, learning from them, drawing comparisons, and moving OER-related practices forward by implementing lessons. With this in mind, a set of key takeaways across the sample are presented below.

- Initiatives have experienced notable successes in increasing access to education and educational materials by **creating new materials and/or reusing and adapting them**.
- There was also evidence of initiatives enabling CPD and skills development, with some managing to do so at scale. This included **providing research on CPD and areas for improvement, together with skills development interventions** themselves.
- Regarding learner outcomes, some initiatives demonstrated increased retention rates, increased pass and graduation rates, and an increased rate of employment amongst students. This highlights a requirement to **study the impact of OER on learner outcomes more comprehensively, particularly regarding their influence on different sub-sets of society**. Because this evidence focussed on the global north, comparative **research on the impact of similar programmes on learner outcomes for those in the global south might yield beneficial insights**.

- Cost savings have been experienced by institutions and students. The **cost savings that such initiatives have propagated mean that students no longer need to carry the financial burden of paying for expensive educational materials**, making quality education more accessible for students.
- The availability of OER was raised as a challenge, suggesting two issues, the need to advocate for adoption and the need to align OER provision with demand. Overall, this points to a **requirement for ongoing advocacy and support for open education in publicly funded institutions, as well as incentives to share materials as OER**.
- There were several operational issues highlighted in the research, including user registration, a lack of internet connectivity, diminishing interest following initial activities, the need for funding, and time constraints. All these issues highlight **the importance of careful planning for the roll-out of such initiatives, together with a need to adapt to circumstances as and when they change**.
- Working with staff and other partners presented **a unique set of challenges from getting partners on board to managing dynamics amongst experts or dealing with staff turnover**.
- It is important to consider **packaging content and research so that it is appealing to different users and conducting sufficient research** to inform OER adoption.
- Finding partners with **local language expertise** can assist in translation and quality assurance in local languages.
- Mechanisms like **memoranda of understanding**, which delineate roles and responsibilities, can assist in managing partnerships more effectively.

Appendix One

Network of Open Orgs: Collaborative project

Summary template

Below is a template for the summaries. Note that this template is intended to guide the summarization process but should not be treated as prescriptive. Authors are encouraged to add headings or sections where appropriate

Name of the initiative	
URL	
Categorisation of impact (access to education/ learner outcomes/ costs)	
Partners	
Funding sources and amount of funding (where available)	
Years it has been operational	

Description, purpose and aims of the initiative

Insert text

Successes and achievements

Insert text

Evidence of impact

Insert text

Challenges and perceived failures

Insert text

Lessons learned and practices that made a difference

[Note that in addition to lessons learned, this sub-section should examine *how* successful implementation was achieved]

Insert text

Resources and publications

Insert text

Translating local insights into an international context

[This subsection should help the reader to abstract findings from the case study and translate them into relevant insights for other countries]

Insert text

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- ⁱ Global Education Monitoring Report Team. (2020). Global education monitoring report, 2020: Inclusion and education: all means all. Retrieved from <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000373718>
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