Some thoughts about sustainable OER

It's all about ownership!

Zone 42 (Ben Janssen, Jan-Bart de Vreede, Robert Schuwer)
Agenda

- Frame of reference
- Why ownership?
- Realisation of ownership
- A case from The Netherlands
Different notions of OER

- OER considered as public goods (Wiley, 2020)
  - non-excludable and non-rivalrous
- OER considered as a commons good (Hess & Ostrom, 2001)
  - non-excludable and to a certain extent rivalrous (under-use or no maintenance)
  - commoning: maintaining and managing of resources by communities (see also (Schophuizen, 2022))
- These notions all affect the issue of sustainability of OER (Wiley, 2007)
Sustainability of OER initiatives

“... the ability of a project to continue its operations. And certainly, the idea of continuing is a critical part of the meaning of sustainability (....).

The definition of sustainability should include the idea of accomplishing goals in addition to ideas related to longevity.

Hereafter, sustainability will be defined as an open educational resource project’s ongoing ability to meet its goals."

(Wiley, 2007) (emphasis added)
The question of ownership

- Collections of Open Educational Resources
- **Goal**: creating **ongoing ability** (enduring value) → sustainability

- **Ownership**: taking responsibility for creating **and sustaining** value
Sustaining value: business models

- Through public funding (Bccampus)
- Through internal funding (U. of Edinburgh, U. of Southern Queensland, UK Open University)
- Through endowments/donations (Wikipedia, OpenStax College, Khan Academy)
- By participating in an OER network (OERu, African Health OER Network)
- By offering services to learners (Khan Academy, Lumen Learning, Siyavula, OpenStax)
- By relying on OER authors (Jörn Loviscach)
- By producing OER on demand (federal textbook programme in Brazil)
- Through sponsorship/advertisement (Global Text Project)
- By offering learning-related data to companies (Hootsuite Academy)
- **Community-based model (Educred.ro, OER communities in OSGeo)**

- **Ownership beats finance**

(Tlili et al, 2020)
Community-based model

- The members of the community jointly bear the production and maintenance costs of OER, with those materials also being accessible to others outside the community.
- Variations are situations in which students also produce materials, whether or not in co-creation (Open Pedagogy).
- Non-financial incentives necessary in order to acquire and retain participation, for example recognition, the desire to see one's own material improved, efficiency through sharing the workload, etc.
- Contributions by members in various forms (engagement)
Sustainability community

Institutionalized sharing knowledge

Incubator

(Ahbel & Raub, 2002)
**Accelerate plan**
Educational innovation
with ICT
digital educational resources

**Summarized**

- **Sustainable OER-initiative**
  - Is needed for
  - Takes
  - Is type of
  - Is needed for
  - Is needed for

- **Business model**
  - Is needed for
  - Is type of

- **Ownership**
  - Is needed for

- **(Professional) community**
  - Is needed for

- **Management support**
  - Is needed for

- **Recognition**
  - Is needed for

- **Experiencing value**
  - Is needed for

- **Conditions**
  - Is needed for

- **BON/BPN**
  - Is needed for
How to translate this to a working practice

• Wikiwijs Platform
  – More than 150K interactive online lessons created (CC-BY and CC-BY-SA)
  – 6M direct visits per year
  – Plus local copies within learning environments
  – Direct links with more than 80 collections
  – Open licensed and open standard connections to all LMS platforms
Ownership within Wikiwijs communities

- Step 1: facilitate a discussion on a common definition of quality
- Step 2: a homepage “this is us and what we think is important”
  - Layer over Wikiwijs
- Make it possible to “certify” materials by a community
- Recognize and reward "creators and owners"
  - Indirectly affects management support
- Encourage ownership of metadata (for other materials as well as their own)
Colophon

References


