

A record of the OER initiatives and contributions of Wawasan Open University, Penang

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A record of the OER initiatives and contributions of Wawasan Open University (WOU), Penang by Prof. Dato' Ho Sinn Chye

According to the *UNESCO-COL Guidelines for Open Educational Resources (OER) in Higher Education* (2011), “*OER are teaching, learning, and research materials in any medium that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open license that permits their free use and, in some instances, re-purposing by others.*”

The list below provides a quick overview of OER related initiatives and contributions of Wawasan Open University (WOU) since 2010.

This content also highlights and conveys the variety of issues that requires attention and resonates all the things the *UNESCO Paris OER Declaration (2012)* requires of its Member States.

A. WOU's ADVOCACY role especially in the Asian Region

1. Presentation by Tan Sri Dato' Emeritus Prof. Dr. G. Dhanarajan entitled “A study of the creation and use of open educational resources in some parts of Asia” in the 5th Conference Learning International Networks Consortium (LINC) 2010 – University Leadership: Bringing Technology-Enabled Education to Learners of All Ages, in MIT, USA, May 2010.
2. Presentation by Tan Sri G. Dhanarajan on “Capacity Building in Digitizing Materials – Distance Education, Open Educational Resources and Reusable Learning Objects”, in Workshop on Open Educational Resources – Capacity Building, in Hanoi, Vietnam, June 2010.
3. Presentation by Tan Sri G. Dhanarajan entitled “A Study of the Potential Application of OER in the Mongolian Educational System” at the National Seminar on Open Educational Resources in Ullanbaatar, Mongolia, September 2010.
4. Presentation by Tan Sri G. Dhanarajan entitled “Sustaining OER – Lessons from Distance Education” in ICDE “Open Education Conference 2010: Impact & Sustainability” at Barcelona, Spain, November 2010.
5. Presentation by Tan Sri G. Dhanarajan on “OER: What does it mean to Open Learning in Higher Education”, in Conference on Open Paradigms in Education [OPEN], New Delhi, India, February 2011.



6. Presentation on the IDRC funded OERAsia project during the post conference Commonwealth of Learning (COL) workshop (October 2011).
7. Plenary presentation by Tan Sri G. Dhanarajan on “OER in a Global World – OER in Asia: The Gap between Aspirations and Practice”, in 24th ICDE World Conference on Open Distance Learning, in Bali, Indonesia (October 2011).
8. Two Plenary presentations by Prof. Mohandas Menon at the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education (IITE) International Conference on *"Teacher Competencies in Knowledge Society: Policy, Pedagogy, Social Skills"* in Baku, Azerbaijan, December 1-2, 2011.
9. Presentation by Tan Sri G. Dhanarajan on “OER in Asia: A snapshot” in OUJ-Globe International Seminar, Tokyo, Japan, February 2012.
10. Presentation by Tan Sri G. Dhanarajan on “Openness: What it should mean in Asia today” in International Conference on Open & Distance e-Learning (IC ODEL 2012), in Manila, Philippines, February 2012.
11. Keynote address by Mr. Ishan Abeywardena (co-authored by Tan Sri G. Dhanarajan) at the UNESCO-COL OER Regional Policy Forum on OER (April 2012, Thailand) leading up to the world OER congress (June 2012, Paris). Details can be found in the report:

http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/CI_InformationMeetings/WOERC%20-%20BANGKOK%20REPORT%20-%20ENGL.pdf.

The report of the keynote address can be found at:

<http://www.unescobkk.org/education/ict/online-resources/databases/ict-in-education-database/item/article/oer-in-asia-trends-and-issues/> .

12. Both Mr. Ishan Abeywardena and Tan Sri G. Dhanarajan spoke at the OER Symposium in Hong Kong in April 2012 (see <http://oer.ouhk.edu.hk/2012.php>).
13. Plenary presentation on “OER for Teacher Development - Case Studies” by Prof. Mohandas Menon (WOU) in the World Bank sponsored International Conference on Use of ICT and ODL in Teacher Education, June 13-15, 2012 in Patna, India.
14. Consultancy report authored by Ishan Abeywardena (WOU) and published by COL (May 2012) on “Re-Use and Adaptation of Open Educational Resources (OER): An Exploration of Technologies Available”. The URL link is shown below.

<http://www.col.org/resources/publications/Pages/detail.aspx?PID=411>)



15. Mr. Ishan Abeywardena delivered a guest lecture at Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University (STOU), Thailand in June 2012.

[The lecture was attended by Vice Presidents (operations and international affairs), Directors of ITS / Library Services / Educational Technology and Deans of Academic Schools. The focus of the guest lecture was on how to effectively utilise and integrate OER into the course development process of the University. Mr. Ishan also demonstrated how the *Course Development Tracking Systems (CDTS)* developed at WOU can be used for this purpose.]

B. WOU's RESEARCH in the field of OER

1. The Institute of Research and Innovation [IRI] of WOU is committed to exploring innovations in teaching and learning especially in the new technology enabled and enriched environment. The IRI was launched in mid 2010 and presently mobilizing funds to support its mission as well as develop a network of Asian researchers studying OER and OCW development in the Asian Region.

IRI's interest in OER covers five areas. These are:

- OER advocacy in the Asian Region
 - Open Textbooks
 - OER Engines
 - OER Architecture
 - OER Sustainability Mode
2. On-going project on the Development of the OERScout Artificial Intelligence Based Search Engine by Ishan Abetwardena. The ultimate aim is to search and accurately cluster HTML based OER materials by building a Keyword-Document Matrix (KDM) using autonomously identified domain specific keywords.
 3. IDRC-CRDI funded project on "A study of the current state of play in the use of Open Educational Resources in the Asian Region" (visit OERAsia website for details).

C. WOU's TRAINING EFFORTS IN THE FIELD

1. Workshop on "Capacity Building in Digitizing Materials –Distance Education, OER & Reusable Learning Objects in June 2010



2. Workshop on OER – Capacity Building Workshop “ Capacity Building in Digitizing Materials – Distance Education, OER & Reusable Learning Objects” in Hanoi, Vietnam in June 2010
3. OERAsia Workshop #1 held in Hanoi involving collaborators from 10 Asian Open and Distance learning (ODL) universities (September 2010).
4. Pre-conference workshop on OER held at the 24th AAOU conference in Hanoi (September 2010).
5. OER seminar for WOU staff conducted by the Institutue of Research and Innovation (IRI) of WOU (November 2010).
6. Seminar on Open Textbooks presented by the Vietnam Foundation hosted by IRI-WOU (January 2011).
7. Regional OER Workshop conducted by Dr. David Porter (Canada), Prof. Wayne MacKintosh (New Zealand) and Dr. V. Balaji (India) hosted by WOU (May 2011).
8. OERAsia Workshop #2 held in Penang with collaborators from 10 Asian ODL universities (April 2011).
9. Town hall meeting and training session on OER conducted for WOU staff in accordance with the OER implementation roadmap of WOU (March 2012).
10. Training workshop on “OER Creation and Use” for WOU staff (April 2012).
11. The OERAsia workshop held in OUHK (held in April 2012; OERAsia BOA announced <http://www.oerasia.org/board-of-advisers>)
12. Mr. Ishan Abeywardena served on executive secondment at the COL, Vancouver for three weeks in May 2012. The details of his work can be found in the attached report.
13. Dr. David Murphy (Monash University, Australia) designed and facilitated an in-house OER integrated ODL training for relevant WOU staff in June 2012.

D. WOU’s use of INTERNET TECHNOLOGY in promoting OER

16. The OERAsia.org website (<http://www.oerasia.org>) was created and launched by WOU in June 2011.



17. Launching of the OER Training Toolkit by WOU on OERAsia.org <http://www.oerasia.org/oer-workshop> (June 2011).

[The assembly and presentation of workshop materials were sponsored by the International Development Research Centre of Canada (IDRC - CRDI) and were produced by Wawasan Open University (Malaysia). The materials were first used at a training workshop at Hanoi Open University in June 2010. This web site provides access to a revised and updated version of the workshop materials.]

18. WOU-OER Online Repository has been created to archive and at the same time showcase WOU-OER materials.

E. WOU's POLICY efforts in promoting the use of OER

1. Prof. Mohandas Menon represented WOU at the UNESCO-COL OER Regional Policy Forum on OER in April 2012.
2. WOU's **OER Policy** has been approved by Senate in June 2012 and is now steering OER related activities in the university as per its OER roadmap.
3. WOU's **Policy on Open Licence** has been crafted and is in the final stage of refinement.
4. The OER-Steering Committee has been formally established in WOU. The Committee meets once a month to discuss matters related to OER based course development roadmap and tracking, archiving of OER materials, staff training in the use of OER, setting of OER research priorities and so on.

F. WOU's efforts in Course Content Development and Reuse of OER

1. The presentation (delivery) of two university courses developed using OER materials to students of WOU:
 - TCC242/05 *Web Database Application* (in the January 2012 semester);
 - EED502/05 *ICT in Education* (in this July 2012 semester).

G. WOU's PUBLICATIONS on OER

1. The following is an ISI indexed publication:



Abeywardena, I.S., Raviraja, R., & Tham, C.Y. (2012). Conceptual Framework for Parametrically Measuring the Desirability of Open Educational Resources using D-index. International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning, 13(2), 104-121.

2. The **OERAsia** book to be published (in December 2012, tentatively).

H. Forth coming events/activities

1. A Regional Symposium on Open Educational Resources: An Asian Perspective on Policies and practices will be held in WOU, Penang on 19-21 September 2012 (visit <http://www.oerasia.org/oersymposium> for details).
2. Key-note address to be given by Prof. Mohandas Menon (WOU) on 'OER in a Multi-Cultural Society' in the International Seminar on Ethnicity, Identity and Literature (ISEL) scheduled for 11-14 October 2012 in Shibsagar, Assam, India.
3. IDRC funded research into Free and/or Open Educational Resources for Higher Education in the Global South (RFOER4HEGS). The first roundtable meeting will be held in Jakarta, Indonesia in October 2012.
4. A pre-Symposium workshop on 'Designing Learning in an OER Environment' is being organized by WOU in September 2012.
5. Proposed WOU-CEMCA (COL) Project on Capacity Building Workshops and Course Development in OER during 2012-13 to be initiated in October 2012.

END

