

Skills for Prosperity Kenya: Adapting OER for More Sustainable Online Course Development

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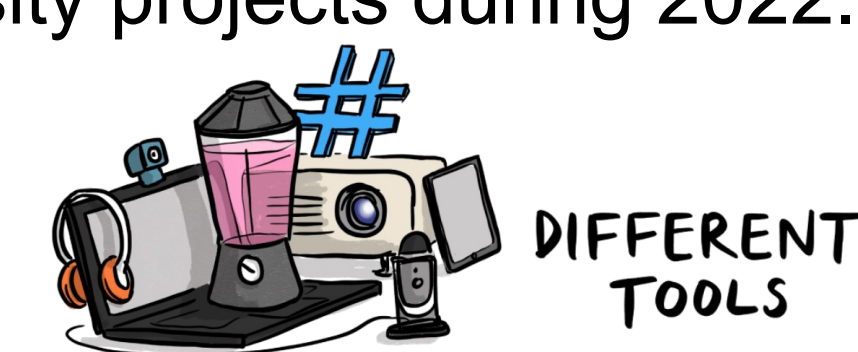
Introduction

As with many universities around the world, in Kenya the Covid-19 pandemic necessitated a move to what is often described as “emergency remote teaching” rather than a planned response and strategic shift to teaching and learning online (see e.g. Bozkurt et al, 2020). In Kenya, the move to emergency remote teaching began with the closure of educational institutions, including universities. In addition to the challenge of moving from face-to-face to online teaching, specific challenges for Kenyan learners and educators that were highlighted particularly during this early period of the pandemic include connectivity, digital literacy, power supply and access to internet enabled devices and wi-fi when outside of the campus setting (see Pete & Soku (2020) and Omwenga (2022)). The Kenyan government has therefore prioritised the development of HE sector expertise in designing and delivering digital education (online and blended) and The Open University (UK) is supporting the government to close the gap in required expertise.

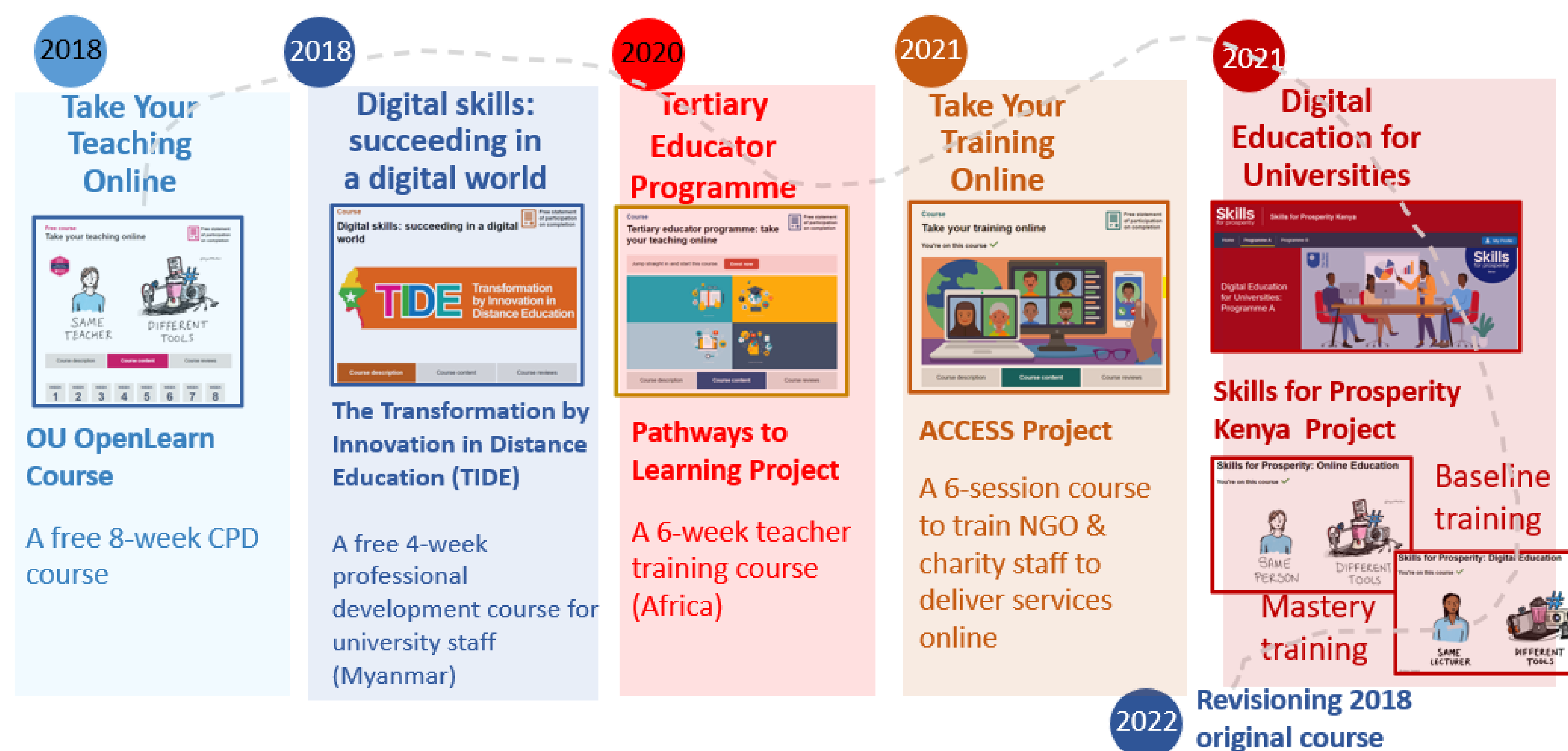
Skills for Prosperity Kenya (SFPK)

The SFPK is a 30-month FCDO-funded nationwide capacity development programme to build Kenyan HE sector expertise in digital education. As a part of this programme, The Open University is working with Higher Education Institutions in Kenya to improve digital education in HEIs across the country. The SFPK programme has adapted existing open educational resources to enable:

- 254 educators, managers and support staff from 29 public universities to participate in Online Education in 2021
- 80 staff from 8 public universities to currently participate in a digital education programme including an online course Digital Education, webinars and mentored university projects during 2022.



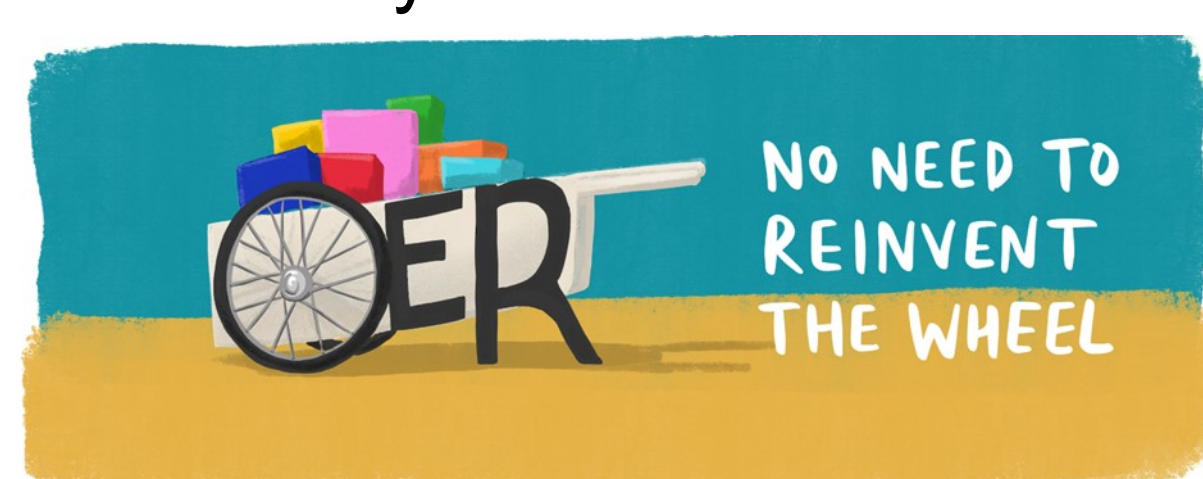
Which Open Educational Resources? The journey....



SFPK used a wide variety of OER, developed around the world. One was fundamental to its structure: ‘[Take Your Teaching Online](#)’, a badged open course from The Open University, hosted on the OpenLearn platform, and available as CC BY-NC-SA 4.0. This OER course covers understanding digital tools, selecting technologies, developing support networks, accessibility in online teaching, and evaluating change and is reused and repurposed since 2018 for several training and capacity building projects as illustrated in the above figure.

Remixing and repurposing process

- Conducted needs assessment** based on JISC Digital Capabilities Framework to identify staff skill and knowledge gaps.
- Defined learning outcomes** based on the needs assessment outcomes.
- Identified gaps in content and the required additional content** through co-design workshops with staff.
- Created additional required content** in forms of:
 - self-study online content,
 - expert webinars,
 - an online community of practice for discussions and
 - regular mentoring sessions for practical activities and projects
- Localised and contextualised the course** by:
 - adopting the language and activities to be relevant to educators and non-educators
 - replacing most images to be more context representative
 - creating new illustrations for the course through liaising with participants
 - co-designing practical university projects as practical elements of the course
 - using a distributed award system



Making the programme accessible and inclusive

The programme ran during the pandemic; several delivery considerations were therefore critical: flexible scheduling, retention challenges, Internet access, learners’ limited experience of online study, and inclusion /accessibility. These were addressed by the OU supported learning open approach and:

- Asynchronous, self-paced delivery mode with flexible scheduling
- Downloadable content in multiple formats
- Accessible content via accessible platform
- Adapting and contextualising the course activities and language
- Distributed award system of digital badges and certificate of completion
- An online community of practice
- Learning, technical and administrative support
- Mentoring sessions, expert webinars, practical and online skills workshops

Impact videos

impact vignette

