A comprehensive study of issue labeling in GitHub repositories

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Ficha do trabalho*

| Título | ISSUE LABELING IN GITHUB REPOSITORIES |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|
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| Bolsista? | Sim |

Introduction

The open-source initiative evolves both at the community, and

the software levels (K. Nakakoji et al.)



Introduction

The project repositories should encompass an infrastructure capable of:

- hosting the source code
- enabling its users (developers, testers, etc.) to provide information about the identified issues

Enabling issue reporting



Users could follow the issue life-cycle process.

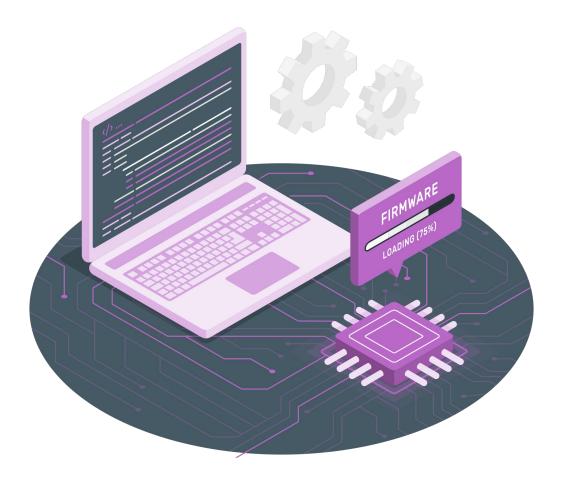


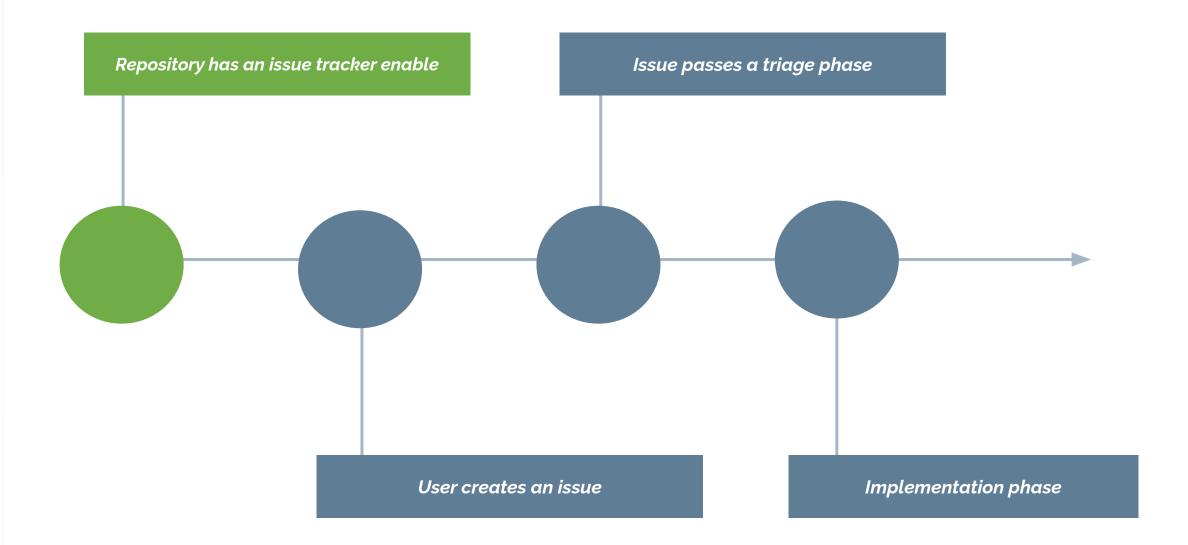
Crucial element for project management

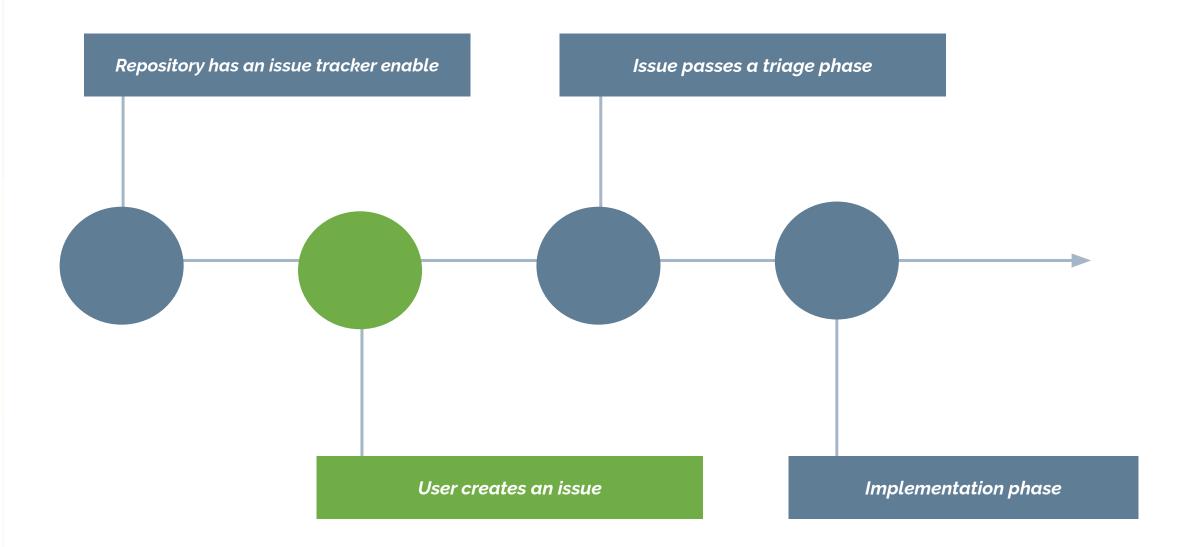


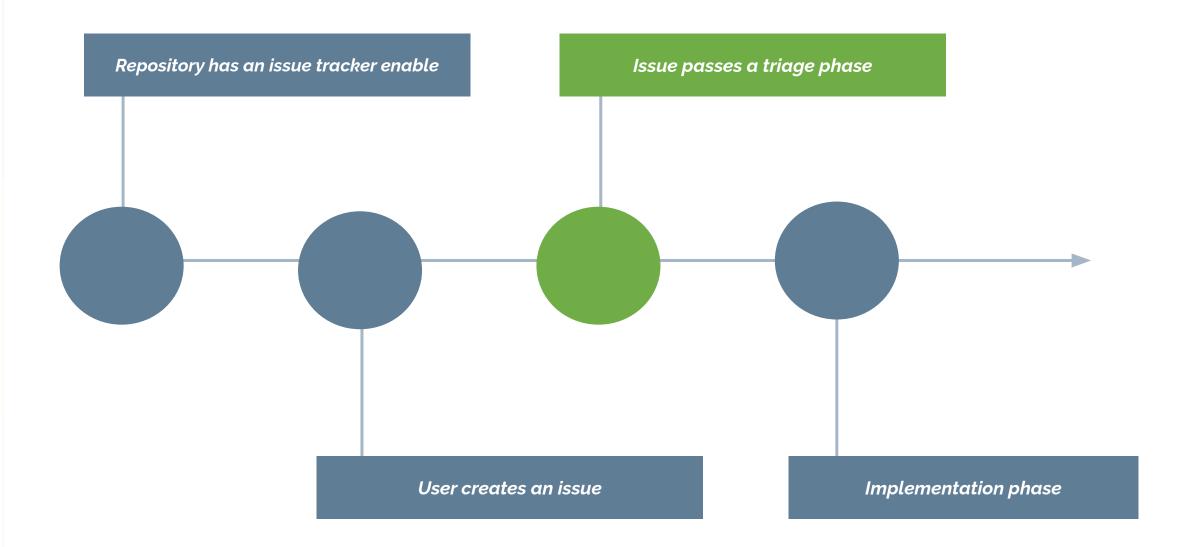
Essential for software maintenance and evolution

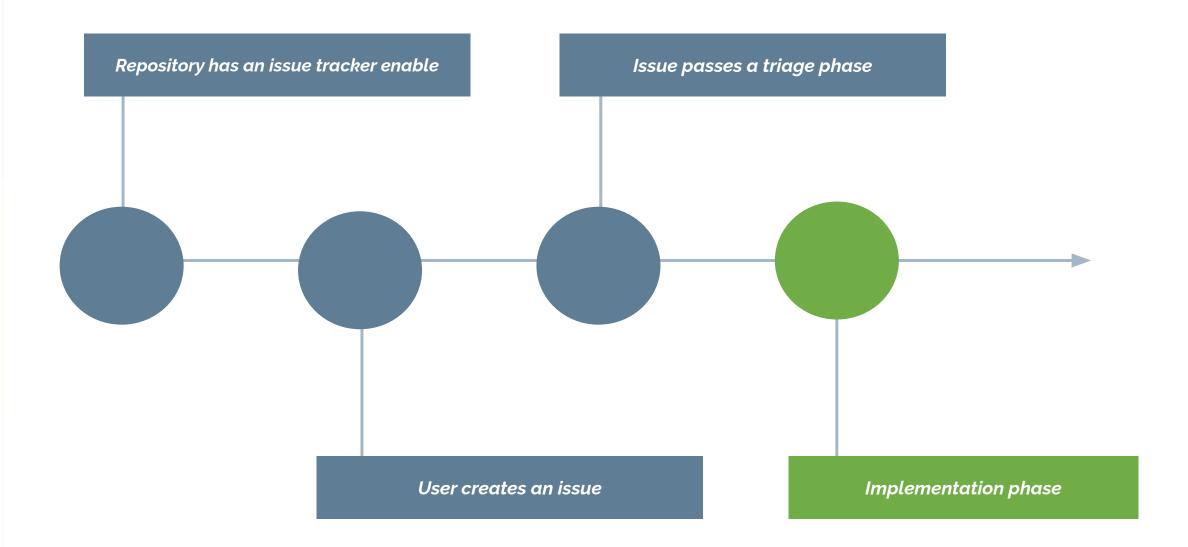
(T. Koponen et al.)

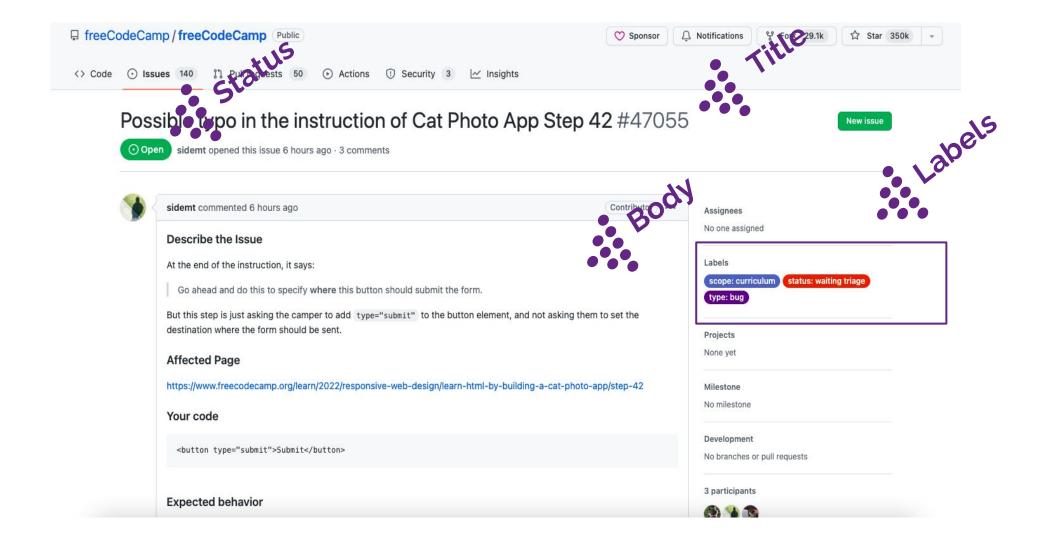












Problem

The issue should include high-quality information

Help developers understand the cause of the reported problem

Problem

An **incomplete** issue **report** is a rather **severe problem** a developer could come across in software projects

(N. Bettenburg et al., 2008) (J. Aranda and G. Venolia, 2009) (N. Bettenburg et al., 2007)

In addition to using the issue structure information of title and description



Repositories **enabled** the **usage** of **labels** to **incorporate** more contextual **information** to the issue

Labels creation

Standard labels X Custom labels

| Label | Description | |
|------------------|---|--|
| bug | Something isn't working. | |
| documentation | Improvements or additions to documentation. | |
| duplicate | This issue or pull requet already exists. | |
| enchancement | New feature or request. | |
| good first issue | Good for newcomers. | |
| help wanted | Extra attention is needed. | |
| invalid | This doesn't seem right. | |
| question | Further information is requested. | |
| wontfix | This will not be worked on. | |

Table 1 GitHub default labels.

Labels creation

Standard labels X Custom labels

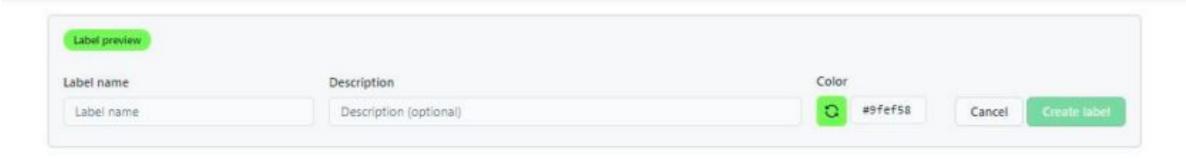


Fig. 2 The GitHub label creation form.

The main contribution has already been achieved.

- 1. A database of 10,673,459 issues of the 180 GitHub featured topics from 13,280 repositories.
- 2. A study about issue labeling with a focus on the maintainability and evolution processes
- 3. A curated list of labels related to triage, life cycle, and defect detection processes
- 4. A list of label creation trends from the most featured repositories

Research objectives (Objetivo(s) da pesquisa*)

The **impacts** of **labels related** to the **maintainability** and **evolution** of **GitHub** issue trackers

RQ1: How often developers use labels in their open-source repositories?

RQ2: Are there occurrences of labels to assist developers in evolution and maintenance activities of triage, issue life cycle?

RQ3: Can the triage time be derived? from the labeling of practice-related labels?

Preliminary results

RQ1: How often developers use labels in their open-source repositories?

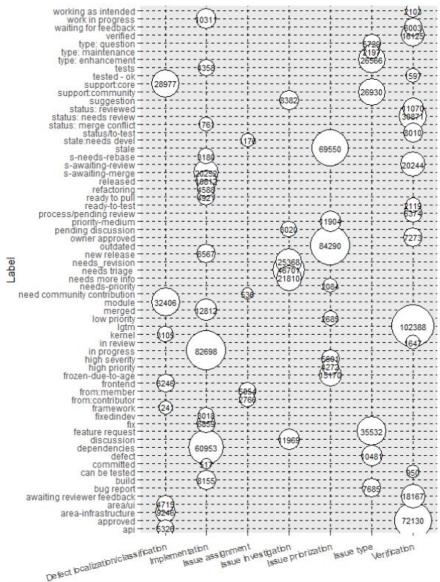
We observed that 10,458 (78,75%) labeled their issues, while 2,822 (21,25%) did not label any issues

66,48% (10,127,463 subscribers) in labeled issues and 33.52% (5,106,845 subscribers) of unlabeled issues

81.72% (1,736,294 assigns) in labeled issue and 18.27% (388,224 assigns) in unlabeled issues.

Preliminary results (Resultados parciais)*

RQ2: Can we define the triage phase from the labeling practice?



Preliminary results (Resultados parciais)*

RQ3: Can the triage time be derived from the labeling of practice-related labels?

Labeling time is concentrated in a shorter time of days

The vast majority of the triage performed by the labels takes little time:

From 1 to 100 days to complete.

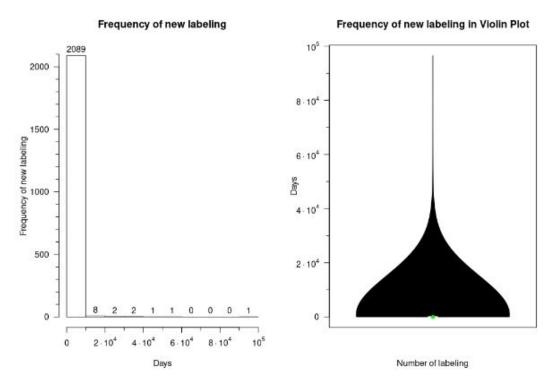


Fig. 15 Histogram and Violin Plot of labeling frequency versus days with no outliers

Future work (Estágio atual*)

Time between two labeling events

To what extent labels and issues components (tittle, body and comments) are related in terms of context and meaning in the issue conversation?

Automated labeling

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