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Diso, Lukman I

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Bayero University
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JSTOR DIGITIZATION PROJECT IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES: POLICY ISSUES IN BUILDING AND SUSTAINING DIGITAL COLLECTIONS

LUKMAN I. DISO

BAYERO UNIVERSITY, PMB 3011, KANO, NIGERIA

lidisoq01@yahoo.com

GSM: +234 (0) 8037053413

Introduction

- ITHAKA (JSTOR) initiated a pilot digitization project in 2010, collaborating with two Nigerian universities, Bayero University, Kano (BUK) and University of Ibadan (UI).
- The collaboration involves the establishment of a digital lab in each of the university libraries.

- The sequence of the project involves basically three phases:
  - Planning: strategic meetings, signing of MOU and training
  - Selection and assessment of materials, infrastructure, provision of equipment and hardware, and generation of metadata.
  - Follow-up by Decopod, publishing digital output at institutions, project evaluation, writing preliminary report and submission of final report.

- December 2011 or before was the expected date of completion with costs not exceeding $4050 to be borne by ITHAKA.
- Both institutions have selected materials and commenced digitization with progress at different rates.

- Both are well behind schedule.

BUK's completion target for metadata generation was February end 2013.UI's completion target was June 2013.

- What follows after the completion will be guided by the MOU.
- This paper aims to examine :
  - The objectives of this project as articulated in the MOU
  - The generation and management of “the selected materials”.
  - The technology system deployed to execute the project
  - The policy issues
  - The institutional capacity building potential of the project .

The objective and Key elements of the Project

- The general objective of the project according ITHAKA was:
  - To conduct a pilot digitization project at BUK and UI
  - To make these materials available online for the scholarly community in Africa and worldwide.
  - To enable the libraries digitize and provide metadata for the selected materials.

- The key element is the MOU that constitutes the understanding of the terms agreed to by the parties.
- The MOU defines the purpose of the project, rights and obligations of the parties involved, in terms of:
  - Selection of materials
  - Standard for creating metadata (Dublin Core)
  - Use of guidelines for quality and fidelity

- Conditions for establishing the digital lab
- Limit to responsibility for staff salaries
- Custody of digital materials.
- Use, reproduction and distribution of materials (by ITHAKA).
- Ownership of copyright interest in selected and digital materials.
- Conditions and terms of use of such materials with copyrights .

- Grant of non-exclusive, worldwide, perpetual, royalty-free license to ITHAKA:
  - To create, archive, distribute the digital material to authorized users of JSTOR for non-profit educational purposes.
  - To make copies for protection against data loss.
  - To modify/adapt digital material without content/context change only as necessary for translation, preservation, delivery technologies.

- These issues constitute the terms of the MOU signed by the parties involved.
- Two implicit assumptions in the MOU
  - No violation of, or non-compliance with, any terms of the MOU
  - Nothing would warrant any need for amendment to, or review of, the MOU.
  - Relationship based on mutual respect/trust.
  - MOU does not make provision for violation, nor for expansion of its scope.

Generation & management of selected materials

- Each institution's library was:
  - To select materials to be digitized based on historical or cultural significance.
  - To create metadata in a spreadsheet for each batch of documents
- BUK selected works mostly written as a result of Sokoto (Fulani) Jihad (1804-1810).

- The works, mostly written in Arabic, were on various subjects including:
  - Religious sciences
  - Jurisprudence
  - Politics
  - Economics
  - Philosophy
  - Poetry, etc.

- The selection decision in the UI was based on materials from:
  - Influential individuals, prominent historical figures in the nationalist movement, mostly from the south-west.
  - Old UI's Journals, letters, books dating back to 1950s.
- In both cases:
  - many of the materials were fragile and brittle
  - had to be preserved/treated before digitization.

- In both cases, staff were designated:
  - Project managers
  - Content experts
  - Translators (Arabic to English) in BUK.
  - System staff
  - System Librarians

The digital laboratory Technology system

- The wisdom in establishing the two labs.
  - BUK to serve Northern Nigeria
  - UI to serve Southern Nigeria
- Requirements to set up the labs:
  - Clean and safe space
  - Access to electricity

- The Decapod technology deployed was:
  - “Extremely cost-effective”(Decapod)
  - Capable of producing a paper- to-digital document solution
  - Highly automated
  - Of low operator interaction (apart from page turning)

- Problems areas it addresses:
  - Allows camera based capture of bound materials to produce flat, clean page images (as flat bed scanner)
  - No need for extensive operator interaction in the capture process
  - Reduced user intervention in the conversion process.
  - PDF/A outputs visually faithful to original, searchable & widely usable.
  - Allows viewable output on mobile devices with PDF reflow support.
  - No need for deep software, hardware or digitization skills

- No capital cost barriers – consumer grade cameras
- Reduced operational cost barriers operated with minimal training/commitment.

- BUK had no existing digitization project.
- UI had MacArthur-funded project with 100,000 pages already scanned.

- Both libraries made provision for the digital lab.
  - Power sources – off the national grid
  - Alternative: inverters, UPS, diesel generators, solar panel arrays.
- Delivery and set up of equipment
- Hardware scanning rig.
  - Standard tripod
  - Consumer digital camera (12 megapixels, 300 dpi gray scale)

- Work flow software (3-step) drives the application software
  - Capturing
  - Software editing
  - Generating PDF
- Equipment application
  - The two libraries have digitized their selected materials
  - They have made progress in generating metadata

Policy issues & institutional Capacity Building

- The project's vision
  - Immediate/short-term: digitization of selected materials
  - Long-term: unlimited digitization expansion.
- Dimensions of Long-term expansion
  - Internal dimensions
  - External dimensions

- Policy Issues to take the same dimensions:
  - Define the internal dimensions
    - New management challenges – sustainability (funding , etc).
    - Internally digitizable materials
    - Equipment maintenance
    - Service delivery
  - Define the external dimensions
    - How to extend the Labs capabilities
    - What institutions, organizations – public , private?

- Under what conditions, terms
- Types of materials to be involved, etc.

- Possible institutions to direct policy instrument
  - History and culture bureaus
  - Archives and Museums
  - Health institutions
  - Research institutions
  - Universities, other learning institutions (federal, State, Private)

- Government Ministries, departments and Agencies
- Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
- Organized Private sector.
- Entertainment Industry (Film, Video and Music Producing bodies)
- Publishing Industry
- Electronic Media.
- The list may not be exhaustive – each Lab sets its Limit

- Details and Specifics of relationship are articulated:
  - On bilateral, case-by-case basis.
  - Within the context of general policy frameworks of each Lab.
- Development of “Action Instruments” for implementation
  - Information gathering about the institu tions/ organizations
  - Information, analysis
  - Consultation

- Practical need for mechanisms – an institutional committee each:
  - To address implementation
    - Set clear goals/Objectives based on JSTOR's Objectives
    - Draw up strategies to achieve the objectives
- Committees' terms of reference:
  - Identification of Key issues/problems in the Policy environs – institutions, digitization needs, etc.
  - Policy formulation with clear vision, goals, objectives, & strategies for implementation

- Policy implementation – MOU (where applicable).
- Policy analysis, Monitoring & review.

- Faithful policy implementation will ensure institutional digital capacity building and sustenance & expansion.

Conclusion

- JSTOR's initiatives, supported by MacArthur Foundation had a vision.
  - Short-term to achieve digital capacity in the two institutions.
  - Long-term to achieve digital capacity in Nigeria and beyond.
- Articulated Policy is one best way to ensure sustainability & expansion of the Project.

Thank you!