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# IR and OA Initiatives in Africa

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# IR and OA Initiatives in Africa

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# IR and Open Access Initiatives in Africa

- Early IR and OA initiatives in Africa began in 1998, before the term OA was current.
- Rhodes University (RU) in South Africa mounted its first digital thesis on the World Wide Web in 1998; it became the first institution in Africa to do so. Other grey literature also gathered.
- RU, like many institutions in South Africa, has developed an OA repository, using EPrint software, containing other digital knowledge products.
- The Database of African Theses and Dissertations (DATAD) programme of the Association of African Universities (AAU), which was designed to improve management and access to African scholarly work, was a precursor to the development of OA repositories by institutions which participated in the programme.

# OA advocacy initiatives in Africa (1)

UNESCO Sponsored ETD workshops:

- South Africa (University of the Witwatersrand) in 2003;
- Ethiopia (Addis Ababa University) in 2004;
- In both countries, decision was made to establish national ETD projects;
- In South Africa, a National ETD Project is driven by the Committee of Higher Education Librarians of South Africa (CHELSA) and sponsored by the National Research Foundation (NRF).

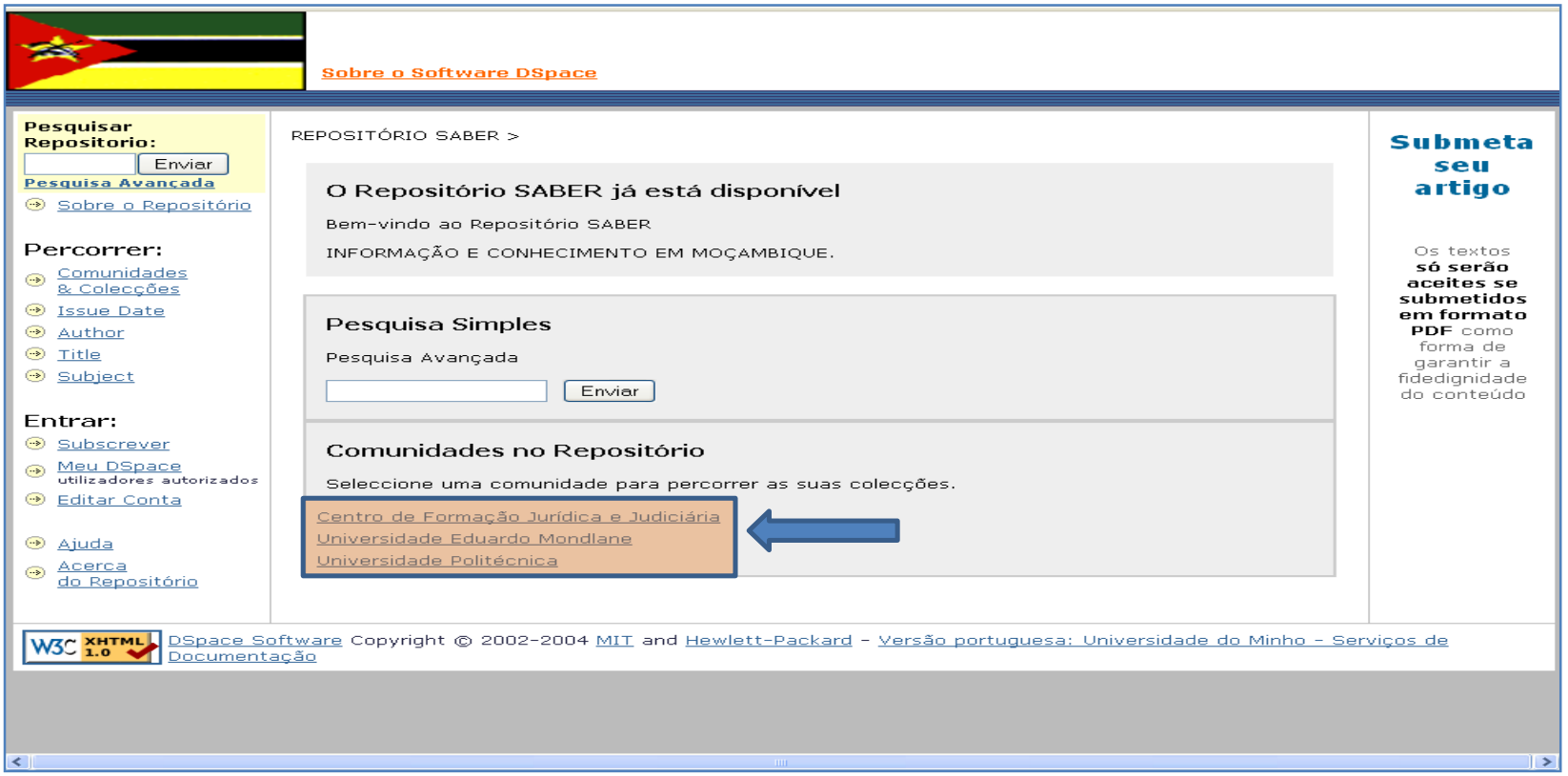
# OA advocacy initiatives in Africa (2)

- In 2007 SARUA organised the Open Access Leadership Summit in Botswana.
- Greenstone training workshops have been held in Namibia, Malawi, Zimbabwe, and Lesotho.
- In Nigeria, an open access working group has been created.
- Universidade Politécnica library in Mozambique has set up a national shared repository for three Mozambican universities.
- The Kenya Libraries and Information Services Consortium organised a digital repositories workshop to raise awareness about open access institutional repositories.
- In South Africa, the National Research Foundation, using DSpace, has set up a national repository for the institutions that have not been able to do so.
- In March 2009, the DATAD Programme organised an International Institutional Repository Advocacy Seminar.

# Collaboration/Partnership

- Institutions are beginning to collaborate to develop IRs.
- Notable that two collaborative projects now exist in Mozambique and South Africa though, at the time of writing, they are not yet available to the public.
- Such collaboration has the potential to speed up the development of IRs in Africa, and this is an approach that could be adopted in the continent, given the financial constraints of most of the countries. (The GDP per capita of many countries ranges from US$175 – US$910).

# Example of Institutional Repository Collaboration between Universities – Mozambique

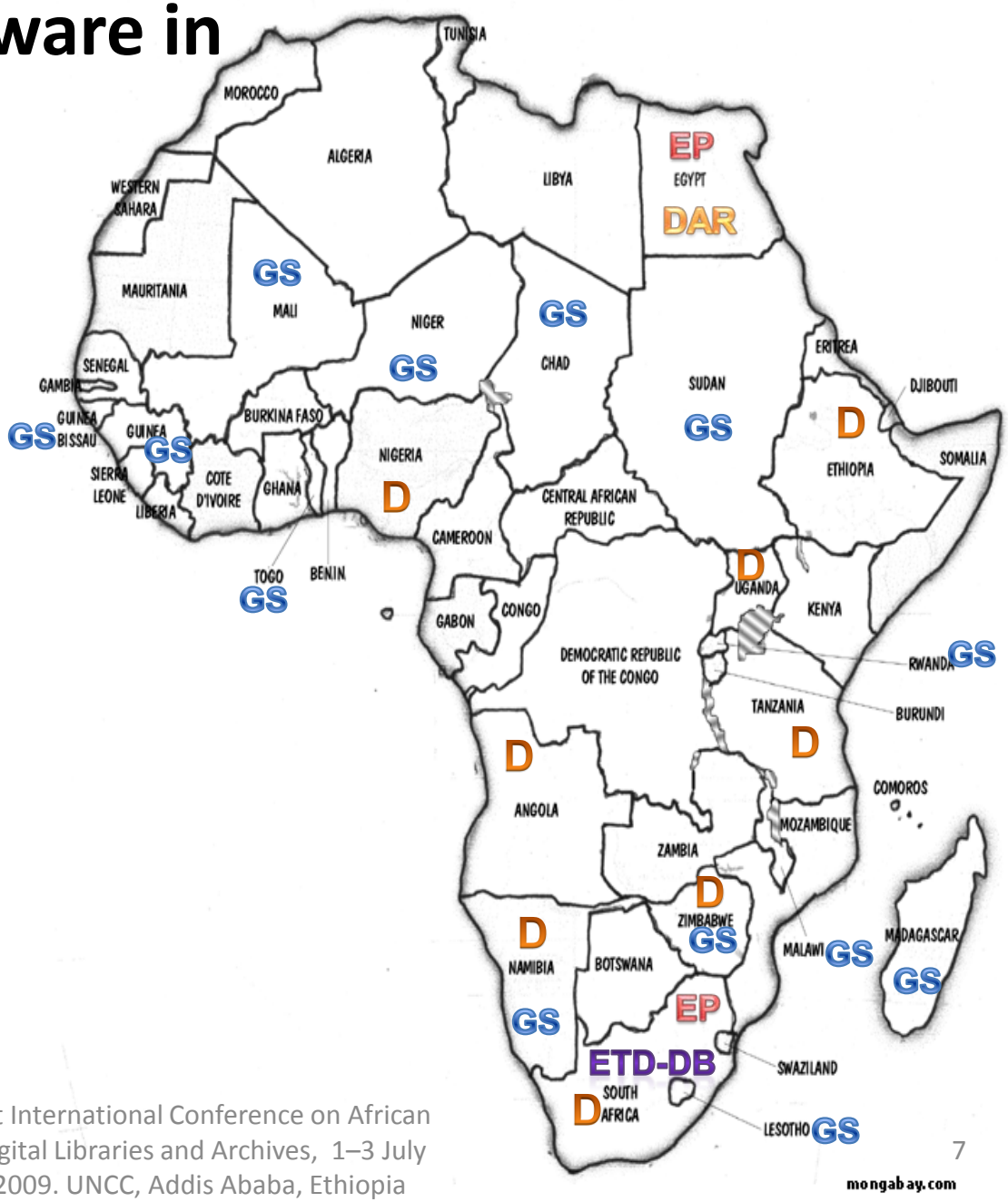



- **Centro de Formação Jurídica e Judiciária**
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**Link to the website - http://196.3.97.216:8080/jspui/**

# Open Access Software in Africa

| | |
|---|---|
| D | DSPACE |
| EP | EPrints |
| GS | Greenstone & Winisis |
| ETD-DB | ETD-DB |
| DAR | Digital Asset Rep. |



# Discoverability of IRs

- A search on *OpenDOAR*, an authoritative directory of open access repositories around the world, only retrieves eight countries as having discoverable institutional repositories in Africa.
- This confirms a general observation that sub-Saharan African research is not readily accessible to institutions in the continent.
- It is important that institutions register their IRs on discovery tools / directories such OpenDOAR, OAIster, and DRIVER in order for the resources on them to be discovered.

# OPENDOAR

## AFRICA

Cape Verde | Egypt | Ethiopia | Kenya | Namibia | South Africa | Uganda | Zimbabwe

## Cape Verde

- **Universidade Jean Piaget de Cabo Verde** - http://www.unipiaget.cv/

  ***Biblioteca Digital da Universidade Jean Piaget de Cabo Verde***

  http://bdigital.cv.unipiaget.org/dspace/

## Egypt

- **Bibliotheca Alexandrina ( ) -** http://www.bibalex.org/

  ***Digital Assets Repository (DAR)***

  http://dar.bibalex.org/

- **British University in Egypt -** http://www.bue.edu.eg/

  ***The BUE e-print repository***

  http://e-prints.bue.edu.eg/

## Ethiopia

- **Addis Ababa University -** http://www.aau.edu.et/

  ***AAU-ETD (Addis Ababa University Libraries Electronic Thesis and Dissertations Database)***

  http://etd.aau.edu.et/dspace

## Kenya

# Recommendations (1)

A few key recommendations from the Association of African Universities (AAU) Advocacy for Institutional Repositories seminar, are worth stating:

**Policy**

- There must be strong documented institutional policies to support the establishment and maintenance of the IR.

**Advocacy**

- Stakeholders in an IR - Heads of Institutions and administrators, relevant committees, faculty and researchers, library personnel, IT Department and personnel, students, users – must be sensitised to its importance from the start and continuous advocacy carried out to sustain interest, especially because of high turnover of staff and students.
- Libraries and academia should work together to ensure well populated IRs with high quality content.

# Recommendations (2)

## Government

- Government through institutions should make available funding for infrastructure and facilities and to build the capacity of personnel to establish and run IRs successfully.

## IR Software

- To ensure a community of users to support each other, a common IR software should be considered for members of a consortium.

## Copyright

- Institutions should have a Copyright Policy and provide a tool kit/ guidelines for authors concerning archiving of their papers in the IR.

# Factors adversely impacting the development of OA repositories

- Lack of a champion (preferably in the library).
- University policy environments.
- Institutional capacities.
- Technical capacities.
- Funding.

# Conclusion

- General awareness among many universities in Africa of the need to develop OA institutional repositories to provide access to the knowledge generated in the institution.
- Many are now requesting students to submit digital copies of their TDs.
- Pace of developments remains slow but could be accelerated through collaborative initiatives such as partnerships and twinning between institutions.
- An institutional champion is a MUST (preferably in the library).

Thank you