NetDiploma Workshop 4: KNADS, Nairobi, Kenya

Date: 4th and 5th September 2019

Venue: KNADS, Nairobi, Kenya

A two-day workshop was held at the Kenya National Archives and Documentation Services (KNADS) in Nairobi, Kenya on 4th and 5th September 2019. The workshop was attended by 31 people from a variety of organisations in Kenya and members of the project team (see the table below).

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

NO.	NAME OF PARTICIPANT	ORGANISATION
1.	Francis Mwangi	KNADS
2.	Richard Wato	KNADS
3.	Naftal Chweya	KNADS
4.	Professor Gobinda Chowdhury	Northumbria University
5.	Dr. Paul Lihoma	Malawi National Archives
6.	Dr. Solomon Teferra Abate	Addis Ababa University
7.	Julius Mwahunga	Kenya National Commission for UNESCO (KNATCOM)
8.	Esther Munga	Cabinet Office, Kenyan Government
9.	Henry Nyabuto	KNADS
10.	Collins Mutimba	Kenya Association of Records Managers and Archivists (KARMA)
11.	Dorothy Kuru	KNADS
12.	Teddy Onyango	Kenya Association of Records Managers and Archivists (KARMA)
13.	Henry Ndungu	Office of the President (OP), Kenyan Government
14.	Victor Kabata	KNADS
15.	Anthony Muiruri	KNADS
16.	Mary Musau	KNADS
17.	Sarah Mbuthia	KNADS
18.	Joyce Wandia	Commission on Administrative Justice (CAJ), Kenyan Government
19.	Emily Ndungi	Kitui County Government
20.	John Munyifu	Kenya Association of Records Managers and Archivists (KARMA)
21.	Baron Silas	KNADS
22.	Margaret Ochari	KNADS
23.	Marcella Bosiburi	KNADS
24.	Johnson Wachira	Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD)
25.	Peter Njoroge	Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD)
26.	Lawrence Monda	National Museums of Kenya (NMK)
27.	Dorothy Kuru	KNADS
28.	Abdi Shisia	KNADS
29.	Mary Mugwe	KNADS
30.	Tabitha Kathini	KNADS
31.	Peterson Kithuka	KNADS

Members of the project team – PI Chowdhury and Co-Is from the partner countries, viz. Co-I Lihoma, (Malawi), Co-I Wato (Kenya) and Co-I Abate (Ethiopia) were present in the event. Member of the Kenya National Steering Committee and Director of the Kenya National Archives and Documentation Services (KNADS) hosted the event and took active part in the discussions on both days. Other members of the National Steering Committee, for example, from the National Commission for UNESCO in Kenya, and Kenyan government ministries/departments were also present and took active part in the workshops and discussions.

Day 1 (Wednesday 4th September) began with a welcome address by the country Co-I Mr. Richard Wato followed by a welcome address by the host Mr. Francis Mwangi, Director of KNADS who highlighted the importance of the NetDipoma project for digital access to government and indigenous information in general, and for KNADS in particular. He pointed out that like many other African countries, Kenyan government is moving fast towards the use of ICT and mobile technologies to facilitate banking, government services and businesses in Kenya.

Presentations

1. In his presentation Prof. Gobinda Chowdhury, PI of the NetDiploma project, explained the key objectives of the project, activities and achievements so far. He outlined the key objective and plan for the workshop which was to explore and understand the key cultural, human, governance and management challenges facing memory institutions in Africa for digital information management and access. The aim of the workshop was to discuss the cultural, legal, human resources/capacity, and management issues as enablers and barriers for linking the services of the memory institutions in order to build the future Digital Public Library of Africa (DPLAf). A broad outline of the DPLAf was developed after the Northumbria event of NetDiploma (in March 2018) (available on the website: www.northumbria.ac.uk/netdiploma) and further discussed and modified through a series of discussions amongst members of the project team, the steering committee members, and two 2-day workshops held in Malawi and Ethiopia in September 2018 and January 2019 respectively.

2. In his presentation, the country Co-I Dr. Paul Lihoma (Malawi) explained the networking activities and developments in relation to the NetDiploma project that have taken place in Malawi since his last report at the NetDiploma event in Malawi in September 2018. In his presentation, Dr. Lihoma highlighted the following key developments that demonstrate the continued partnership building and activities taking place in Malawi for facilitating digital access to indigenous and cultural heritage information in the country. Dr. Lihoma reported that the NetDiploma Project has drawn significant attention of various stakeholders, and it continues to register remarkable progress towards access to digital government records and cultural heritage information held at various memory institutions in Malawi. Some of the key developments, and achievements of the NetDiploma project, include the following:
   ➢ **Country's President is aware of the project**: Every month, Cabinet Ministers submit their reports to the President. When the NetDiploma started, the relevant Minister described the project, its goals and benefits to the country in his report to the President. Such a mention is a great achievement in itself.
   ➢ **Establishment of networks of local institutions and continued activities**:
      ➢ Since the beginning of the NetDiploma project, and especially after the NetDiploma workshop in Malawi in September 2019, a network of local institutions was established. Members of the network participated in the first workshop and since then the member institutions continue to cooperate in a number areas.
      ➢ The Malawi National Commission for UNESCO organised a follow-up workshop in December 2018. The workshop attracted participants from the heritage institutions, media and universities to discuss preservation and wider sharing of

digital information. The Minister opened the workshop, which attracted wider media coverage.

  ➢ Formation of a local association aimed at preserving, publicising and sharing of audiovisual and other information for research, was agreed. A draft constitution of the proposed association is undergoing review processes.

➢ **Publicity of the Project to the African Ministers' forum**: During the annual African Ministers conference on Libraries and Information in Durban in 2018, the minister from Malawi mentioned the NetDiploma as one of the projects that promote regional cooperation by noting that Kenya, Ethiopia and Malawi were involved in the NetDiploma project representing the African continent. He further noted that results of the NetDiploma would benefit Africa as a whole.

➢ **Establishment of new projects**

  ➢ **Digital Malawi Project:** During the NetDiploma workshop in Malawi, the E-Government representative informed the workshop about the World Bank sponsored Digital Malawi Project, which she said was in line with the NetDiploma goals. Further discussions led to the introduction of the **National Archives** into the Digital Malawi Project. A series of meetings **finally led to incorporation of the National Archives into the World Bank sponsored Digital Malawi project**.

  ➢ **EDRMS Project: The National Archives has been identified as a lead institution to ensure that the public service should adopt an Electronic Document and Records Management System** as a way of modernising government operations, managing public records systematically and promoting security and wider access to records in line with the Access to Information legislation.

    ➢ **Processes are underway to recruit an EDRMS Technical Advisor to work** alongside the National Archives in rolling out the EDRMS project

  ➢ **Screening of Digitised Historical Footage by the National Library Service:** As a result of networking and closer cooperation through the NetDiploma workshop in Malawi, **the National Library Service has secured funding from the Rei Foundation to support digitisation of historical footage material** held by the National Archives and National library Service. The digitised content will be screened at the National Library Service to students and the public**.**

3. **A presentation by the country Co-I Dr. Solomon Abate (Ethiopia)** explained the networking activities and developments in relation to the NetDiploma project that have taken place in Ethiopia since the beginning of the project in 2017, and especially since the workshop in Ethiopia in January 2019. Some of the key initiatives, triggered by the NetDiploma project and workshop include:

  ➢ AAU (Addis Ababa University) Digital library (http://www.aau.edu.et/library/resources/digital-library/)
  ➢ Ethiopian Digital Public Library by the Ministry (http://library.stic.et/home)
  ➢ Automation of documentation management by 'Save the Children'
  ➢ Automation of heritage management by ARCCH
  ➢ Knowledge management platform of the African Union (AU)
  ➢ Services of the Ethiopian National Archives and Library Authority Library (NALA)

Overall, the NetDiploma project workshop motivated young professionals in the promotion and use of digital cultural heritage information in Ethiopia. The NetDiploma project triggered a new initiative for the development of National Digital Information Access by NALA, INSA and AAU to undertake the following activities:

▶ Preliminary survey of existing national activities

▶ Policy analysis and stake holder identification

▶ Needs Assessment

▶ Project formulation

The NetDiploma project also triggered interests in higher education; for example, the NetDiploma project partner from the IES (Institute of Ethiopian Studies) has decided to pursue his PhD study towards digital information services.

4. **A presentation by country Co-I Mr. Wato (Kenya)** discussed some critical challenges with regard to institutional policies and dilemma surrounding the open access to digitised content that need to be addressed. He discussed some government initiatives for digital government services, such as the Open Government partnership (OGP), Kenya Open Data Initiative (KODI), and the Access to InformationLaw, that can be used as a backbone for further developments in digital access to indigenous and cultural heritage information in Kenya.

Panel discussion

A panel discussion followed the presentations where the participants were invited to ask questions, and share their own experience in the context of access to cultural heritage and indigenous information in Africa in general, and Kenya in particular. This resulted in very lively and informative discussions lasting for three hours, where participants from various organizations, like the National Commission for UNESCO, Kenyan National Commission on Administrative Justice (CAJ), Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development, National Museums of Kenya, and various government departments/ministries discussed and shared their experience with some ongoing initiatives, such as the success of the *Huduma Centres* in providing digital government services to people in Kenya. Challenges associated with some ongoing activities and initiatives at various institutions, especially digital skills and behavioural issues of information service providers as well as the end users with regard to access to government information, and cultural heritage information were also discussed.

Day 2 (Thursday 5th September 2019)

Presentations and panel discussions on day one led to the development of a shared understanding of some key ongoing activities vis-à-vis challenges associated with access to digital cultural heritage and government information in Kenya. A group discussion was held to address the key issues in depth.

Three groups were formed, each comprising between 10-12 people, to discuss the key enablers and challenges associated with access to government and cultural heritage information in Kenya. Groups were formed such that there were people in group representing multiple organisations (see the participants' list).

Each group was given two hours to discuss the key enablers and challenges associated with three major themes: (1) technology and infrastructure, (2) policies and governance; and (3) resources.

At the end of the groups discussions, each group was invited to make a presentation highlighting the key outcomes of the discussions in their group. Each group was given between 30-40 minutes to make the presentations. The key points were noted, combined and presented in the following table.

Theme	Key enablers	Key challenges
Technology and infrastructure	Initiatives already taken by ministries of ICT/e-Government, e.g. the *Huduma centres* for providing e-Government services	Rapid obsolescence of ICT; some ICT facilities in government offices and memory institutions are outdated
	Improved internet connectivity in the cities as well as remote areas	Limited network/internet connectivity esp. in rural/remote areas
	Growing awareness of ICT and mobile technologies	High cost of internet access
	Availability of e-Government services, e.g. for issue of passports, driving licenses, etc.	Online security issues/concerns
	Rapid mobile penetration throughout the country	Lack of expertise/capacity in ICT and infrastructure in most government offices and memory institutions
	Steady growth in internet access especially among the city population	Lack of standardization for data formats
	Mobile connections in the rural areas even in places with no electricity (use of alternative energy sources for ICT and mobile phones)	Lack of data storage and curation facilities
	Government subsidies in some areas of ICT, e.g. in the price of mobile phones and network costs	People in regions/provinces have different priorities, e.g. food, water, health, sanitation etc., as opposed to ICT and information access/use
		ICT devices and technology are expensive as a whole
		Power failure: electricity is not available round the clock, or it is unreliable
		Mobile phones are used for business/banking or entertainment, and not for access to information or knowledge
		Lack of digital skills amongst people of all sections
		Lack of literacy & reading/writing skills
		Marginalisation: poor and remote communities can't afford and use ICT for access to information
Policies/Governance	Access to Information law passed in many African countries, including Kenya	No clear policies on availability of, or accessibility to, internet for everyone
	Ministry of ICT is championing ICT policies	Lack of policies on privacy and data protection
	Government initiatives towards building digital cities	Lack of policies to provide and support online access for people with disabilities
	Laptop project that aims to provide laptops in schools and various other institutions	Lack of policies for promoting culture and heritage

	Devolutions leading to data management policies at local/regional levels	Access to oral tradition (information transferred through oral communications) need to be included in the Access to Information Laws
		An online dictionary of proverbs and colloquial phrases may be developed
		Lack of policies for capturing indigenous and community knowledge
		Lack of awareness of people w.r.t. access to information
		Culture of secrecy in government offices
		Lack of conflict between Access to Information Law and rules for restricted access to some information
		Lack of an implementation framework (e.g. for the Access to Information law)
		Lack of a quality assurance framework for information
		Uncoordinated activities of various stakeholders in the digital information space
		Electronic records management is not a priority (despite having the Access to Information law)
Resources	Some skills are available for ICT and digitisation, etc. through the e-Government initiatives and the *Huduma Centres* in Kenya	Lack of priorities for ICT development in specific government sectors and especially in the memory institutions
	Information officers have been appointed in some government offices	Lack of financial resources is a key challenge
	Some digital skills training facilities are available for government office staff	Sustainability of government initiatives on digitisation and digital services is affected by lack of resources and movement of people (loss of skills)
	Growing human capital in general and in ICT in particular	Lack of context-specific ICT and digital skills training
		Lack of recognition of skills and excellence of staff/people
		Lack of champions with technology and people/communication skills

The participants left the NetDiploma project workshop with a great degree of enthusiasm, a better understanding of the key challenges that call for ongoing networking and collaborative activities to promote access to cultural heritage information in African countries in general, and Kenya in particular.