AFRICAN INSTITUTIONAL REPOSITORIES

AS CONTRIBUTORS TO GLOBAL INFORMATION: A SOUTH AFRICAN CASE STUDY
OUTLINE

• Introduction
• Institutional Repositories in Africa
• Institutional repositories in Southern Africa
• The University of Zululand
• UZSpace
• Challenges and success Factors
• Current Status of the project
• Insights gained
• Future Plans
• Conclusion
INTRODUCTION

Open access IRs are entrenched in developed world

African IRs still experience challenges

SA leading country in Africa

Smaller institutions face challenges

The importance of harvesters
INSTITUTIONAL IR IN SA

- SA IR constantly growing
- 14 in 2009
- Currently 24
- First steps taken in 1999 – SARIS
- Funding models
- eIFL
- Mellon Foundation
IR DEVELOPMENT

• Most started as ETDs

• University of Pretoria one of earliest IR

• University of Zululand in rural setting

• Unique challenges to be faced

• Valuable lessons learned
A case study: uzSpace

- Remote rural location
- Resources not readily available
- UZSpace managed by LIS
- 16000 students, 40 plus active researchers, 450 post graduates
- Access to local content
- Uzulu hard copy collection - IKS
The UZSpace project

- Started 2007
- IR steering committee 2008
- Chaired by deputy director
- Linked with research committee
- Linked with eLearning committee
- A phased process adopted
Three Phased Process

Phase 1: Obtain and install required hardware and equipment, digitise existing dissertation and thesis and create metadata records

Phase 2: Add newly completed research output for Masters and Doctoral research as well as exam papers in PDF format and create metadata records

Phase 3: Add file for Indigenous Knowledge sources, expand to include all completed research articles
Implementation

- Mellon Funding for server
- OCR scanner obtained
- Retrospective digitization
- External agent used
- Implementation plan with responsibilities, time frames
- Draft policy document
Initially shared system support with DUT, MUT

Not institutional archive

Decide what is local content for inclusion

New skills required for meta data editing etc.

No additional staff - added responsibility

Intensive training and marketing programme started
**Institutional Attitude**

- Initial reluctance by researchers to participate
- Awareness sessions started
- Self-archiving slow to take off
- Currently 970 dissertations and theses
- Sudden increase in usage
- Registered with harvesters
Current Unizulu Community

- 55% Masters
- 25% Honours and postgraduate diplomas
- 16% Returning undergraduates
- 3% First time entering undergraduates
- 1% Doctorates
Short, Medium term planning

• First phase completed successfully

• Long term preservation and curation needs addressing
Usage

- 2008-2009 moderate usage
- Steady increase 2010
- 2011 – registered with harvesters
- Significant increase
- Global accessing and searches
- China registers high usage
THE UNIZULU RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

PRO’S

“A” rated researchers

Research funds available

Library well equipped e-resource collection

First phase of IR implementation well received
Russia 5%  
UK 4%  
China 6%  
Japan 7%  
SA 49%  
Kenia 1%
Future Plans

- Promote and support self-archiving
- Promote open access publishing
- Digitize more Uzulu collection items
- Digitize rare art collection
CHALLENGES IMPACTING ON SUCCESS

Challenges experienced on three levels:

- institutional,
- user group and
- technical
Institutional Challenges

- Copyright
- Changing policies and procedures
- Corporate culture
- Lack of KM strategies
- Poor inter-departmental procedural alignment
USER GROUP CHALLENGES

- Reluctance to share research
- Plagiarism
- Quality and integrity
- Resistance to self archiving
Technical challenges

• Staff contingencies
• Funding contingencies
• esAL consortium
• Hardware maintenance and upgrade
• Administration of license agreements
CURRENT STATUS

- Project well established
- Usage is encouraging
- Researcher buy in is positive
- Skills transfer taking place
- Networking positive e.g. IR talk
INSIGHTS GAINED

• Flexible approach
• The champion principle worked well
• International interest was welcome surprise
• Linkages made
• Future plans – community participation and IKS
CONCLUSION

• IR implementation was a success
• Must manage for sustainability
• Stay abreast of new developments
• Constant awareness and marketing
• More attention to curation
• Must link with other processes at institution e.g RIMS
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