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EIFL-OA: Open Access

Removing barriers to knowledge sharing

The Central Open Access Repository in Nepal

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Results of the EIFL-funded Open Access Project

INTRODUCTION

A great deal of research output is generated for use by research and development organisations, especially multilateral institutions and a few large government and non-government organisations in Nepal. These reports are not widely disseminated, even when their potential usefulness to other researchers and practitioners is very high.

Research reports and papers presented in seminars and conferences do not get published or archived even though these papers tend to be comprehensive in their coverage of issues of specific thematic areas.

Scholarly articles published in international journals and book chapters, even those written by Nepalese, are not accessible to the general researchers in Nepal due to their unavailability locally and/or due to high cost/subscription charges.

This project, implemented by [Nepal Library and Information Consortium \(NeLIC\)](#) with the partners –The Social Science Baha and Madan Puraskar Pustakalaya – aimed to bring together the research community by making them aware of Open Access (OA). The project also sought to build an OA repository of research output, which were not archived systematically and/or are not easily accessible due to the lack of a OA repositories. The central OA repository would benefit researchers and students by providing a single portal for deposition and access to these research output.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- The Central OA Repository (<http://50.57.171.206:8001/dspace/>) was established using DSpace software.
- NeLIC, in collaboration with its project partner Madan Puraskar Pustakalaya (MPP), held 12 meetings and a one-day workshop attended by 285 peoples from different institutions such as libraries, universities, colleges, research centers and NGOs to introduce the concept of OA and present a central OA repository.

STRATEGIES, TACTICS AND TOOLS



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We started a project with a series of small meetings with interested librarians, researchers, journal editors, policy-makers, and publishers to discuss the need and importance of an OA central repository. These proved to be important events in sharing the OA message with all the individuals and institutions involved in the process of knowledge creation/generation and dissemination.

Towards the end of the project a national OA advocacy workshop was held in Kathmandu on 16 May 2013 to inform key stakeholders such as researchers, authors, librarians, teachers, and students about the establishment of the central OA repository and also to plan future activities. Further management and developments issues such as collection development, depositing work-flows, publicity, etc. were discussed in small break-out groups.

Information on the OA repository was also disseminated through leaflet distribution to academic institutions, libraries, students, and researchers. The leaflet is also available on the NeLIC website.

A central OA repository has been established to serve as a one-stop resource where any institution or individual can deposit their research output and also access the works of others.

The following groups benefited from this project:

- Institutions and organisations without a repository of their own can now use the central repository to deposit their research output.
- Researchers and students now have free and easy access to research output which was hard to locate earlier.
- Researchers can make their work available through OA repository.

LESSONS LEARNED

- It is better to focus on young researchers as a target group as they demonstrate more interest and are more comfortable in accessing research materials using digital technology than their seniors.
- It is also desirable to first prepare an OA policy before selecting and depositing the documents. The policy can also serve as a quality assurance guideline for all materials to be deposited in the OA repository. The central OA repository policy is currently being drafted and discussed among the project stakeholders.
- Though NeLIC has been uploading the collected materials, the researchers themselves will have to learn to upload them eventually. And NeLIC will keep supporting and monitoring the central OA repository.

THE FUTURE

The grant laid the groundwork for future OA advocacy in Nepal. Going forward, the central OA repository will be managed by NeLIC. We take it as a positive sign that institutions are taking an



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interest in participating in this project – such as Kathmandu University Central Library, the Pokhara University Central Library, and the Tribhuvan University Central Library – and we expect such interest to continue, and grow, in the future as the benefits of OA are realized across Nepal.

Our future efforts will be to further populate the central OA repository and develop a comprehensive collection of relevant research output so that researchers, students, and other information seekers will not be completely dependent upon the literature published outside Nepal. A Programme Officer will be appointed and he/she will contact the individuals or institutions involved in research, identify and collect the useful resources to be deposited in the repository.

According to the suggestion of the workshop participants we have planned to conduct trainings to authors/researchers/journal editors and institutional representatives on how to upload the research output to the repository. A training-workshop and follow-up meetings in Kathmandu and Pokhara will be organised to ensure uptake of OA repository in Nepal. We expect that researchers will make available their work through the OA repository and the project will contribute to the effective development of science and education, both at the national and international level.

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