



International Conference on Digital Library Management (ICDLM 2011)

***Theme: Extending Benefits of Modern Technology to Public,
Academic and Special Libraries***

Kolkata, 11-13 January, 2011

Science City Mini Auditorium, Kolkata

RECOMMENDATIONS

Vision Statement

The Conference recognizes that the value of Digital Libraries lies in promoting knowledge society, innovation, literacy, lifelong learning, reading culture; exploring cultural heritage, leisure or entertainment; supporting everyone in the quest for information, reading material and published resources; and offering a neutral place for the people to meet and interact with each other.

Vision - India to emerge as a role model in the development of public libraries as modern digital information and knowledge centres on a sustainable model for access to digital resources on Indian culture and heritage.

Key Recommendations

- Reorient libraries for a more customer focused resources and services
- Set up a National Digital Public Library of Indian Culture and Heritage
- Develop a National Policy on Creation of Digital Resources
- Build and strengthen capacity and competencies of public libraries professional staff in ICT applications
- Develop a platform to provide online access to integrated catalogue of large, medium and flagship public libraries
- Enable public libraries to manage their functions by using LMS hosted on a central server
- Build and strengthen information infrastructure in public libraries

Issues and Action Statement

1. Reorient libraries for a more customer focused resources and services

Key Message : The Conference recognizes that public libraries by harnessing information technology, adopting best practices and standards in the service and management of library operations, and by building innovative management models that allow web access to nation-wide distributed library resources can improve the value and impact of public libraries and can make them relevant to the challenges of contemporary society in the present digital environment. In this context, it is important that public libraries must expand their roles as follows in a phased manner:

- Community Information Centre – Connecting local community at village panchayat level to information on governmental programmes on social, health, and cultural importance as well as to information of daily interest to members of such community for economic regeneration

- Learning centre – Connecting student community and people to knowledge materials as a means of aiding their educational goals, career goals, and economic regeneration
- Information literacy centre – Connecting people to basic computer skills and competencies and to information resources of interest to them and how to access and use them online
- Focus on reaching the un-reached – Public libraries may focus on the less privileged, less educated, and less well off from remote and underdeveloped areas to meet the societal needs for inclusive growth;
- Internet access centre – Public libraries should serve as centre for use of Internet for information purposes free of charge
- Building Community-focused resource – Public libraries may build community-focused resources, and repositories of cultural heritage of local interest, in local language

Action: RRRLF may bring about awareness among the professional staff of the public libraries on above mentioned roles by way of organizing various suitable programmes and enable the professional staff with competencies to undertake and play the above mentioned roles.

2. Set up a National Digital Public Library of Indian Culture and Heritage

Issues : A number of public libraries are engaged in the creation of digital resources as well as in digitizing activities. In addition, quite a good number of agencies such as DIT, CSIR, ICAR, ICSSR and others are also engaged in similar activities leading to perhaps duplication in such effort. Although such indigenous resources do constitute an important national resource and that such resources are not available for access through any other channels such as Google, Yahoo and others, it is essential to integrate these resources on a common platform with links to full text and artifacts. The organization and management of these resources however would remain in distributed manner as at present. To make it happen it is therefore essential and important to integrate all such resources on a common web based platform.

Action 1: RRRLF in consultation with the States may take up initiatives in digitizing various heritage and rare material holdings as well as modern day copyright free materials in the holdings of public libraries in respective States

Action 2: The Working Group already in place in Ministry of Culture may work out a feasibility report to set up a facility for the purpose.

3. Develop a National Policy on Creation of Digital Resources

Issues: The component of such a policy would be as follows:

- Identification of libraries who should under such work
- Formulate and define the technology, national standards, best practices, and guidelines for digitization and content development to ensure quality and consistency in such digital outputs;
- Provide funding to libraries to build repository of local resources for global access;
- Provide funding to libraries to enable them to make a shift in their library functionality and services from one primarily based on text to those based on Internet, mobile and broadband connectivity;
- Guidelines for collection development of electronic and print resources for different categories of public libraries
- Identify manpower needed at different levels for ICT integration in libraries, etc.
- Set up a mechanism to minimize duplication in digitization efforts in the projects undertaken by various agencies in creating digital resources;
- Enable public libraries to build stronger linkages with academic, and special libraries on issues of common interest.

Action: The responsibility to develop such policy document may be entrusted to the Digitization Task Force already set up by the Ministry of Culture. The document may be prepared in consultation with stakeholders in the States.

4. Build and strengthen capacity and competencies of public libraries professional staff in ICT applications

The Ministry of Culture may authorize RRRLF as the nodal agency to organize need based workshop/ training programmes in ICT application in partnership with institutions of repute and library schools in India and abroad for the benefit of professional staff.

Set up scholarships programmes in library schools for internship in leading libraries of India and abroad.

Action: RRRLF may prepare a feasibility report on the above proposal.

5. Develop a platform to provide online access to integrated catalogue of large, medium and flagship public libraries

Issues: At present the customers countrywide do not have any means to know what resources are available in leading public libraries in India resulting into under-utilization of public library resources. The challenge is how to widen library accessibility to users.

Develop Information Commons – A service tool on the Web to provide access to integrated catalogues of nationwide libraries including the linkages to full text documents wherever available, and incorporating in this catalogue the Web 2 technology for managing user generated data, leading to Library 2.0 catalogue.

Action: The Ministry may setup a task force to work out the feasibility of the proposal.

6. Enable public libraries to manage their functions by using LMS hosted on a central server

- Issues: The pace of Library automation in public libraries is slow and tardy due to varied factors such as long delays in the selection of suitable Library Management System (LMS) packages, late administrative approvals, followed by support service issues.
- On the other hand, the proposed centralized approach to library automation provides the advantage to accelerate automation process and avoids the need to set up expensive standalone LMS systems and also avoids duplication in cataloguing efforts by participating libraries.

Action: The Committee constituted by the Ministry of Culture for undertaking the CIP project may also be given the responsibility to work out the feasibility report on the above proposal.

Expected Outcomes

These sets of recommendations, once fully implemented, are expected to produce the following outcomes

- It will generate a one-stop shop for access to Indian cultural heritage information which currently either does not exist or are not easily accessible.
- It will bring the public library system to the next generation level, or the Library 2.0 level where every member of the public will have access to information that they may need for their day-to-day activities or for knowledge and creation.

- It will create a mechanism of one-window access to the entire knowledge available in Indian public libraries

The Recommendations have been drafted by the Recommendation Committee constituted by the Conference Organisers with following members:

1. Dr. S. M. Dhawan, Chairperson;
2. Smt. Kalpana Dasgupta;
3. Dr. Suprabhat Majumdar;
4. Prof. S.B. Ghosh;
5. Mr. K.K. Banerjee;
6. Dr. P.R. Goswami;
7. Dr. Gobinda Chowhury;
8. Dr. Mrs Barbro Wigell-Ryynanen;
9. Dr. Erik Thorlund Jepsen;
10. Dr. P.K. Bhattacharya
11. Dr. Shantanu Ganguly
12. Dr Debal C Kar
13. Mr Ashok Mitra