greenstone digital library software

Feasibility study on the establishment of a

Greenstone Support Organisation for Africa (GSOA)

Purpose of study

The purpose of this survey is to elucidate the technical problems faced by African institutions and information professionals in creating digital libraries, and to conduct a feasibility study on the establishment of a Greenstone Support Organization for Africa (GSOA), which can help to resolve these problems.

Digital libraries can assist in the creation of local content and promote availability and preservation of content, as well as supporting capacity building in civil society. The open source Greenstone software suite for creating digital libraries (www.greenstone.org/) can play an important role in advancing human development in Africa and contributing to the dissemination of national and international information in civil society and by institutions in the fields of education, science and culture.

As the proposed GSOA is intended to provide continent-wide support, the study will take into account the needs of the Amharic, Arabic, English, French and Portuguese language regions, identify key challenges to the establishment and successful functioning of a GSOA and provide concrete recommendations for addressing these challenges.

Please take a few minutes to complete the survey below.

1. Profile

1.1 What is your name?

1.2 Your job title?

1.3 Name of your institution?

1.4 E-mail contact address?

1.5 The above information is requested only for clarification of responses given. Please indicate whether you wish your personal information to be distributed further, ie. quoted in the study?

☐ Yes ☐ No

1.6 How would you characterise your main place of work or study? (please choose one)

☐ Public library

☐ Archives

☐ University/College library

☐ University department

☐ Special library

☐ School library

☐ Museum/gallery/art centre

☐ Private library/museum/gallery

☐ Research institute

Other - please describe:

1.7   Which of the following best describes the sector to which your establishment belongs, in relation to the above? (please choose one)

☐ Public sector / Government

☐ Higher Education

☐ Private / Commercial

☐ Independent NGO/ Charitable trust

Other - please describe:

[   ]

1.8   Which of the following best describes your main role or function? (please choose one)

☐ Researcher

☐ Librarian

☐ Archivist

☐ Museum professional

☐ University lecturer

☐ Operational information and communication technology

Other, please describe:

[   ]

2. Digital library experience

2.1   Are you involved in the planning or creation of digital library collections?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Please elaborate:

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2.2   If so, what collections are you developing, or do you intend to develop?

☐   Electronic theses and dissertations

☐   Special collections

☐   Institutional repository

☐   Electronic administrative archives
Other - please describe:

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2.3   What media types do your collections comprise?

☐   Text

☐   Images

☐   Video

☐   Audio
Other - please describe:

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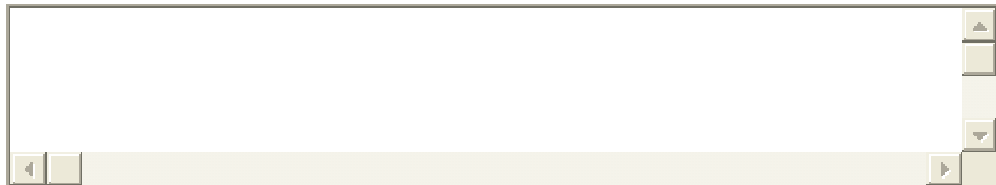
2.4   Is your collection static (completed, or planned as a once-off project), or dynamic

(content is continually added)?

☐   Static

☐   Dynamic

2.5   In your organization do you have personnel with the following computer skills?
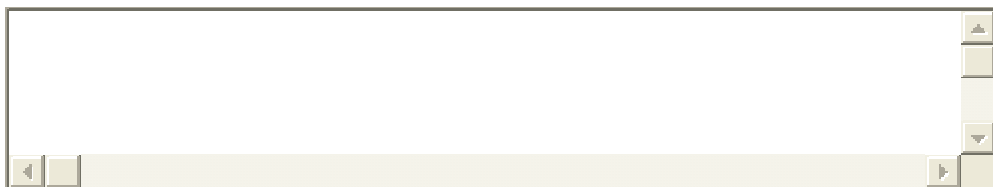
☐   General computer use (Capable of using email, Internet and Office suites,

      such as Open Office or Star Office or MS Office

☐   Computer hardware specialists

☐   Graphic designers

☐   Network administrators (To install, configure, monitor and maintain your computer

      and backup systems)

☐   Web and Software developers (Capable of using technologies such as C++, C#,

      Java, perl, java script, PHP, ASP, web servers, and web services under UNIX or Windows

      platforms)

☐   Human computer interface (HCI) specialists
Other - please describe:

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2.6   Do you plan to host your collections locally or externally or both?

☐ Local server   ☐ External host   ☐ Both
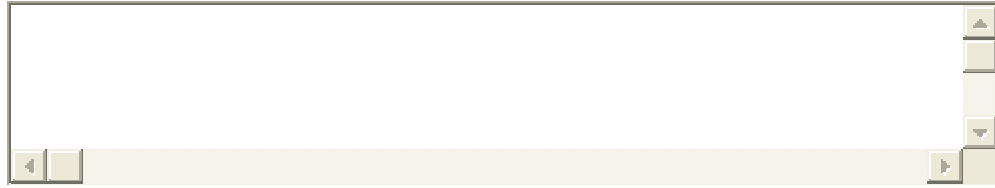
2.7   If you plan to host your collections locally, please describe the server and backup systems

       that are in place. In your answer please also indicate the type of network connection you

       have (e.g. Dial up, ADSL etc.)

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2.8   Are you familiar with the use of digital library software?
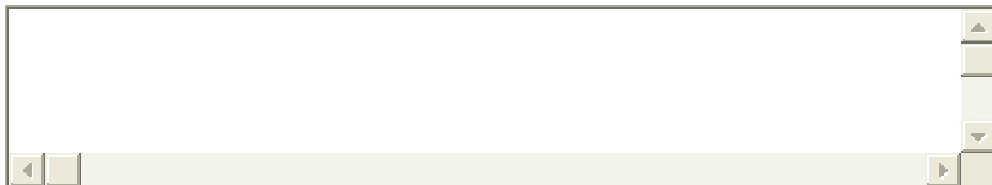
☐ Yes ☐ No

2.9   If yes, which packages have you used? Please describe:

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2.10   What training opportunities or programmes on the creation or use of digital libraries have you
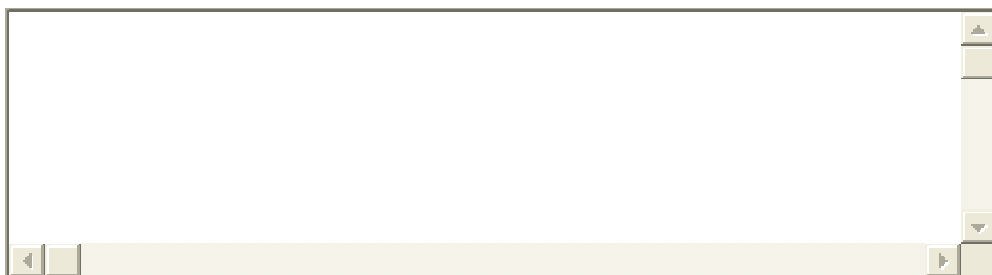
       experienced?

☐ Workshop(s) or seminars

☐ Class(es) towards higher education

☐ Conference(s)

☐ Video presentation

☐ Online or computer-based tutorial

☐ Individual instruction (one on one)
Other - please describe:

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2.11   Please state the name/s and date/s of the training programme/s, with relevant URL if available.

       Please provide a brief assessment of the effectiveness and usefulness of each:

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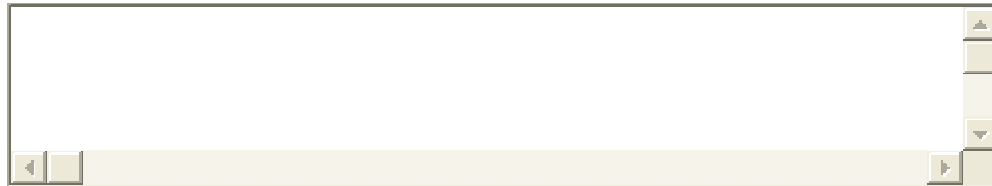
3. Digital library support services

3.1 What digital library support services are needed in Africa?

- ☐ Advocacy for digital library development
- ☐ Develop and maintain an African digital library portal
- ☐ Encourage the availability of African indigenous knowledge content online
- ☐ Promote general awareness of Free and Open Source Software (FOSS)
- ☐ Facilitate collaboration with related local and international institutions
- ☐ Strengthen civil society in building repositories of information useful to individuals, NGOs, business, and governments
- ☐ Contribute to preservation of African works of cultural and historical importance

Please elaborate on these or other needs:

3.2 What do you perceive as the major challenges in your own organisation, concerning the creation and use of digital libraries?

- ☐ Lack of funding
- ☐ Multiple languages
- ☐ Lack of specialist staff
- ☐ Managerial apathy
- ☐ Poor vendor support
- ☐ Inadequate infrastructure (i.e. electrical wiring, telephone lines, buildings, etc.
- ☐ Slow network connectivity

Please describe how modest external support could assist in these, or in other challenges.

[text input box]

4.   Greenstone use and support

4.1   Have you installed or used Greenstone? ☐ Yes ☐ No

4.2   If yes, please describe its strengths and weaknesses?

[text input box]

4.3   Did you find the following support services of the New Zealand Digital Library project useful in implementing Greenstone?

☐ Manuals

☐ Tutorial exercises

☐ Electronic discussion groups

☐ Translation support services

☐ Other website facilities

Which of the above was most useful to you, and why? Please describe:

[text input box]

4.4   Did you experience any difficulty in making use of the above support mechanisms?
☐ Yes ☐ No

4.5   If so, please describe how you feel the Greenstone support services could be improved:

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[                                                           ]
[                                                           ]
[                                                         ▼ ]
[ ◄ █                                                     ► ]
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4.6   What types of general digital library support service do you believe should be developed
        as a priority for Africa?

☐   Advice on training facilities

☐   Equipment acquisition / maintenance

☐   Organisational strategic planning

☐   Grant writing

☐   Mobilisation of funding

☐   Intellectual property rights management

☐   Formulation of job descriptions

☐   Advice on project management

☐   Guidelines for best practice

☐   Cooperative software development

Please elaborate on these, or other identified priority needs:

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[                                                           ]
[                                                           ]
[                                                         ▼ ]
[ ◄ █                                                     ► ]
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5 Organisational structure of future digital library support organisation

5.1   Do you consider an African-based support organization for digital library initiatives/projects
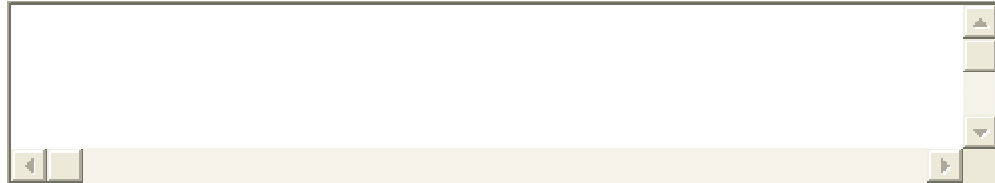   is needed?
        ☐ Yes ☐ No

5.2   If so, what model might be appropriate, in your opinion, for structuring such a support
        organization?

☐   Centralized structure based in a designated host institution

☐ Network structure based on the participation of a number of participating host institutions (e.g. regional representation, themed content, or complementary areas of expertise

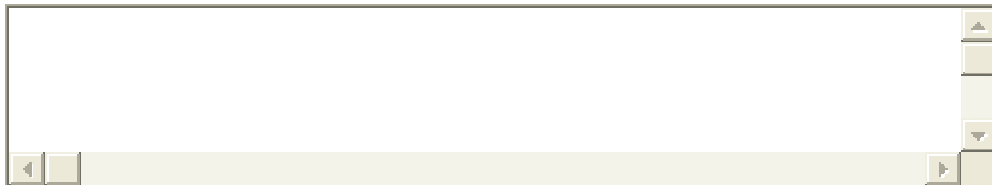☐ Associative structure based on subscription of individual and/or institutional members.

Please explain your reasons:

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[                                                              ]
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5.3   What governance mechanisms should such a support organisation employ?

☐ Governing committee

☐ Direct user representation

☐ Representation through national chapters

☐ Representation through existing professional organisations and/or other NGO's
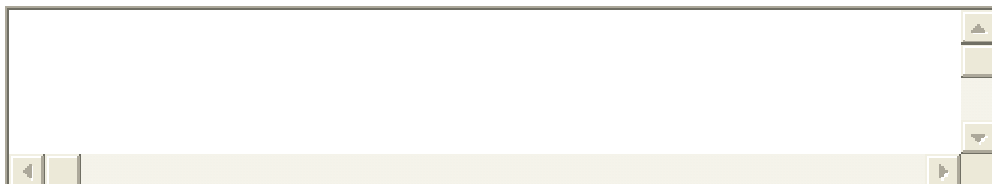
Please elaborate, or suggest alternate mechanisms of governance:

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5.4   How would you promote the sustainability of a digital library support organization?

☐ Fee for services (e.g. consulting, training, hosting collections, advertising, etc.

☐ Annual membership subscription towards the operational cost of facilities

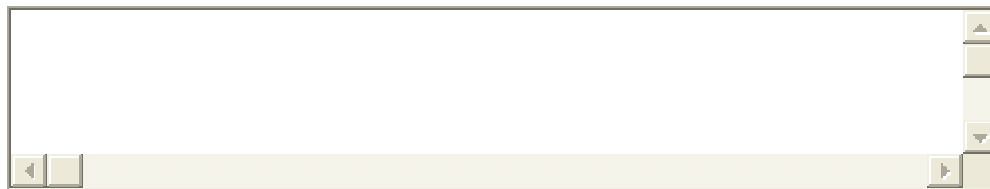☐ Contributions in kind by African specialists and institutions
Other- please describe:

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[                                                              ]
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5.5   If you support a fee for service model, for which of the following services would you be
        willing to pay a fee?

☐   Consultancy services

☐   Accredited online courses for digital libraries

☐   Dedicated external hosting (with high bandwidth, extensive storage, backup, and digital arc

☐   Access rights management

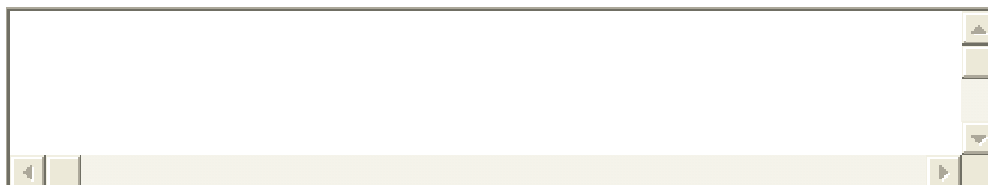☐   Property rights management

☐   Content payment mechanisms
Other - please describe:

[text box]

5.6   In which kind of organisational framework could such an organization best be positioned /
        structured?

☐   Public sector/ government

☐   University/ higher education sector

☐   Private /commercial sector

☐   Independent legal entity

☐   Combination of above

Please elaborate on your reasons, or suggest alternative structure/s:

[text box]

Thank you for participating in this survey!
Please fax your response to +27-31-209-6590
Or e-mail to: petersd@ukzn.ac.za

Send Reset