International Conference on African Digital Libraries and Archives (ICADLA): A Framework for Widened Access to African Scholarly and Cultural Digital Content

Report to the Consorcio Casa África Workshop on Libraries & Development Cooperation, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria
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About **ICADLA**

- The goal is to generate synergies for creating a digital portal of Africana scholarship and cultural heritage resources

- ICADLA-1 was held in Ethiopia on 1-3 July 2009, with a follow-up ICADLA-2 in South Africa on 14-18 November 2011.

- Formats: ICADLA-1 comprised a Strategic Roundtable with Intergovernmental Organizations on putting knowledge on African development agenda & presentations on strategies for the African Digital Future; ICADLA-2 was a 3-day training workshop on digitization matters & a 2-day strategic planning conference.

Digitization Hot Spots

ICADLA-1	ICADLA-2
The DISA portal	World Digital Library in **Uganda**
The Akoma Ntoso project , **Kenya**: open access to parliamentary & judiciary documents from Africa	Digitization of 680 million records at **Kenya** National Archives & Documentation Service
Digitization at CSIR, etc in South Africa	African Journal Archive, Sabinet; NRF train-the-trainer program, South Africa
Open access agricultural repositories in Africa	Digitization of historical information at the National Archives of **Zambia**
	Digitization of **Eritrea's** printed heritage
	National Archives of **Namibia** digitization programme
	Digitization of Islamic and Geez archives & photographs in Ethiopia

Capacity building initiatives from African Digital Library Support Network & Royal Tropical Institute /Association of African Universities

The Pointers

ICADLA-1

- An umbrella body to provide oversight for creation of the African digital library & archives

- Development of strategic framework and road map

- An integrated information platform for Africa which will permit sharing of knowledge across partnering countries is needed

ICADLA-2

- Promising partnerships : World Digital Library, ESARBICA, New York Academy of Medicine, Internet Archive, British Library, Finland

- Promising capacity development initiatives: African Digital Library Support Network and Open Access Repositories the Capacity Strengthening Programme for Africa (OA-IRCSP)

- Cost saving open source software: Greenstone & DSpace

- Models: World Digital Library, the Internet Archive, Norwegian National Digital Library and Europeana

What has been learnt from ICADLA?

Challenges

- Absence of national & institutional digitization strategies
- Thinly spread skills
- Slow uptake of metadata & technical standards
- Insufficient mastery of intellectual property & copyright issues
- Inability of institutions to exchange records
- Numerous collections not yet accessible online
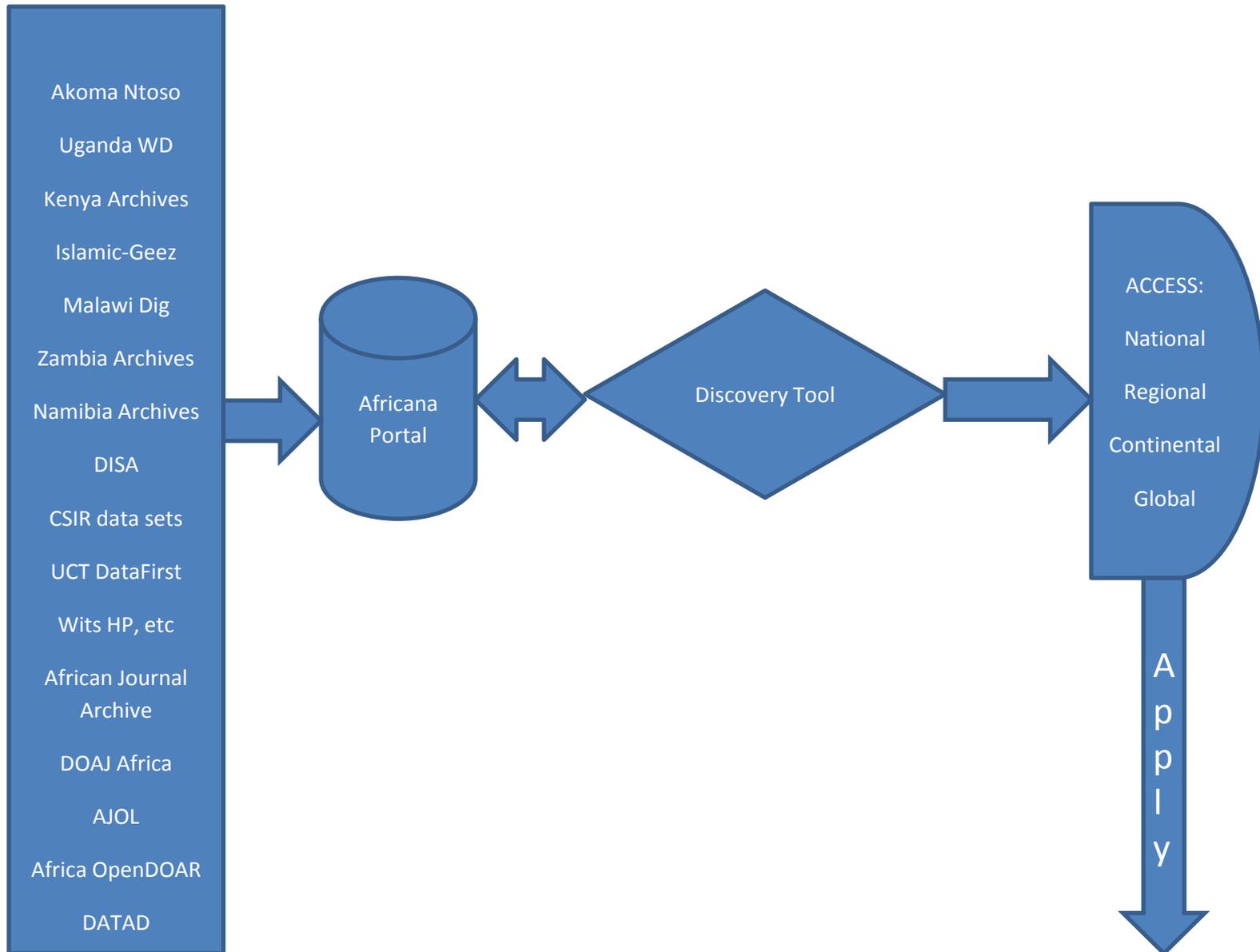- Inadequate project funding, marketing & equipment.

Lessons

- Donor-driven approaches may not always necessarily meet institutional needs
- Partnerships with organizations such as the World Digital Library, Internet Archive, British Library & Finland may assist in capacity building
- Initiatives such as the African Digital Library Support Network & Open Access Repositories the Capacity Strengthening Programme for Africa (OA-IRCSP) have supported capacity development
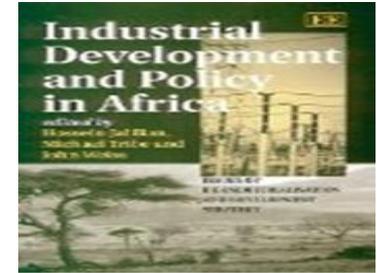
Outcomes

- ICADLA-1 raised awareness among leaders & programme managers
- The ICADLA-1 embryonic knowledge base is at: http://www.uneca.org/icadla1/documents.htm; The ICADLA-2 papers will be at: http://www.tinyURL.com/icadla2
- The ICADLA-2 workshop created a trained pool of 35 experts from Archives, Libraries & other memory institutions
- Institutionalization of ICADLA through a Convening Committee, Standing Committee, & International Advisory Committee
- Articulation of ICADLA Agenda: Digitization training & development; Audit of Africa digitization projects; Deepening of projects; Development of discovery tools; position paper for tabling at AU Summit in June 2012; Conferences & Partnerships to sustain the initiative
- Confirmation of the venue for ICADLA-3, in Morocco, to extend opportunities to North, West & Francophone Africa
- Identification of the building blocks for the African Digital Library & Archives, including resources & partnerships
- ICADLA welcomes partnering with Casa África in arranging and running a mid-term training workshop pending the holding of ICADLA-3 in 2013 & is open to exploring any other mutually beneficial collaborative initiatives that may arise from ongoing dialogue.

Africana Portal: Prototype

Contribution

ICADLA-2 illustrated

Thank you

Discussion