

Techlib Cooperative Cataloguing Project

Purpose:

As a follow-up to the 2001 Workshop, a cooperative project of cataloguing/indexing into the UNESDOC/UNESBIB database was proposed to field office documentalists. The purpose of this project is twofold:

- Allow field offices to have records of their own documents/publications, and sponsored publications, accessible via Internet rather than confined to local databases
- Avoid duplication of work, i.e. indexing of same materials by both the Field offices and the Headquarters Library

Methodology:

In order to allow access to the Headquarters Library's Techlib cataloguing module, participants were given unique passwords and user identities.

In order to identify the originating body, three special and unique fields were created for each participant.

Techlib cataloguing and indexing guidelines, i.e. descriptive cataloguing rules and guidelines on how to use the UNESCO Thesaurus, were sent by e-mail and fax: each and every new record was revised and sent back with explanations and corrections by e-mail and fax so as to ensure the integrity and quality of the UNESBIB database.

Output

UNESCO Brasilia and the UNESCO Institute for Education, Hamburg volunteered for this experiment.

The comparison between the output of these two participants clearly shows the advantages and limits of this undertaking:

Since July 2002, when both participants started contributing to UNESBIB/UNESDOC, Brasilia has created and revised 85 records, while Hamburg only 8.

Brasilia's contribution to UNESBIB is clearly cost-effective for both sides:

- Brasilia's published and sponsored titles can now be accessed via Internet;
- The UNESCO Library staff saved time and effort by not having to process Brasilia's documentary production.

In addition, by updating and adapting the Library's cataloguing/indexing rules to the needs of field offices, Brasilia has made a special contribution to other prospective project participants.

Conclusion

As in any undertaking, motivation and professional background are essential factors for the successful implementation of a project, i.e. the persons in charge have to be professional documentalists or librarians responsible for their own documentation centres/libraries (which was not the case for the Hamburg Institute). Another important factor is continuity: the database has to be updated regularly, if not frequently, by the same person for an acceptable period of time (e.g. the UNESCO Institute of Statistics in Montreal was a potential participant until the non-renewal of the documentalist's contract.)

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<http://www.unesco.org/general/eng/infoserv/library/index.shtml>