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Unesco - Proyecto

PROYECTO UNESCO DISPONIBILIDAD PUBLICACIONES

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Pilot Project on Availability of Publications

1 Origin

The pilot project had its origin in Recommendations 28(a), 33, 34 and 39 of the UAP Congress (see Annex I for the full text of these Recommendations). Following these recommendations, Unesco included the following sentence in the Draft Programme and Budget for 1984-1985 "A three-year pilot project will be undertaken to assist in the designing and development of a national policy and a national accessions system." (Paragraph 07214).

This text was approved by the General Conference at its twenty-second session. The project should, however, be viewed in the context of the overall development of the UAP Programme.

This Programme was initiated in 1973 in the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions. Its purpose is to ensure for all users the widest possible availability of published documents.

The scope of the programme is, of course, international in the sense that more and more users of all categories need information from all kinds of sources. But the programme also requires each country to assume its responsibilities at the national level.

Two stages can be identified in the development of the UAP Programme - before and after the Congress held by Unesco in 1982 in conjunction with the IFLA.

During the first stage, essential study and research were carried out in order to identify the main problems and suggest possible solutions. In this sense, the work done prior to the Congress can be said to have been mainly theoretical. In addition to the research work efforts were made to increase awareness of and secure adoption of the basic principles of the UAP Programme. The Congress afforded an opportunity to discuss these efforts and to adopt guidelines for future operational activities.

The second stage consisted in practical implementation of the recommendations of the Congress, through information, promotion and training and, especially, practical measures. The pilot project is an example of this practical action.

II Aim of the Pilot Project

The overall object of the pilot project may be said to be to investigate ways of carrying out a national policy to increase the availability of publications and to draw from this investigation lessons for passing on to other interested countries.

It therefore involves both research and action. In other words, the aim of the project is not simply to establish a national UAP plan but also to draw lessons from the undertaking. These lessons may relate to any aspect of the project and may be of all kinds, relating, for example to the mechanisms of causality and interdependence, criteria for decision-making, material and human factors, the time factor, unforeseen obstacles, and anything that might have a positive or negative effect on the implementation of UAP.

III Objectives

The pilot project has a number of overall objectives. It will seek to :

- improve access to documents by nationals of the host country, whether the documents are available within the country or outside it;

- make better use of existing and potential resources (both material resources and personnel); and

- secure greater participation by all persons concerned with UAP.

Should these objectives be attained, the pilot project will have a national impact which will be perceptible by various ways, in particular with the targets previously determined.

IV Targets

The results should be tangible, if possible measurable, and of such a kind as will enable a difference to be perceived between the situation before and the situation after, either qualitatively or quantitatively.

Quantitative targets :

- an increase in requests for loans;

- an increase in satisfaction (number of requests satisfied and general user satisfaction); and

- an increase in the speed of responses.

Qualitative targets :

- formulation of a national policy for UAP and appointment/ establishment of a body which will be responsible for planning at the national level;

- appointment / establishment of the machinery required for improvement of UAP (e.g. a mechanism for relaying requests both within and outside the country, development of machinery for managing national collections, rationalization of collections);

- improvement of collections in the light of national requirements.

The above enumeration is indicative only, as the targets will clearly depend on the situation at the start and may be determined more accurately when a preliminary diagnosis is made prior to commencement of the project. These targets will be the key factor in determining the extent to which the project has achieved its objectives.

V Implementation

Implementation of the project could be undertaken as follows:

- diagnosis of the present situation;

- national seminar;

- development of means of improving access to publications.

a) Diagnosis of the present situation

The requirement is to describe as accurately as possible the present situation with regard to access to documents; basically, this involves assessing present and potential demand in relation to resources, taking account of the particular environment. For further details, refer to the Guidelines published by the IFLA.

In making such a diagnosis it will clearly be necessary to call on the assistance of all national institutions concerned with UAP (the national documentation centre, the national library, university and research libraries, specialist documentation centres, etc.). The IFLA Office for UAP can provide methodological assistance.

As was mentioned above, the diagnosis should contribute substantially to the definition of the targets. It is worth noting that the pilot project can achieve its aim - i.e. identify certain mechanisms connected with UAP - without necessarily achieving all the objectives that have been set (e.g. an appreciable improvement in UAP in the host country).

b) National seminar

The aim of the national seminar should be to determine, on the basis of the diagnosis, the general direction of UAP in the country concerned (whether, for example, the system should be more or less centralized or decentralized), the strategy to be followed, the contribution of the existing institutions, and the possible need for new machinery. It will also serve to develop awareness of the problem among the people involved, and thus probably to secure better co-operation.

c) Implementation

This will in effect be the practical application of the general policy guidelines chosen at the national seminar.

VI Environment

The total amount which Unesco can allocate for the project during the 1984-1985 biennium is US$ 48,000. This will not be sufficient to cover the provision of basic resources or large-scale purchases of books or periodicals. This means that the host country will already have to have a certain infrastructure in terms of information services. On the other hand, in a country whose information services are fairly highly developed, the input from Unesco may not be sufficient to have any appreciable effect. The range of possible countries is thus rather limited, and these prior conditions clearly limit the external validity of the experiment. Account should be taken of this in interpreting the results.

Other sources of financing (international or bilateral) might possibly be associated with the project.

VII Undertakings by the host country

Any Unesco Member State wishing to becoming host to the pilot project basically undertakes to co-operate fully with Unesco in all stages of the project as specified under 'Implementation', above, i.e. diagnosis of the present situation, national seminar, and execution. It is very hard to quantify what this contribution involves in monetary terms, but clearly not only does the agreement in principle of the principal national authorities for the information services and libraries have to be secured (e.g. the Ministries of Education, Research, Science, etc., the National Library, the National Documentation Centre, university libraries, etc.), but also their active participation (see Annex 2).

In addition, since one of the essential aims of the project is to pass on the lessons drawn from the experience, it is also essential that all the information needed for evaluating the pilot project be accessible, including relevant data on national activities concerning the various aspects of the project mentioned above under 'Aim of the Pilot Project'. Dissemination of the results will be affected by means of a publication or of a seminar, or both.

ANNEX 1

Relevant Recommendations of the UAP Congress

(Paris, 3 - 7 May 1982)

Recommendation 28

"Considering that a national acquisitions policy is an effective means of ensuring an appropriate level of availability of local and foreign publications, Member States are urged to :

(a) examine, where national acquisitions policies exist, the levels and methodsof provision presently attained and practised, and take steps necessary to ensure their suitability to meet expected future requirements and maintain effective levels of provision;"

Recommendation 33

"Member States with national interlending policies or systems should examine existing provisions in terms of the proportion of requests satisfied, speed of supply and costs, and consider their suitability to meet present and future requirements."

Recommendation 34

"Member States which have no national interlending policies should consider their establishment as one of the essential means of improving availability. Pilot projects should be set up with international and other assistance for the establishment of national interlending systems which would serve as models for others."

Recommendation 39

"A pilot project should be established in a Member State with Unesco assistance, to design and establish a national acquisitions policy and system as a model for possible application in other countries."

Summary for 1984-1985

Stages	Unesco Contribution (Regular Programme)	IFLA Contribution	Host country contribution
Diagnosis	Financing of diagnostic mission (US$ 6,000)	Suggestions by the consultant	participation in diagnosis - provision of data - participation in interpretation
National seminar on UAP	Financing of seminar (US$ 5,000)	Joint Unesco/IFLA/host country organization of the National Seminar on UAP	
Implementation of project	Financing of some of the activities recommended by the seminar, e.g. : - establishment of a mechanism for co-ordinating acquisitions - establishment of a mechanism for monitoring international lending - seeking other sources of finance.	Consultations on implementation	- implementation of recommendations with Unesco and national financing

ANNEX 2