

**Noolaham Foundation**  
**Project Report**



<b>Project Title</b>	Digitization Project in Colombo 2007
<b>Project Number</b>	NF/PG/2007/002
<b>Project Location</b>	Colombo
<b>Sector</b>	Digital Archive
<b>Implementing agencyand contribution</b>	Noolaham Foundation
<b>Grant Agency and Contribution</b>	N/A
<b>Total Budgetand Expenditure</b>	
<b>Project Period</b>	February 2007 – December 2007
<b>Responsible Stakeholders</b>	G. Shaseevan, G. Vajeeven, T. Kopinath, Thelivathai Josheph, Sarinihar Sivakumar, G. T. Ketharanathan, S. Thillakan, Sivaraj, S. Jeyashankar, B. Thuvaragan, S. Lambotharan and volunteers who scanned

## **Summary**

The **Digitization Project in Colombo 2007** was carried out by Noolaham Foundation during 2007 to increase the publications stored in Noolaham Digital Library. This project was an innovative implementation that used donated funds as well as volunteer resources to increase the efficiency of digitization initiatives. An incentive was provided to the volunteers to finish the project within the given timeframe.

A total of 1,117 documents were digitized through this project and 1,074 of them were made available online through Noolaham Foundation's Digital Library [www.noolaham.org](http://www.noolaham.org). This project significantly increased the Noolaham Digital Library collection and enabled us to get a wider recognition among Tamil internet users and get more support and resources towards Noolaham Foundation.

## **Introduction and Background**

Project Noolaham was started in 2005 adopting the Project Gutenberg approach of involving volunteers to contribute to the creation of an online ebook library. Even though a number of individuals were interested in contributing towards this project, most of them could not contribute continuously and Noolaham faced delays in achieving the targets.

Some volunteers who were participating in Noolaham Foundation's activities proposed that as they could not find time and expertise, they would like to make monetary contributions to digitize books. Providing incentives was proposed, but as Noolaham was purely volunteer driven at that time, volunteers felt that paying volunteers directly would not be a good practice.

Thus it was planned that scanners would be bought and given to the volunteers to digitize the publication. A time specific target was given to the volunteers and it was decided that the volunteers who achieve their target within the given time frame shall keep the scanners. Thus volunteers were given an attractive incentive to achieve the targets within the time frame.

### **Objectives and Achievements/Results**

The objective of the Digitization Project in Colombo 2007 was to scan a minimum of 1,000 documents and increase the Noolaham Digital Library collection significantly. Monetary funds as well as volunteer resources were utilized efficiently to achieve the project goals within the planned time frame. This project was implemented in two phases. A total of 18 scanners were distributed to various volunteers and they were requested to scan about 3,000 pages in 3 months to keep the scanners.

A total of 1117 documents were digitized through this project and 1074 of them were added to the Noolaham Digital Library. Out of the 1074 documents, 1019 were new additions to the collection and 55 were added to the books which had been typed in earlier. 47 documents were duplicates and had to be removed. Another 57 could not be added as they had various issues such as pages missing, scanned at lower resolutions etc. Shaseevan Ganeshananthan planned and coordinated this project. About 40 volunteers contributed towards this project.

While implementing this project, as the number of documents increased significantly at Noolaham Digital library, the need for a better content management system was evident and a separate project was started (Digital Library CMS Project 2007) to develop such a system. The Mediawiki based website was also launched during 2007.

#### **Phase 1**

Volunteer	Pages	Documents	Noolaham #	Added (new + already numbered)	Duplicates or removed
G. Vajeevan	2632	51	407-452	50 (46+4)	1
B. Sayanthan	2944	91	453-538	86	5
T. Janahan	2945	44	539-572	39 (34+5)	5

Sajeev Edward	3024	102	573-665	95 (93+2)	7
S. Mayuran	2802	63	666-725	60	3
Thiruvarangan	3019	89	726-798	74 (73+1)	15
S. Jeyaruban	3048	89	799-882	85	4
Sivothaman	2789	64	883-941	59	5
Puviharan	2737	39	942-972	37 (30+7)	2
Ramesh	2705	56	973-1017	51 (45+6)	5
Phase 1 Total		689	407-1017	636 (611+25)	52

## Phase 2

Volunteer	Pages	Document s	Noolaham #	Added (new + already numbered)	Duplicates / removed
Atchuthan	2623	37	1208-1230	36 (33+3)	1
S. Kopinath, S. Jaganath, Kirupanath	3009	118	1231-1333	105 (93+12)	13
Dinesh, Prasanth	2986	68	1334-1391	58	10
Nesamurugan, Hariprasath, Prathepan	2973	52	1392-1437	48 (46+2)	4
Janahan, Jeyaruban	2887	55	1438-1486	49	6
Saratha	2781	49	1487-1519	40 (33+7)	9
Anoja Radnasabapathy, Abarna Radnasabapathy	3130	63	1520-1579	61 (60+1)	2
Kumuthini	2948	46	1580-1618	41 (39+2)	5
Phase 2 Total		488	1208-1618	438 (408+30)	50
Project TOTAL		1117		1074 (1019+55)	102

### **Constrains / Challenges and lesson learned**

- Out of the 1117 documents scanned, 47 were duplicates. That is quite a big number of duplicates for one project. Most of the duplication happened because documents already scanned were distributed again.
- While most of the volunteers were quite enthusiastic about this project, some of them could not allocate enough time to finish the scanning within the timeframe. This resulted in lower number of scanning.
- Some scanning was done using incorrect specifications. They had to be done again or discarded.
- Some documents were incomplete as some pages were missing but the errors were identified only after the scanning was been finished. Such documents could not be added.
- In a digitization work, scanning is only small part. In this project, while 8 to 10 volunteers were scanning at a time, only 2 to 3 volunteers were doing all the post processing, digital library and back up works. This resulted in stress for the volunteers involved.

### **Suggestion and Recommendations**

- Noolaham Digital Library was moved to Mediawiki based CMS while conducting this project. Lists were created for each document and pages with metadata were created. As Mediawiki does not allow two pages with the same name, a duplicate cannot be entered into the system unless there is a spelling error.
- Before starting a project, the staff or the volunteers involved should be trained and guides should be provided.
- The documents should be checked for completeness before starting the scanning.
- The All Pages special page of the Mediawiki should be used to identify documents already scanned so that any duplication is avoided.
- Noolaham should consider paid staff to do the post processing of scanning and edit the Digital Library site.