Noolaham Foundation
Project Report

Project title	Women's' Education and Research Centre Digitization Project
Project number	NF/PG/2007/0003
Project location (District, Division/s, Village)	Colombo
Sector	Print Publications Archive, Collection Development, and Organizations and Institutions
Implementing agency and contribution	Project Noolaham
Grant Agency and Contribution	Project Noolaham and Education and Research Center (WERC) and Volunteers of Noolaham Foundation
Total Budget and Expenditure	Not recorded
Start and End date	2007 – 2008
Responsible Stakeholder/s	Team Leader Mr. Shaseevan Ganeshananthan Dr. Selvi Thiruchandran, Mr. Mahesh Vairamuthu and Women's Education and Research Center (WERC) and Volunteers of Noolaham Foundation

Summary:

This Women's' Education and Research Centre Digitization Project was carried out by Noolaham Foundation and Women's Education and Research Center (WERC) in 2007 to digitize the publications of the WERC. It was the first collaborative project undertaken by Project Noolaham collective with another organization.

A total of 140 documents were digitized through this project and 132 of them were made available online through Noolaham digital library at www.noolaham.org. About 100 of the digitized publications were the publications of Women's Education and Research Centre including books, magazines, newsletters and journals. This project increased the number of Tamil publications related to Women's issues in Sri Lanka online, and thus contributed towards the mission of the Women's' Education and Research Centre as well.

Introduction and Background

Noolaham Foundation is a non-profitable, collective and voluntary endeavor aimed at preserving Sri Lankan books and magazines in e-format in order to make them available to and for the benefit of all those who are able to access the internet. Noolaham website is a digital library which provides free access of e-books online to the public. The notion behind

the entire project is to make information and knowledge available to future generations that will base the internet as one of the primary sources for intellectual purposes.

Women's Education and Research Center is a Colombo based nongovernmental organization focusing on gender issues. It conducts and supports various activities such as research, publication of books and journals, seminars and information services.

Women in Sri Lanka are facing many critical forms discrimination, including gender-based violence and the ill-treatment of minority women and their children. Apart from domestic violence, women are also subject to sexual abuse, putting them at risk of unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, and lack of nutrition. All the Sri Lankan women need to chart pathways to liberate themselves from these forms of oppression and fight for a comprehensive change in all spheres of social life.

Implementation

In April 2007, Project Noolaham volunteers met Dr. Selvy Thiruchandran (Executive Director, WERC) and Ms. Mahesh Vairamuthu (Board of Director, WERC) to discuss the possibilities of digitizing the publications of WERC. The proposal was wholeheartedly welcomed by WERC and the project was started in May 2007. This project was to digitize the publications of WERC and Dr. Selvy Thiruchandran. It was coordinated by Mr. Shaseevan Ganeshananthan of Noolaham Foundation.

WERC provided their publications, computer, computer maintenance and a space in their research library to carry out the scanning. Noolaham Foundation paid for the labor and scanner charges. The first phase included scanning and correcting human errors in scanning. The scanned images were double checked by volunteers and human errors were corrected by scanning those pages again. This first phase of the process was completed during May, June and July of 2007. The second phase consisted of removing the impurities caused during the scanning, creation of e-books, finalizing and uploading. Cleaning the scanning was a paid activity, but the other tasks were done by volunteers. Noolaham Foundation couldn't get sufficient funds in time to carry out that activity as soon as possible. Thus the second phase was delayed until 2008. In February 2008, the second phase was finished and in March 2008 the e-books were uploaded.

Objective/s and Achievements or Results:

This project was initiated in line with the Noolaham Foundation's objective of creating archives for organizations and institutions and collection development. Especially this project focused on Noolaham's objective of creating a Print Publications Archive.

Various kinds of 140 documents were digitized through this project. 132 of them were made available online through the Project Noolaham digital library. Out of the 8 omitted scanning,

7 were duplications and one belongs to MIT which would not prefer to grant us permission for digitizing.

Documents with Serial numbers 1042 to 1173 (132) were uploaded on Noolaham Foundation's Digital Library www.noolaham.org.

Constrains / Challenges and lesson learned:

- In this project, few machine errors such as poor image quality were not corrected as sophisticated equipment was not affordable for Project Noolaham.
- The second phase of the project was delayed until 2008 by inadequate funding to pay for the project activity.
- A project in collaboration with another organization was a new and challenging experience for Noolaham volunteers. For the first time in Noolaham Foundation's history, funding was utilized for scanning. Some standard practices were selected from this experience.

Suggestion and Recommendation:

- For Noolaham Foundation, this can be a starting point for similar projects. The potential of collaborative effort is realized and similar projects would be undertaken to create digital content.
- Adequate funding and human resources are necessary to enable quality outcome and to finish the project within the proposed time. Paying attention to these needs will help us in our future activities.
- The publications left out should be scanned when resources are available.
- Project Noolaham should collaborate more and more with other organizations and groups in creating digital content.