

Noolaham Foundation
Project Report Draft

Project title	International Center for Ethnic Studies Digitization
Project number	NF/PG/2010/0005
Project location	Colombo
Sector	Collection Development - Special Collections, and Organizations and Institutions
Implementing agency and contribution	Noolaham Foundation
Grant Agency and Contribution	Noolaham Foundation
Total Budget and Expenditure	Not recorded
Start and End date	2010
Responsible Stakeholder/s	Volunteers of Noolaham Foundation International Center for Ethnic Studies Colombo, Sri Lanka and Mr. Ponnudurai Thambirajah – Chief Librarian ICES, Colombo.

Summary:

The **International Center for Ethnic Studies Digitization** Project was carried out by Noolaham Foundation and International Center for Ethnic Studies (ICES), Colombo in 2010 to digitize the publications of the ICES. It was a collaborative project undertaken by Noolaham Foundation collective with another organization..

Through this project 137 documents were digitized and were made them available on Noolaham Foundation’s digital library at www.noolaham.org. The digitized publications include books, research papers, working papers, lectures handouts, monographs, reports, magazines, periodical newsletters and journals. This project increased online information sources on civil society, human rights, post war and land issues, history of conflict, capacity-buildings, current socio – political and economical configuration and contributed towards the mission of International Center for Ethnic Studies as well.

Introduction and Background

Noolaham Foundation is a non-profitable, collective and voluntary endeavor aimed at preserving Sri Lankan related books, magazines and other publications in e-format in order to make them available to and for the benefit of all those who are able to access the internet. Therefore Noolaham Foundation has a digital library which provides free public access of e-books online. The notion behind the entire project is to make information and knowledge available to future generations that will base internet as one of primary source for intellectual resources.

International Centre for Ethnic Studies is a Colombo based nongovernmental organization and is one of the Sri Lanka's leading research centers as well, focusing on ethnicity, identity politics, conflict and conflict resolution, post-war reconstruction, democracy and governance, human rights, development and gender. ICES consists of eminent scholars and practitioners, multi-ethnic core staffs and frequent international research fellows. It engages and supports in various activities such as academic research, advocacy on key policy matters and endeavors to create a critical mass of people who believe in cultural pluralism and tolerance, publication of books and journals, seminars and information services.

The ICES has published a range of publications on ethnicity, culture, identity, religion, women's studies, politics, law, and history. But the library holds only a few copies and these are often not available through interlibrary loan and also they may not going to be reprinted in mass scale. Published documents digitization can potentially greatly increase the breadth of access that can be provided. Digitized documents can be made available to multiple local users through this project. Use of a digital surrogate may decrease the need to use the original – which may difficult to access. These were considered when the project was initiated by Noolaham foundation.

Objective/s and Achievements or Results:

This project was taken place under the Noolaham Foundation objectives of Provide knowledge and information services to ensure free and open access, thereby supporting educational, research and development endeavors related to Sri Lankan Tamil speaking communities. Especially this project focused on Noolaham objective of Collection Development - Special Collections.

Various kinds of 137 documents were digitized through this project. Most of the documents are made available online through Noolaham Foundations digital library but some of books are have only the bibliographical entries as permissions from the copyright holders were not obtained to make the documents fully available online. Those who want to access parts of such publications under the fair use doctrine can do so by contacting Noolaham Reference Services.

Constrains / Challenges and lesson learned:

- A project in collaboration with another organization was a new and challenging experience for Noolaham Foundation's volunteers. Some standard practices were selected from this experience.
- This project showed that it was possible to secure permission to digitize works still in copyright provided publisher stipulations were met. Although some authors granted permissions freely, others want to limit use to the web.

Suggestion and Recommendation:

- The potential of collaborative effort is realized and similar projects would be undertaken to create digital content useful towards research work and further study.

- Written authorizations that release most or all copyright restrictions can greatly increase the accessibility, use and preservation. Voluntary arrangements need to be negotiated on a case by case basis. Noolaham Foundation has to explain to authors, the importance and usefulness of documentation for archival, educational and research purposes.
- Noolaham Foundation should collaborate more and more with other organizations and groups in creating digital content and improving the quality of work Noolaham Foundation has carried out since its inception in 2005. And also all the upcoming publications should be archived by Tamil speaking Community when the resources are available.

Acknowledgments

Noolaham Foundation takes immense pleasure in expressing its gratitude to the International Center for Ethnic Studies (ICES), Colombo for collaborating with us in this project. Noolaham Foundation would like to acknowledge Mr. P. Thambirajah, for his valuable guidance of this project and also for his suggestion towards all the activity, who worked as official contact person for this at the ICES. Noolaham Foundation also acknowledges all the members and staff attached to the ICES for the co-operation and support.