Digital Preservation Practices in the UN System: FAO Survey Results

Rachele Oriente
The Survey Instrument

- Sent to 25 UN Agencies
- Email contacts from UN-LINKS, contacts for the FAO Archives & RM, and from the May, 2011 FAO JHOVE2 workshop
- Designed and available in SurveyMonkey
- Open December 8, 2011 to January 15, 2012
- 12 respondents
Recognizing the Importance of DP

Strong consensus that now is the time to act
UN Agencies & DP Practice

• **4 of 12** respondents have a **systemized DP practice**
  – Only 2 of these 4 are actually working - ≥5 years
  – 1 is “going to start”
  – 1 did not give any details

• **8 respondents do not practice DP**
  – 3 of these 8 do project-driven or ad hoc DP, for ≤1-5 years
DP Policies

• 2 of 12 have a Digital Preservation policy.
• 4 do not have a Digital Preservation policy.
• 2 answered “other” - policy is in progress or, making an effort to develop policies and working procedures under the obstacle of lack of management support.
Selection Criteria

• 6 of 7 respondents favor having selection criteria
• 1 or 7 respondents collects “all objects” but selection criteria will be part of their forthcoming DP policy
• Existing criteria:
  – 2: use the same as paper records
  – 1: All Agency publications plus a particular author
  – 2: Official Agency records retention schedules
  – 1: Collects all objects
Content of Collections

100% of respondents preserve organizational reports and documents,
71% of respondents preserve archival records and images,
42.9% of respondents preserve monographs and journal articles, pamphlets and brochures,
28.6% of respondents preserve web sites or web pages and audio files,
14.3% preserve numeric data and multimedia.
No respondents preserve either computer code or maps/geospatial data.
One respondent reported also preserving email.
Repository Systems

- Documentum
- Agency Records and Archives Electronic Document Management System
- Greenstone → Dspace
- FAO – Fedora Commons
Size of Preserved Collections

7 respondents:

• 2: don’t know
• 1: have 200,000 objects
• 2: approximately 300,000 objects
• 1: 16,000 objects
• 1: 1,080,000 – Agency working in DP ≥ 5 years
• ?Byte size of collections is generally a ?
Access Models
Open? Restricted? Mixed? Dark?
Metadata

– 4 respondents use multiple schemes
  • MARC & DC or PREMIS or METS
  • 3 respondents use single schema
    – MARC
• 3 assign Metadata at creation of object
• 1 assigns metadata at creation and also during preservation activities
• All assign descriptive, 6 assign Administrative, 5 assign technical and events metadata and 3 assign structural metadata.
Systems & Tools

• PDF-A format; JHOVE and PRONOM, Open Text DAM & CLM
• No 2 UN agencies use the same system and 5/7 uses systems that we did not name
Activities

- 1 of 7 uses off-site storage; None use off-continent
- 1 of 7 uses UUID Persistent identifiers; 5 others would consider it; 1 named DOI
- 2 of 7 use audit trails, 3 others would consider it
- None practice EMULATION
- 3 practice FORMAT & MEDIA MIGRATION
- Integrity measures: 3 practice format verification, virus check, checksum verification, format validation and content validation
The Agency & the Digital Preservation Archive

Branch or Work Unit Responsible for DP
The Agency & the Archive: personnel

- 5 of 7 a Professional is responsible for DP
- 1 of 7 a General Service is responsible
- 1 of 7 has a “Digital Archivist”
- No correlation between number of DP staff and size of preserved collection
- Correlation between skills of DP staff and size of preserved collection
Challenges & Risks Experienced

- Lack of funding
- Lack of organizational / management support
- Lack of training for staff
- Infrastructure

Other (please specify)
Conclusion

- Universal interest in Agencies in DP
- Most Agencies new to DP
- Training is requested
- Common challenges: funding, support, training and infrastructure
- Recognition that it is time to act