

Annual Report of Activities 2008
EADI Information Management Working Group
June 2008

The Information Management Working Group serves as a platform for reflection, discussion and action on development information across Europe. It is the only European meeting place for information professionals with a strong interest in international co-operation and development research. For the past 32 years, the working group has organised annual meetings in close collaboration with its members. New members are always welcome!

1. Members

The members of the Working Group are mainly drawn from the EADI members. In recent years, the nature of group has evolved with more communication specialist joining with the information management and librarians, to form a solid and interwoven group. As a result of informal networking and interaction over the years, the members comprise a core group of around 40 people who attend the annual workshops regularly, and have been directly involved in IMWG project activities. A larger group participates in workshops on a more occasional basis, and efforts are made for each Workshop to reach out to local constituencies and networks and draw in additional participants. Over the past 5 years the total number of people involved in workshops has probably exceeded 150.

2. Activities

During the year we have been engaged in the following activities:

2.1 Conference

The Working Group took full advantage of the June 2008 EADI General Conference, hosted by the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva, to organise a series of activities and working sessions.

The focus of the main sessions were:

- **Showcasing Knowledge and Information Services** (co-organised with Euforic) – 12 different information services were briefly presented (COMPART, EADI Portal, Eland, E-Leida, Focuss.info, Hinari, IDS Knowledge Services, InfoResources, KIT Portals, NewsforDev, R4D and Reliefweb).
- **Accessing Research Information: the view from the South** – with presentations by Pinkie Mekgwe (CODESRIA) and Vikas Nath (South Centre) followed by a panel discussion.
- **Hard Talk: Interrogating Open Access** – A mini-symposium consisting of a presentation by Leo Waaijers followed by a panel discussion hosted by Lawrence Haddad.
- **Recognising Multiple Knowledges for Better Governance and Sustainable Development: Conceptual and Methodological Challenges** – led by the IKM Emergent project.

A Business Meeting of the Working Group was held, and visits were organised to the Libraries of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, and CERN, where a presentation was also given on the work of the ILO library. The Nordic Institute for Asian Studies in Copenhagen, has kindly offered to host the next IMWG workshop, in June 2008.

2.2 Discussion group

IMWG manages an online discussion group on DGroups currently consisting of around 80 participants. It is an informal space used by members to share knowledge. Its main purpose is for:

- Creating an interactive space for professional support
- Discussing the upcoming conferences
- Discussions around projects

The administration of the Group has been taken over by Sarah Cummings, with assistance from Sally Corcoran. For more on the group see www.dgroups/groups/imwg

2.3 Convenor meetings:

The Working Group Co-Convenors met in January 2008 (in Geneva) and held several conference calls subsequently to help plan the conference.

2.4 Project Work

2.4.1 EL@ND

ELAND is a European library collaboration and access initiative that has been championed by the IMWG since the late 1990's. A significant step forward was made in June 2008 with the launch of a completely redeveloped ELAND website, integrated within the main EADI website – which has also been recently redesigned (see www.eadi.org/eland). The functionality of this site has been simplified and improved, and a number of additional library collections and other resources have been added. The main contents of the site now comprise:

- The ability to search/access a total of 11 leading libraries and information collections hosted by EADI institutes around Europe – **CMI** (Bergen), **BLDS, Eldis and id21** (from IDS in Brighton), **DCISM** (Copenhagen), **ECDPM** (Maastricht), **IHEID** (Geneva), **ILO** (Geneva), **ISS** (the Hague), **OEFS** (Vienna), **REGARDS** (Bordeaux).
- Information on how to access all of these collections, and arrangements for document delivery.
- An overview page on each of the member libraries.
- Latest news from member libraries, which is available via a newsfeed.

Three more library collections are in the pipeline to be integrated – **CIDOB** (Barcelona), **INWENT** (Bonn), and **UCD** (Dublin). This project is now coordinated by the EADI Secretariat. The IMWG Business Meeting acts as a governance group, with representatives from contributing organisations the primary stakeholders.

2.4.2 IKM Emergent

The project has been operational for just over a year. The overall focus of the programme is on the understanding, handling and use of multiple knowledges within development organisations. Its objective is to stimulate thought and innovation and provide illustrations, rather than rigid solutions. There are 3 working groups looking at:

- Power relations and the barriers to the use of local knowledge in the South
- Tools for handling and communicating knowledge – now and for the future
- Organisational arrangements through which knowledge is managed in development organisations

There is a recent newsletter on the project website at www.ikmemergent.net. A first programme wide meeting is being held in Cambridge in July. The project came out of the IMWG group, and is open to new collaborators (contact the project coordinator, Mike Powell mike@ikmemergent.net).

2.4.3 Open Access Declaration

The IMWG has discussed Open Access archiving and publishing at both of its last two workshops. In 2007 it was agreed that the group would champion the Open Access philosophy and promote practical action in this direction within EADI member institutes. A draft declaration on Open Access was presented for initial consideration to the EADI Directors' meeting in October 2007, and raised again at the Directors' meeting at the 2008 Conference. Following the Conference session on 'Interrogating Open Access' – which was designed to raise awareness of the issue among EADI members - the intention of the IMWG is to suggest that EADI adopts the declaration at the October 2008 EADI Executive Meeting, and Directors' Meeting.

2.4.4 Focuss.info

www.focuss.info is a collaborative research tool for global development cooperation, making use of the Google custom search facility to provide a customised subset of recommended web resources. Set up by Institute of Social Studies in The Hague, the site used to be hosted on an ISS server, but is now on a different server and has been deliberately detached from ISS in terms of branding so it is

seen as a jointly owned initiative. The number of participants and searches has been steadily increasing. They are looking for more organisations and individuals to contribute recommended content to the search, and particularly pushing for participation and bookmarking by colleagues in the South. Work is underway to put the initiative on a more sustainable financial footing. The team would value help from IMWG members in make use of and raising awareness of Focus. (contact ask@focuss.info)

3. Convenors

At the annual conference, **Christine Wehrli** (Graduate Institute, Geneva) stepped down as from the IMWG Convenor Group. For the coming year, the Convenor Group will consist of **Geoff Barnard** (IDS), **Laurel Dryden** (ILO), **Anja Moller Rasmussen** (NIAS) and **Michel Wesseling** (ISS).