

COUNTRY REPORT TO CDNL-AO 2011

Name of country: Japan

Name of library or equivalent national-level organisation: National Diet Library

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1. General overview of recent major developments at the reporting library

The National Diet Library (NDL) has continued to see developments in constructing the basis for a national digital library function in FY2010. First, for digitization of paper materials, large-scale digitization of around one million items including almost all the books published before 1969 in Japan and held by the NDL, 12,000 titles of magazines and journals, 58,000 rare and old books, will be completed in March 2011. Second, for web archiving, the NDL has been collecting Internet information such as websites produced by government and government related institutions since April 2010 and websites for which permission has been obtained are already available on the NDL website, while others are available inside the NDL facilities. Third, for acquisition of online publications, equivalent to conventional books and magazines, which are produced by the private sector, the NDL is now vigorously working on the legislation following the report presented in June 2010 by the Legal Deposit System Council.

The NDL starts new user services in January 2012. The objectives are to create an environment where users can seamlessly access rapidly-increasing digital information and materials in traditional formats, such as paper; enhancing preservation and conservation function to hand down to the following generation valuable materials acquired as national heritages; improving user registration system and user assistant system; and developing the system environment and user environment to efficiently accomplish these objectives.

“NDL Search,” an information searching service program which will play a key role in this system, was released on trial in August 2010. It is expected to be an access point for the wealth of knowledge accumulated by the NDL, Japanese public libraries, archives, museums, institutes of academic research. It is equipped with an automatic translation system for Japanese/English, Japanese/Chinese and Japanese/Korean, which enables search for items by a keyword in another language. “NDL Search” is still in beta version, but it will go into full-scale operation in January 2012, reflecting feedback from users to make it a more user-friendly service.

In international cooperation on digital library projects, the NDL, the National Library of China and the National Library of Korea concluded an agreement for a digital library initiative on August 10, 2010. Based on this, the three libraries started working level cooperation to realize “easy integrated access on the Internet to the cultural and scientific heritage of the three countries.” The development of the automatic translation function for the above-mentioned “NDL Search” has also been conducted with the cooperation of China and Korea.

The NDL was especially active in holding public events in 2010, the National Year of Reading, to deepen people's understanding about reading, books and libraries, including a two-day international symposium "Enhancing the Culture of Reading and Books in the Digital Age - Copyright as a means to foster creativity and access –" in association with IFLA, IFRRO, WIPO and IPA. The International Library of Children's Literature of the NDL, which marked its 10th anniversary in 2010, also held a variety of events and exhibitions celebrating the National Year of Reading. The year 2010 also saw the 120th anniversary of the Japanese Diet (parliament) and an exhibition introducing historical materials on parliamentary government was organized by the NDL.

The 52nd meeting of the Council on Organization of Materials on Science and Technology submitted to the NDL Librarian a recommendation concerning the NDL's basic policy on organization of science and technology materials. It presents from a long-time viewpoint the role to be played by the NDL in the information environment where digital information resources will be of growing importance, stating that the NDL, based on its mission and experience as a national library, should take an active role in constructing a national knowledge infrastructure, which will be a new academic information basis.

2. Note of the reporting library's relationship to the government, citation of legislation which sets out the library's mandate, and other legislation which directly affects the library's operations.

The NDL was established in 1948 by the National Diet Library Law, based on Article 130 of the National Diet Law, "the National Diet Library shall be established in the Diet by a separate law, in order to assist Diet Members in their study and research." The National Diet Library Law declares the ideal of the library's establishment in its preamble, "the National Diet Library is hereby established as a result of the firm conviction that truth makes us free and with the object of contributing to international peace and the democratization of Japan as promised in our Constitution." Its purpose is defined in Article 2 of the law, "the National Diet Library shall collect books and other library materials for the purpose of assisting the members of the National Diet in the performance of their duties and also for the purpose of providing certain library services as hereinafter specified for the executive and judicial agencies of the national government and for the people of Japan."

3. Key fact and figures

- Collections (as of March 2010)
Total: 36,617,299 items
(Books: 9,496,680 volumes / Serials (periodicals and newspapers): 13,701,333 items)
- Number of staff: 890 (as of April 1, 2010)
- Annual budget (FY2010): 21.1 billion yen (approximately 255 million in USD)

4. New developments in creating and building collections

The NDL continues to acquire publications issued in the country through the legal deposit system as well as building its collection by purchase, donation and international exchange. It made efforts to raise awareness of the people about the legal deposit, especially on the occasion of the fourth Day of the Legal Deposit System, May 25, 2010. For developments regarding digital materials including web archiving and collection of online publications, see *1. General overview of recent major developments at the reporting library.*

5. New developments in managing collections

The NDL has been working on the planned introduction of a new integrated library system in January 2012. This system will function as a foundation not only for more efficient collection management, but also for updated information searching and user services, referred to in *1. General overview of recent major developments at the reporting library*.

6. New developments in providing access to collections

In relation to web services, “Newly Acquired Books Information” (Japanese only) started in October 2010, which offers the basic bibliographic information of books newly acquired through the legal deposit system, a few days after their deposit, before the completion of the bibliographic records. The data are available in RSS format as well as in text files (TSV), and since January 2010 they can also be searched by the “NDL Search (BETA).”

In November 2010, the NDL began to provide approximately four million JAPAN/MARC records to OCLC. Its member libraries worldwide can download the bibliographic records from WorldCat and use them for their own materials in the Japanese language. This also allows people around the world to search free JAPAN/MARC data.

“Digital Library from the Meiji Era,” providing images of books digitized by the NDL (see *1. General overview of recent major developments at the reporting library*) and whose copyright is cleared, has been developed over the year 2010. In April, an improved version was released with a new front page and easy-to-use functions. In February 2011, the Digital Library of Children’s Literature was integrated into the Digital Library from the Meiji Era. As of February 2011, digital images of about 390 thousand volumes are available in this digital library, of which about 172 thousand volumes can be seen on the Internet.

The NDL’s “Japanese Periodicals Index” is a search means for a wide scope of Japanese periodicals articles since 1949. In November 2010, the number of records exceeded 10 million.

The NDL has been stepping up its transmission of information via new channels such as Twitter and RSS. In addition to the latest news in the field of library and information science, information about the National Union Catalog Network (Unicanet) and Collaborative Reference Database is now offered using Twitter. Through RSS, more updates of information offered on the NDL website have been made available during the year 2010. The International Library of Children’s Literature launched web pages specialized for children.

7. Examples of collaboration between the reporting library and other national collecting institutions (libraries, archives and museums)

The National Diet Library Archive Portal (PORTA) enables people to search through an integrated search system various archives owned by national, public and private organizations in addition to NDL’s archives. Since its launch in 2007, number of searchable archives has increased with the cooperation of domestic institutions. As an example, mutual cross searching was launched by system coordination with the National Institutes for the Humanities in July 2010, which contributed to a significant increase in the number of search target archives. As of February 2011, 179 archives are searchable through PORTA.

In 2010, the NDL established a roundtable on digital information resources in MLA (museums, libraries and archives) collaboration in Japan. The roundtable consists of an annual meeting and two working groups: (1) Forum for Promotion of Digital Archives in Public Libraries; (2) Research on the Construction of Digital Information Resources Overseas. Up to February 2011, two forums have been held for the enhancement of digital archives in public libraries. Regarding the research, the results will be used for forming a policy to improve MLA collaboration in constructing digital archives in Japan and available on the NDL website.