

COUNTRY REPORT
21ST CONFERENCE OF DIRECTORS OF NATIONAL LIBRARIES IN ASIA AND OCEANIA
(CDNLAO) 2013

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1. General overview of recent major developments

In 2012 which is the second year of its five-year plan (2011-2015), the National Library of China made remarkable achievements in multiple areas both in business and management.

The National Digital Library Project of China approached completion. The National Digital Library Project which was initiated in 2005 came into the phase of completion with several major systems finished and put into service in 2012, including the Reader's Portal, the Wenjin Search Engine, the Resource Unique Identification System and the Copyright Management System. These systems have levelled up building and management of library collections and greatly helped improve library service. Thirty-four standards were built based on life-cycle management of digital resources.

Remarkable progress in Digital Library Promoting Project. The project is a major culture programme initiated in 2011 to benefit the public at large. With the aim of promoting the ideas, technologies and standards of the National Digital Library Project to the whole country, the project is designed to construct a multi-tiers distributive digital repository, a virtual private network interconnecting public libraries throughout the nation, a platform for demonstration of essential Chinese culture, aggregation of information service and communication of international cultures, thus providing universal digital library functions for legislative reference, research, education and life-long learning of the public. One of the significances of the project is that by the help of government's financial aids allocated to project participants, a lot of libraries especially those in underdeveloped areas improved their hardware equipments such as servers and storage facilities, as well as adopted advanced methods for building, management and utilization of collections.

By the end of 2012, some 60 libraries had been interconnected via virtual private

network, forming a DLPP network backbone throughout the country.

Further developments in Chinese Ancient Books Preservation Project. In 2012, the NLC launched a nationwide survey of the situation of preservation and protection of ancient books, proposed candidates for 'Directory of Precious Ancient Books' part IV as well as 'National Key Institutions for Ancient Books Preservation', and undertook a series of work on the registering of over 130,000 ancient books. The Library also hosted training programs 17 times with a total attendance of 1,139. Several standards on preservation of ancient books were formulated.

Minguo Documents Preservation and Conservation Project was in full operation. The project, aimed at saving endangered Minguo (the period of 1911-1949) documents, was another major program launched following the Chinese Ancient Books Preservation Project. In 2012, the NLC set out investigations on the collection of Minguo documents both inland and overseas, made relevant standards and started registering of the documents as well as devised dedicated systems for registering and union cataloging of the materials.

2. Relationship to government

(1) Progress in legislation of *Public Library Law*

The *Public Library Law* is a major legislative initiative in China's cultural field and will be the first national law on libraries. Since the library law was officially listed in the national legislation plan in 2001, the National Library of China had collaborated with experts in China library field, providing abundant materials and studies to help formulate the *draft version of Public Library Law* which was later submitted to the Legislative Affairs Office of the State Council in the end of 2011. During 2012, the Office solicited advices on the draft from the general public twice. Now the NLC is supporting certain departments for further revising of the *Public Library Law*.

(2) Paying close attention in third amendment of *Copyright Law*

The *Copyright Law* of China was issued in 1991 and on July, 2011 the government started to prepare its third amendment, soliciting opinions from the public. During this period, The Chinese library society led by the National Library of China proposed that libraries should own more copyright exceptions in the new information environment on the items of fair use concerning with library affairs. At present, this law is still under being revised and the Chinese libraries will continue to pay close attention to its progress.

3. Facts and figures

In 2012, in a situation that the south building closed due to refurbishment, the NLC saw a visitorship number of 3,755,000, offered 24,250,000 items of physical collections for circulation, and answered reference inquiries 657,000 times. The NLC website registered 1.12 billion page views, showing a 50.6% increase compared to last year.

By the end of 2012, 1,256,500 items were added to the Library, making the total amount of physical collections at 31,199,700 items; digital collections increased by 246TBs, reaching a total of 807.3TBs, 690.2TB out of which were produced by the Library itself.

By 2012 the NLC catalogued various collections of 1,237,511 items in 597,630

titles, a 35.67% increase compared to 2011.

4. New developments in creating and building collections

For physical collections: A new platform for facilitating legal depository was in use and works well as the Library saw remarkable increase in new collections received: books in Chinese increased at 38%, post-doctoral reports at 40%, books in eastern languages at 48%, books in western languages at 44%.

For digital collections: The Library also had new breakthroughs in building digital collections. Measures on digital collection management were revised to adjust related work procedures. As an innovative way of building digital collections, the NLC began collecting digital resource from public cultural organizations. The Library also saw rapid growth in the digitalization of characteristic collections of its own, and kept working in procuring licenses for a broader user range for purchased digital resources.

5. New developments in managing collections

The Online Library Cataloging Center, established by NLC, welcomed 291 new member libraries during the year, making the total members stand at 1,224 libraries and the amount of data downloaded increased by 42% compared to previous year. We have also collaborated with almost 50 libraries in a union catalogue program, gathering and sharing over 24,340,000 bibliographic records.

Research and studies were made on the Library's collections as well as on library development matters, resulting in compilation and publication of following works: 'Dunhuang Manuscripts in the National Library of China', 'A Compilation of Minguo Documents', 'Categorized Compilation of Minguo Periodicals', 'Manuscripts of Neoteric Famous Persons' and 'Blue Book of China Library Development'.

6. New developments in providing access to collections

(1) Providing reference service for government organs.

The NLC started providing reference services during the 'two sessions' viz. National People's Congress and Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference since 1998. In 2012 new features were added to the services including providing digital library materials. A research center of documents relating to borderland was also established by NLC.

(2) Digital library service.

The Readers' Portal provides registered NLC online readers with an integrated platform for various kinds of digital resources, which can be customized based on each reader's personal flavor. An all-in-one search engine named "Wenjin" was in full operation, aggregating nearly 200,000,000 metadata and providing a "one place" method to retrieval of the resource which is significantly faster in response and easier to use. A new version of NLC website went online together with the revamping of the Library's OPAC system. The Mobile Digital Library Service System was also improved to develop more users and provide more contents. We have also cooperated with an IPTV platform vendor to bring digital library service on IPTV in six provinces.

(3) Social education.

207 lectures, 142 exhibitions and other events were organized to help people's

use of Library collections, attracting over 788,000 participants. The 7th NLC 'Wenjin' book award event was successfully carried out, selected books were recommended to the public.

As the announcement of Chinese novelist Mo Yan's winning on 2012 Nobel Prize for Literature, a special bookshelf was set up in the Library's Chinese books area providing Mo Yan's most popular works for readers, an exhibition was also held demonstrating the Library's collections for the Nobel laureate's publications in multiple languages. (As a reply, the author wrote a public letter expressing appreciation for being honored and loved by the NLC and its readers.)

(4) Service for underage and disabled people.

The Library devised and published 'National Essential Catalogue for Children's Reading Rooms or Libraries'. Lectures and other programmes designed for underage people were also held periodically. We had also established digital library websites for people with disabilities (including visual impairments) and actively promoted the service in library field.

7. Collaboration

In 2012, the National Library of China took the responsibility of launching the Minguo Documents Preservation and Conservation Programme, in which the library will unite all the national libraries, archives and museums to generally survey their Minguo documents collection and provide the public with union catalogue search service. For most of the Minguo documents was damaged seriously because of paper acidification, the National Library of China will plan for repairing documents, digitalizing and publishing some documents for research under the support of the national finance, which enables the public access to these documents. This job is still in progress.

The National Library of China and the National Library of Singapore proposed *The Nanning Initiative of East Asian Libraries in 2012 China-ASEAN Cultural Forum*, which was approved by ASEAN's ten member states, China and Korea. This Initiative states that with the goal of resource co-building and co-sharing and establishing long-term and stable cooperative relationship, supported by modern information technologies, all the countries should increase personnel exchanges, further enhance the cooperation among libraries, and realize co-development and serving the society on the basis of mutual trust and mutual benefit; all the countries should develop comprehensive and practical cooperation especially in the collection, protection, developing and utilization of resources, digital library construction, and promoting the library service ability; all the countries should strengthen the regional cooperation development, promote the cooperation level, support and actively push forward holding the *Conference of Directors of National Libraries in Asia* during the *Thirteenth Asia Arts Festival* which will be held in 2013 in Yunnan, China.