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# The University of Michigan Library's International Data Workshop (IDW) Series

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### III. The University of Michigan Library's International Data Workshop (IDW) Series

As Read and Cox (2020) pointed out, academic libraries historically played a primary role around collection management, access, and discovery. "As scholarly communication (SC) evolved into a complex digital ecosystem, library services had extended their role to match it. Today, libraries are involved in a wide range of SC activities."<sup>[1]</sup> Although academic libraries in the United States and Canada have provided data services related to data collection, access, and discovery for many years, the primary focus of these services has often been the resources associated with North America and Europe. Data service specialists often cannot provide the same quality of data services for research related to non-Western regions. Otherwise, subject librarians and area specialists hold in-depth disciplinary understanding and language skills. However, they had little chance to expand their skill sets related to quantitative research methods and knowledge about statistics, geospatial data, and research data management services. To support librarians' effective data services to their clients, the University of Michigan Library's Clark Librarians have provided a series of two-day in-depth data services boot camps, called International Data Workshop<sup>[2]</sup>, every two years for subject librarians and area specialists. Initially, the primary targeted audience was the subject liaison librarians and area specialists in the US and Canada. But, this workshop series became a data workshop series for a worldwide audience. From this article, I will explain the characteristics of the IDW series, the content of the IDW 2023: Africa, which was held in May 2023, and the lesson that we learned from organizing the IDW series.



*The Clark Library of Government Information, Maps, and Data Services, University of Michigan*

#### **Characteristics of the International Data Workshop (IDW) Series**

The International Data workshop was planned based on feedback from international studies librarians and area specialists. This workshop's target audience is subject librarians and area specialists who cover underrepresented regions. As an international government information librarian at the Clark Library of government information, map, and data services, Jungwon Yang had multiple chances to present international statistics information at these area specialists' conferences, such as the Africana Librarians Council, the Association for Asian American Studies (AAAS), and the Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials (SALALM). The participants of these presentations eagerly shared their willingness to learn about data services. They also let Jungwon know that all data service training focuses on the cases of the US, Canada, or Western European countries. As a result, they have little chance to learn about their region's statistics information. Based on their feedback, the Clark Librarians planned two-day in-depth data

services boot camps every two years for underrepresented regions' subject librarians, area specialists, and academic researchers.

In November 2017, with financial support from the Nam Center for Korean Studies, Jungwon, and the Asia Library librarians launched a pilot program. The librarians of Clark Library, the Social Science team, Research Data Services, Digital Scholarship, East Asia Library's librarians, the education director of the the Inter-University Consortium of for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), and the Korean Studies Librarian at Princeton University asked to be instructors for this workshop. Over thirty East Asian librarians and area specialists in the US, Canada, and the Netherlands came to the University of Michigan Ann Arbor campus. After the workshop, Jungwon received much positive feedback from participants. For example, an East Asian librarian reported that she successfully figured out which International Government Organizations (IGOs) database was helpful for her client after she attended the IDW workshop. After the pilot program's success, Clark librarians decided to offer an International data workshop for subject librarians and area specialists related to other geographic regions.

In May 2019, librarians of Clark Library, the Social Science team, Digital Scholarship, and the International Studies unit were invited to be instructors to teach the IDW workshop for Latin America and Caribbean studies librarians and researchers. Librarians and area specialists from the US, Canada, and Puerto Rico, and the researchers from the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, University of Michigan, had a chance to participate in the in-person data boot camp. In 2021, the librarians of Clark Library and Social Science team, Taubman Health Library, Digital Scholarship, and International Studies unit offered a virtual IDW workshop for South Asia studies librarians and researchers because of the COVID-19 pandemic condition. The original IDW workshop series was designed for librarians in the US and Canada. Hence, the workshop preparation team never expected that more than 120 people from the US, Canada, Europe, India, Pakistan, and East Asia would register for the IDW 2021 South Asia<sup>[3]</sup>. In May 2023, librarians of Clark Library and Social Science team, Taubman Health Library, Digital Scholarship, Library Information Technology, Research Data Management services, and International Studies unit offered an international data workshop about Africa. Over 100 librarians, researchers, and archivists from North America, Africa, Europe, Asia, United Nations, and NGOs participated in the workshop.

The primary instructors of this workshop are Clark Library librarians because they have expertise in data collection management, data discovery, statistics, geospatial data and tools, maps, and international government information. But, this workshop is the product of collaboration with multiple units and departments of UM community. First, to identify the needs of targeted subject librarians and area specialists, the Clark librarians always invited the subject librarians of the UM library to participate in the workshop preparation team. For example, Yunah Sung<sup>[4]</sup> and Dawn Lawson<sup>[5]</sup> of Asia Library helped to prepare the 2017 workshop for East Asian librarians. Barbara Alvarez<sup>[6]</sup> and Edras Rodriguez-Torres<sup>[7]</sup> of International Studies worked with the Clark librarians to prepare the 2019 IDW workshop for the Latin American and Caribbean region. Jeffrey Martin, a librarian for South Asian Studies and Anthropology at the International Studies, was a preparation team member for the 2021 IDW workshop for South Asia. Loyd Mbabu, a Librarian for African Studies at the International Studies, was one of the 2023 IDW preparation team members. Second, we believe that statistics, foreign government and IGOs information, and knowledge about geospatial data, digital scholarship, health data, and research data management are essential to understand the researcher's research needs. Therefore, we invited informationists from Taubman Health Library, librarians of Social Science, Research Data Management services, Digital Scholarship, and the ICPSR education department director to become IDW workshop instructors. Becoming an instructor of the International Data Workshop is quite a challenging and time-consuming commitment. Instructors must find open-access resources because most IDW attendees are affiliated with small- or medium-sized librarians or academic institutions. They may not subscribe to or purchase many databases that UM library offers. Moreover, instructors are experts in data services and tools but may not be familiar with assigned regions' specific data resources. As a result, instructors often started to research the assigned regions' data resources a year before the workshop began.

## **International Data Workshop 2023: Africa<sup>[8]</sup>**

## International Data Workshop 2023: Africa

*International Data Workshop 2023: Africa website (Created by:Caroline Kayko)*

The recent international data workshop was held in May 2023. Six classes related to statistics, health data, geospatial data and tools, maps, digital scholarship, and research data management policies pertaining to the African region were offered.

In the Data Sources for Africa: International and National class, Jungwon Yang, Catherine Morse<sup>[9]</sup>, and Loyd Mbabu covered sources, current and historical, for statistics and survey data on Africa, including international government organizations and government-produced data from national statistical offices. The instructors also shared tips related to data reference interview and IGO publications' collocation management strategy. In the Health Data Sources for Africa: A Global and Regional Context class, Gurpreet K. Rana, Global Health Coordinator at the Taubman Health Science Library, provided useful resources of public health data related to and reported by international, national, regional, and country-level organizations. During the presentation, Gurpreet also discussed statistical and geospatial data sources that show impact on African health outcomes, such as the Sustainable Development Goals Indicators and the Global Burden of Disease Study. An Introduction to the Mapping of Africa was taught by Tim Utter, Manager of Clark Library. Tim introduced many resources on mapping of Africa, including online collections, carto-bibliographies, and other information resources. This class covered the history of post-colonial mapping in Africa, from its developments that include the colonial national surveys through the more modern scientific, topographic & social mapping initiatives. For the research data management service information, Sara Samuel, informationist of Taubman Health Science Library, opened the Landscape of Research Data Policies and their Impact on Researchers class. In the class, Sara provided an overview of various data-focused policies authored by funders, publishers, and institutions. In addition, specific data policies, such as the new NIH Data Management & Sharing Policy, were reviewed to help attendees understand these policies' purpose and goals. In the end, she discussed the practical impact of these policies on researchers. We also provided a digital scholarship class called Introduction to Digital Scholarship Projects in African Studies. Anne Cong-Huyen<sup>[10]</sup> and Jackson Huang<sup>[11]</sup> explained tools and research methods related to digital scholarship and helped participants to think through the potential of digital projects in African Studies. They also shared their experience related to a US- Uganda collaboration project. They walked through the planning process of applying for grants, working with library collaborators, and considerations for project teams and leads. Finally, the Data Visualization and Mapping class was taught by Justin Joque<sup>[12]</sup>, Nicole Scholtz<sup>[13]</sup>, and Caroline Kayko<sup>[14]</sup>. This workshop provided an overview of data visualization tools and best practices, including mapping and geospatial analysis. These instructors discussed strategies for finding data and selecting appropriate tools and methods for a project. The current availability of African geospatial data was framed in the context of the cultural information landscape.

### What we learned from International Data Workshops

Looking back at the process of the IDW series, the best decision we made was to ask UM library's area specialists to join the workshop preparation team. Our area specialist colleagues helped the IDW workshop management team connect with stakeholders of workshops, including librarians, area specialists, archivists, and researchers nationally and internationally. They also helped us understand the distinctiveness of each interest group's distinctive needs. For example, while we prepared the IDW 2019, Barbara informed the workshop preparation team that many Latin American and Caribbean studies librarians had an advanced degree in Social Science. Therefore, they are already familiar with how to retrieve statistical data from the database. Instead, these librarians were interested in learning Geospatial data collection and GIS analysis tools. We, therefore, requested the data visualization class's instructors to develop the advanced level GIS class for these groups. As a result, we successfully designed and implemented customized international data workshop series for area specialists and subject liaison librarians.

Overall, the Clark Library's International Data Workshop series exemplifies UM Library's effort to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility for the UM community and global library communities. Also, our virtual workshop's unexpected success shows that subject liaison librarians

and area specialists have strong wills to expand their skill sets related to international data.

## Footnotes

- [1] Alice Read, Andrew Cox, Underrated or overstated? The need for technological competencies in scholarly communication librarianship, *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, Volume 46, Issue 4, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib>.
- [2] <https://www.lib.umich.edu/research-and-scholarship/library-workshops-and-credit-courses/international-data-workshop>
- [3] The detailed information about 2021 WDI workshop classes is available from the following link: <https://sites.google.com/umich.edu/clark-library/international-data-workshop/2021-south-asia-data-workshop>
- [4] Korean Studies Librarian, Asia Library
- [5] Director of Asia Library
- [6] Director of International Studies
- [7] Librarian for Latin American and Caribbean Studies
- [8] <https://sites.google.com/umich.edu/clark-library/international-data-workshop/2023-african-data-workshop>
- [9] Political Science, US Government Information and Law Librarian, Clark Library
- [10] Director of Digital Scholarship, Learning & Teaching
- [11] Digital Collections and Content Ingest Coordinator, Library Information Technology
- [12] Visualization Librarian, Clark Library
- [13] Librarian for Geospatial and Numeric Data, Clark Library
- [14] Map and Geospatial Data Librarian, Clark Library

## IV. GIOPS @ WLIC 2023 & IFLA Elections

### IFLA WLIC IN ROTTERDAM AUGUST 21 – 25, 2023:

#### GIOPS Business Meeting:

- [The GIOPS Standing Committee Open meeting](#) (Session ID 032) will take place on August 20, 2023 at Port 1A from 11:15 am to 13:15 pm.
  - This is our business meeting where you can meet the new Officers and the new Standing Committee Members. It is open to all

#### Open Session:

- [How can librarians recognize misinformation in official government publications? – A panel discussion in search of guidelines for the government library field.](#)
  - Chair: Thanos Giannakopoulos (UN, Dag Hammarskjöld Library)
  - Panelists: Duncan Omole (World Bank Group), Kathryn W. Tallman (University of Colorado, Boulder), Justin Joque (University of Michigan, virtual participation), Meg Wacha (UN, Dag Hammarskjöld Library, virtual participation).
- This panel discussion (Session ID 155) will take place on August 23, 2023, in Rotterdam B from 11:30 am to 12:45 pm.

#### IFLA ELECTIONS 2023, NEW STANDING COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

- 1<sup>st</sup> term:
  - Jim Church, United States of America
  - Anoja Fernandow, United Kingdom
  - Devika McWalters, United States of America