Needs Assessment Workshop Report

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Event	Needs Assessment Workshop held on April 3 2017
Type of event	Workshop (using Video Conferencing and Webex meetings tool)
Venue	Islamic University of Gaza- Gaza & Birzeit University- Westbank
DOI	10.5281/zenodo.801797
Organizer	Islamic University of Gaza & Birzeit University
Reporting date	18/04/2017
Report author(s)	Rawia Awadallah & Iyad AlAgha (contributions from BZU team)

Research Output Management through
Open Access Institutional Repositories in
Palestinian Higher Education Institutions

The Islamic University - Gaza

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Workshop Objectives

Planning for Open Access Institutional Repositories (OAIRs) requires identifying key stakeholders who would support us in realizing the objectives of the project. There are so many layers of work to manage institutional repositories. Universities libraries, research offices, information technology departments, academic departments, university administration work together side by side to make sure that the OAIR process proceeds smoothly and sustainably over time. They share the responsibility of capturing the research output, organizing it and ensuring that long term availability and preservation is maintained, educating the scholars and the researchers about their privileges and rights as the authors of those works, and helping them understand the larger information policy and the copyright issues that touch their works.

The participants of the workshop were the key stakeholders of the project. We invited them at an early stage of the project, before the actual planning of OAIR models and before implementing or refining them, as we believe their opinion will shape the whole process. Our stakeholders will be incorporated into all aspects of the project, as the work progresses. They would be involved also with us in training sessions and future workshops.

In the first four months of the project, the Palestinian partners conducted two surveys. The first aimed to assess researchers' current practices, and the second explored institutional support staff capacity. The four participating institutions include:

- The Islamic University of Gaza (IUG)
- Al-Quds Open University (QOU)
- Birzeit University (BZU)
- Palestine Technical University-Kadoori (KAD)

The EU partners have conducted a survey based on a survey carried out by DCC in 2015, to assess the current practice of Open Access and Research Data Management (RDM) in the UK, Europe, Australia and USA. The four participating institutions include:

- Vienna University of Technology (TUWIEN)
- The University of Parma (PARMA)
- The University of Brighton (BU)
- The University of Glasgow (GLA)

The main objectives of this workshop are as follows:

- To present the findings of a needs assessment survey study that was carried out with researchers and support staff in four Palestinian Higher Education Institutions (PS HEIs) between December 2016 and February 2017.
- To present good practice in establishing RDM and OA services in the European partners universities
- To engage the stakeholders in discussions to identify their requirements, interests or concerns regarding the OAIRs.

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- To setup requirements for doing the gab analysis and the road map for Research Data Management in PS partners through OAIRs.

Attendees Present

Institution	
Islamic University of Gaza (P1) – host partner **30 participants including:** – IUG team members – Stakeholders (Scientific research affairs, library, IT center, Faculty of Information Technology staff and students)	**Birzeit University (P2) – host partner** **30 participants including:** – BZU team members – Stakeholders (Fada team, library, IT center, Faculty members)
Al-Quds Open University (P3) **10 participants including:** – QOU team members – University Stakeholders	**Vienna University of Technology (P4)** – TUWIEN team members
Universita Degli Studi Di Parma (P5) **– Parma team members**	**University of Brighton (P6)** – ROMOR team members
University of Glasgow (P7) – GLA team members	**Palestine Technical University - Kadoorie (P8)** 10 participants including: – PTUK team members – University Stakeholders

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Summary of the Workshop (April 3 2017)

Timing	Notes
10:00	Henry Giacaman, the Vice President for Academic Affairs at BZU, delivered the welcome address of the host. He welcomed all attendees and thanked all partners for their efforts. He also emphasized the importance of the ROMOR project in building capacity in RDM in Palestine through OAIRs.
10:10	Rawia Awadallah, the project manager, gave an overview on the scope and the objectives of the ROMOR project. She highlighted the publication trends in the Arab world and in Palestine. She then discussed the challenges that have led to inadequate visibility of PS research outputs, and the ways to maximize output visibility through OA publishing and Institutional Repositories (IRs). She presented the advantages of IRs and their status in the Arab world. Finally, she briefly identified the ROMOR project's consortium, partners, and stakeholders.
Session 1: Needs Assessment by Academic Staff and Research Managers at PS partners	
10:25	The first session was chaired by Talal Shahwan from BZU. The session aimed to present the results of the needs assessment surveys, and was delivered by academic staff and research managers at the four partner PS universities.
	Iyad AlAgha, from IUG, explained in detail the results of the needs assessment survey conducted for academic staff at the four PS partner universities. He briefly explained the survey objectives and delineated the adopted methodology. He then presented the results and statistical details that showed: 1) An estimation of the size and types of scholarly and non-scholarly literature at the four PS partners; 2) The common research practices and habits adopted by PS researchers, and the extent to which these practices come in line with OA and IRs; 3) The status of institutional policies and the staff's awareness of these policies; 4) The status of IRs in partner universities and the staff's attitudes towards them; 5) The staff's attitudes towards OA publishing. Comparisons between PS partner universities were made where appropriate. Finally, conclusions were drawn and discussed.
11:00	**Coffee Break**
11:15	Four members of the ROMOR project, one from each PS university, each of them a research manager at their university, presented their institution's main needs assessment results by. The four members were: Adnan Yahya from BZU, Yosef Abuzir from QOU, Nael Salman from PTUK, and Iyad AlAgha from IUG. Each presentation highlighted issues related to RDM at the institutional level, including the preserved digital materials, the RDM activities as well as the

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departments/centres in charge of each RDM activity, and the main challenges encountered in this regard. In addition, the status of IRs, RDM policies, metadata, and the priorities for future development were also discussed. Iyad AlAgha also summarised the conclusions from the individual institutional needs assessment presentations, and highlighted the common observations from and differences between PS universities.

After the end of presentations, Rebhi Barakah, from IUG, discussed the problem of technical and supporting materials associated with Masters theses, and asked whether it is possible and appropriate to deposit technical materials into IRs. Rawia replied that IRs should not be limited to publications, but should include all materials and information related to publications. **The needs assessment study should identify this issue, and whether there is a need or not to preserve such technical materials in IRs.**

Stefano, from Parma, commented on the need for digital preservation, and asked whether our aim is to preserve materials so that they remain accessible for generations, or just to archive materials in IRs without considering long-term accessibility.

A participant from BZU indicated that the study does not identify to what extent the current policies in partner PS universities motivate researchers to deposit into IRs.

12:20	Lunch Break

Session 2: Reporting and Reflecting on DCC Survey Results

13:20	Session 2 commenced at 13:20, and was chaired by Prof. Samir Afifi from IUG. Joy Davidson from Glasgow presented about the good practice in establishing RDM services, and lessons learned from the UK experience. She first explained the DCC RDM service model which she adapted to analyze the needs assessment results. Key results from the needs assessment survey by PS academic staff were mapped to the related components of the DCC RDM model. For each key result, Joy discussed the aspects of good practice and possible implementation challenges. She then reflected on the national picture in the UK. Finally, Joy gave a summary of recommended actions to be considered when developing RDM infrastructure.
	Prof. David Anderson from UoB presented the results of the ROMOR EU survey, which was based on a survey carried out by DCC in 2015. He presented results related to the EU researcher's attitudes to OA. Issues such as development barriers, support for data management, OA plans, and digital preservation were also presented and discussed. He also examined issues

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	related to sources of funding for research management and expected change in capacity and long-term accessibility.
Session 3: Open discussion with Stakeholders	
14:00	Adnan Yahya from BZU opened the session by asking for questions from the audience in Gaza and Ramallah, allowing for questions to be asked in Arabic or English.
	An attendee from the IUG's library staff asked the following questions: 1) how can we motivate researchers to contribute their publications to the institutional repository?; 2) Most of the discussion raised so far revolved around the research data, while nothing has been told about ways to reach or contact the researchers; 3) How different types of materials such as images and videos will be deposited into the IRs.
	Rebhi Barakah, from IUG, asked about the long-term sustainability of IRs, and how it can be assured taking into consideration the rapid changes in technologies and software solutions that will become obsolete within few years.
	Mr Mamdouh Ferwana, the manager of IUG central library, asked the following questions: 1) How will the sustainability and continuity of the project be guaranteed after the completion of the project?; 2) Is the ministry of Higher Education involved in the project or not?; 3) Is it possible to expand the list of participants in the project to include not only universities but also ministries? The goal, as he indicated, was to widen the scope of IRs so that they go beyond research outputs by acting as national or regional archives.
	Prof Samir Afifi, from IUG, indicated that the involvement of stakeholders has been one of the main challenges that we need to address, and he asked about potential ways to persuade stakeholders to participate.
	Rawia, the manager of ROMOR project, asked about the commitment of the partner PS Universities towards the project outcomes, and whether they are going to assure the continuous operation and maintenance of IRs after the completion of the project. She also asked the team of BZU about who will be responsible for the running and maintenance cost, based on their experience with IRs.
	Bahaa Fayed, from QOU, noted that there are many challenges that we need to consider to make this project a success. An example of such a challenge is the unwillingness of many researchers to share their outputs. He asked what we can do to face this challenge.
	Another participant from Ramallah raised a few questions about the digitization of research artifacts that are not in digital format such as cultural

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heritage material and some PhD theses written in Arabic. He wondered what we should do to digitize such materials. He then talked about the progress that BZU has made to digitize the Palestinian cultural heritage in order to be maintained in its repository. He also referred to text recognition tools and their limitations in Arabic text recognition.

Another participant from Ramallah asked the project manager, Rawia, if the project aims to establish a single repository for all PS partner universities, or a repository for each university. Rawia replied that the project aims to establish a single repository for each partner PS university to maintain its research outputs. Repositories may be also linked through a single user interface that allows for searching in all repositories at the same time.

Another participant from QOU highlighted the need for multilingual support, and the digitization of Arabic documents. He also talked about the experience of using OCR software in Alexandria University for scanning Arabic documents, and that OCR tools do not always give satisfactory results.

Rawia asked the team at BZU about the potential ways to motivate researchers to deposit into IRs, and how they tackled this issue for the FADA repository.

Diana Sayegh, the manager of the BZU central library, participated in the discussion and talked in detail about the establishment of the FADA IR in BZU: She said that the process started by forming a committee consisting of administrative staff, librarians and IT staff. This committee worked to prepare the deposit and usage policies of FADA. Afterwards, they started with a small pilot by depositing only graduation projects. Then they moved forward by coordinating with the Academic Affairs at BZU to motivate researchers and academic staff to contribute to FADA' content. Depositing content into FADA has then become a condition for academic promotions. Diana also raised several challenges for IRs such as copyright issues.

Joy, from Glasgow, commented on the sustainability issue and indicated that it has always been a problem even for projects in the UK and Europe. One way she suggested to tackle this issue was to look for beneficiaries outside HEIs that can bear the cost. She also suggested establishing collaborative models through which multiple universities run a shared service, and thus share the running costs. She gave an example of a pilot collaborative model that included four technical universities in the Netherlands that run a shared service.

Adnan commented on the issue of motivating researchers, and said that the motivation amongst researchers will grow once everyone becomes convinced of the potential benefits of IRs and the value of opening access to faculty

publications at both institutional and individual levels. Adnan also emphasized the need to add support for Arabic content, and to address multilingual issues. He also stressed the need to expand the target community by making IRs integrated into social media, and by engaging the ministry of higher education to adopt a national policy that can foster the development of IRs.

Mohammed Abu-Hamdia, from the Palestine Polytechnic University, discussed the results of an existing study that compared different software solutions for implementing IRs, and suggested that DSpace is the best software due to its support for both Arabic and English languages.

Iyad, from IUG, responded to the question about ways to reach or contact the researcher after depositing his/her data. He said that metadata associated with publications should include information about the owner/researcher such as contact details. He also said that the running and maintenance cost of IRs can be reduced by making the operational tasks of IRs part of the job duties of the current library/IT/research staff, hence no additional employment is needed for operating or maintaining the IRs. He also said that IRs should support different formats of materials such as text, images, video and audio.

Rebhi Barakah from IUG supported Adnan's viewpoint about the need to link IRs with social media, and suggested to explore approaches to support automatic population of IRs by, for example, crawling the web to automatically extract content from academic literature.

Rawia directed a question to Diana Sayegh, the manager of BZU library, about the levels of accessibility to the content of the repository, and whether it is possible to restrict access to some materials on the repository. Sayegh replied that FADA repository addresses this issue by providing researchers with three options to control the access to their materials: The first option is "open access" which aims to make the content openly accessible to everyone. The second option is to make the material accessible only by the university's community. The third option is called "archiving", and it can be used for materials that should be preserved without being visible in the short term such as internal reports and private documents.

Rawia then asked Sayegh about the problem of duplicated publications, which refers to republishing, through IRs, material that are published somewhere else. She wondered if the team of BZU has studied this issue. Sayegh said that FADA repository only allows access to material that are not openly accessible on the internet. If the publisher's policies do not allow republication, then only a link to the publication on the publisher's website will be shared through FADA. Rawia said that it could be possible to resolve the duplication issue by

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	integrating research management systems, such as VIVO[1], into the IR's deposit process. Such systems can identify duplicated publications before uploading content to the repository. Talal Shahwan, from BZU, stressed the importance of motivating staff members to contribute to the IRs, and raising their awareness of the potential benefits in terms of the increased number of citations and visibility of their outputs. He also talked about the experience of BZU in making the contribution to the IR's content a requirement for academic promotions. He also emphasized that the higher levels of administration at PS universities should be convinced of the importance of IRs, and should adopt policies to advocate and populate them consistently.
15:00	Coffee break
Session 4: Closed Discussion with team members	
15:15	Rawia started the session by highlighting the main challenges raised in the former session, which are: the support for multilingual content, the duplicated publications, the sustainability of IRs, the motivation of researchers, and the digitization of content. Rawia asked Prof. Janet Delve (BU) about the multilingual content and the digitization of Arabic materials: Is this issue out of the project's scope, or should be considered? Janet said that these issues are out of scope, but if this material is identified as key and typical, we could consider starting with a small pilot with a minimum content, should the budget allow. Through this small pilot, potential challenges and needed efforts can be estimated, thus a clear decision can be made. Starting with such a small pilot, additional content can be added iteratively later on. Samir Afifi suggested to look for extra funding to cover the expenses of content digitization. Stefano Caselli, (PARMA), suggested that we should focus on specific types of data based on the national priorities. He also pointed out that the digitization of content is out of the scope of the project. He also suggested to focus on peer-reviewed literature because it constitutes the main research output of the university, it is considered for promotions, and will remain accessible and reusable for a long time. Rawia suggested to initiate a working group in each PS partner university to identify the specific needs and data types to be deposited into its repository. All stakeholders inside the university should be involved in the working group and should take part in identifying the institution's needs. Even for BZU, which

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[1] http://vivoweb.org/

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already has FADA repository, the working group will help in identifying additional needs or data types.

Tomasz Miksa, (TUWIEN) and in Ramallah, said that the priority is to discuss the forthcoming training and curriculum development activities based on the identified needs. He also stressed that the digitization of materials is out of the scope of the project because it is time-consuming and needs a lot of money. He said that our project is more about best practices in establishing and managing IRs, as well as the associated vocational and academic training. Other issues such as long-term accessibility and content digitization are out of scope. He also indicated that each PS university should identify and prioritize their specific demands, which should be then considered in curriculum development and training activities.

David, (BU), agreed with Tomasz on the need to focus on digitized or born-digital data, and that content digitization is beyond the scope of the project. Both David and Joy suggested conducting a small pilot on digitization if there is a budget for that.

Talal Shahwan from BZU emphasized that content digitization is an essential and inevitable process. Based on the experience of BZU in this regard, we would find ourselves obliged to deal with a large number of publications and materials in Arabic, Talal said. BZU has tried to tackle this issue by motivating researchers to digitize their materials, and convincing them of the potential benefits.

Nael Salman, from PTUK, said that it is necessary to convince both the administration and the researcher of the benefits of IRs. If they are both convinced, they will be motivated to digitize and contribute to the IRs. He also recommended to start with small pilots and individual repositories in each university before going further and thinking of establishing a national repository. Based on his experience, a previous project had the objective of establishing a national repository but it was not successful due to the conflict of interests between the entities involved in the project.

Rawia directed a question to Diana Sayegh: She asked about the idea of integrating individual repositories through a single user interface that allows for accessing and searching in all repositories, and whether this interface falls under the scope of the ROMOR project. Sayegh thinks that the shared interface could be a good idea if the budget permits. However, she thinks that the priority at this stage is for building and populating individual repositories before integrating them.

Adnan Yahya said that the repositories to be established in PS partner universities are not necessarily to be identical due the different needs of each

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university. He suggested that each university should address its own issues and problems, but all universities should share and agree on the common issues such as copyrights and intellectual properties.

Rawia asked the team at BZU to transfer the knowledge they gained from the work on FADA so that other national universities can benefit from their experience. She emphasized that one of the project objectives is to provide guidance to other universities and international parties, and to target the wider audience through the Wiki by publishing training material in Arabic.

Rawia suggested to add support for metadata in both Arabic and English. Joy and Janet said that it is important to support metadata in both languages to address the multilingual issue. They also suggested to have a small pilot on that.

Rawia asked partner PS universities to create a working group in each university to identify its specific needs and priorities. Each working group should involve all stakeholders in each university. The mandate and deliverables from each group will be defined and circulated.

Summary of the Required Actions

A summary of the required actions is given the Table 1. A more detailed description of the different actions is given the WP1 final report.
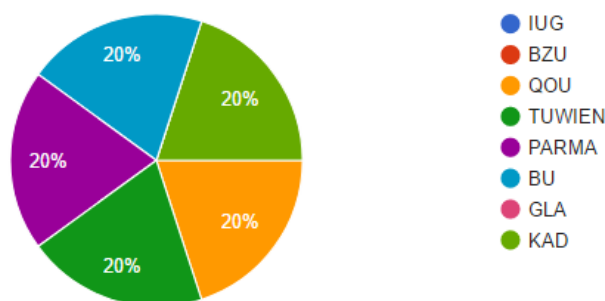
Table 1: Summary of required actions

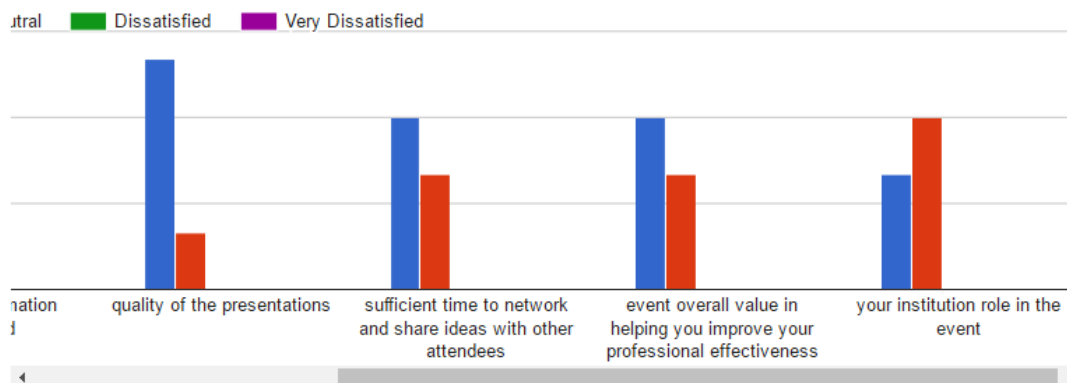| Action	Responsible	Deadline
Forming working groups	PS partners	April 21 2017
Identifying the broad objectives and the RDM profile of the institution	PS partners	April 21 2017
Identifying the requirements of each stakeholder group	PS partners and EU partners	April 25 2017
Identifying the training needs	PS partners and EU partners	May 5 2017

Workshop Evaluation Summary

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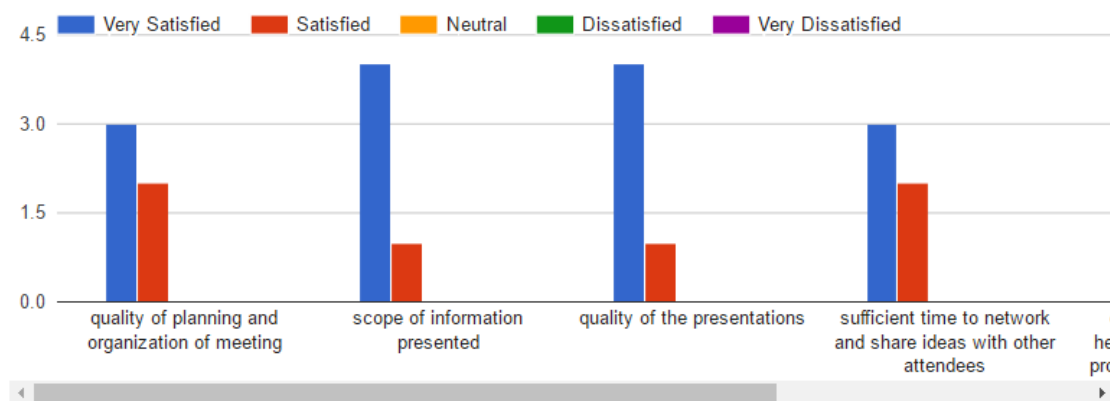Co-funded by the
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Assessment of the Event (Needs Assessment Workshop)

How satisfied are you with the:

Assessment of the Event (Needs Assessment Workshop)

How satisfied are you with the:

Feedback and Suggestions

Are there any additional comments or suggestions regarding the event or the project in general?

(3 responses)

The day worked very well - webex enabled us to stay connected all day, and to see and present slides easily. Thank you everyone!

Provide short consecutive translations during discussion sections! Sometimes it was difficult to track the opinions of the various contributors.
Interesting and lively, though.

I would like to thank BZU and IUG for planning and hosting the event