Methodology

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1. Initial communication and project planning

Communication and negotiations with IFLA started at the 2006 IFLA conference in Seoul. The contract for the 2007 World Report was awarded to the Department of Information Science, University of Pretoria, South Africa at the end of January 2007.

2. Development of the questionnaire

The questionnaire that was used for the 2007 World Report was based on the questionnaire used for the 2005 World Report. The existing questionnaire was reviewed by the research team and questions were expanded and changed. The questionnaire was also reviewed and pre-tested by independent reviewers and adapted accordingly. The proposed changes were accepted by the FAIFE Committee of IFLA, as well as the IFLA Headquarters. (Copies of the questionnaires used for the 2007 World Report are available in Appendices A, B and C.)

The questionnaire (in English) was translated into French and Spanish. The French translation was done by Ms Liezl-Marie Watt, at that time from the University of South Africa, with input from Mr Junior Bweenda Muke from the University of Pretoria. The Spanish translation was done by Ms Loida Garcia Febo, an IFLA member, from the Queens Public Library in New York, who also translated the questionnaire from English to Spanish for the 2005 World Report.

The format of the questionnaire was an electronic form in Microsoft Word. It contained the questions in a read-only (locked) format with tick boxes where respondents could indicate their response, and additional space where respondents could provide more information and type in as much information as they preferred.

2.1 The 2007 questionnaire

Compared with the 2005 questionnaire, some changes were made to the 2007 version.

Firstly, the structure of the questionnaire was changed from three sections in 2005, to five sections as follows: (1) Country and contact details; (2) Estimated number of libraries; (3) Libraries and the Internet; (4) Special issues; and (5) Ethics and IFLA initiatives. See IFLA/FAIFE World Report (2005: 48-49) for the rationale for, and explanation of most of the questions.

A short summary of the changes in each section is provided below.

- *Section 1: Country and contact details*

This section asked respondents to furnish their country, institution or organisation's details, as well as their own contact details. It was clearly stated that the contact details were required for follow-up communication. Respondents could also indicate their request for anonymity with regard to either their organisation, or person, or both.

- *Section 2: Estimated number of libraries*

In addition to the 2005 questionnaire, this section asked respondents not only to estimate the number of libraries in the two categories of public and research libraries, but also to provide an even more detailed account of research libraries in their country. Separate subcategories for university research libraries, school libraries and government-funded research libraries were created. Another addition was the question regarding the source of these numbers. The reason for including this question was quality control, i.e. to disclose whether the numbers were based on a guesstimate or on a survey, research and/or official figures.

- *Section 3: Libraries and the Internet*

In accordance with section 2, the new subcategories were included when respondents were asked for the percentage of public and research libraries offering Internet access to users.

Three new questions were added to this section. Respondents had to indicate on a scale their estimate of the amount of local content that is available on the Internet (local content being defined as content that originates in the country). Also indicating their estimate on a scale, they were asked to which degree content on the Internet is available in local languages.

The rationale is that if a person is not fluent in one of the major languages of the world, access to the Internet may not be very valuable. Also, content that may be valuable and/or relevant in a developed country context may not be relevant in a specific local context in a developing country. Bridging the digital divide through access to the Internet would therefore

also entail access to relevant local content in a language that is understandable to the reader.

Lastly, respondents were asked to express the literacy rate in their country as a percentage. Even though this information was also taken from the *CIA World Factbook*, it was important to see whether there were any discrepancies between local data (as provided by the respondents) and data in the *CIA World Factbook*.

The questions regarding the filtering and blocking of information, as well as financial barriers impacting on access to the Internet, were kept the same as in 2005. The only addition was space to provide more information and/or to elucidate responses.

- *Section 4: Special issues*

This section contained questions about:

(i) User privacy and anti-terror legislation
(ii) Violations of intellectual freedom
(iii) HIV/Aids awareness
(iv) Women and freedom of access to information

Although the questions remained the same in order to follow up on the 2005 report, the format was different for some. Tick boxes had been supplied and additional space provided in all cases for respondents to explain their responses and/or provide additional information. The motivation for adding the textboxes was to gain more information and allow for a better context for responses.

- *Section 5: Ethics and IFLA initiatives*

The questions relating to ethics and the IFLA initiatives (the Internet Manifesto and the Glasgow Declaration) were kept the same as in 2005, so as to update the findings of the previous reports. Additional textboxes were provided for respondents to further substantiate their responses.

2.2 Problems experienced with the questionnaire

The list below summarises the observations made and challenges experienced in regard to the questionnaire used in the 2007 World Report:

- With reference to section 1 (questions 1 and 2), the categorisation of libraries proved difficult for some respondents. The categories were public libraries and research libraries, with the latter subdivided into university research libraries, school libraries and government-funded research libraries. Some respondents did not understand the last-mentioned category, and indicated (for instance) that all research libraries in their country were government funded. Clearer definitions in this respect are therefore required.
- No separate category existed for a national library, which also posed challenges as to the category in which it was placed. Including such a category could therefore be beneficial in the next report.
- Some respondents interpreted the question about the literacy rate in their country as pertaining to the illiteracy rate. This misinterpretation can possibly be ascribed to a language barrier. These instances were rectified during the input and feedback process.
- In general, many respondents completed the tick box sections of the questionnaire, but did not offer explanations and/or additional information to allow for more in-depth reporting on some issues.
- Few countries reported incidents and/or violations with regard to FAIFE-related issues. The reasons for this non-reporting are unclear and can only be speculated upon.

3. Data collection process

This section offers an overview of the data collection process, a very time-consuming and complex one, with many aspects that had to be managed. The process was coordinated and managed by Ms Retha Claasen-Veldsman from the Department of Information Science at the University of Pretoria. The entire process was a team effort, with all members working well together.

3.1 Selection of countries and potential participants

It was contracted with IFLA that the 2007 World Report would include 90 countries, compared with the 84 countries represented in the 2005 report. Since the start of the World Report series in 2001, the number of countries has increased steadily. As it is IFLA's goal to have this publication as representative of the countries in the world as possible, the team endeavoured to reach as many countries as possible.

IFLA provided the contact list for the 2005 report, which the team used as a starting point. The list was expanded to include the countries that had not been contacted and/or represented in the previous reports.

In order to identify potential respondents, Internet searches were conducted to identify national libraries, library associations and/or other relevant institutions that could assist in finding a national library and/or library association. Existing directories and contact lists available on the Internet were also consulted, for example the IFLA membership directory, IFLA's address

list of national libraries, the American Library Association's directory of library associations, the UNESCO library portal, the University of Queensland's list of national library websites in Australia, the directory of Asia-Pacific libraries, lists of national libraries and library associations on Wikipedia, and so forth.

It should be noted that none of these lists was comprehensive, thus various lists were consulted and many Internet searches conducted. We would like to thank IFLA members and other volunteers who also assisted in providing contact details of potential respondents. As a result, it was possible to draw up an expanded contact list.

3.2 Methods of communication

A total of 174 of 229 countries as listed in the *World population prospects: The 2006 revision population database of the United Nations Population Division* (http://esa.un.org/unpp/index.asp?panel=5), were contacted and supplied with the call for participation.

Communication took place mainly in English. As in 2003 and 2005, the questionnaire was also available in Spanish and calls for participation and/or follow-up communication were also conducted in Spanish. In 2007, French was introduced as an additional language, the questionnaire was available in French and calls for participation and/or follow-up communication were conducted in French. The addition of French proved to be very effective as 15 French responses were received, nine of which were first-time participants.

The methods of communication used in this process are discussed below.

3.2.1 Email

The main method of communication was via email. The first calls for participation were sent out on 14 March 2007. Similar to 2005, many either came back as failed messages, or no response was received within the first two weeks. Four student researchers, Ms Rebecca Buchmann, Ms Rebecca Hall, Ms Alissa LaChapelle and Ms Reagen Thalacker from the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee in the USA, worked from 13 to 30 April to check and confirm the existing contact list as received from IFLA, as well as the new countries added to the list. They did important work to identify potential new respondents in those countries not represented in the previous report.

Email messages were managed on a daily basis, with individual follow-up per country. A string of email correspondence was built up for each country. Correspondence was done mainly in English, with the exception of French and Spanish messages.

3.2.2 Telephone contact

Potential respondents were phoned in cases where email contact could not be established, an email address could not be found or where such an address did not exist. These potential respondents were contacted telephonically by Ms Ncamsile Dlamini, from the Department of Information Science, University of Pretoria. Telephone calls to French-speaking countries were made by Mr Junior Bweenda Muke, a French mother tongue speaker, whereas Spanish-speaking countries were phoned by Ms Maria del Pilar Cortabarria, a Spanish mother tongue speaker (both from the University of Pretoria).

Although initially used only to establish a contact person or an email address, telephone calls were also in some cases used to follow up participation, especially to those countries that indicated their intent to participate.

At least 90 countries of the 174 contacted were contacted telephonically during the data collection process. Of these 90 countries, 16 were French and seven were Spanish-speaking countries. Of the 116 countries that responded, 71 were phoned for reasons as mentioned above. Unfortunately, many countries that indicated their intent to participate eventually did not respond. The telephone calls nevertheless proved to be a very effective way of establishing personal contact and also of following up on email messages, as many potential respondents did not receive the initial emails.

3.2.2.1 Problems with telephonic contact

The problems experienced with the telephonic contact are summarised below:

- It was time consuming and time intensive.
- Phone calls had to be made according to the time differences between countries, often resulting in calls that had to be made either early in the morning or late at night.
- Language was also a challenge, as English in many countries is not the first language. In some cases there was a total communication breakdown due to the language barrier. The telephone calls in French and Spanish helped a great deal, but unfortunately many other languages could not be accommodated as effectively.
- Outdated information on the Internet, such as

telephone numbers that did not exist any more, resulted in additional time used to search for other contact numbers.
- Problems with telephone networks were experienced, especially for some of the African countries, where the correct telephone numbers were confirmed but the connection was not working.

3.2.3 Follow-up

Initially the response rate was very slow, with few countries responding to the first call for participation. The confirmation of contact details proved to be very successful and many more responses were received after sending out the call for participation to the updated contact list.

Dedicated follow-up and continued searches to identify potential respondents were conducted. In some cases, three or four follow-up emails were sent to potential respondents to remind them of the project and to invite them to participate. Respondents that confirmed their participation were also reminded. Although the follow-up of potential respondents mainly took place via email, telephonic follow-up was also done for most of the countries.

Unfortunately no responses were received for the two questionnaires that were mailed and one faxed to potential respondents.

3.2.4 Problems with data collection

In this section, problems and challenges experienced with the data collection process are summarised.

- Outdated information on the Internet was a tremendous problem. Many websites of national libraries and/or library associations were out of date, in particular with regard to the date of last revision and the events, news and/or meetings advertised on the websites.
- In many cases the design and content of the websites posed some challenges in identifying the management and/or other potential contact persons. It should, however, also be acknowledged that many institutions had excellent websites.
- Language differences posed a number of difficulties. Some websites were only available in languages other than English, which called for a great deal of translation (mainly using online translating services) and/or educated guesses as to contact details and so on. Some sites offered an English version, which was very helpful, except in cases where the English version was quite obviously outdated compared with the official language, with some versions even looking totally different.
- Faulty email addresses and/or telephone numbers created problems.
- It is a pity that some countries indicated their interest in participating in the World Report, but did not respond to calls for participation.
- The final deadline for submission of the completed questionnaires was extended a couple of times to accommodate countries that had received their calls for participation at a later stage than others, due to the reasons already discussed.

3.3 Responses received

From the 174 calls for participation, a total of 116 responses were received. Of these, 33 countries participated for the first time in the World Report series. A detailed analysis of these countries as well as comparative tables can be found in the section "Analysis and conclusions".

Due to the challenges experienced with sending out calls for participation, it was necessary to extend the initial cut-off date for responses. In many cases the due date of 31 March was extended to accommodate countries that had received their call for participation at a later stage than others. This process of sending out a call for participation and subsequent follow-up (in many cases up to four reminder messages), was individually handled for each country individually (according to the research that was done to establish a contact person).

The response time of two weeks was kept the same for all countries, irrespective of the date of receipt of the first call for participation. After the two week response period, continual follow-up was done. The final date for submitting completed questionnaires was eventually set for 10 August 2007. The number of responses received during the time of data collection is depicted in the table below.

Responses received	
March 2007	8
April 2007	16
May 2007	29
June 2007	35
July 2007	22
August 2007	6
Total:	116

Only eight responses were received by the end of March 2007, which was set as the initial submission date for completed questionnaires. Although the number of submissions doubled in April, it was only in May, June and July that most countries responded. Many of those responded after follow-up messages had been sent out. This can be ascribed to the fact that the search for the correct contact people and/or contact detail took some time and that a great deal of follow-up work was done during that period.

The last six responses were received in August. Of the submitted questionnaires, 28 had to be translated – 15 from French and 13 from Spanish.

4. Additional research

Additional research was done with regard to the demographical statistics of the responding countries, as well as matters regarding freedom of access to information and freedom of expression.

4.1 Demographics of responding countries

The existing framework of the 2005 World Report was used for the demographical statistics of the countries responding to the 2007 report. A question about the literacy rate of the country was included in the questionnaire. This reported rate is provided alongside the rate published in the *CIA World Factbook*. Although similar in most cases, there are instances where the given rates differ substantially.

Ms Ncamsile Dlamini compiled the demographic statistics from the *CIA World Factbook* (https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/). Searches were conducted regarding the population size, literacy rate and main languages spoken in each participating country. Internet World Stats (http://www.internetworldstats.com/) was consulted for data on Internet penetration and online population figures for the respective countries.

4.2 Research relating to freedom of access to information and freedom of expression

Independent research was done from 13 to 30 April 2007 by the four American students mentioned earlier. Messrs Marcus Block, Koos de Beer, Kosie Eloff and Ms Rochani van Staden from the Department of Information Science at the University of Pretoria did additional online searches on the subject of freedom of access to information and freedom of expression for all the countries that responded.

The websites searched were predetermined by taking into account those used for the 2005 World Report, and in consultation with the researchers working on the project. In some cases additional websites were consulted. The identified sites include the following:

- Amnesty International (http://www.amnesty.org/)
- European Digital Rights (http://www.edri.org/)
- Human Rights Watch (http://www.hrw.org/)
- Index on Censorship (http://www.indexonline.org/)
- International Freedom of Expression eXchange (IFEX) (http://www.ifex.org/)
- Irrepressible.info (http://irrepressible.info/)
- OpenNet Initiative (http://opennet.net/)
- Reporters Without Borders (http://www.rsf.org/)
- UNESCO (http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=2493&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

The writing of the country reports is discussed next.

5. Data analysis and writing of the country reports

Six staff members from the Department of Information Science were involved in the data analysis and the writing of the country reports. They are Prof. Theo Bothma, Ms Retha Claasen-Veldsman, Dr Erica Cosijn, Prof. Archie Dick, Prof. Ina Fourie and Prof. Maritha Snyman.

Country reports were compiled by analysing the questionnaire and consulting the additional research conducted into matters relating to freedom of information and freedom of expression (as discussed above). Care was taken to respect respondents' requests for anonymity, as indicated on 25 of the 116 questionnaires received.

As in 2005, it was decided to retain the existing format of the country reports, thereby ensuring consistency. The structure of the country reports consists of three different parts: (i) a summary of all issues covered in the questionnaire; (ii) a discussion of the responses to questions 6-12, with specific reference to third-party sources, where applicable; and (iii) two tables of which the first reflects some demographic statistics of the country and the second mainly provides a summary of issues covered in the questionnaire and statistics with regard to libraries.

6. Quality control

In this section measures to ensure quality control are summarised.

- All the country reports were read and checked for consistency.
- For the first time since the start of the World Report series, opportunities for input and

comments were provided to the FAIFE Committee of IFLA and the respective respondents.

- The draft country reports were published on the Internet after their completion.
- The FAIFE committee of IFLA had an exclusive viewing opportunity from 1-15 October 2007 during which they could review the country reports and give feedback. No feedback was received from FAIFE Committee members.
- Thereafter, respondents had the opportunity to review their country reports and give input. Respondents were individually contacted via the email address provided in the questionnaire and were given the opportunity to send their feedback and comments from 15-31 October – 46 responses were received in this regard. They included requests for amendments, additional information and input, confirmations of receipt, messages of thanks for the opportunity, confirmations that the particular reports were accepted, and general correspondence. A total of 30 country reports were changed and/or amended, thereby adding to the quality of the reported data.
- Again, some problems were experienced, including failed email addresses and lack of response in many cases, thus making it difficult to determine whether or not the addressees had indeed received the message. In the case of failed email addresses, telephonic contact was used as a second option to establish contact.

7. Other articles

The report also contains six commissioned articles:

- *From censorship to freedom of access to information and freedom of expression in South Africa*

  Archie L. Dick (Department of Information Science, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa)

- *Corruption and transparency in Russia: The anticorruption role of libraries*

  Irina Trushina (Assistant Deputy Director-General, National Library of Russia, St Petersburg, Russia)

- *The USA PATRIOT Act: An example of the impact of national security legislation on libraries*

  Barbara M. Jones (University Librarian, Wesleyan University, Middletown, USA)

- *Censorship in Arab countries*

  Kamel Labidi (Tunisian freelance journalist currently based in Arlington, Virginia, USA; Consultant for the International Freedom of Expression Exchange (IFEX) and the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ))

- *On libraries and intellectual self-defence*

  Jane Duncan (Freedom of Expression Institute, Johannesburg, South Africa)

- *The interrelated roles of archival and right of access to information legislation to promote democratic government in South Africa*

  Ethel Kriger (Freedom Park Trust, Pretoria, South Africa)

8. Conclusion

It is appropriate to acknowledge officially the time and effort of all those respondents who completed the questionnaires. Without their support and willingness to participate, the World Report series would not be possible. We thank all the newcomers who have become a part of this project. We also extend our thanks once again to the 99 countries who have participated more than once since the beginning of the World Report series for their continued and valued support.

Dedicated data chasing proved to be the success of the 2007 World Report. This entailed a great deal of Internet searching (sleuthing!) to find correct and working contact details of potential participants; many calls for participation, daily follow-up of contacts and a concerted team effort.

This is the fourth time that the IFLA/FAIFE World Report has been published since 2001. The growth of this publication through the years is indicative of an increasing awareness of this project of IFLA – striving to reflect the real situation with regard to access to information and freedom of access to information and freedom of expression issues around the globe. We trust that this publication will be of value not only to the library and information community, but also to all spheres with a focus on the access to information.