DHIVEHI DIGITAL LIBRARY CREATION:
A MILESTONE

Ms. Aminath Riyaz
Chief Librarian, MNU Library, Maldives National University, Malé, MALDIVES

Ms. Fathmath Nashfa
Assistant Librarian, MNU Library, Maldives National University, Malé, MALDIVES

Dhivehi – the locality and the language of the Maldives – is celebrated with this newly created digital library by the Maldives National University (MNU) Library. The most prominent literary work of Dhivehin (locals of the Maldives) is the "Faithoora" journal that has been in circulation since 1979. The monthly journal is highly referred to by local researchers and students from all levels of education. The journal is in Dhivehi language and for the past twenty-two years it was available only in its print form.

The MNU Library in affiliation with the Maldives Greenstone support Network (MGN), trialled the creation of a digital library of the Faithoora using Greenstone open source software. With this project, the MGN, in cooperation with University of Waikato, has also introduced Dhivehi language interface for Greenstone software (see Figure 1).
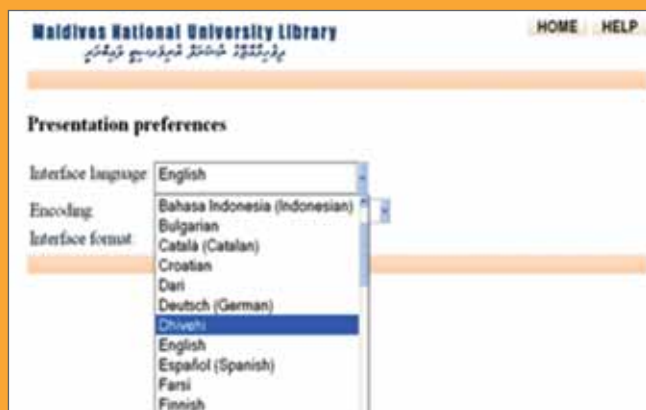

Figure 1: The language for the interface can be adjusted to the preferred language

The Faithoora Digital Library is hosted on the MNU local network for further trialling (it is available at http://192.168.8.164/gsdl/cgi-bin/library.cgi). This has facilitated access to a much demanded publication which prior to this was available in print without any indexing or abstracting of specific topics. This project also facilitates access to this local publication by rural campuses which do not have physical access to the item, due to their remoteness and difficulty in transport infrastructure for regular commuting to Malé, the capital of Maldives where the MNU's main Library is located. The MGN is now further exploring copyright clearance and accessibility options to make it publically available to the wider community through a Public Internet Protocol (IP).

At present, the digital library can be browsed by title and date as seen in Figure 2. It can be searched based on the title of the articles as seen in Figure 3. While full text is available, it is not searchable at present due to issues with optical character recognition of Dhivehi script on scanned documents. This enhancement is marked as the next phase of the MNU Library's DL project for Faithoora. The creation of this collection has facilitated in the creation of other much needed Digital Library collections of local material.

Figure 2: "Title" view of the Digital Library which displays all the titles in the library (displayed in the English language interface)

Figure 3: Search result for the term "dhivehiraajje" (Maldives) – (displayed in the Dhivehi (local) language interface)

Recommended Citation:
Riyaz, A., & Nashfa, F. (2011 June). Dhivehi digital library creation: a milestone, IFLA Asia and Oceania section newsletter, 23(1), 21. Available at http://www.ifla.org/files/asia-and-oceania/newsletters/june-2011_1.pdf