blog

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The Botswana Open University Library hosted a Winter School through collaboration with the CODATA-RDA instructors, from 17th to 21st May 2021.

Although our libraries support research activities taking place in our respective institutions, many librarians lack the required data management skills to effectively provide data services. On the other hand, many researchers are also unprepared for and lack sufficient time and skills to handle the requirements of data management. Librarians are therefore better placed to provide support for data management issues such as: data storage, integrity and back-up options. The purpose of the school therefore was to provide better understanding on data stewardship for librarians and application of research data management process for researchers.

The School had a total of 31 participants, dominantly the academic librarians, then research institute librarians as well as researchers across the country. The program of study covered topics in introduction to RDM, responsible and open research and developing and implementing research data policy. The topics provided a bases for discussions and context for implementation and practice in our institutions.

The Winter School Data Stewardship Training was officially launched by Professor Kgomotso N. Moahi, the Deputy Vice Chancellor – Student Services on Monday the 17th May 2021. In her launching remarks Professor Moahi said data stewardship was very critical as it allowed for re-use of data by other researchers, answers new research problems by using existing data, and can also be used to verify research. She encouraged the participants, both librarians and researchers to work together in their future research projects.

The ceremony was officially closed by the Deputy Vice Chancellor Professor Frank Youngman who made an observation that in Botswana research activities are not as organised as could be and hopes the three days of training will address some of the gaps. This event therefore was an eye-opener to the local research fraternity.

Testimonials

When asked how they are going to apply what they have learnt at individual and institutional level? The following are answers from a few anonymous participants.

> "I would like to see a functioning research data management framework at my institution".

"Increase my research efficiency/competence and also share knowledge gained from the training with my colleagues especially on the proper data open policy techniques of research data for future research"

"I have enrolled for PHD focusing on RDM with the University of CapeTown and await feedback, I also plan on taking RDM Coursera courses while at institutional level i plan on developing a framework for the library in delivering RDM services to researchers and also educate others after I have gained depth understanding by reading through the materials on Fairdata forum".

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