

Textbook Affordability Initiative at AU Nigeria

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Introduction

- The on-going experiment is meant to promote and facilitate the use of E-Textbooks and adoption of Open Access Textbooks (OATs) by Faculty.
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- Reduce the cost of textbooks to make education more affordable
 - Major actors in the experiment: Director Digital Services (DDS), Information Literacy Manager (ILM), Research & Cataloging Manager (RCM), Instructional Technology Unit (ITU), Faculty and student workers.
 - The team used to work in an Open Office for easy collaboration.

Library Open Office



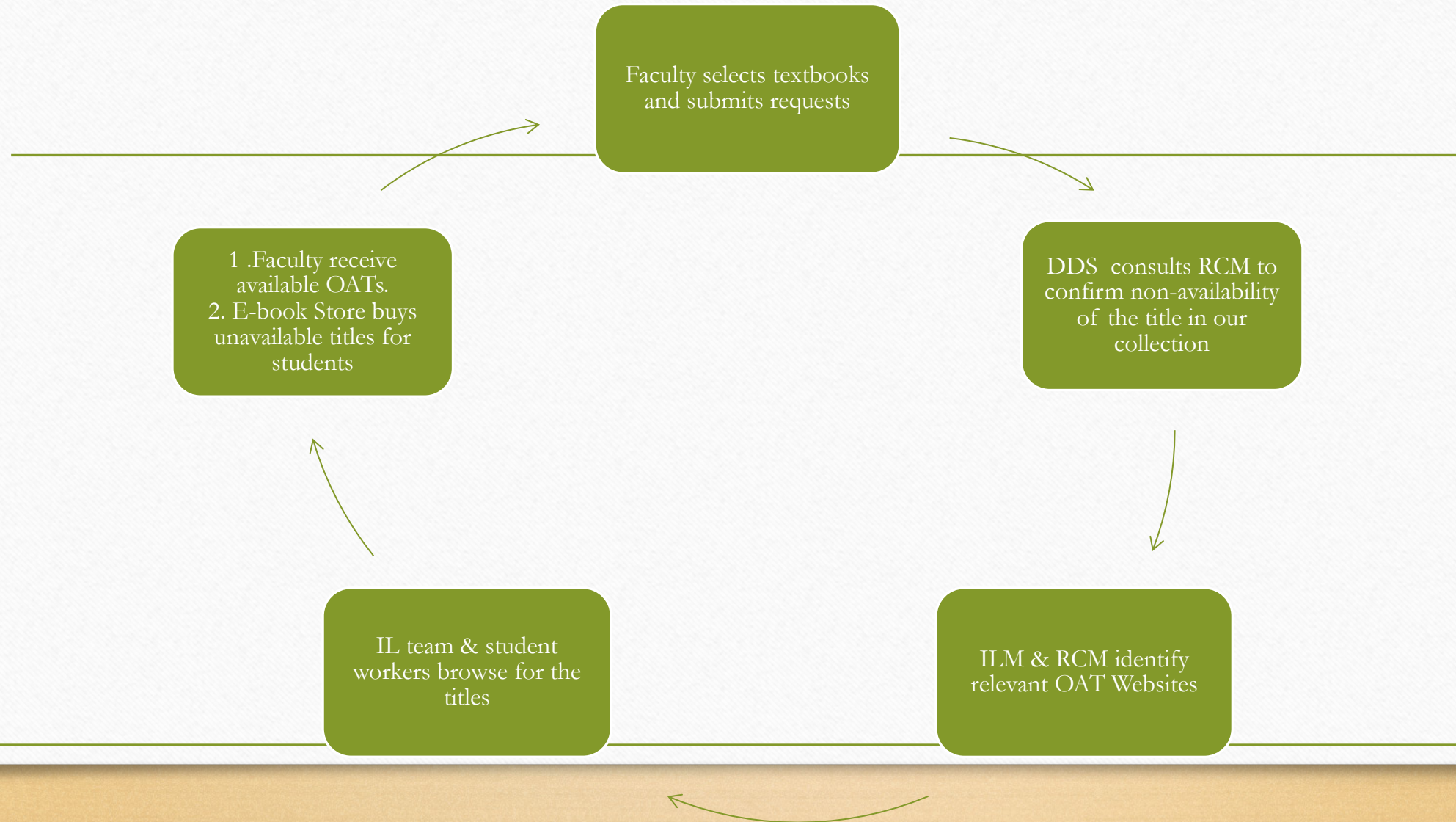
Our Initial Sources for (Text)books

- YBP, our major overseas Library supplier; for textbooks: McGraw Hill and Cengage.
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- Book fairs and acquisition trips within Nigeria were the sources for local publications.
 - Stocking the Campus Bookstore with Textbooks for students to buy.
 - Library purchasing Textbooks and place them on reserve for students.
 - Students' purchase of used copies from colleagues and Bookstores.
 - Sharing cost of Textbooks by students of the same level.
 - Photocopying Textbook chapters (Copyright issues)

Why E-Textbook Option

- Books are costly as publishing in Nigeria is still at its infancy: lack of skills and customs duty on publishing materials.
- Local authors publish their works abroad for wider market, academic prestige and assured royalty payments.
- Reliance on overseas books is expensive in costs, delays in shipment and custom formalities.
- Few local publishing houses exist in the South but transporting them to Northeastern Nigeria wasn't secure due Boko Haram activities.
- Budget shrinks and change of information seeking attitudes of our students
- Taking advantage of purchasing habit of our students; preference for hand-held devices to paper books,
- E-resources proved to be the option: cheap, easy to use/share, with free copies available.

Experiment Process



Outcome of the On-going Project

- Students acquired thirty eight (38) titles of 171 E-Textbooks from our E-book Store of ITU in the last two Semesters.
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- Twelve (12) E-textbooks were adopted as class textbooks within the last two (2) Semesters.
 - Our New Foundation School (Pre-degree Program) adopted three (3) for students and four (4) for Writing Instructors this Spring.
 - More E-textbooks are used than print.
 - Student participants seem to be interested in being part of the project.
 - Browsing through OATs inspires adventure into other online resources which they are keen to share with colleagues.

Challenges

- Faculty preference for traditional and physical copies as against digital versions.
- Faculty reluctance to replace their familiar course materials with OATs or Open Educational Textbooks (OETs}; they question their credibility and quality.
- Limited availability of OATs is a concern expressed by Faculty.
- Some textbooks (of local contents) don't have digital formats.
- Free textbooks are mostly available for introductory courses.
- Faculty unwillingness to collaborate on OERs project.
- Answers to questions on access challenges are often not handy (sudden disappearance of links or titles)
- Recent rise in cost of E-textbooks due to Dollar exchange rate issues.
- Lack of Librarians with subject expertise.

How we Advocate the Project

- Daily IL classes were held to promote use of digital resources.
- Participants of IL classes urged to download free relevant texts for their use.
- Library shares with other Institutions, Library-On-A-Flash (LOAF), an app that contains free PDF text books.
- A committee/advocacy group on OARs to be made up of Faculty, Librarians, ITU and students is being planned.

How AMICAL may play a role

Amical to create a section to advance the cause of OATs/OERs through:

- Offering Faculty/Librarians development Webinars on OAT awareness programs.
- Organizing workshops and conferences.
- Facilitating the curation and creation of OATs.
- Funding OERs projects of member institutions.
- Compiling guides, bibliographies and indexes to OERs and Websites.
- Coordinating textbook affordability activities of member institutions

Open Access Textbook Websites

- Open Textbook Library: <https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks>
- OpenStax Textbooks: <https://openstax.org/subjects>

- Bookboon.Com: <https://bookboon.com>
- OERcommons: <https://www.oercommons.org/hubs/open-textbooks>
- BcCampusOpenEd: <https://open.bccampus.ca>
- Scholar Commons: https://scholarcommons.usf.edu/oa_textbooks/
- FreeBooks4Doctors: <http://www.freebooks4doctors.com/>
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