



Preserving and sharing access to our documentary heritage

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The Memory of the World Programme is a major part of UNESCO's work to help preserve the cultures of the world as expressed through the documentary heritage. Science and technology are tools to help achieve this. Education is both an aid in preservation and a beneficiary of the success of the Programme.

The Programme was started in 1992 in response to the crisis that is facing many archives and libraries. Historic books and manuscripts are decaying or being destroyed by war and natural disaster. Acid paper is a problem with many modern textual publications. The Vinegar Syndrome is destroying films. Machine obsolescence is causing major problems for holders of audio and video material.

When setting up the Programme, it was decided to use part of the long established World Heritage Programme as a model. This has been in operation for over 30 years and has raised the public appreciation of the buildings, monuments and natural features that have been included on the World Heritage List. It has also helped increase public understanding of the importance of other buildings and features.

Preservation and Access

The Memory of the World Programme has two main aims - to preserve the documentary heritage of the world and to improve access to it. To help achieve these aims it is necessary to raise the awareness of the importance of the documentary heritage of both the public and governments.

The first objective of the Programme is to ensure the preservation, by the most appropriate means, of documentary heritage which has world significance and to encourage the preservation of documentary heritage which has national and regional significance. A twin objective is to make this heritage accessible to as many people as possible, using the most appropriate technology, both inside and outside the countries in which it is physically located.

Preservation of the documentary heritage and increased access to it complement one another. Access incites protection and preservation ensures access. For example, digitized materials can be accessed by many people and demand for access can stimulate preservation work.

Another element of the Programme is to raise awareness in the Member States of their documentary heritage, in particular aspects of that heritage which are significant in terms of a common world memory.

Finally, the Programme seeks to develop products based on this documentary heritage and make them available for wide distribution, while ensuring that the originals are maintained in the best possible conditions of conservation and security.

Programme scope and structure

The scope of the Programme is, therefore, vast and involves a variety of partners, ranging from students, scholars and the general public to owners, providers and producers of information and manufacturers of end products. An International Advisory Committee for the "Memory of the World" Programme was appointed by the Director-General of UNESCO to guide the planning and implementation of the Programme as a whole and make recommendations concerning fund-raising, fund allocation and the granting of the "Memory of the World" label to the projects selected. The Statutes of this Committee, approved by the Executive Board of UNESCO in May 1996, provide in particular for close co-operation

with competent NGOs such as IFLA and ICA and stress the need to facilitate access to endangered documentary heritage by the greatest number, using state-of-the-art technology.

The IAC consists of 14 people appointed in their personal capacity by the Director-General of UNESCO. The IAC normally meets every two years and the Bureau, consisting of the Chairman, three Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur, meets more frequently to advise the Director-General between the main meetings.

So far the Committee has held seven meetings (Pultusk, Poland, September 1993; Paris, France, May 1995, Tashkent, Uzbekistan, September 1997, Vienna, Austria, June 1999 Cheongju, Republic of Korea, June 2001, Gdansk, Poland, August 2003 and Lijiang, China, June 2005). At its first meeting it recommended that the concept of documentary heritage be extended to include, besides manuscripts and other rare and valuable documents in libraries and archives, documents in any medium: in particular, audio-visual documents, computerized recordings and oral traditions, the importance of which varies from region to region. In all these fields there is a need for protection, sometimes as a matter of urgency if we are to prevent collective amnesia and set up world wide cultural exchange.

At the national level, it is recommended that a committee be appointed, firstly to identify the most significant documentary heritage, to select projects according to the criteria agreed upon and submit them to the International Advisory Committee and, thereafter, to follow them up. The committee should include experts capable of making an active contribution to the projects and users' representatives. Persons submitting projects must ensure that the rights of the owners of the holdings or collections are protected. "Memory of the World" National Committees have been set up in 70 countries. Using their knowledge of local conditions and problems, they are best placed to recommend projects to the national government and UNESCO for assistance.

In addition there is provision for Regional Committees to be set up to deal with documents that are of importance to a number of countries. Two Regional Committees have been established so far - the Asia/Pacific Regional Committee and, very recently, the Regional Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean.

The Asia/Pacific Regional Committee's objective is to promote, facilitate and monitor the implementation of the Memory of the World Programme within the region, and to represent the region's perspective at the international level. In particular, it will support and facilitate nominations and encourage adequate representation of the region's documentary heritage in the Memory of the World Register. It will also support and complement the work of the National Committees and, where appropriate, encourage or initiate nominations.

Another Regional Memory of the World Committee has been created during a meeting of regional preservation experts held in Pachuca, Mexico, in June 2000. It aims to federate Latin American and Caribbean initiatives for the preservation of documentary heritage and to strengthen the collaboration between experts and institutions in the region.

Memory of the World Registers

One of the main tools to attract publicity are the Registers. It is hoped that these will have the same effect on public and government awareness as the World Heritage List has had for buildings and

monuments. There are three types of register: *international*, *regional* and *national*. All registers contain material of world significance and a given item may appear in more than one register. This *international register* lists documentary heritage which has been identified by the 'Memory of the World' International Advisory Committee as meeting the selection criteria for world significance, similar in some ways to UNESCO's World Heritage List. However, the nomination and registration of documents under the "Memory of the World" label will have no legal or financial implications.

The total number of entries on the Memory of the World Register amounts to 120 collections from 57 countries.

The African continent is under represented. Only 8 countries appear on the International Register with the following 11 inscriptions:

Benin: [Colonial archives](#) (1997)

Ethiopia: [Treasures from National Archives and Library Organization](#) (1997)

Egypt: [The Memory of the Suez Canal](#) (1997)

[Deeds of Sultans and Princes](#) (2005)

Mauritius: [Records of French Occupation of Mauritius](#) (1997)

Namibia: [Letter Journals of Hendrik Witbooi](#) (2005)

Senegal – AOF Archives: [Afrique occidentale française](#) (1997)

South Africa: [The Bleek collection](#) (1997)

[Archives of the Dutch East India Company](#) (2003)

Tanzania: [German Records of the National Archives](#) (1997)

[Collection of Arabic Manuscripts and Books](#) (2003)

Individual countries are encouraged to set up their own documentary heritage registers in parallel to the international register. National registers identify the documentary inheritance of the nation. The national registers will increase awareness of the importance of the national documentary heritage and the need for a co-ordinated and integrated policy to ensure that endangered documentary heritage is preserved. Groups of nations like the Scandinavian countries or the Baltic States may compile regional registers to list documentary heritage which is integral to their collective memory. Regional registers may vary in character: for example, they may be a form of cooperation between national registers, or they may list documentary heritage of regional influence which does not appear on national registers. They may afford opportunity for minorities and sub-cultures to be appropriately represented.

Selection criteria

Each register – international, regional or national - is based on criteria for assessing the **significance** of documentary heritage, and assessing whether its **influence** was **global, regional or national**. The following criteria are framed in terms of the international register, but also apply (with logical variation) to regional and national registers.

Assessment is comparative and relative. There can be no absolute measure of cultural significance. Accordingly, there is no fixed point at which documentary heritage qualifies for inclusion in a register. Selection for inclusion in a register will therefore result from assessing the heritage item on its own merits against the selection criteria, and in the context of other items already either included or rejected.

When considering documentary heritage for inclusion in the Register the item will be **first** assessed against the threshold test of: **authenticity**. Is it what it appears to be? Has its identity and provenance been reliably established?

Second, the IAC must be satisfied that the nominated item is of world significance. That is, it must be: **unique and irreplaceable**, something whose disappearance or deterioration would constitute a harmful impoverishment of the heritage of humanity. It must have created great impact over a span of time or within a particular cultural area of the world. It may be representative of a type, but must have no direct equal. It must have had great influence - whether positive or negative – on the course of history.

Thirdly, world significance must be demonstrated in meeting *one or more* of the criteria set out below. Because significance is *comparative*, these criteria are best illustrated by checking them against items of documentary heritage already inscribed on the *Register*.

1 – Time: Absolute age, of itself, does not make a document significant: but every document is a creature of its time. Some documents are especially evocative of their time, which may have been one of crisis, or significant social or cultural change. A document may represent new discovery or be the “first of its kind”.

2 – Place: The place of its creation is a key attribute of its importance. It may contain crucial information about a locality important in world history and culture; or the location may itself have been an important influence on the events or phenomena represented by the document. It may be descriptive of physical environments, cities or institutions since vanished.

3 – People: The social and cultural context of its creation may reflect significant aspects of human behaviour, or of social, industrial, artistic or political development. It may capture the essence of great movements, transitions, advances or regression. It may reflect the impact of key individuals or groups.

4 – Subject and theme: The subject matter may represent particular historical or intellectual developments in natural, social and human sciences, politics, ideology, sports and the arts.

5 – Form and style: The item may have outstanding aesthetic, stylistic or linguistic value, be a typical or key exemplar of a type of presentation, custom or medium, or of a disappeared or disappearing carrier or format (such as illuminated mediaeval manuscripts, palm leaf manuscripts, obsolete video or audio formats).

Finally, the following matters will also be taken into account:

- ◆ **Rarity:** does its content or physical nature make it a rare surviving example of its type or time?
- ◆ **Integrity:** within the natural physical limitations of carrier survival, is it complete or partial? Has it been altered or damaged?
- ◆ **Threat:** Is its survival in danger? If it is secure, must vigilance be applied to maintain that security?
- ◆ **Management plan:** Is there a plan which reflects the significance of the documentary heritage, with appropriate strategies to preserve and provide access to it?

It was agreed that a high degree of *selectivity* along with a high degree of *rigour* adds to the credibility of the Memory of the World label.

The criteria for documentary heritage to be entered on National or Regional Registers are to be decided by the relevant National or Regional Committees. It is recommended, however, that the World Register criteria be used as a model. Restrictions on access to documentary heritage will not systematically prevent entry on a Register but may reduce the possibility of receiving support through the "Memory of the World" Programme.

Pilot projects

The Programme has established several experimental pilot projects. These have resulted in a number of interesting CD-ROMs, web sites and publications. These projects include:

Prague

A digitization programme was launched by the National Library in Prague, in co-operation with a private firm, Albertina Ltd. A demonstration CD-ROM was first published in 1993, featuring some of the most precious manuscripts and other documents in the historic collections of the National Library, with annotations in Czech, English and French. In 1995 a CD-ROM series has been started with the release of the first two discs in May. Digitizing the most beautiful manuscripts and old prints of the National Library will facilitate access to these treasures without exposing the originals to heavy use, thus contributing to their preservation. In addition, while colours and ink react with paper, parchment, silk and other traditional media, digital information does not fade with the passing of time and could be easily transferred from CD-ROM to future more durable media.

The Sana'a manuscripts

In 1972, after heavy rain, a section of the wall of the Great Mosque of Sana'a collapsed. Work on the roof brought to light manuscripts which had been concealed in the ceiling in ancient times. They are parchment and paper fragments representing approximately one thousand different volumes, the oldest of which date back to the first century of the Hegira. Most are extracts from the Koran and are of considerable interest for the linguistic, religious and paleographic study of the literature of the early centuries of the Hegira and of the Arabic language. The fortuitous and extraordinary discovery of these documents and their unique character constitute a remarkable event which will mobilize efforts and expertise on an international scale. Thanks to the active participation of Germany, a plan of work on the fragments was begun, which led to the construction of a House of Manuscripts, the restoration of some

12,000 fragments of parchment (out of 15,000), their storage, identification and classification and the training of Yemeni restorers and photographers.

Research work on illuminated fragments and on bindings was carried out with a grant from the Getty Institute. This work, together with papers read at congresses and articles in academic journals, shows just how remarkable the collection is. The Yemeni authorities concur in the view that the collection is the equivalent of a historic building of exceptional heritage quality. A UNESCO mission visited Sana'a at their request to consider including a pilot project on the Yemeni collections in the "Memory of the World" Programme.

A National Committee for the project has been set up to identify the most suitable documents. A demonstration disc based on a selection of manuscripts including some of the Koranic fragments has been published, in co-operation with the Regional Information Technology and Software Engineering Centre (RITSEC), Cairo, Egypt. This CD-ROM offers an introduction to the Arabic calligraphy illustrated by Yemenite manuscripts, especially the Koranic fragments. Descriptions and comments are provided in Arabic, English and French.

African Postcards

The old postcards chosen for this project constitute a pictorial treasure and are related to the 16 countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). These postcards are very rare because they are scattered in many countries, mostly in Europe. Only their presentation on a CD-ROM or a Web Site could bring them together, at least partially, under one theme or in an historical and geographical framework. The CD-ROM, prepared in collaboration with the Association Images et Mémoires and ICG-Mémoire Directe, features 3.000 postcards, which represent only a small percentage of the existing 50.000 for the same period (1890-1930) and the same countries. This first achievement should pave the way to even more sophisticated initiatives.

Treasures of Dar Al Kutub

This project, reproducing on CD-ROM a selection of precious manuscripts of the National Library in Cairo (Dar Al Kutub), offers a guided tour among the splendours of the Arab culture and its contribution to the enhancement of knowledge in numerous scientific fields.

A second CD-ROM was dedicated to 'The contributions of the Arab and Islamic civilizations to medical sciences'. This work highlighted through a selection of manuscripts how the Arab and Muslim scholars laid the basics of clinical medicine and set the rules of theory and practice in the sphere of medicine and pharmacology.

Palm-leaf manuscripts

Tamil Medical Manuscripts preserved at the Institute of Asian Studies in Madras, India, reflect the ancient system of medicine, practised by yogis. This system explains the methods of obtaining medicines from herbs, herbal roots, leaves, flowers, barks, fruits etc. The proportions of the ingredients as well as the specific processes are explained in detail

The IAS-based project is designed to preserve endangered manuscripts and make their content accessible to people worldwide in the form of an expanded Web site with online 'reading rooms' of original palm-leaf manuscript images

Virtual Matenadaran

The Matenadaran is one of the oldest book-depositories in the world. Its collection of about 17.000 manuscripts includes almost all the areas of ancient and medieval Armenian culture and sciences -

history, geography, grammar, philosophy, law, medicine, mathematics-cosmography, theory of calendar, alchemy-chemistry, literature, chronology, art history, miniature, music and theatre, as well as manuscripts in Arabic, Persian, Greek, Syrian, Ethiopian, Indian, Japanese and others. In this center of cultural heritage many originals, lost in their mother languages and known only of their Armenian translations, have been saved from loss.

The history of the Matenadaran dates back to the creation of the Armenian alphabet in 405. This centre of manuscripts has a history of centuries and the history continues now as well. The Virtual Matenadaran has been set up in the context of Memory of the World.

Uzbekistan: Oriental miniatures

This CD-ROM represents a collection of book miniatures of Middle East from 14-17th centuries. It features 374 miniatures, held in Al-Beruni Institute of Oriental Studies of them 114 miniatures by Kamoliddin Behzad and his school.

The Bibliotheca Corviniana

King Mathias of Hungary invited to his court the leading humanists, artists, poets, and created at the end of the 15th century a library consisting of 2000 volumes. This Bibliotheca Corviniana contained works written for the king and copies of the most important documents known at this time. It represented the literary production and reflected the state of knowledge and arts of the Renaissance. The collection covered philosophy, theology, history, law, literature, geography, natural sciences, medicine, architecture, etc. The manuscripts and early printed books were written mostly in Greek and Latin. In addition to the content, this collection represented a great artistic value due to the miniatures and the bindings.

In the wars this library was partly destroyed, partly scattered all over the world. Today 216 so called Corvinas are known, out of which Hungarian libraries preserve 53 items, the Austrian National Library possesses 39 volumes, different Italian libraries own 49 items and the rest is in French, German, English, Turkish, USA collections. Their reunification in a digital version of the Bibliotheca Corviniana and its registration on the Memory of World Register of documentary heritage would mean the recreation of a unique presentation and overview of what was the common cultural heritage of the Renaissance in the 15th century Europe.

Photographic collections in Latin America and the Caribbean

The huge number of photographic collections scattered around the world led the promoters of this project to limit its scope, in a first stage, to Latin America and the Caribbean and to public collections of the 14th century held in national archives and libraries.

Through the stock of prints often stored in inadequate preservation conditions, it is the whole life of the nations which re-surges with its important moments and the portraits of those who have influenced the course of history.

The coupling of a CD-ROM containing 3.000 to 5.000 prints illustrating the main stages of the history of some ten countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and of a presentation on the Web of a representative sample of images (video quality) with comments in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish, will enhance the value of this fragile heritage, in danger of disappearing. It is hoped that this will then help libraries and archives to ensure that preservation of their photographic collections is a priority.

Slave Trade Archives

UNESCO launched the *Slave Route* project in 1994 and set up an International Scientific Committee for the project. This Committee's mandate was to examine the whole question of the slave trade, its impact on the prevailing economic, social and political situation in a number of countries and its role as a means of promoting intercultural dialogue. The Committee has stressed the importance of archives as the basis for the study of the slave trade. In this context, in 1999 UNESCO set up the *Slave trade archives* project, funded by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD).

The *Slave trade archives* project is an attempt to improve the conservation and accessibility of slave trade records. The project deals with original documentary sources that bear witness to the trade, mainly in the form of written documents. Digitization of these sources, particularly those at risk from deterioration, will help to establish a collective memory of this part of history.

The first phase of the Project was limited to the slave trade of the Atlantic basin, organized by the European powers from Africa, since the XV century. Written history kept in archives can be found in approximately 40 countries. The Project is focused on those whose archives are at risk of heavy deterioration and often are of difficult access for users. As part of the UNESCO Memory of the World program and in close co-operation with the International Council on Archives (ICA), a feasibility study was carried out to identify, in order of priority, national archives and related institutions in several African, Latin American and Caribbean countries, with a view to upgrading their facilities and services in order to ensure adequate preservation of original records, to obtain copies in appropriate formats of documents held elsewhere and to provide training for technical staff.

Several different types of documents, likely to contain information on how the slave trade worked, were scanned and selected:

- Navy registers and Naval Office "shipping lists" with quantitative slave trade data
- Descriptions of the shipments, disciplinary matters and the places where trading took place.
- Official correspondence between the local colonial authorities in Africa and national governments.
- Memoirs and accounts of journeys.
- Slave routes and the practices and customs of populations that were victims of slavery.
- Legal case files preserved in court archives.
- Private documents: contracts for the sale of slaves
- Censuses of blacks in colonies, particularly in Haiti, Liberia and Sierra Leone for former slaves who were freed and stayed in the reception country.
- The local colonial press.

The first phase of the program was initially scheduled to last from 2000 to 2003, later extended until the end of 2004. The project operated in eleven countries: Benin, Cape Verde, Gambia, Ghana and Senegal in Africa, plus Argentina, Brazil, Barbados, Colombia, Cuba and Haiti.

To reach the goals of the project, each participant country received funds to acquire minimum technical equipment and many of them received training, in administrating and handling of the equipment as well as in documentary technical aspects. To that effect, UNESCO coordinated short term training missions, mainly in African participant countries. An initial training session held in Cape Town (South Africa) in February 2001 was used as a model for regional and national sessions organized in the participating countries.

In the case of countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, programs depended on local resources, and UNESCO gave variable amounts of money to buy equipment, pay investigators and produce final products.

During the progression of the Project, many preliminary reports were made, consulting reports, and finally an international meeting of experts in Havana in November 2004, where the products were presented and experiences shared.

The unanimous recommendation of the participants in the Cuba meeting was that the project should continue beyond 2004, incorporating other countries. The ultimate objective would be the compilation of a database, accessible via the Internet, covering all primary documentary sources, related to the slave trade throughout the world.

Timbuktu Manuscripts

Funded by the Government of Luxembourg, the main goal of the Timbuktu Manuscripts Project is to preserve and provide wide access to the invaluable cultural and literary heritage held in both public and private collections of historical manuscripts in the Timbuktu area.

Through training and upgrading facilities, the project will increase the capacity of the national Ahmed Baba Institute (IHERI-AB), to perform its essential missions of restoration and conservation, and scientific exploitation and dissemination of the content of the manuscripts currently in its possession as well as collections held in other libraries in Timbuktu.

Today the city of Timbuktu has some 60-80 private collections, the largest of which, the Mamma Haidara Memorial Library, has been rehabilitated through a grant from the Mellon Foundation, while a catalogue of its contents is being published by the Al-Furqan Islamic Foundation. Several other private collections were acquired by the Centre Ahmad Baba, a public institution that now contains over 18,000 manuscripts. UNESCO's assistance has resulted in digitizing a few hundred manuscripts. A portal devoted to the Timbuktu Manuscripts provides ample information on the project: <http://www.manuscripts-tombouctou.org/>

Technical framework

From the examples mentioned above, it emerges clearly that the two basic principles which guide the "Memory of the World" Programme are the preservation of documents, holdings and collections and the democratization of access to them. The two principles are intrinsically linked, since access is conducive to protection and preservation ensures access.

The essential steps for carrying out any project in the "Memory of the World" programme are: selecting and preparing the documents, ensuring that they are placed in a suitable physical environment, photographing them where necessary, digitizing them, describing and annotating them, providing the staff to perform these tasks with appropriate ad hoc training where necessary, translating bibliographical descriptions or even the texts themselves where necessary, and ensuring that the resulting product is distributed as widely as possible.

Provision has been made for the establishment of these sub-committees, the first to make regular assessments of the technology that might be used by the Programme, the second to study methods for marketing the Programme throughout the world and the third to assess nominations for the Registers.

A number of training activities are being arranged in the context of the Programme.

Regional Workshops on Preservation of, and Access to, Southeast Asia Documentary Heritage took place in Hanoi, Vietnam, 4-8 February 2002 and Cheongju City, Republic of Korea, 11-14 June 2002.

A similar workshop was held in Cheongju City in 2004 and a third one in September 2006.

Finally, UNESCO has published guidelines on the Programme's technical, legal and financial framework and its working structures. This text is available in all UNESCO official languages, free-of-charge, under the title "Memory of the World- General Guidelines to Safeguard Documentary Heritage" (CII-95/WS-11). A new edition was published in 2002 and is available online.

Legal Framework

Documentary heritage in war

A major diplomatic conference held in The Hague, Netherlands (15-26 March 1999) adopted new provisions for the protection of cultural heritage in the event of armed conflict, destined to improve the safeguards provided by the UNESCO Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict adopted in The Hague in 1954.

These provisions will offer the international community an opportunity to take measures to counter the alarming new tide of damage and loss due to armed conflicts since 1990. The recent, and sometimes intentional, destruction of heritage in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Croatia, Iraq and Somalia, among other places, has led to calls to improve this protection. Such destruction represents an inestimable loss to the common heritage of humanity and to the cultural development and identity of local communities.

UNESCO, together with some other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, has conducted a review of the 1954 Convention and found several aspects in which it could be strengthened. More precise provisions were brought to the concept of "military necessity" and better heritage protection in situations of civil and domestic conflicts. There is also a significant demand for the adoption of an improved system of sanctions to punish perpetrators of crimes affecting cultural heritage and for the creation of a body to supervise the implementation of the Convention.

The International Council of Museums (ICOM), the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), the International Council on Archives (ICA) and the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), which have established the International Committee of the Blue Shield as a coordinating body, provide the experts who try to protect cultural heritage under threat.

Partnership agreements and ethical issues

Working in partnership in an international context means that a legal framework is an absolute necessity if "Memory of the World" is to be managed in a properly accountable manner. The framework must nevertheless remain sufficiently flexible to guarantee the originality of each project and take account of the diversity of national legislation.

It is essential that the rights of the owners of the collections and holdings in a project are respected and that the relationship between the owners and the technical and commercial partners is clearly defined, particularly with regard to the division of rights among the various parties, the allocation of rights of ownership to the images produced and the sharing of the profits from the sales of products made from images. It also seems clear, however, that excessive protection which might limit access to the documents would run counter to one of the Programme's fundamental principles. The International Advisory Committee recommended, at its second meeting, that UNESCO pay careful attention to legal questions affecting the intellectual heritage in the new context of the increasing use of electronic storage media in libraries and archives, in particular to provide for freedom of access within the limits set by national and international legislation.

Financial context

All projects carried out so far were funded under the UNESCO Regular Programme. A number of other projects received funding under the Participation Programme. Two more projects received extra-budgetary funds: these are the Slave Trade Archives project, funded by Norway and the Timbuktu Manuscripts project, funded by Luxembourg.

Each "Memory of the World" project is an entity in itself, especially as far as finance is concerned. While profit can never be a prerequisite for carrying out a project, each project must strike a financial balance between, on the one hand, the investment needed for digitizing, reproducing, and distributing products and for preparing the reproduced collections and holdings for conservation and, on the other, initial contributions from local or outside funds and royalties from possible sale of products. This balance will not be achieved without the participation of sponsors and technical and financial partners. The search for partners is an important, not to say decisive, phase of all "Memory of the World" projects.

Some projects are being funded by governments with no financial implication for UNESCO. A good example is **the archives of the Dutch East Indian Company (VOC)**. An international conference on the Dutch East Indian Company Archives project was held in The Hague and Leyden on 10 and 11, December 1998 following Resolution 28 adopted by the 29th session of the General Conference of UNESCO. This meeting was organised by the National Commission of the Netherlands and attended by participants from all concerned countries, including Permanent Delegates to UNESCO of the Netherlands, India, Sri Lanka and Indonesia. The archives of the Dutch East Indian Company (VOC) represent a unique source of information about the 17th and 18th century history of many countries and cultures of Europe, Africa, Asia and Australia. The history of the East India Company is not merely the of a large Dutch business conglomerate symbolized by many large architectural monuments such as warehouses, meeting halls or ship wharves. The records of this Company deal with its operations in Asia, and thus shed considerable light on Asian history as well. The aim of the project is safeguarding the extensive material heritage this trading company has left behind in the Netherlands and Asia, and how we can make this mutual heritage accessible and available for further use.

The Sub-Committee on Marketing outlined a fund-raising strategy for the Programme, together with a promotional and marketing plan and a legal framework. Members agreed that there was a possibility for "Memory of the World" to seek partnership with major companies active in creating and preserving memory and knowledge. It was also stressed that the Programme needed to be marketed first for the professions, through their associations and publications. The participants also suggested that celebrated writers and winners of literary prizes should be invited to rally the Programme and publicise its aims and achievements.

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For further information please visit UNESCO's web site: <http://www.unesco.org/webworld>