GOALI Goes to Johannesburg – Training and Outreach in South Africa for Research4Life's Global Online Access to Legal Information Program

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Abstract:

Global Online Access to Legal Information (GOALI), a Research4Life program providing access to legal information in low- and middle-income countries, conducted a three-day training in Johannesburg, South Africa, in January 2019, for trainers in Africa and for South African librarians. Cornell Law Library, one of the GOALI institutional partners, planned and delivered the training. Since the majority of the workshop attendees were already experts in using the Research4Life research platform but novices in legal research, the training focused on legal systems, subjects, and information, because these topics are the necessary context for training and developing capacity to use a database of legal secondary sources.

The workshop planners successfully collaborated with existing programs to make the workshop possible. As one of the planners' goals was to facilitate student engagement in access to justice, they partnered with the Cornell Legal Research Clinic, which provided a librarian-instructor and one of the two students who co-taught the workshop. Funding for student engagement was provided by Cornell University. Because the attending trainers were primarily based near Pretoria, South Africa, the workshop planners developed a new collaboration with an existing Cornell Law School partner, the University of Johannesburg Faculty of Law, to provide conference room facilities, as well as housing for the visiting Cornell librarian-instructor and students.

Evaluations by the participants of the resulting workshop showed that they gained valuable information and context for future GOALI trainings, and that the hands-on aspects of the workshop were most highly valued. The participating students were engaged both personally and professionally.

Keywords: access to justice, Africa, collaboration, student engagement, instruction

Introduction

In January 2019, Ariel Scotese of Cornell Law Library at Cornell University, with the assistance of two Cornell Law School students, taught a three-day workshop on using Global Online Access to Legal Information (GOALI), the most recent program of the Research4Life partnership, at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa. The workshop introduced the nature of legal information, several legal systems, and basic legal subjects, as well as how to use GOALI for research in law, to six Research4Life trainers and three librarians. The workshop was the result of more than six months of planning and preparation, and, importantly, building on existing collaborations, programs, and resources.

Background

GOALI's purpose is to provide legal information at free or low-cost to researchers in low- and middle-income nations.[1] It does so as a general partner of Research4Life, with the common objective of "reduc[ing] the knowledge gap in academic research between industrialized countries and the developing world."[2] GOALI's managing partner institutions are the International Labour Organization (ILO), which provides global expertise, outreach and communication, and facilitation; the Lillian Goldman Law Library at Yale University, which provides content selection and curation, including bibliographic metadata; and our team at Cornell Law Library, which provides fundraising and capacity development. Commercial publishers provide access to the content, which would otherwise be inaccessible to low- and middle-income nations behind a prohibitive paywall.

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[1]   Richelle Van Snellenberg & Edit Horváth, *Global Online Access to Legal Information (GOALI)– A New Legal Training Resource for Developing Countries*, IFLA LIBRARY (July 10, 2017), http://library.ifla.org/1680/1/168-snellenberg-en.pdf. For more information about GOALI, *see The First Research4Life Training Empowering African Trainers on Legal Research*, RESEARCH4LIFE (Mar. 25, 2019), https://www.research4life.org/the-first-research4life-training-empowering-african-trainers-on-legal-research/ [hereinafter *First Research4Life Training*]; Edit Horváth, *GOALI Helps Librarians and Researchers "to Know Our Rights and Respect the Rights of Others,"* RESEARCH4LIFE (Mar. 5, 2019), https://www.research4life.org/goali-helps-librarians-and-researchers-to-know-our-rights-and-respect-the-rights-of-others/; Jose Beduya, *Cornell Librarians Help Train Researchers in Africa*, CORNELL CHRONICLE (Feb. 28, 2019), https://news.cornell.edu/stories/2019/02/cornell-librarians-help-train-researchers-africa; Lora Johns et al., *The GOALI Initiative: Removing the Barriers to Legal Research, Training, and Justice in Developing Countries*, AALL SPECTRUM, Mar./Apr. 2019, at 38.

For more information about access to GOALI and other Research4Life programs, *see Eligibility for Access to Research4Life*, RESEARCH4LIFE, https://www.research4life.org/access/eligibility/ (last visited May 20, 2019).

[2]   Van Snellenberg & Horváth, *supra* note 1.

GOALI launched in March 2018. By mid-2018, users at hundreds of institutions around the globe had accessed GOALI content. We and other librarians from the partner institutions spoke about and demonstrated GOALI at meetings and institutes such as the Association of Caribbean University, Research and Institutional Libraries (ACURIL) annual meeting for 2018, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) annual conference for 2017, and the Cornell Center on the Death Penalty Worldwide's Makwanyane Institute, an intensive training workshop for capital defenders. While our presentations have helped build awareness of GOALI, the most effective use of the platform for research requires training. Developing the capacity of users in countries with limited access to subscription databases is an important aspect of making these resources available to researchers around the world.

One of the essential aspects of GOALI's partnership in Research4Life is the ability to build on successful capacity development by other partners such as Hinari Research for Health (Hinari) and Access to Global Online Research in Agriculture (AGORA), both of which had long partnered with the Information Training and Outreach Centre for Africa (ITOCA), based near Pretoria, South Africa. For close to twenty years, ITOCA trainers have traveled throughout Africa, holding workshops on Research4Life offerings for over 20,000 researchers.[3] By partnering with ITOCA, GOALI could build on this successful collaboration. Specifically, instead of repeatedly sending trainers from North America or Europe to Africa to conduct GOALI workshops, we could conduct a single workshop in South Africa for ITOCA trainers, who would subsequently include GOALI in future workshops across the continent. This "train the trainers" model could stretch the value of any grant dollars received.

The nature of the training, however, was not in how to use the research platform. Research4Life programs, while they have separate portals, are all based on the same platform, a combination of a standard portal customized for each program and ProQuest's Summon® Service. ITOCA trainers are experts at using the platform, but they had no experience with the study of law or legal information. Our conversations with Gracian Chimwaza, ITOCA's Executive Director, confirmed that what trainers needed was an understanding of the research users would conduct and the sources they would use. Thus, in mid-2018, we began planning a workshop in South Africa for the trainers. Planning and preparation took place on two separate tracks: Logistics and Curriculum.

Logistics

Cornell University promotes community-engaged learning, leadership, research, and other types of public engagement by funding student involvement in public engagement through its office Engaged Cornell.[4] Accordingly, when planning began we had already successfully applied for an Engaged Opportunity Grant from the University to fund law-student involvement in GOALI. This was not the first time the Law Library had supported student engagement through Engaged Cornell—in 2016 it had received a grant from Engaged Cornell to develop the Legal Research Clinic, the first credit-bearing, law-library-developed, legal research clinic at a US law school.

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3   *First Research4Life Training*, *supra* note 1.

4   *About*, ENGAGED CORNELL, https://engaged.cornell.edu/about/ (last visited May 17, 2019).

Two important factors dictated the choice of January 2019 for the workshop. First, the Engaged Opportunity Grant required the student engagement take place when school was not in session, and Cornell's Winter Break ended on January 22. Second, another Cornell Law School field experience was scheduled to take place in January 2019: Cornell's William Nelson Cromwell Professor of International & Comparative Law, Muna Ndulo, travels with the students in "Law and Social Change: Comparative Law in Africa" to South Africa every January, where they intensively study law at the University of Johannesburg and engage "with individuals and organizations directly involved in the administration of law" in South Africa.[5] This long-established program's partnership with the University of Johannesburg provides residence, food, and transportation for Professor Ndulo's students. Professor Ndulo and the University of Johannesburg Faculty of Law graciously made these facilities available to our small party of GOALI workshop trainers as well. This arrangement significantly reduced our time commitment for logistics.

The Law Library's Legal Research Clinic also became an important partner in the workshop. The Assistant Director for the Clinic, Ariel Scotese, was selected to lead the Johannesburg workshop, and her Fall 2018 Clinic students were the first students offered the opportunity to participate as instructors. From this pool we selected Dana Kinel, J.D.[6] expected 2020, to participate in the workshop. After opening up the opportunity to other Cornell Law students, we chose Medhavi Nautiyal, LL.M.[7] 2019, from a competitive pool. Thus, by partnering with the Clinic, the GOALI workshop benefited from the 2016 Engaged Cornell grant by involving Clinic students.

The last logistical step was for us to identify the workshop participants. Five ITOCA trainers agreed to travel from their offices outside Pretoria to Johannesburg. Digital Access to Research (DAR), a recent capacity-development collaboration between Research4Life and the UN's Technology Bank,[8] sent a participant who also conducts Research4Life training in Africa. Finally, an outreach call to librarians at the University of Johannesburg about the workshop led to two of them attending the workshop, and the ILO was able to send a librarian from its local Johannesburg office.

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[5] *Students Study Law and Social Change in South Africa*, Cornell Law School (Mar. 27, 2018), https://www.lawschool.cornell.edu/spotlights/law-social-change-south-africa.cfm.

[6] The Doctor of Jurisprudence or Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree is the standard first professional degree required for the practice of law in the United States. *Structure of the U.S. Education System: First-Professional Degrees*, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS OFFICE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (Feb. 2008), https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ous/international/usnei/us/professional.doc.

[7] Cornell Law School's Master of Laws (LL.M.) program is a one-year program for students who have already earned a first professional law degree outside the United States. *General LL.M.*, CORNELL LAW SCHOOL, https://www.lawschool.cornell.edu/admissions/graduate-legal-studies/LLM/LLM.cfm (last visited May 17, 2019).

[8] *New UN Technology Bank Inaugurated in Turkey*, RESEARCH4LIFE (June 5, 2018), http://www.research4life.org/new-un-technology-bank-inaugurated-in-turkey/.

Curriculum and Agenda Development

At the same time logistics were being worked out, curriculum and agenda planning started from the identified need, a basic understanding of legal systems, legal information, and the subjects encompassed in the study and practice of law, as well as how to use GOALI most effectively for research in law. Thus, we decided to build the substantive curriculum around legal systems, legal subjects, and legal sources.

Understanding that different legal systems exist is particularly important for those training in African countries, where two or more systems frequently coexist in one country.[9] Because participants train in countries with different systems, the workshop curriculum introduced five systems: common law, civil law, customary law, Islamic law, and international law. Awareness of these systems can help trainers appreciate why literature about the common law and cases, for example, is of importance in Anglophone East African countries such as Kenya but of little to no importance in a Francophone African country. Introduction to legal systems and to major areas of law such as contracts, property, and criminal law equips trainers both to develop relevant research exercises and to understand the research their users want to conduct.

Trainers also need to understand legal sources and the distinction in the legal context between primary and secondary sources. In particular, trainers need to know that while GOALI mostly provides access to secondary legal sources such as journal articles and treatises, users will ask about access to primary sources such as statutes, regulations, and cases. Only by understanding these sources can trainers teach the most effective use of GOALI.

Having decided on the curriculum for the workshop, we created a draft agenda. We wanted to ensure that the event was not so long that it would be overwhelming for the participants and the teachers. We also needed to ensure ample time for questions, since the audience for this workshop would primarily be trainers, who were familiar with the Research4Life platform but not with legal research.

We decided upon a three day-long workshop, which we divided into two components. The first component would be an introduction to legal information, different legal systems, and legal research, while the second component covered GOALI and how to use GOALI for subject specific research. On the first and second day of the workshop, we taught four one-hour long sessions and on the last day we taught three one-hour long sessions.

With the draft curriculum completed, we met with Gracian Chimwaza of ITOCA. During the meeting, we went over our proposed curriculum and workshop agenda. This virtual meeting provided us with the opportunity to ensure that the workshop would meet the needs of our participants. As a result of this conversation, we were able to move forward with creating the training materials—lesson plans, slides, and worksheets—that we would use in the workshop. For this stage, as American law librarians we needed to gain relatively quickly a good working knowledge of the operation of Islamic law and African customary law systems, with which we were less familiar. Two helpful titles in these areas were *The Future of African Customary Law*[10] and *Modern Perspectives on Islamic Law*.[11]

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[9]   For more on legal systems and their classification, *see* JURIGLOBE—WORLD LEGAL SYSTEMS RESEARCH GROUP, UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA, http://www.juriglobe.ca/eng/index.php (last visited May 17, 2019).

[10]   THE FUTURE OF AFRICAN CUSTOMARY LAW (Jeanmarie Fenrich et al., eds., 2011).

The last major step was to prepare for training the two students co-teaching the workshop. We decided they would co-teach three one-hour sessions of the workshop: common law, international law, and a legal subject of their choice. This approach gave the students the opportunity to gain valuable experience in educating laypersons about the law, without being overwhelmed with unfamiliar legal topics. We created the materials for the student-taught sessions, and we encouraged them to develop additional activities to engage the participants and to modify the presentation materials as they saw fit. Although the students were not required to teach other sessions at the workshop, they had to be knowledgeable about GOALI and familiar with all the exercises so they could assist participants during the working sessions.

While most of the training and preparation of the students took place in Johannesburg, as described below, before the trip they read from *International and Foreign Legal Research*[12] and *Introduction to Foreign Legal Systems*.[13] These assignments bolstered their knowledge of foreign, comparative, and international legal research and the mix of customary law and western legal systems in Africa.

Johannesburg Instruction

While in Johannesburg, Scotese and the students spent a week preparing for the workshop. The University of Johannesburg Faculty of Law provided access to the campus and classroom space for preparation. Lizette Van Zyl, Faculty Librarian (Law), and Catrin Ver Loren van Thermaat, Information Librarian (Law) conducted a tour of the law library. During this week, Scotese reviewed with the students the subject matter of the workshop, including the legal systems, the subjects that they would introduce, and subject-specific research using GOALI. The students practiced co-teaching their workshop sessions. To reinforce their knowledge of African legal systems and law, they attended lectures given by the Faculty of Law to Professor Ndulo's class.

Final logistical preparations included sending the final agenda to the attendees and making last minute preparations for the event. The University of Johannesburg Faculty of Law facilitated necessities such as packets for the attendees, conference facilities, catered breakfast and lunch, and parking.

During each session of the workshop, the attendees participated in lively discussion about the legal systems, subjects, and information, and about how the law functions generally. The discussions were particularly instructive because, as South Africans who lived with both African customary law and common law frameworks, the participants had insight relevant to the workshop. Also, even though the participants came to the workshop with two different professional backgrounds—the trainers had expertise in Research4Life platform, while the librarians had expertise in legal information—both trainers and librarians could contribute their knowledge and increase their expertise.

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[11]   ANN BLACK ET AL., MODERN PERSPECTIVES ON ISLAMIC LAW (2013).

[12]   MARCI HOFFMAN & MARY RUMSEY, INTERNATIONAL AND FOREIGN LEGAL RESEARCH: A COURSEBOOK 3-16 (2d ed. 2012).

[13]   V. Essien, *Customary Law and Western Legal Influences in Modern-Day Africa (Case Studies from Ghana and Nigeria), in* INTRODUCTION TO FOREIGN LEGAL SYSTEMS 171–204 (Richard A. Danner & Marie-Louise H. Bernal eds., 1994).

Assessment

To help us evaluate the workshop, we asked attendees to complete an anonymous survey at the end of the last day. The survey was based on those used at the end of other Research4Life training sessions. The survey questions are included in the appendix.

Participants were quite positive about the workshop, giving it an overall ranking of 4.77 on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high). Other survey responses showed that participants found the hands-on activities one of the greatest strengths of the workshop, helpful, and useful, and that future trainings should incorporate more hands-on sessions.

Participants were less uniformly enthusiastic about the length of the program, with some stating that the workshop could have been longer, in particular the hands-on segments. One participant noted that the second half of the workshop was very dense. One possible approach in the future would be to reduce the number of subjects covered and increase the time spent for hands-on practice, if lengthening the workshop is not practical.

When asked to rank the statement "I acquired knowledge and skill I can use" 6 participants responded with "agree" while 3 participants responded with "somewhat agree". One individual who responded with "somewhat agree" suggested that the hands-on examples be more similar to real life research questions, while another would have liked some discussion of resource evaluation.

When asked to rank the statement "instructional materials were relevant/useful" 8 out of the 9 respondents agreed. One respondent suggested that future in-person trainings discuss different curricula for different audiences. One way to incorporate this suggestion would be to structure examples for different research needs.

Finally, we asked the two students who co-taught the workshop with Scotese to write a brief reflection paper about their experience. In the papers, both students described the value of this experience for them in their careers as well as how this experience impacted them. For Medhavi Nautiyal, the experience helped her with initial preparation for the New York State Bar Examination, which qualified individuals must pass before practicing law in New York. For Dana Kinel, the experience of teaching the workshop was empowering. She noted:

> Access to the law is access to justice; by helping ITOCA representatives understand the basics of the legal field, we formed the first link in a chain to justice for students, professors, researchers, government officials, and other players in the legal field in developing countries.

Conclusion

Thanks to the work of other GOALI partners, including 60 partner publishers, the legal content included in the program has continued to grow since its launch in 2018. As of April 2019, roughly 2500 journals, 12,000 books, and 35 other information resources like the Max Planck Encyclopedia of Public International Law are available as part of the GOALI platform, adding to the content available from the other Research4Life programs (Hinari, AGORA, OARE, and ARDI).

Researchers from institutions in eligible jurisdictions continue to access GOALI content. As of March 2019, users had logged in to GOALI 14,786 times, with the number consistently growing in January, February, and March of 2019. The two highest monthly totals are from March 2019 (1600 logins) and February 2019 (1411 logins).

The training performed in January 2019 is already paying off in future trainings. In May 2019 Research4Life participated in Land Portal's workshop "Catalyzing East Africa's Data Ecosystem" with a half-day training on GOALI and legal information. Blessing Mawire, one of the participants in the Johannesburg workshop, helped organize this session, and selected training materials used in Johannesburg were incorporated.

Acknowledgments

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Appendix

GOALI
RESEARCH FOR GLOBAL JUSTICE

Instructional Materials	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	N/A
Were used effectively	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Were relevant/useful	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Hands-on sessions were useful	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Session Objectives					
Met my expectations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Session Content					
Was well organized	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Length was appropriate for course content	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Trainer					
Was knowledgeable/organized	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Effective presenter	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Responsive to questions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I Acquired					
Knowledge & skills I can use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2. Identify the major strengths of this session (check one or more)
☐ Demos/Hands-on   ☐ Networking   ☐ Creative ideas
☐ Information gained ☐ Support materials   ☐
Other:_____

3. What part of this session was most helpful? Why?

_____

_____

4. What part of this session was least helpful? Why?

_____

_____

5. Overall, I would mark this session in a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 being the highest, best, or most, and 1 being the least or worst)

1 (lowest)	2	3 (middle)	4	5 (highest)

6. Could you please give us some additional comments? Was this training useful for your needs? Would you share with us your Plan of Action in the near future? Are you going to promote GOALI or will you become a trainer?

_____
_____
_____

7. What other topics would you suggest including in the GOALI training?

_____
_____
_____

8. Are you   Male   Female
(if you complete this item, it will help us to assess our gender equity in training opportunities)

January 2019