

Chapter 2

A Proposed Framework for Research Data Management Services in Research Institutions in Zimbabwe

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ABSTRACT

The chapter documents the proposed framework for the establishment of research data management services in research institutions in Zimbabwe. It has been indicated that there are no formal research data management services taking place in Zimbabwe as researchers are managing their own data. It is against such a background that a literature review was undertaken to understand how research institutions in other countries are engaging in research data services. E-mails were sent to the pioneers of research data services. It was discovered that there are challenges that are faced when establishing research data management services and it is important to consult all stakeholders at the planning stage. The framework consists of strategies, policies, guidelines, processes, technologies, and services.

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INTRODUCTION

The chapter documents a proposed framework that can be used in Zimbabwe to develop research data management (RDM) services in research institutions. Published research (Chigwada, Chiparausha and Kasiroori 2017) shows that RDM is a new concept in Zimbabwe and research institutions are working towards the establishment of RDM services. This chapter would assist in unpacking the activities and processes that should be undertaken in establishing RDM services by proposing a framework that can be used. The objectives that are addressed by this chapter are:

1. To identify the strategies that can be used to establish RDM services in Zimbabwe;
2. To identify the stakeholders that can be involved in establishing RDM services in Zimbabwe;
3. To assess the challenges faced when establishing RDM services in Zimbabwe.
4. To propose a framework that can be used to establish RDM services in Zimbabwe.

A literature survey and document analysis were carried out to obtain the information from those with experience in the establishment of RDM services. Emails were sent to RDM ‘champions’ to gather as much detail as possible on how research institutions in Zimbabwe might establish RDM services.

WHAT IS RESEARCH DATA MANAGEMENT?

Research data management (RDM) is the organisation and description of research data, from its entry to the research cycle to the dissemination and archiving of the results (Whyte and Tedds 2011). Pinfield, Cox, and Smith (2014) point out that RDM addresses a number of information needs and is driven by the need to provide immediate data storage facilities; to ensure the security and long term preservation of data; compliance with the requirements and policies of other agencies such as funders; the quality of the research activity and research data itself; the need to share data and make it open access; and the jurisdiction to be involved in RDM and the involvement of other players in offering RDM services. Consequently, various initiatives were carried out in Africa to establish research data management services and some institutions are now archiving research data locally, nationally, regionally and internationally.

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