

DEVELOPING AN INSTITUTIONAL(?) REPOSITORY IN SIERRA LEONE: TAKING THE LEAP



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OUTLINE



- **BACKGROUND (why the question in the title; HEIs in SL)**
- **THE CREATION STORY (TAKING A LEAP OF FAITH)**
- **COMPONENTS OF THE REPOSITORY**
- **CHALLENGES**
- **KEEPING HOPE ALIVE**

BACKGROUND



BY THE NUMBERS

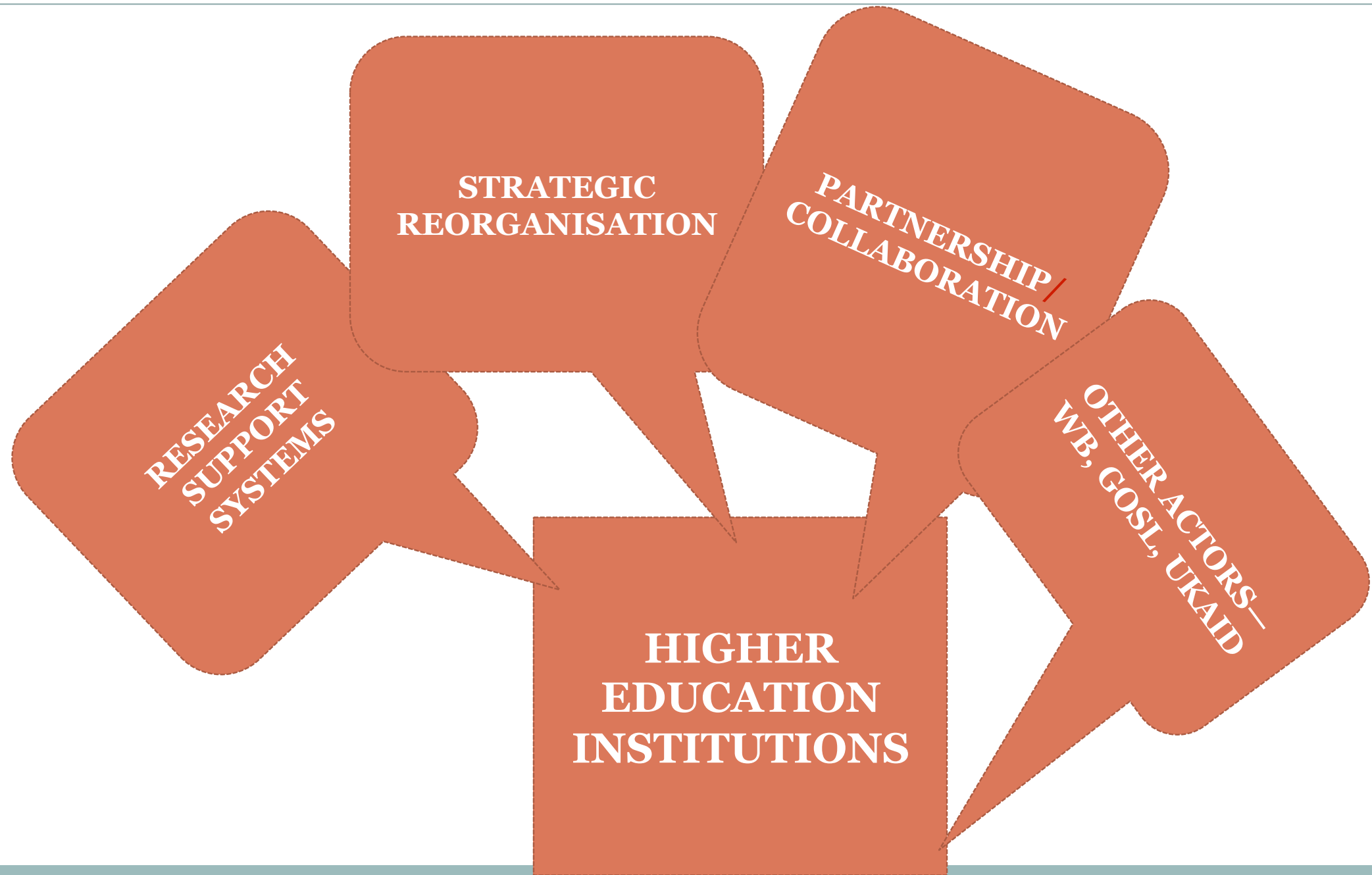
- POP 7+ MILLION
- 3 PUBLIC & 2 PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES
- 3 POLYTECHNICS/TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGES
- MULTIPLE OTHER INSTITUTIONS



“TRIPLE R” PRIORITIES OF HEIs



- In the last 5 years HEIs have intensified efforts at:
 - **R**ebuilding (capacities and systems and infrastructures post-war)
 - **R**ealigning (visions, curricula with a focus on quality and graduate employability, “New Direction”– new government flagship programme, Free Quality Education)
 - **R**esearch strengthening (rethinking funding, new partnerships/common agendas)

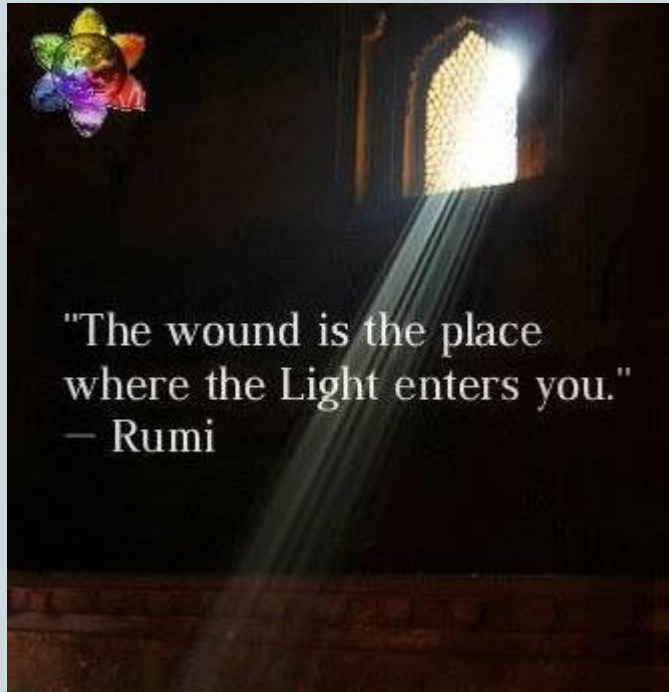


LOST IN THE ECOSYSTEM



It is not always easy for academic library leaders to clearly articulate to top academic leadership how the library can **inspire** and **transform** institutional missions of research, learning and teaching, especially in resource-poor environments.

EBOLA: FIGHT OR FLIGHT



"The wound is the place
where the Light enters you."
— Rumi

- Need for quality research to understand an evolving situation
 - researchers were in fire fighting mode in the field;
 - universities' slow response
- springboard for creative ideas (IR → other e-initiatives) -- new synergies among units & depts; libraries became a meaningful hub for information generation, not just provision (new lease on life)

THE NEW ACADEMIC LIBRARY'S ROLES



- **Connector:** strategically linking people, resources, services, information, and technology to achieve common goals
- **Creative catalyst:** prompting new insights into teaching, learning, research and offering new models to support them
- **Provider** of service-rich environments available to all constituents

Adapted from Janice Jaguszewski and Lisa McGuire (2018), “Connector, Catalyst and Common Good: Defining the Academic Library of the 21st Century.” *Library Leadership and Management* 32.2: 1-20

REPOSITORY COMPONENTS



- **OPEN LEARNING MATERIALS**
- **SIERRA LEONE HISTORICAL MATERIALS**
- **UNIVERSITY OF SIERRA LEONE RECORDS**
- **USL RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION OUTPUT**



Abubakarr Kamarakeh

DSpace Home

DSpace Repository

DSpace is a digital service that collects, preserves, and distributes digital material. Repositories are important tools for preserving an organization's legacy; they facilitate digital preservation and scholarly communication.

Communities in DSpace

Select a community to browse its collections.

[Open Learning Materials](#)[Sierra Leone Historical Materials](#)[University of Sierra Leone](#)

Documents of the University Registry and Constituent Colleges



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Fourah Bay College

Institute of Public Administration and Management

Registry

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CHALLENGES



- **IDENTITY -- NATIONAL OR INSTITUTIONAL OR HYBRID?**
- **SIGNIFICANT BUY-IN FROM ACADEMIC LEADERS AND FACULTY**
 - buy-in but not ingested in institution's vision or budget
- **DISINTERESTED LIBRARIANS (apathetic; novelty idea/pie-in-the-sky) → slow uptake**
- **TRAINED PERSONNEL – IT; LIBRARIANS**

ON CHANGE



- **CHANGE BY EXCEPTION** (retain old beliefs while identifying new ones)
- **INCREMENTAL CHANGE**
- **PENDULUM CHANGE** (from one extreme to the other)
- **PARADIGM**

(Marilyn Ferguson (1980), The Aquarian Conspiracy: Personal and Social Transformation in our Time)

Library-NREN Nexus



- NRENS -- A natural ally for the modern library:
“Librarians played a prominent role in causing the ‘E’ to appear in NREN. Before early 1989, it was just NRN – designed to support scientists in their work with [US] federal agencies.”

(Martin, Susan K. (1991). “Defining “It”: NREN's Opportunities for Librarians.” In B. Sutton and C.H. Davis, eds. 1991. *Networks, open access, and virtual libraries : implications for the research library*. Urbana, Il: Graduate School of Library and Information Science: 61-73. p.64)

- SLREN development team included two library professionals *ab initio*



**THANK YOU,
WACREN**

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Individually, we are one
drop. Together, we are an
ocean.

- Ryunosuke Satoro

