GLOBAL DIMENSIONS: ACCESS TO FOREIGN GOVERNMENT/IGO DATA FOR RESEARCH

Objectives
Meeting the challenges of locating and using global information, particularly data and documentation produced by governments in emerging regions and inter-governmental organizations such as the UN, World Bank, and World Health Organization. The growing globalization of U.S. higher education and the technological developments that have radically altered the “supply chain” for information and documentation produced beyond the U.S., make it imperative to re-envision the role of research libraries in supporting international research. Many longstanding practices and organizational frameworks of research libraries for gathering and maintaining information from world regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia have been rendered obsolete by digital information production and distribution channels such as the Web and social media. In the new global digital environment, “depository libraries” and “overseas acquisition programs,” for example, are becoming artifacts of the print age.

On-going activities:
Global Dimensions of Scholarship and Research: a Forum on the Future, an invitational conference held at Duke University in December 2012, brought together faculty, librarians, and representatives of scholarly societies, associations, and funding agencies for two days in December 2012 to consider the future of research libraries and their role in advancing international scholarship and the globalization of the universities of which they are a part. The conference was to provide the basis for revising and renewing the practices and capabilities of research libraries in North America to support original research in the humanities, social sciences and sciences. Since 1949 the Center for Research libraries has promoted and supported cooperative action by North American research libraries to protect and preserve primary source materials and information from the developing world for research. These include financial, demographic, and statistical information, and documentation of events and developments through news and other communications.

Results:
CRL and Duke University Libraries invite input on the preliminary Global Dimensions conference report. The report shares a vision of a new, broad-gauged information infrastructure and services that might invigorate research on issues of local and international concern. Recommendations are offered as a point of departure for discussions and input from the research community, which will inform a comprehensive final blueprint for action by the Center for Research Libraries, major U.S. and Canadian research libraries, and allied organizations to address the challenges of locating and using global information.

URL for conference site and preliminary report: http://www.crl.edu/events/8478