

Global Access to Local Treasures: A Botswana-Canada Collaboration

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CRKN CONFERENCE, 2025

Access Check

Is there anything about the space (display, sound, speaking speed, etc.) that we should address now?

Are there any other access needs that might affect your participation in the conversations that we could also address?

Land Acknowledgement

We wish to acknowledge the Lands upon which this work was done, and of which we are uninvited occupants.

Accordingly, we acknowledge Toronto - originally Tkaronto - which for thousands of years has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit.

Amal is grateful to be on Treaty 13 lands to give this presentation today, and Jordan is grateful to be presenting from the territory of Mississaugas of the Credit (Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg), specifically the Between the Lakes Treaty 3 after growing up on neighbouring Treaty 19 lands.

Who are we?



Amal Hussien (she/her)

Outreach & Engagement Librarian for Black Studies University of Toronto



Gase Kediseng (she/her)

Museum Curator Khama III Memorial Museum



Jordan Pedersen (she/her)

Research and Scholarship Librarian University of Guelph

What you can expect

01

Overview of the process and timeline

02

Highlights from the Collection

03

Success and Challenges

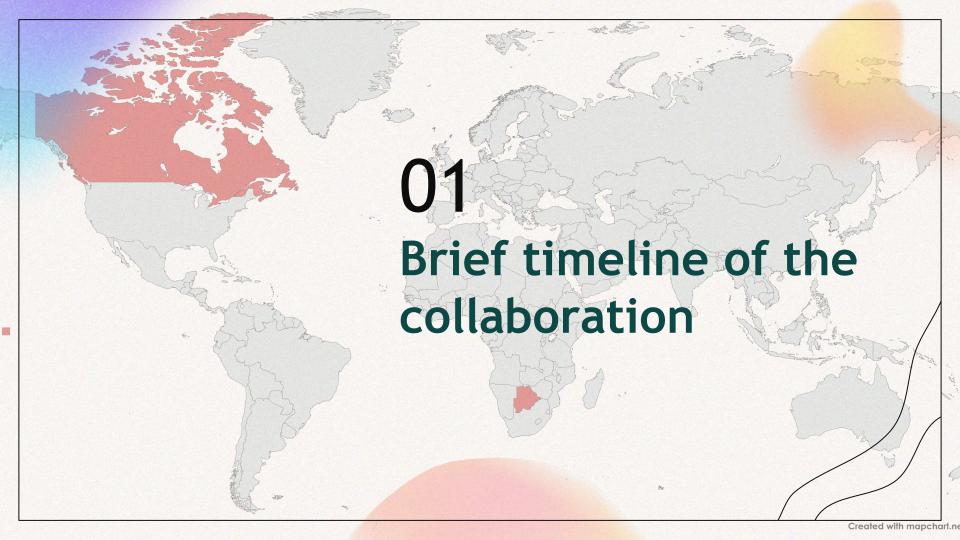
04

Lessons Learned 05

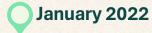
Practical advice & takeaways

06

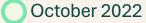
Q&A



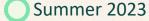
Part 1: 2022 - Summer 2023



The UTL Collection Diversity plan was written.



Discuss digitizing the Khama III and Bessie Head Papers and loop in Jeff Newman (African Studies Librarian); Steve Marks (Digitization Librarian) & Kana Tlhaodi (Archivist)



Finalizing budget for project and begin drafting contract

Jordan and Gase meet and begin sharing and learning about each others roles and institutions

Fall 2022

Submitted project to the Equity Diversity and Inclusion in Collections Initiative

May 2023

Part 2: Fall 2023 - Present

Feb 2024

First draft of proposal is completed and resubmitted for review

October 17, 2024

A Formal agreement is made by the Khama III Memorial Museum & the University of Toronto Libraries to digitize & provide access to material held in the Khama III Memorial Museum archives March 2025

Introducing University of Botswana as the host of the materials! World events highlighted need for local control.

Erin Calhoun joins the team! (Electronic Resources Librarian)

March 2024

Museum began acquiring equipment and the team begin drafting detailed digitization & metadata creation workflows & guidelines, with training documentation

January 2025

Thief Scho oma Dear Chief I have to advise you of houng received the Lion Shin through M. Fales of the B. J.a. Acid is delighted with it and we loth wish & thanh you fu the very useful present. the also desire to wish you the Complements of the Secons and trust the New Sear will be a Sught and Properary one for you and all at Serone. Gorus Sincerele

02

Highlights from the Collection

Highlights from the Collection

- A letter from Sekgoma II, dated April 1923 to King George V, through the Resident Commissioner of the Bechuanaland protectorate Mr. Mac Gregor, paying tribute to King Khama III.
- Represents loyalty and continuity through giving him their most prized possession (generational spear and a kaross).
- Tracing of our heritage and identity.
 Uncover the unknown about our heritage.

Berowe .

April 1923

HO AAGE

From Chief Sekgoma and the Bangwato.

To His Honour The Resident Commissioner of the Beond. Prot

KHAMA IS DEAD.

Our will and pleasure thereofre is that you, in Mac Gregor C. 1. 3., kesident Commissioner of the Pechuanaland Protect to whom the cognizance of matters of this nature doth properly belong, do request a d ask your Honour to accept.

)1(These Historical and Foyal Spears which the Late Chief Khama had inherited from his treat transfathers.

Spears which had won for them a high military honour in connection with the mode of heathen warefare etc.

Then Khama became the Chief of the Bamangwato
he found that Assegais were no match for Martini Pifles
and faxim guns, he, therefore made up his mind that Loyalty
to the Great White Queen was his only duty and safe position
and ever since these Spears have been lowered down and
ordered to sheath their bloody blades which for many years
had terrified other tribes. And though the other mighty
African Princes had foolishly opposed the British Supremacy,
he, wiser than they acknowledged it and remained Chief; as
Chief he ruled his people in the fear of God, and encouraged
truth, devoutness, and Loyalty to His Majesty The King.

Pastly he died as he had wished in narness of the

biggest Empire in the World.

Success of the Partnership

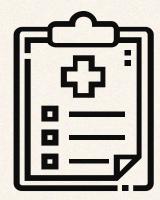
- From the University of Toronto perspective - this fulfilled the goals of the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion Collection fund and can serve as a model for more community-engaged collection building
- The project is contributing to significant professional development (ex. collecting as liaison).
- Possibilities are endless!

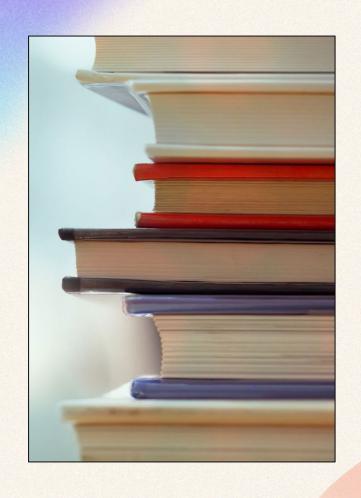


Challenges of the Partnership

- Ensuring the right people and partners are in place
 - Ex. Drafting the contract and project charter, assessing digitization and hosting partners
 - Ex. Working with rights holders
- Finding the Right Hosting Platform
 - There was uncertainty regarding which platform would provide secure, long-term access to the digitized materials. This delayed the decision-making around storage format and security protocols

- Fragile and Unlabeled Documents
 - Several documents were in poor condition or missing identifying information, requiring extra care and slowing down the organization process





03

Lessons Learned and Key Takeaways

Our learnings

01 Strong Team

- Base collaboration on respect, mutual interest and trust
- It's important to have a strong team of people working together to make sure the project doesn't rest on a single individual

02 Plan for External Delays

- Build in buffer time when relying on outside institutions
- Maintain a flexible timeline and have contingency plans in place

03 Secure Hosting Early

- Discuss and decide on hosting platforms in the initial planning phase
- Early alignment ensures smooth transitions between phases

04 Be Creative

- Be creative with the resources that you have access to
- You may need to ask for external support for resources your institution does not offer





Thank you!

Amal Hussien

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