

# Burying MARC, birthing BIBFRAME

Rapidly evolving cataloguing standards and models are increasingly complex and might place strain on cataloguers.

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As the world of information science is currently debating the transition of systems from MARC (Machine-Readable Cataloguing) standards to BIBFRAME (Bibliographic Framework) standards, there is a concern that cataloguers might not be able to keep up with the rate of change.

“The transition is demanding a fast and steep learning curve,” says Dr Acquinatta Nomusa Zimu-Biyela from UNISA. “While cataloguers are still striving to adapt to RDA (Resource Description and Access), they are

now expected to learn about the BIBFRAME Linked Data model as well.”

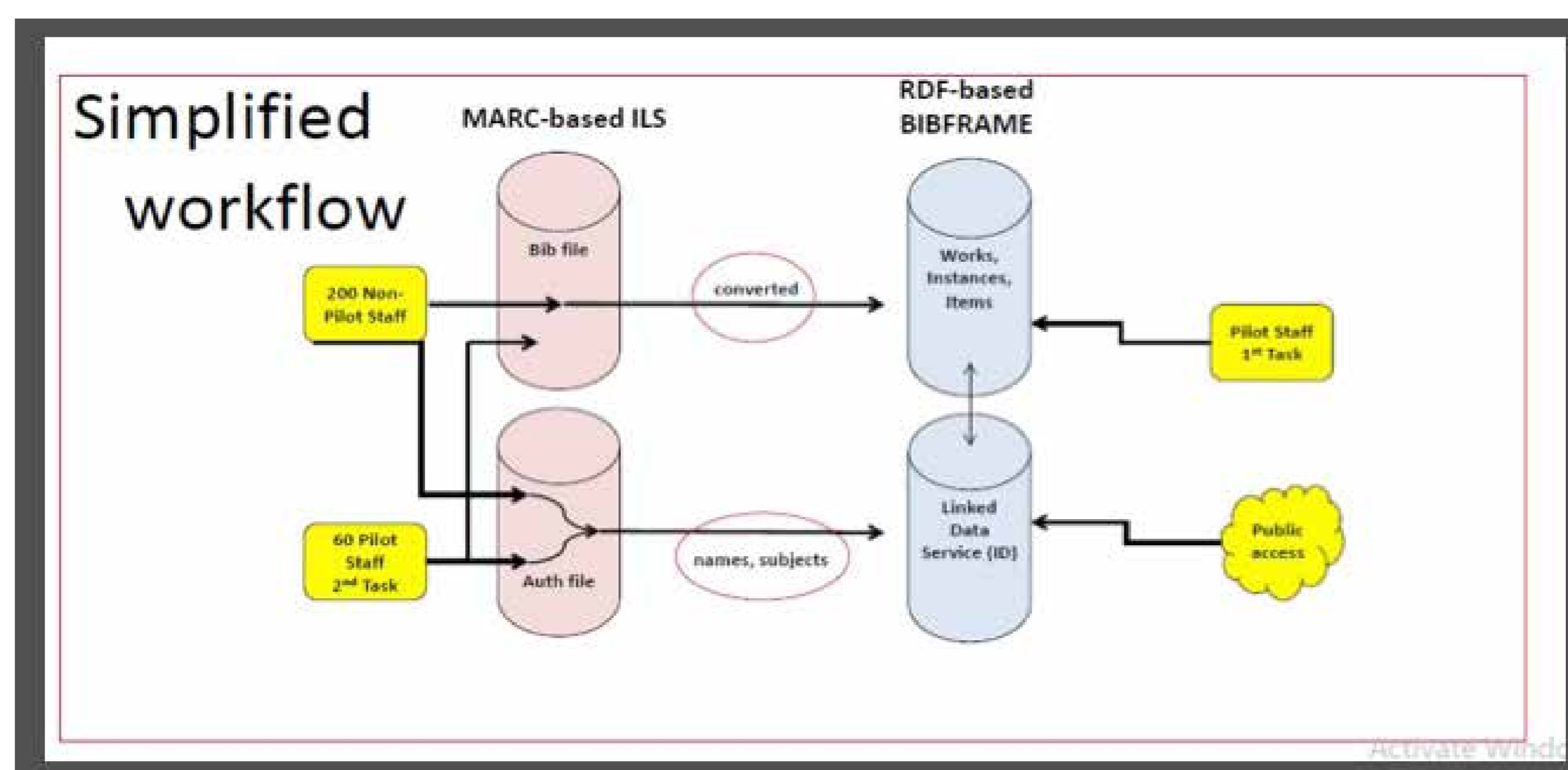
These are all digital cataloguing systems, and one of MARC’s limitations is that it is commonly used inside the library community. BIBFRAME is the latest data model and was designed to replace MARC. It makes use of linked data (data interlinked with other data) to make bibliographic data more useful.

“We are currently researching the differences between the various models to gain insight into the

differences between the MARC and BIBFRAME models and to examine why there is a need to replace MARC with BIBFRAME.”

Various factors play a crucial role in the transition to BIBFRAME, particularly in Africa. These include the competencies that cataloguers need in order to handle BIBFRAME, as well as their perceptions regarding how ready they are for the transition.

“When we are done, we will be able to make recommendations on what can be done to improve cataloguers’ skills in Africa.”



*Cataloguing standards are evolving rapidly.*