

# Namibia Library and Archives Services Information Bulletin



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**Regional Study and Resource Centres:  
Promoting Regional Development  
Through Libraries and Information**

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## Who we are

The Namibia Library and Archives Services (NLAS) is a central agency for the implementation of national and international standards relating to library and information work. Its purpose is to secure equal access to knowledge and information for lifelong learning by creating and maintaining professional expertise and nationwide network of libraries/information centres. The Directorate consists of five sub-divisions: Community Library Services, the National Library, Ministerial Library Services, Education Library Services and the National Archives.

The mission of the NLAS is to ensure that adequate, appropriate and relevant information services and resources are available at all levels of the Namibian society.

### Contributions

Contributions are welcome from individuals and organisations within the library sector in the form of articles, news items, and comments. The Publishers reserve the right to select and reject the items and edit for space available.

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# Message from the Director

**W**elcome to the second issue of our newsletter. Much has happened over the past year, and I would like to briefly summarise some developments within the Namibia Library and Archives Services (NLAS) Directorate.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Directorate and our intention is not just to celebrate the success of the past 20 years, but to leverage this momentous occasion to get the word out about NLAS and its transformative programmes. A lot of developments have taken place since its formation, including the establishment of about 64 community libraries throughout Namibia. Our records in the past years have shown an increase in the patronage of our libraries and Archives. This is an indication that our efforts of promoting library services continue to bear fruitful results.

Although we continue to offer traditional library services, computer usage in our libraries has grown in leaps and bounds. Our clientele make good use of the free Internet access as well as the free Wi-Fi for their compatible equipment. Subscriptions to e-resources such as EBSCOHost and HINARI have not been in vain either.

The Regional Study and Resource Centres (RSRCs) are almost completed. These centres will become the regional information hubs in Namibia.

The re-opening of the Windhoek Public Library in September 2012 after it had been closed for major renovations since February 2009 is a welcome development. It offers state of the art facilities, conducive study environment, and the children section is our biggest pride.

The issue of salaries for librarians that has been a bone of contention over the years has finally been addressed. It is a great pleasure to announce that the regrading exercise has favourably ended years of librarians and archivists being under-rated. Finally



Ms Veno V. Kauaria, Director

archivists and librarians have reclaimed their professional standing in the Namibian society.

The new structure will ensure that libraries are headed by professionals, who will plan and direct community outreach programmes. The high staff turnover will surely be addressed by these changes. However, staffing is still going to be a challenge since the country does not train enough librarians to meet demand. As the saying goes; "Rome was not built in a day."

We have no doubt that all these developments will make a difference in meeting our clients' expectations.

We hope you will enjoy this issue, and we invite you to share with us any ideas that will enable our Directorate to perform better. Your comments are always welcome! Please continue to share the Newsletter with others in your professional networks. See us at the RSRC opening in Oshakati soon!!!!!! ■

*Ms Veno Kauaria  
Director  
National Library and Archives Services*

# The First Three Regional Study and Resource Centres (RSRCs) in Namibia:

## Oshakati, Helao Nafidi and Gobabis



Theopolina N.  
Shuumbili  
Chief Librarian:  
Community Library  
Services

The Millennium Challenge Account (MCA-Namibia) Programme funded the three RSRCs being built in Oshakati – Oshana, Helao Nafidi – Ohangwena and Gobabis – Omaheke. These RSRCs are also part of the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP), a 15 year programme in the Ministry of Education which represents the education and training sector's response to the call of Vision 2030.

The RSRCs are a new concept for library services in Namibia, but common internationally. RSRCs are regionally based with multi-tiered library services and programmes. These centres are planned and designed in a modern way to have adequate study facilities and are equipped with the latest Information Computer Technologies (ICTs).

The mandate of the RSRCs is to empower the regions to be self reliant instead of being dependent on the capital city for information. The new RSRCs will serve as main branch libraries or new information hubs for the regions. They will provide information services to the entire region, through branch/community libraries, regional offices or other modes of information delivery. The RSRCs services are designed to meet the educational, informational, and recreational needs of the community and the residents they will serve.

Some essential services at the RSRCs will include; homework help for learners, job finder services, health corners, economic empowerment and poverty alleviation programmes, and assistance with research. They will also offer information

on agriculture, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), e-governance and decentralised planning and development.

RSRCs will also provide access to resources and other relevant knowledge in an organised manner to facilitate e-learning and support education, especially open and distance study opportunities. Facilities will also include internet access, video conference facilities and spaces for various activities such as halls to watch movies.

These centres are lifelong learning centres, thus they will also incorporate Community Learning and Development Centres (CLDCs); Ministry of Education (MoE) Directorate of Adult Education: Literacy and Adult Education Programmes; CLDC Coordinator – Office and training facilities.

Furthermore, RSRCs will recruit professional expertise to serve the information needs of the regions. They will also house collections for mobile libraries to support communities with relevant information materials, facilities and services such as internet access, printing, story-telling, borrowing facilities and so forth.

### Proposed opening dates:

The first two RSRCs (Oshakati and Helao Nafidi) are expected to open to the users during September 2013 while Gobabis is expected to open its doors to the public early next year (2014). ■

**NB:** These are just proposed dates, hence the centres may be open earlier or later than the anticipated dates.

### References

1. Namibia Library and Archives Services: Regional Study and Resource Centre, Concept brief – 2009



*On-going construction*

# Khomas Region: Community Libraries



*Hilka Hashoongo  
Regional Librarian:  
Khomas*

The mandate of community libraries in the Khomas Region is to render services to the clientele within the region. All eight community libraries are functional even though there has been a shortage of staff members. Renovations at the Windhoek Public Library were completed and the library was re-opened to the public after two years of closure. The library was officially

re-opened by the late Hon. Dr. Abraham Iyambo on the 28 September 2012.

## Community libraries in Khomas

- Support lifelong learning
- Provide information services and resources to the public
- Support teaching and learning through e-resources
- Support the school curriculum by providing learners with relevant materials
- Assist learners with their homework.

## Windhoek Public Library

With the renovation of the library, new services were introduced while the existing services were improved.

### Main Library Section

The main section hosts a variety of materials. Users are allowed to borrow books for a specific period of time. The library has general fiction books in Afrikaans, English and German. The library has a teenage section, but they are welcome to make use of the main section as well.

### Reference Section: improved service

A variety of reference material such as dictionaries, encyclopedias and other reference books are available for use.

### Audio Book Centres: new service

Underneath each of the staircases leading to the balcony are audio book centres. These can be used by everyone, but are specifically for the visually impaired. The audio book centres are sponsored by Rotary Namibia. This centre does not attract many users at the moment; however, the library is in the process of acquiring audio books to boost the scant collection of this section.



*Windhoek Public Library: the Main Section*

### Children's Computer Section: new service

The library has five computers specifically for the young ones. These computers are equipped with child friendly keyboards and educational games to assist with Mathematics, Spelling and Typing as outlined below:

- School programme level 1-4: it is a programme to equip learners with phonics, spelling, reading, math, grammar skills and critical thinking.
- Basic mouse skill programme: children acquire skills on how to use a mouse.
- Big Boet Programme: the programme is in both English and Afrikaans and it helps children to develop reading and spelling skills in both languages. Some of the contents include word blocks (play and spell), comprehension (word explanation); letter matrix (spelling Riddie) and 10 000 spelling words in English and Afrikaans.
- X-Box to assist in hand and eye co-ordination and concentration skills for children. The only activity available is X-Box with Forza Motorsport 3.

Computer training is taking place on an ad hoc basis to learners who do not know how to operate some activities on the computers. The weekly video hour was piloted, but will take place as soon as the library acquires the relevant materials.

*continued on page 6*



Learners at Windhoek Public Library busy with different activities

### Computer Laboratory: new service

Twenty (20) computers with internet connection are available to the public. Prior booking is required. Users are welcome to browse the internet, do research, assignments or type documents. Usage is free, however, users will be charged for printing.

### Study Space

The library has a study hall, 32 study cubicles on the balcony, five in the Reference Section and ten in the Children's Section. There is a study space on the basement that can accommodate up to 20 users at a time.

### The Finnish Library for Development Programme

The Finnish Library Association and the Ministry of Education have a special programme, which offers basic computer training to women, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and to other categories. The training is conducted in selected libraries including Windhoek Public Library, Maxwilili Community Library and Greenwell Matongo Community Library. The basic computer training is offered to those who would like to learn how to do the following:

- Basic ICT (hardware, software);
- Ms Word 2007/2010;
- Ms PowerPoint 2007/2010;
- Internet & Email;
- Social Networking – Facebook (Sign up);
- CV and Cover Letter Writing, Online job hunting (registering and uploading CVs on websites), Information searching skills
- Referencing and citing sources.

With the inception of the new Basic Computer Project more than 400 participants from the Khomas Region have been trained and awarded attendance certificates.

If interested in attending the training, please sign up at the circulation desk. Volunteers to help with the training of community members in these basic skills are welcome.

The table below gives a breakdown of the number of people who have received basic computer training per target group in the Khomas Region under the Finnish project.

*continued on page 7*

Table 1

Statistics for Basic Computer Training - Khomas Region 2012						
Library	Target Groups					Total
	General Public	Youth & Students	SME	New Literates	School Kids	
WHK Public Library	69					69
Greenwell Matongo	30	30				60
Maxwilili CLDC	136	112	22	6	33	309
<b>Total</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>438</b>

Table 2

Computer usage statistics					
Library	Computer users/ Sep-Dec 2012	Computer users/ Jan-May 2013	Wi-Fi Sep-Dec 2012	Wi-Fi Jan-May 2013	Total
Greenwell Matongo	10814	4457	0	0	15271
Rössing Khomasdal	-	6	0	6	6
Maxwilili/Okulyangava	4620	2421	0	0	7041
Windhoek Public Library	4700	7800	205	257	12962
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>20134</b>	<b>14684</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>35280</b>

### Computer Training Statistics for January – June 2013

Windhoek Public Library has trained a total of 28 people of the general public. Maxwilili CLDC is not conducting training due to the ongoing construction. There is no training so far at Greenwell Matongo Community Library.

### Maxwilili Community Library

This is one of the libraries in Khomas Region which has space limitations. To address this problem, the City of Windhoek is currently busy with the construction of a new modern facility. The new structure will accommodate a wide range of sections such as the main library, children's section, computer laboratory, offices and study space.

### Internet Service

Internet service is offered in only four community libraries which are specified in Table 2.

\* Internet is free

### Membership Requirements

- National I.D.
- 2 passport-sized photographs
- Proof of postal address or municipal bill
- Membership is free

### Where to find Community Libraries in the Khomas Region:

#### Windhoek Public Library –Lüderitz Street (CBD)

P/Bag 1386  
Tel: 061-224163

#### Greenwell Matongo Library

Dannela Street  
Tel.061-235736

#### Maxwilili Community Library

Tauno Hatuikulipi Street  
Tel. 061-217261

#### Rössing Khomasdal Library

Rand Street  
Tel. 061-210981

#### Rössing Katutura Library

Klemens Kapuuo Street  
Tel. 061-263499

#### Otjomuise Community Library

Bonn Street



Basic Computer Training at Windhoek Public Library

# Libraries are the Hearts of Schools



Belinda Lizazi-Mbanga  
Regional Librarian:  
Otjozondjupa

Allow me to review some of the hidden treasures of libraries which are ignored by many in society. For many years one song has been sung by one person with a soft voice yet no one is responding so that many mixed voices can be heard to make the song sweet. That song is the high failure rate of Grade 10 and 12 learners. Namibian schools except private schools are supported by the Education Library Services (ELS), a sub division of the Directorate Namibia Li-

brary and Archives Services (NLAS) of the Ministry of Education. ELS provides resources to school libraries to support the curriculum needs of learners and teachers.

The question is, do learners have access to these resources? Do the school principals consider the importance of school libraries? Can a school function properly without a library? Can learners achieve better results without a library? What is the role of a public library, national library, special library, academic library and school library in society? These are debatable issues which may raise more questions and fewer answers. A school library is an intellectual place for the development of a wide range of information that leads to the creation of deep knowledge that opens up opportunities for lifelong learning. It is a place where learners develop skills in order to become effective users of ideas and information to develop a love of reading. It should not be ignored that the school library is the heart of the school. The heart pumps blood to all parts of the body in order for the body to function properly; the heart needs to function properly as well. Hence the school library pumps knowledge which cannot be inherited.

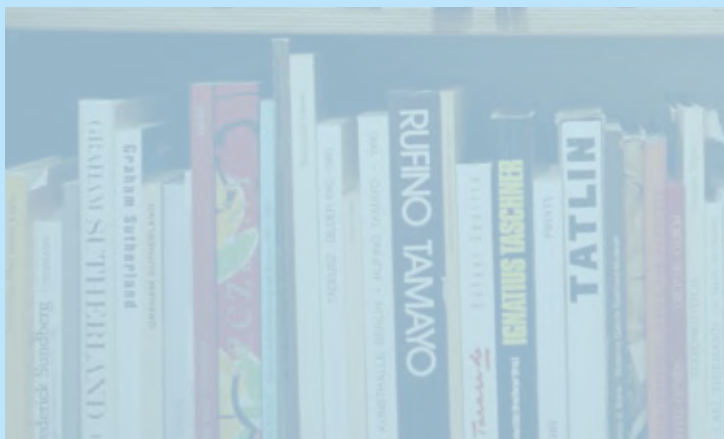
Schools and libraries are two inseparable concepts. Where there is a school, the library should be there to support the curriculum needs of the school; and where there is a library, there should be someone to acquire what is hidden in the li-

brary resources. The role of school libraries is the same worldwide. The school libraries offer learning services to learners as well as equip them with knowledge and skills and support the curriculum needs of its teachers. According to numerous researchers, school libraries play a role in the academic performance of learners. Researchers also have established that learners who attend schools with well developed and collaborative library programs achieve better results. Yes, learners can achieve better results if they become friends of the library, "because the library provides access to books – access to books allow children to read more – reading more creates better readers".

Will the pass rate increase up to 70 % one good year? I doubt. Because school libraries or libraries in general are the lowest of priorities in educational spending, the majority of schools have no library. If a school possesses one, it either has few shelves with outdated books or a cupboard with few books. The budgets of school libraries or libraries in general are extremely low so that they cannot satisfy the information needs of users. In order for the school library to play its role efficiently and effectively, the Government should intervene and consider libraries as vital.

School libraries lay the foundation for the future use of public and academic libraries. Public and school libraries are vital institutions which cannot be separated from education. The provision of public and school libraries is crucial and indispensable to learners and adults. As information is easily disseminated and shared through computer networks and other telecommunications, people increase their ability to acquire new knowledge. Yes! New knowledge can be obtained at the library at no cost. Teachers may teach research processes masterfully, but if learners do not find and use quality information, their projects will suffer and their results will be poor. ■

The article was also published in The Namibian newspaper - 01/03/2013



“What a school thinks about its library is a measure of what it feels about education.”  
Harold Howe



# Libraries for Development Project



Maria Ausiku  
ICT Administrator

The Libraries for Development Project is a cooperation between Namibian, Finnish and Tanzanian libraries. The Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs has allocated development funds to the Finnish Library Association for the years 2012 – 2014. The funds are meant to support development cooperation with Namibian and Tanzanian libraries. The initial phase involves 20 libraries from Namibia and two from Tanzania.

Two members of staff were hired, one ICT Administrator and one IT Technician. The project was officially launched in October 2012 by the late Minister of Education, Dr Abraham Iyambo, in Windhoek.

In 2012, a total number of 1666 people from different target groups were trained in basic computer use, internet and email, online job-hunting, social networking and Microsoft Office Suite. Those who are interested in

this training should contact their nearest community/public library.

This project is part of the Poverty Reduction Strategies of the partner countries in accordance with the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. The immediate objectives of the project are;

- To support capacity building of the personnel of libraries in Information Communication Technology (ICT) and information searching skills. This aims at bridging the digital divide at grassroots level.
- To cooperate with a number of non-governmental organisations, in particular with women's organisations and small-scale entrepreneurs.
- To improve distance learning possibilities for out-of-school youths.
- To establish health corners in libraries
- To organise ICT and information searching sessions for subsistence farmers.
- To promote literacy by cooperating with literacy classes.

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The Project Launch, left to right: Ms Veno Kauaria, NLAS director, Prof. Kingo Mchombu, project evaluator and the late Education Minister, Dr Abraham Iyambo on the podium.

The project runs free basic computer use training for community members at the following participating libraries:

	Library	Region
1	Rundu	Kavango
2	Katima	Caprivi
3	Tsumkwe	Otjozondjupa
4	Otjiwarongo	Otjozondjupa
5	Omaruru	Erongo
6	Swakop	Erongo
7	WHK Public Library	Khomas
8	Greenwell Matongo	Khomas
9	Maxuilili CLDC	Khomas
10	Lüderitz	Karas
11	Keetmanshoop	Karas
12	Mariental	Hardap
13	Outapi	Omusati
14	Okahao	Omusati
15	Ohangwena	Ohangwena
16	Eenhana	Ohangwena
17	Auala	Oshikoto
18	Omuthiya	Oshikoto
19	Opuwo	Kunene
20	Warmband	Karas
21	Gobabis	Omaheke
22	Oshakati	Oshana



*Training at Keetmanshoop Community Library*



*Maria Ausiku in a music library in Helsinki, Finland and Comfort Kamba from Tanzania Library Services Board*

The target groups for training are; the general public, out-of-school and unemployed youth, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), health workers and farmers. ■



*Participants with their certificates after training at Windhoek Public Library*

# Beyond Access in Namibia:

## Libraries and Access to Information



Charles Mlambo  
Chief Librarian:  
National Library of  
Namibia

**B**yond Access is an initiative of the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX), the Electronic Information for Libraries (EIFL) and the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The initiative descended to Windhoek in April 2013 for an event that was jointly organized by the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) – Namibia and IREX's

Beyond Access Initiative. The discussion was attended by librarians and information professionals in Namibia including officials from the Ministry of Education, and various other institutions such as MCA, University of Namibia, The Polytechnic of Namibia, and the Bank of Namibia amongst others. Beyond Access is a project that ensures that libraries have a seat at the table during global development discussions. Although this discussion was local, it carried with it an international flavour as it was facilitated by Mr. Matej Novak – Director of Bibliomist Global Libraries who flew in all the way from the Ukraine. This meeting brought a very stimulating discussion from 'cutting-edge' librarians who were eager to share their ideas and knowledge. All those in attendance left the meeting convinced that access to information was critical to global and national development.

There were discussions on how public libraries in countries such as Nepal are facilitating social and financial inclusion programmes for a third of their population living on less than US\$1/day. Information is critical to every one of us. Rural farmers need information to connect with new markets so that they can sell their produce easily and more profitably. Health workers need up-to-date research based information so that they can care for their patients. Yet, the challenge is that the majority of Namibia's population in the rural areas does not have access to information they need to improve their lives. Without access to information, these citizens are prevented from accessing or requesting from government the basic services they need. These were some of the challenges affecting the supply chain of libraries and information services that generated discussions.

There was also room for self-introspection when one conceded that librarians did not know how to persuasively communicate what they did. Another participant suggested that librarians should be community activists and that there was an urgent need to engage in a mind-set change.

Dr Fay Chung, the Adviser to the Minister of Education, also gave a regional and global view of the importance of libraries in giving access to education and opportunities. Ms Tuli-Mevava Nghiyoonanye from MCA, which is financing the construction of the massive Regional Study and Resource Centres (RSRCs) in Oshakati, Ohangwena and Gobabis, said that the perception of libraries as belonging solely to the Ministry of Education (MoE) deflects interest from other stakeholders. She urged that the RSRCs should be seen as business institutions; and that requires extensive marketing.

The Under-Secretary in the MoE, Ms Claudia Tjikua raised the issue of the short supply of local content material in Namibia, and said this existing gap was a niche market that needed to be exploited. She also mentioned the issue of the soon to be introduced mobile libraries and the crucial role they were going to play to reach the unreachable.

One interesting observation came from Ms Ellen Namhila, the UNAM Librarian and Chairperson of the Namibia Library and Information Council (NLIC), when she advocated the formation of a consortium amongst Namibian libraries to achieve higher buying power for information resources, unlike the present situation whereby libraries from different institutions compete to buy the same resources from the same sources thereby losing the gains of sharing. This definitively needs further exploration.

NLAS Director, Ms Veno Kauaria, brought the issue of whether the use of Facebook and emails in libraries offering public computer access was appropriate. This issue always raises a huge debate, but most participants were in agreement that social networks had become educational tools and one participant termed Facebook as an on-line version of the Public Library. All in all this was a discussion not worth missing as themes ranged from the need for a mental shift by librarians to the necessity of thinking out of the box all in the quest to provide access to information and serving community needs. The afternoon session proved that discussions of such nature are critical to opening people's minds and should be held more frequently. ■

“

To add a library to a house is to give  
that house a soul.

Marcus Tullius Cicero

”

# The Book Selection Workshop



*Workshop Exhibitors*

**N**LAS successfully conducted a Book Selection Workshop from the 25th to the 27th of June 2013. The two and half day event which took place at the National Library and National Archives building was attended by a total of 35 librarians, library assistants and call coordinators from community and school libraries in the 13 regions of Namibia. 18 publishers from Botswana, Namibia and South Africa exhibited at the event. The Book Selection Workshop aims to give the participants an opportunity to see what is available in the market and to engage them in selecting library materials without having to travel from place to place.

## **Objectives of the workshop**

- To create an environment where librarians and publishers come together; with librarians selecting materials for their libraries and publishers exhibiting their materials;
- To bring together librarians from all regions to interact and share experiences
- To provide an opportunity for librarians to present the challenges they face in their respective regions;
- To make recommendations to challenges faced in the regions

The programme included briefings, discussions and book selection. Briefings from the subdivisions were presented by Ms Ndala, the Acting Head of the Education Library Services (ELS) and Theopolina Shuumbili, the Head of the Community Library Services (CLS). Ms Ndala gave an outline of the activities of school libraries that are required by ELS from the regions. She stressed the fact that communication was essential to enable the co-ordination of school library activities as well as the

monitoring and evaluation by ELS. Ms Ndala gave an outline of the elements of a good children's book to assist with the selection of appropriate fiction books for school libraries. Ms Shuumbili gave guidelines on how to select books for community libraries. The participants were reminded to cater for the needs of their library users based on the results of their needs assessments. Ms Shuumbili also went through the budget allocation for community libraries for newspapers and magazines for each region.

Briefings from the 13 regions on activities, future plans and constraints were presented. Presentations provoked questions



*Workshop Exhibitors*

# Workshop at the National Library



*Workshop Exhibitors*

and sharing of ideas amongst the participants. Key challenges that were repeated throughout the workshop included;

- The lack of space or proper library infrastructure in schools – with the exception of a few, most school libraries are in the form of a storeroom, a mobile cabinet, a shelf in the headmaster's office or a classroom.
- Vacancies are not filled due to the shortage of qualified librarians in the country
- Lack of adequate funds to equip school libraries with books, photocopiers, furniture and other resources

- Low bandwidth, and in some cases there is no internet connectivity at all
- Lack of commitment towards and support for school libraries and Basic Information Science (BIS) – BIS is not a promotional subject, so it is not given the necessary attention. Most BIS teachers feel overloaded to teach a non-promotional subject
- Libraries are still using the manual system
- Lack of reliable transport
- School libraries still remain closed in most schools. ■



*Workshop Participants*

# Ministerial Resource Centres on the MOVE



Namutenya  
Hamwaalwa  
Senior Librarian:  
Ministerial Library  
Services

## Abstract

The use of technology and the availability of information from other information resources such as the internet are challenging Ministerial libraries to redefine their roles in order to remain relevant to their parent organisations. Ministerial libraries are challenged to make their libraries comfortable for patrons as well as to provide the latest technology to enable access to global information. This article therefore looks at different activities that ministerial libraries in Namibia are embarking on in an attempt to provide quality services required in support of information dissemination and knowledge management in the Ministries.

## Brief overview of Ministerial Resource Centres

Most Government Ministries in Namibia have institutional libraries, referred to as Ministerial Resource Centres (MRCs), which are mandated to provide information support to the Ministries and to make information accessible to the general public.

The MRCs are under the supervision of the Ministerial Library Services (MLS), a subdivision under the Directorate of Library and Archives Services in the Ministry of Education. MLS is responsible for providing human resources to the Ministerial libraries and for ensuring that the Ministerial libraries are fully operational.<sup>1</sup>

There are 22 MRCs currently being served by the MLS, however, Ministries that do not have information resource centres realise the importance of such a service and therefore the number of centres is bound to increase. Ministerial Resource Centres are marked by extreme variations in their size and effectiveness and their operations are adversely affected by different constraints such as low library budgets, or no budgets, and lack of clear spelt out roles for libraries within Ministries.

The importance of Ministerial Resource Centres, and indeed all libraries in Namibia, is underscored in Vision 2030, the official document in which the country's long-term vision for national development is articulated. In that landmark document, it is envisioned that the nation shall strive to transform itself "into an innovative, knowledge-based society."<sup>2</sup> The national

*continued on page 15*



*Kamutjonga Inland Fisheries Institute Resource Centre*

<sup>1</sup> Government of the Republic of Namibia (1997). Information for Self Reliance and Development: A Policy Framework for Libraries and Allied Information Agencies for Namibia

<sup>2</sup> Government of the Republic of Namibia (2004). Namibia Vision 2030: Policy Framework for Long Term National Development

development policy is therefore challenging information centres to expand their services and facilitate access to global information as well as to integrate information technology infrastructure to manage and maintain both print and digital information resources.

### **In response to vision 2030 and change in technology**

Today's electronic environment enables information users to access all kinds of information from different databases and search engines such as Google, without going to libraries.

It is evident that libraries need to focus on different activities in order for them to be of value to the people they serve. Nowadays, libraries are not just competing with other information providers, but they are also competing with other departments within organisations. It has been observed that resources allocated to libraries are often among the first to be slashed when times are tough. As indicated earlier on, most ministerial libraries already operate on limited budgets because they still have to prove their effectiveness to be rated as equally important as other departments. As such, we have realised that MRCs have to demonstrate that they do not just provide quality information, but that they also add value to the institution's performance. Below are some of the Ministerial Resources Centres which are currently working on uplifting their looks and improving their services.

The Ministry of Education Resource Centre, located at the Ministry of Education's head office was one of the least used MRCs with an average of 20 users per day in 2011. The Directorate of Libraries then refurbished the building in order to meet international standards of specialised libraries. After the renovations, 10 computers were acquired and connected to the wireless internet. Furniture was also acquired to make the place conducive for users.

In support of the Education Resource Centre's activities, Multi-choice Namibia (Pty) Ltd now offers free access to educational channels through DSTV. This provides students with additional information for their studies and staff members of the Ministry with up-to-date national news on events such as the national budget. Usage of the library has increased to an average of 35 users per day and 378 computer users per month.

The National Marine and Information Resource Centre (NatMIRC) at the Ministry of Fisheries Swakopmund is also under the supervision of MLS. NatMIRC was one of the most used Resource Centres with an average of 35 users per day in 2010. Its performance was affected when the librarian left the service in May 2011. The position was only filled in 2013. The current librarian is now working tirelessly to reinvent the wheel and make the resource centre functional again. He has also opened another small Resource Centre, one of its kind, at the Mirrabills vessel in Walvis Bay. The Centre provides information support to researchers and other crew members in the Mirrabills vessel.



*The Namibia Agriculture & Water Information Centre*

Though the Ministerial Resource Centres are trying to improve their services, challenges such as budgetary constraints and staff turnover also negatively affect the performance of the resource centres. One has to keep in mind that the Ministerial Resource Centres are specialised in different disciplines and librarians working there are required to learn and acquire relevant skills related to the disciplines in order to be effective. Most of the librarians attend relevant courses related to their Ministries and some learn on the job. The other challenging situation is that the positions of these librarians/information specialists are entry level positions. Therefore when a skilled librarian leaves the service, they are replaced by new graduates who require training in that specialised field and librarianship in general. This results in lack of continuity as this training might require some time before the newly recruited staff assimilate the operations of the specialised libraries.

In the next issue we will provide you with recent developments in the Ministry of Environment, National Planning Commission and the Ministry of Agriculture Resources Centres. ■

“ If you would not be forgotten as soon as you are dead, either write things worth reading or do things worth writing. ”  
Benjamin Franklin

# The Importance of Electronic Resources in Libraries



*Jakobina Nghulondo  
Librarian: National  
Museum of Namibia*

**L**ibraries play a very significant role in everyday life. Most people believe that libraries are all about books, but they are rooms of knowledge where you can find periodicals, CDs, computers, newspapers, newsletters, films and recorded music. A library is where one can gain knowledge and skills in order to upgrade one's studies. Students, researchers and the community in general should always visit the library for their research studies or assignments.

Electronic resources are materials, data or programmes encoded for manipulation by a computerised device. Electronic resources therefore play a very significant role in libraries because they are the tools for retrieving information easily and effectively. Information sources are available electronically which makes it easier to share information with other librarians or professional people in the field of information science and the public at large. E-Resources allow a greater degree of interaction with libraries through the use of blog and e-mail. Internet makes life easier because through e-resources even disabled people can access most

library resources such as e-books at home. The application of computers in information processing has brought several services and products to the scene. The internet and the web influence the development of communication in library and information science.

Since space is always a major concern in libraries, it is therefore important for libraries to have electronic resources available so that they can always download materials or information. Some publications are only available electronically and not in physical format. It is therefore recommended for libraries to subscribe to electronic resources in order to access such publications. Today libraries are operating in a rapidly changing environment. There is need to digitise materials in order to make them easily accessible and retrievable for users. The rapid growth in the quantity of information and the fact that information can now be digitised and delivered electronically necessitates that libraries combine their efforts in providing a range of new services through cooperative electronic networks. Librarians, archivists and information officers need to have skills and knowledge in retrieving information from electronic databases to be effective in locating information resources and to pass on the knowledge to the users. ■







# The Ethical Dilemmas of Librarians in the Digital Era



Nomusa Senzanje  
Senior Librarian:  
National Library of  
Namibia

The importance of upholding ethical standards in any given profession cannot be underestimated. In making decisions regarding acquisition, processing, and dissemination of information, librarians are guided by principles which enable them to determine what is right or wrong, good or bad. According to the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) Code of Ethics, librarianship is, in its very essence, an ethical activity embodying a value-rich approach to professional work with information.<sup>1</sup> However, it is believed that when values are in conflict, little can be done to prevent unethical conduct.

Some of the core issues of information ethics include intellectual freedom, equitable access to information, information privacy, security, and copyright and intellectual property. These issues have always been of concern, but “with the rise of modern technology, new rules are needed to govern behaviour, and to develop procedures for librarians on the frontlines.”<sup>2</sup> However, Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) have brought about various benefits to the information service industry and to the society at large. While librarians maximise the benefits, they need to be mindful of the challenges that arise in identifying, acquiring, organising, storing, locating and retrieving information using ICTs.

## Equitable access to all sources of information

Librarians and other information workers ensure that the right of accessing information is not denied and that equitable services are provided for everyone despite their age, gender, citizenship, political affiliation, physical or mental ability, immigration and asylum-seeking status, education, income, marital status, race, religion and sexual orientation.<sup>3</sup>

The utilisation of digital information technology and the internet have increased the ability of people to access information. This has resulted in information explosion or an extreme increase in the supply of information to information users. Librarians are faced with situations where they have to impose some restrictions to limit access to the different types of information they avail to the public. Although the use of filters in libraries has been considered unethical, some regard them as a “necessary evil,” especially in protecting the younger generation to accessing information which may be considered violent, hateful, or sexually explicit.<sup>4</sup> Yet, providing unequal service is considered unethical as it denies individuals equal access to information. However, despite the debate over unrestricted access to the internet, librarians have a moral obligation to support the social and cultural goals of the societies in which they serve.

## Intellectual Freedom

Supporting intellectual freedom and resisting censorship clearly further the librarian’s mission to ensure access to information for all. “Intellectual freedom is the freedom to hold, re-

*continued on page 18*

1 IFLA (2012). IFLA Code of Ethics for Librarians and other Information Workers.  
2 Jonas, H. (1984). *The Imperative Responsibility*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press  
3 IFLA, Op. Cit.  
4 Bopp & Smith (eds.) (2011). *Reference and Information Services: An Introduction*. 4th ed. California: Libraries Unlimited

ceive and disseminate ideas. The concept of intellectual freedom supports the belief that people have a fundamental right to the ideas produced in a society and that society functions best when the flow of ideas is unimpeded.<sup>5</sup> The librarian's personal biases should not obstruct the flow of information. The big question that can be posed is whether intellectual freedom is guaranteed in libraries.

Intellectual freedom hinges on the assumption that individuals choose the path their inquiries take.<sup>6</sup> This is not necessarily true because the librarians may choose the information they avail to the user. They may choose to withhold information without the user's knowledge since contemporary librarians are empowered with the necessary skills to access information from specialised databases. Therefore, "librarians should set aside their prejudices to ensure that they do not destroy the fundamental principle that underlies librarianship: the social obligation to allow access to all perspectives."<sup>7</sup>

### Protect the privacy and dignity of library users

The basic ethical issues such as confidentiality and privacy pose a great challenge in the digital era due to the fact that information sent over the internet can be monitored as it passes through many computer systems. "Therefore it is often possible to track an individual's identity, queries, and precise use of electronic databases. Such information should be treated with the same respect for confidentiality and privacy as circulation records."<sup>8</sup> For patrons to feel comfortable seeking information, they must be confident that their queries and the answers given to their queries are confidential. Confidentiality of library records is a matter of concern to academic freedom, as well as to intellectual freedom. The responsibility of the librarian is to ethically facilitate, not monitor, access to information. Consequently, patrons would not take out certain books or have online searches conducted on some controversial topics if they felt they could be subjected to public scrutiny.<sup>9</sup> However, confidentiality can be difficult to maintain since library records may be subpoenaed by the courts and law enforcement agencies.

### Copyright and Intellectual Property Rights

Intellectual property refers to the creations of the human mind namely technological inventions, and literary and artistic works such as books, music, paintings, electronic databases and so forth. Copyright law protects the forms of expression of ideas and the owner of intellectual property against copying and misuse by third parties. The new technologies raise ethical concerns as they have made it difficult to protect intel-

lectual property since information can now be easily copied or distributed on networks.

Librarians face a dilemma in obtaining an appropriate balance between giving sufficient respect to originators of works and serving the needs of library patrons. This normally occurs when users do not give due respect to intellectual property rights. Moreover, "with the new era of digital libraries, ethical concerns pose a series of problems that are not characteristic of the print media and should be dealt with due diligence."<sup>10</sup> The current infringement policies are not designed to effectively handle copyright infringement on the internet. In the USA, the Digital Millennium Copyright Act of 1998 in compliance with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Copyright Treaty was created to deal with such challenges. The Act aims to protect the rights of both copyright owners and consumers. It provides, to a certain extent, some protection on selling and distributing books, articles, and other intellectual property legally on the internet.<sup>11</sup> In an attempt to serve the interests of both the copyright owners and library users, libraries may charge their patrons a fee for accessing and downloading from digital library collections. This would provide revenue for publishers, authors and libraries.

### Security

In the 21st century, the increased need for security of information content to protect against cyber theft, hacking or piracy requires the librarians to be on the alert of information ethics. "Simply accessing a computer system without authorisation or with intent to do harm is a crime."<sup>12</sup> The use of passwords has improved security of library databases from unauthorised users. With the advent of the internet, libraries subscribe to a number of electronic databases with stringent security mechanisms. To access these databases, librarians are required to type in passwords on behalf of the users. This can be time consuming and cumbersome, but turning off these security measures poses a security risk to the usage of e-resources.

### Conclusion

Faced with these dilemmas, it is imperative for librarians to understand and adopt new ethical guidelines as they emerge. The profession is changing at a tremendous pace and it is no longer business as usual. There is need for a paradigm shift in order to keep pace with the advances in ICTs. Although codes of ethics have proven to have limited control in the digital era, librarians can do their fair share in upholding moral standards of the profession. ■

5 Vaagan, R.W. (ed.). (2002). *The Ethics of Librarianship: An International Survey*. Munchen: Saur

6 Schweinsburg, J.D. (1995). Professional Awareness of the Ethics of Selection. *Journal of Information Ethics*, Vol. 4, No.2.

7 Mason, M.K. (2012). *Ethics of Librarianship: Libraries, Intellectual Freedom, and Censorship in the Age of Technology*

8 Bopp & Smith (eds.) (2011). *Reference and Information Services: An Introduction*. 4th ed. California: Libraries Unlimited

9 Ibid.

10 Froehlich, T. (1997). *Survey and Analysis of the Major Ethical and Legal Issues Facing Library and Information Services*.

11 Laudon & Laudon (2012). *Essentials of Management Information Systems*. 10th ed. Boston: Prentice Hall

12 Ibid.

# Namibian Information Workers Association (NIWA): the Revival

Wilhelm Uutoni and Liwakala Mudengi  
Executive Committee Members: NIWA

The Namibian Information Workers Association (NIWA), formed in 1990, is the association for information professionals in Namibia which strives to promote the development of information professions and information services. The association's objectives among others are:

- To unite all information workers in Namibia in an autonomous and representative body,
- To make and maintain contact with relevant international and national organisations,
- To promote the interests of information workers by making representations to concerned authorities regarding matters affecting the training, grading and remuneration levels of information workers and the collection, preservation, or dissemination of information,
- To raise the level of expertise of information workers by offering training courses, seminars, workshops and other relevant activities, and
- To advise academic institutions involved in the training of information workers in curriculum development.

## What does NIWA do?

NIWA provides an opportunity for information professionals to associate, to meet, to share experience and expertise and to

“ If there is a book you really want to read, but it hasn't been written yet, then you must write it. ”  
Toni Morrison – US novelist

create innovative solutions in a constantly changing environment. NIWA also provides networking opportunities, reading culture, coordination of mutual interests and needs, information dissemination, knowledge acquisition and promoting the use of information technology.

NIWA was revived at the NIWA annual general meeting that took place on the 12th of April 2013 at the National Library of Namibia where 76 NIWA members and aspiring members made up of librarians, archivists and information specialists from the private and public sector attended.

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From left to right: Mr. Liwakala Mudengi, Ms Foibe Shaambeni, Ms Selma Ilonga, Ms Theopolina Shuumbili, Dr Chiku Mchombu, Mr. Wilhelm Uutoni and Ms Veno Kauaria



*Aspiring Members at the NIWA Revival*

Information workers in Namibia are encouraged to join the Association.

For further information and application forms for membership, contact:

Membership fee per year is as follows:

- Institutional membership – N\$ 500.00
- Individual membership – N\$ 150.00
- Students/Retired information workers – N\$ 30.00

NIWA Secretary and Treasurer  
 P.O. Box 308, Windhoek  
 Namibia  
 Email: niwaassociation@gmail.com

Reference  
 Namibian Information Workers Association (2006). Constitution of the Namibian Information Workers Association.

**NIWA leadership for 2013 to 2015 is headed by the following executive committee members**

- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Chairperson:       | Ms Veno Kauaria, Director: NLAS, MoE  |
| Vice Chair:        | Dr. Chiku Mchombu, Senior Documentalist: HRDC, UNAM                                     |
| Secretary:         | Mr. Liwakala Mudengi, Senior Information Officer: BoN                                   |
| Deputy Secretary:  | Ms. Selma Ilonga, Librarian: UNAM Library   |
| Treasurer:         | Ms. Theopolina Shuumbili, Head: Community Library Services, MoE                         |
| Editor:            | Mr. Wilhelm Uutoni, Lecturer: Department of Information and Communication Studies, UNAM |
| Additional member: | Ms Foibe Shaambeni, Library Science Student: UNAM                                       |

# RECENT APPOINTMENTS



**Tonderayi Chanakira** was recently appointed as the Head of the Education Library Services (ELS). He has worked as an Information Professional for a period of 25 years. During this period he has contributed to the development of the information profession serving as a practicing librarian, information specialist and as an academic.

He has read for the following: Diploma in Peace & Security in Africa obtained from the Uppsala University of Sweden in March, 2013; Bachelor of Arts General Degree obtained from the University of Zimbabwe (UZ), 1988; and a Master of Science Degree in Information Science obtained from the National Institute of Science Communication and Information Resources (NISCAIR), 1994.

- Tonderayi has worked in SADC countries such as Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe in several organisations serving in various posts:
- The National Archives of Zimbabwe as a Librarian/Archivist for a period of 7 years.
- The University of Zimbabwe as Faculty of Arts Librarian, in the Main UZ Library; Technical Editor in the Human Resources Research Centre (HRRC) & as a Senior Assistant Librarian at the Institute of Mining Research Library [IMR] at the UZ for 5 years.
- ZimTrade as a Market Advisor in information for 6 years.
- Head of the SACCAR Information Unit, SADC, Gaborone, Botswana for 3 years.
- Senior Librarian at the Ministry of Education in Namibia in the Namibia Library & Archives Services (NLAS) Directorate for 2 years.
- As a Guest Lecturer in the Department of Information & Communication Studies, University of Namibia (UNAM).
- Director for Research, Training & Documentation at the Centre for Peace Initiatives in Africa (CPIA).
- Lecturer at the Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU) in the Department of Information Science & Records Management.

His vision is to assist Namibia's school libraries to develop through developing policies and implementing them to benefit the country's school library sector. He is taking his appointment as a great challenge, which requires diligence regarding performance in bringing change within ELS. He believes that success can only be achieved in the spirit of team work - working together with colleagues within ELS as well as with other colleagues in other subdivisions of the NLAS.



**Jessica Uheua** graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Library and Information Science at UNAM in April 2013. She has been appointed as a Librarian at The Supreme Court of Namibia Resource Centre as from March 2013. She gained work experience at Gobabis Community Library, where she worked as a volunteer, processing damaged books and working at the circulation desk from 2006 to 2007. She did her professional practice at Greenwell Matongo Library in 2011.

She did her vacation placements at the Khomas Region Library Services from December 2010 to January 2011; the National Library from December 2011 to January 2012 and the Windhoek Public Library from December 2012 to January 2013. In addition, she worked as a volunteer at UNAM Library where she did mainly cataloguing. Whilst at UNAM, she developed a passion for cataloguing and classification.

# RECENT APPOINTMENTS



The vibrant **Olga Kufanga** graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Library Science (Geography and Environmental Studies) in April 2013 from the University of Namibia. She also acquired a Diploma in Information Studies in 2008 from the same institution. Olga was appointed as the librarian at the National Earth Science & Energy Information Centre (Ministry of Mines and Energy) in March 2013. In 2011, she did her internship at the Information and Learning Resource Centre at UNAM. Olga gained experienced as a library assistant on vacation placements at the following libraries: the National Museum of Namibia and Katima Mulilo Community Library. The energetic Olga enjoys cataloguing and research in the area of environmental studies.

**Kathleen A. Gauises-Gowases** was appointed as the Senior Librarian at the Educational Library Services in July 2013. Prior to her appointment she served as an Information Officer at Namibian Network of Aids Service Organization (NANASO) from February 2008 up to May 2013; Archives Assistant (Jobber) at the Namibian Broadcasting Cooperation (Radio) from May 2004 – Dec 2007. Kathleen obtained a Diploma in Information Studies in 2005 and a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Library Science and Records Management in 2010 from the University of Namibia.



**Andreas Hainghumbi**, graduated in May 2012 at the University of Namibia with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Library Science. He started working at the National Marine and Information Research Centre (NatMIRC) in September 2012. Andreas says there is nothing more exciting about his work than dealing with people every day and trying to meet their information needs. Even though it can be a challenge at times, it is always good to be pushed out of one's comfort zone and overcome such challenges. He believes that good ideas are only successful when shared.

**Helvi Nangome** was appointed in June 2012 as the Library Assistant at the Education Library Services. She graduated from the University of Namibia with a Diploma in Library Science. Before joining NLAS, she was working at the Katutura Community Art Centre as a volunteer. She did her internship at Rössing Community Library. Helvi enjoys shelving, data entry and designing brochures and cards.



# CONTACT DETAILS FOR THE SUB-DIVISIONS

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## **Community Library Services**

1-7 Eugene Marais Street  
Private Bag 13186  
Windhoek

Chief Librarian: Theopolina Shuumbili  
Email: Theopolina.Shuumbili@moe.gov.na  
Tel: 061 293 5250/5251  
Fax: 061 293 5253

## **Ministerial Library Services**

Luther Street, Government Office Park  
Private Bag 13186  
Windhoek

Senior Librarian: Ms Namutenya Hamwaalwa  
Email: Namutenya.Hamwaalwa@moe.gov.na  
Tel: 061 293 3184/3166  
Fax: 061 293 3168

## **Education Library Services**

1-7 Eugene Marais Street  
Private Bag 13186  
Windhoek

Chief Librarian: Mr. Tonderayi Chanakira  
Email: Tonderayi.Chanakira@moe.gov.na  
Tel: 061 293 5280/5282  
Fax: 061 293 5281

## **National Library of Namibia**

1-7 Eugene Marais Street  
Private Bag 13349  
Windhoek

Chief Librarian: Mr. Charles Mlambo  
Email: Charles.Mlambo@moe.gov.na  
Tel: 061 293 5301/5111  
Fax: 061 293 5308

ISBN/ISSN: Ms Barbara Jacobi  
Tel: 061 293 5305

## **National Archives of Namibia**

1-7 Eugene Marais Street  
Private Bag 13520  
Windhoek

Acting Chief Archivist: Mr. Erasmus Nyanga  
Email: Erasmus.Nyanga@moe.gov.na  
Tel: 061 293 5211/5215  
Fax: 061 293 5317



“

Libraries are reservoirs of strength, grace and wit, reminders of order, calm and continuity, lakes of mental energy, neither warm nor cold, light nor dark... In any library in the world, I am at home, unselfconscious, still and absorbed.

Germaine Greer

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