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KNLS Vision

A National centre of excellence that preserves and disseminates information for knowledge and creativity

KNLS Mission

To make information resources available and preserve the national imprint for use by all communities through utilization of appropriate technology

KNLS Core Values

We commit ourselves to live up to the highest ideals of service provision and therefore the following are our guiding core values.

- Quality
- Transparency
- Relevance
- Accountability
- Teamwork
- Professionalism

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Reading, the best way to refresh your mind

Without mincing words, the Minister of State for National Heritage and Culture Hon. William Ole Ntimama has challenged Kenyans to read in order to refresh and protect their minds from rotting. The Hon. Minister was speaking during the ground-breaking ceremony for the construction of KNLS Narok library. He termed himself as an avid reader and explained how he has managed to climb the ladder of politics because he embraced reading at an early age.

KNLS performance in the government's performance contracting strategy has continued to improve over the years. In the 2009/2010 evaluation results announced by the President and the Prime Minister on 16th June 2011, KNLS garnered the first position in the service providing category of 46 state corporations. This is attributed to clear strategic direction by the Board, focused management and profound commitment by staff. Read also about the various aspects that can be considered in improving performance in this issue.

Working collaboratively with donors and partners has enabled KNLS to raise her service delivery to the public a notch higher. Responsive services such as provision of health information are offered in some selected branches. A report on impact assessment on reliable and accessible health information in Kisumu and Eldoret libraries is covered in this Issue. KNLS staff have also benefited from training sponsored by donors. With this kind of joint ventures, and with new partners such as Pearson Foundation coming on board, more will definitely be achieved. The Board has also sponsored a variety of seminars and workshops for different categories of staff. This has notably worked well in terms of raising the moral of staff and empowering them to execute their duties appropriately.

After a series of ground breaking ceremonies and opening of a new library in Buruburu, it seems like the fire of development that has been lit by the KNLS Board is not about to be quenched. Anytime

this calendar year we will be witnessing the opening of another modern library in Nakuru. You will also read about other new libraries coming up including Narok and Kibera libraries which are already under construction.

The new constitution demands that professionals in different fields have to be revolutionized in their thinking and align themselves to the new dawn in Kenya. KNLS Board Chairman has challenged the KNLS Librarians to reposition themselves strategically as the driving force in provision of relevant information within the national and county governments. As the agency charged with knowledge delivery, KNLS has an obligation to eradicate ignorance that has hampered individual, community and national development in our country.

Simply sticking rigidly to the status quo may not be enough to ensure an organization's survival. KNLS Board has undertaken a job evaluation in order to stay put and relevant in this fast moving and constantly changing world.

Way into the 21st century, it is apparent that the concept of modern librarian practice is not clear. Worse still, there is no textbook for what effective practice looks like in continually changing information and communication landscapes. Hence, librarians especially in public libraries should simply stay relevant by just "being prepared" for whatever their customers and colleagues might want. Of importance also is to take interest in what librarians in other libraries are doing to assist their customers and be willing to learn all the time.

Is digitization the way to go? Read about what the National Library is doing in this area; also read about publicity and marketing of public library services; knowledge management in libraries; "the librarian's axiom" in economic downturn; and the role of libraries in Vision 2030. You will definitely find many more interesting articles in this issue. So brace yourself for additional knowledge on different aspects as you read on!

- Nancy

To all those who have contributed to the publication of different issues of the KENAL Newsletter, accept my humble appreciation. Your articles have been of value and are highly regarded. By sharing information you are definitely living up to your call as information providers. I also wish to invite other staff especially librarians to share with readers what is happening in their branches. To our readers, we thank you for giving us a reason to continue writing! Send your articles for the next issue to: corporatecommunications@knls.ac.ke or knls@knls.ac.ke

KNLS excels in 2009/2010 performance contracting

The 2009/2010 performance contracting evaluation results announced by the President and the Prime Minister on 16th June 2011 saw KNLS attain position no. 1 (one) in the service providing category of 46 state corporations, with a composite score of 2.0892. Out of 162 state corporations that had signed the performance contract that year, KNLS was no. 16 (sixteen). This can be attributed to clear strategic direction



Mr. Atuti

by the Board and focused management. With such factors in place staff were able to execute their duties responsibly and with profound commitment. This is significant improvement from the previous contracting period when KNLS was at position 23 and 5 respectively.

"These are very good standards that we have set for ourselves as the KNLS family. We must sustain and surpass them in the coming years. I am proud about all the staff and I take this opportunity to congratulate you most sincerely for every effort that you put in ensuring that you all achieve and exceed your set targets. Remember without your dedication we can't go far. Again, Congratulations all!" KNLS Director, Mr. Richard Atuti.

And to say that the sky is the limit is an understatement. Kudos to the Board, Management and all staff of KNLS!!

Read or rot! asserts Hon Ntimama

The Minister of State for National Heritage and Culture Hon. William Ole Ntimama challenged Kenyans to read in order to refresh and protect their minds from rotting. The Hon. Minister was speaking during the ground-breaking ceremony for the construction of KNLS Narok library. He termed himself as an avid reader and explained how he has managed to climb the ladder of politics because he embraced reading at an early age. It was challenging to listen to the Minister tell his story of how despite having not known the inside of a secondary school, he is a degree holder. He attained his secondary education by reading on his own and later registering for examinations as a private candidate.

The Hon. Minister described the proposed library as a landmark in the Masai region. Regretting that there has been no public library in the Masaai region for a long time, the Minister thanked the KNLS Board for giving priority to the construction of a library in Narok. He also hailed the National Museum for donating three acres of land to KNLS to facilitate establishment of this much need-

By Nancy Ngugi



Minister of State for National Heritage and Culture Hon. William Ole Ntimama addressing guests during the ground-breaking ceremony in Narok.

ed facility. Speaker after speaker expressed their gratitude for this noble course and urged the Masaai community to maximally utilize the library once it is complete. They advised that reading opens up communities to opportunities available globally.

The project consultant explained that the Ksh. 32 million project was the single largest government project in the whole of Narok at the time. The project is expected to be complete in 70 weeks starting April 2011. It is expected that the education standards in the area will be greatly enhanced through access to relevant reading and information resources. The library will also provide opportunities for the youth to discover opportunities available through online sources. Being a public library, the different categories of people will find their place within. The library stock will include among other resources information on entrepreneurship, farming, motivation and fiction books, electronic databases comprising of professional journals and research papers, curriculum books, books on management, law, medicine, to mention but a few.

The library features include a children and teenagers reading area, adult reading area, multimedia section, cyber café, reference section, multipurpose hall and a cafeteria. It is expected to be a stopover for tourists visiting the Mara Game Reserve.

Libraries Policy

The KNLS Board together with the Ministry of State for National Heritage and Culture, which is currently the Ministry in Charge of Libraries, has developed a draft Libraries' Policy which is waiting to be subjected to stakeholders' debate for input and ownership before it can be submitted to the Hon. Minister for necessary action and subsequent implementation. In the spirit of devolved government, the policy will appropriately guide the players in the establishment, operations and management of libraries in Kenya to ensure that relevant standards are maintained. The policy will also inform the ongoing revision of the KNLS Board Act which is expected to give a clear separation of the roles of the National Library of Kenya and the Public Library System.

Monitoring and evaluation

In simple terms, monitoring is concerned with tracking the progress and answers the question "what?" It is regular and systematic. On the other hand, evaluation involves making judgment about the progress made and the way forward. It is periodic and answers the question "why?" These facts were expounded in a two-day workshop organized for 20 staff from headquarters, Nairobi Area and Buruburu libraries.

Second Surveillance ISO Audit

The 2nd surveillance ISO audit was carried out by Bureau Veritas in May 2011. Just like with internal audit, the main objective of the external audit is to look for compliance and conformance. The audit is usually based on procedure and the ISO standard requirements. Various branches and departments were randomly sampled by the Bureau VERITAS as representatives of the entire KNLS network.

Resource Mobilization and Communication

A two-day workshop was organized for 21 staff from Headquarters, Nairobi, Buruburu, Thika and Murang'a libraries on 9th and 10th June 2011. The workshop was facilitated by fellow staff in the spirit of internal resource mobilization. Omar Abdi, the Resource Mobilization Officer took participants through the section on resource mobilization and fundraising while Nancy Ngugi, Senior Public Relations Officer handled the area of communication. Participants appreciated the information shared by the facilitators, saying that the subject had been broken down to manageable pieces and brought right "home" in a language easy to understand.

In general, the participants described the workshop as eye-opening, resourceful, participatory and captivating. Participants were challenged by Mr. Suka, Deputy Director (Finance & Administration) to be creative and innovative in order to attract more partners. It is hoped that fruitful efforts geared towards mobilizing resources both internally and externally will be noted especially in departments and branches that were represented in the workshop.

New partnerships

Pearson Foundation

A team comprising Ronel, Miriam and Charles from Pearson Foundation and Mr. Kaikai Karani of Longman Publishers met with KNLS Director and some KNLS staff members on 13th June 2011 with a view to establish a partnership in the area of Early Child Development. The team was introduced to KNLS by Mr. Kaikai. On his fact-finding tour of KNLS branches in preparation for the initial meeting with the Pearson Foundation and KNLS officials, Mr. Kaikai was able to visit Nakuru, Gilgil, Eldoret and Naivasha branches.

During the meeting Mr. Kaikai reported that he was very impressed by what he saw in the branches. He especially noted that in all the branches he visited, he found the librarians in charge despite this being an impromptu visit and having arrived in some of them after 5.30pm. He also appreciated that all the librarians he chatted with were able to articulate the vision and mission of KNLS.

The guests were given an elaborate introduction of KNLS and some of the strategies being employed to inculcate a reading culture in the lives of children. They expressed their excitement about what KNLS is doing to promote positive reading culture in the country. They were optimistic that through their partnership with KNLS, they would be able to make constructive contribution in integrating ECD in KNLS services by adapting a triple alliance that links the LIBRARY, SCHOOL and the COMMUNITY. They emphasized that any programme aimed at inculcating a reading culture in the lives of children must feed into the minds of the teachers, parents and the community.

KNLS looks forward to a fruitful relationship in this newly found partnership!"

National Environmental Management Authority

KNLS received a donation of information materials on environment and book shelves from NEMA on 20th May, 2011. The donation was presented by the Senior Coordinator, Environment Educational Information and Public Participation, at the KNLS Headquarters.

Job evaluation in KNLS

By Nancy Ngugi

A job evaluation exercise has been going on in KNLS since December 2010. The second draft report was discussed by the KNLS Board and Management on 26th and 27th May 2011 and various recommendations were arrived at. In his remarks the KNLS Board Chairman recognized job evaluation as an important exercise in a growing organization. He appreciated that this growth has necessitated the need to re-look at KNLS in order for the organization to remain relevant in this fast moving and constantly changing world, and also ensure the organization's survival. Following the review of strategic plan (2008/2012) in May 2010 the Board sanctioned the job evaluation exer-

cise in December 2010 with the ultimate goal to determine the comparative worth of jobs in KNLS; and produce rationalized, harmonized, justifiable and equitable job-grading structures. The Chairman emphasized that through this, the Board would be able to attract desirable job candidates, retain high-potential employees and clarify job descriptions, allowing the employees to clearly understand their role within the organization. In addition, successful implementation and sustainability of library projects will derive their bearing from a well structured workforce. "In order for us to be effective externally, we have to be well organized internally and maintain a complement of competent and

committed staff" says Mr. Kobia. The following are some of the outcomes expected on finalization and implementation of the job evaluation exercise:

- Clear job descriptions and job specifications to avoid duplication of roles and duty overlaps
- Optimum staffing levels per library branch on the basis of workload analysis
- Performance based pay/reward system
- Performance management and appraisal systems including performance appraisal tools, rewarding system, and training needs/impact assessment system
- New scheme of service/ career path required to deliver KNLS corporate strategy

BRIEFS

Health Information Workshop

A four-day workshop for KNLS librarians implementing the health project was sponsored by Elsevier Foundation through BAI 2nd to 6th May 2011. It was facilitated by Dawn Makena of Corporate Communication and a BAI consultant. Two library staff from each of the ten project libraries attended the workshop. Also in attendance were six health workers from the regions served by the project libraries. With the newly acquired skills, we expect that services in the project libraries will improve and be used as examples for benchmarking by other libraries. The project libraries are: Thika, Isiolo, Mombasa, Embu, Kabarnet, Garissa, Wundanyi, Kericho, Laikipia and Kisii.

KLA Conference

This year's KLA annual conference was held in Mombasa from 24th to 27th May 2011 with the theme: Positioning Informational Professionals for the future. The conference was officially opened by Dr. Jacob Ole Miaron, PS, Ministry of National Heritage and Culture. The KNLS Director Mr. Richard Atuti also addressed the gathering. He emphasized the need and urgency for ICT integration in library service provision. During the conference Mr. David Muswii, the KNLS Deputy Director (Technical Services) was elected as the Vice Chairman. From the Corporate Communication Office and on behalf of the entire KNLS family we congratulate Mr. Muswii and assure him of our support as he champions KLA endeavors into a higher level. Congratulations Mr. Muswii!

Another milestone

After a series of ground breaking ceremonies and opening of a new library in Buruburu, it seems like the fire of development that has been lit by the KNLS Board is not about to be quenched. Anytime this calendar year we will be witnessing the opening of another modern library in Nakuru. The over Kshs 250 million library complex comprises five floors with provision for children and teenagers section, adult, multimedia, cyber café and reference sections among others. Library services will be offered in four floors while the top most floor is set aside for income generation. KNLS has already received overwhelming requests from various organizations who want to rent the space. However due to the location of the space, that is sharing the same building with the library, KNLS has been cautious so that only the business that does not conflict with provision of library services will be allowed to operate. Construction works are complete and the process of furnishing, stocking and equipping the library are at advanced stage in preparation for opening the library to the Nakuru community and the surrounding areas.

It's a new dawn for Kenya

Do something with a positive impact on society

By Nancy Ngugi

The KNLS Board Chairman, Mr. Silas Kobia has challenged librarians to be revolutionized and align their thinking with the new dawn in Kenya, and reposition themselves strategically as the driving force in provision of relevant information within the national and county governments.

During several library events, the Chairman explained that Kenya has undergone a revolution and that "we are" in a new republic. One area that librarians can make impact is in youth empowerment. Youth are very productive, energetic and unless they are engaged in productive activities they may end up on the wrong side of the law in atrocious anti-social behavior. They need a vent to direct their energies to. Fundamentally, relevant information will open them up to the diverse myriad opportunities available in the market. They should therefore be coached to be the change agents in development. The library, especially the public library which is commonly referred to as the "people's university," should thus be reinforced to provide this kind of knowledge for the benefit of the young people.

Mr. Kobia acknowledges that a library is such an important resource for learning and economic empowerment, and should be accessible to all communities. He concurs with other scholars that a library links the past, present and future. It should be the "heart of a society" and is crucial to the intellectual growth of a community. A library is much more than a building filled with shelves of books. It should create a profound, safe and welcoming space for everyone in the community.



KNLS Board Chairman, Silas Kobia reads a speech during the ground-breaking ceremony for Narok Library

For the children and teenagers it should serve and help to reconnect them with society. For the young people, it should be a refuge from life on the streets, a place where they can be themselves, and where books and other information sources will allow them to dream and envision a better future. For the senior citizens, it is a key resource to keep them updated and in line with the new developments. It is a resource to shelter their minds from information degradation. A resource to help them re-discover themselves and begin a new lease of life after their formal retirement.

Consequently, Kenya can no longer afford to gamble with accessibility of library and in-

formation services to its citizens. Indeed, the constitution of Kenya recognizes libraries as vehicles for National & Cultural expression. It also recognizes information as a fundamental human right. The Chairman is optimistic that with appropriate stakeholders' and development partners' support, the Board will up its efforts in order to meet the divergent information needs of communities. As the agency charged with knowledge delivery, KNLS has an obligation to eradicate ignorance that has hampered individual, community and national development in our country. This "ignorance" was a conspicuous enemy of development at the Kenya's independence as it is today.

Digitization project begins in the National Library

By Philomena Mwirigi

Digitization is the process of converting information into a digital format. Digitizing information makes it easier to preserve, access, and share. For example, an original historical document may only be accessible to people who visit its physical location, but if the document content is digitized, it can be made available to people worldwide. There is a growing trend towards digitization of historically and culturally significant data. National library Division (NLD) has begun phase one of the digitization of its collection. The division has a rich collection of information materials deposited under the legal deposit law in the Books and Newspapers Act Cap 111 of the Laws of Kenya. The main objective of this regulation is to ensure that the national imprint is preserved for posterity. Other collections in the division include: Development information

materials from World Bank, International Monetary Fund, International Labour Organization and bound newspapers among others. In the phase one of digitization, the main concentration is on Government reports, Sessional papers dating back to 1947, Kenya National Bibliographies from 1980 and rare books. It is envisaged that conversion of the collection in digital form will enhance global sharing of our resources, suitable preservation notwithstanding. Digitization is significant in record keeping as well. Libraries that have switched to digitizing their books and records find that they may have an entire extra room or two for use. What used to take up valuable space can now be stored on compact discs, taking up part of a bookshelf instead of an entire wall. This is not only for libraries. Similarly, doctors who have switched to digital record keep-

ing now find that they can add an examination room and an office using the space that used to be packed with shelving systems holding thousands of folders full of paper. There is a lot that can be done with digitization and scanning of documents or records. However, digitization and scanning are two very different processes. While scanning essentially takes a picture of a document and makes it available on a disc for storage or for printing, digitization stores the information contained in a document, picture or a sound file and makes it available in a format of your choice. Scanning and digitizing are good options if you want to preserve or share corporate information, library collections, or fragile books and documents. Digitization also provides a means to share the materials with large groups of interested patrons or subscribers.



Digitization will lead to the development of virtual libraries and online referencing

Kibera to get a purpose-built public library

By Nancy Ngugi

After years of pulling back and forth trying to identify a suitable place for library establishment, Kibera residents will finally rest with a sigh of relieve as they wait patiently for the completion of the library project.

The groundbreaking ceremony presided over by the KNLS Board Chairman Mr. Silas Kobia and Dr. James Berkley of Alistair Berkley Trust was held on 30th March 2011. The project which involves various key stakeholders is funded by the Alistair Berkley Trust of UK through Practical Action.

The other stakeholders are the Kibera community, UN-Habitat and KNLS who is expected to take up the running and management of the library once it is complete. To ensure stability and sustainability of the project, the Kibera community surrendered the plot to the KNLS Board. It has been a tough struggle for the community and the groundbreaking ceremony was received with remarkable enthusiasm by all the parties involved. Due to the sensitive issue of land in Kibera, KNLS has faced numerous challenges in trying to repossess another of its legally owned library plot within Kibera that has been occupied by jua kali artisans for several years. The Board has not given up the fight though but one can only hope that someday, the occupants will find it noble to release the plot for the intended beneficial purpose without any form of confrontation.

In the mean time those who worked tirelessly to ensure a library is in place can enjoy sound sleep after conquering the greatest handle of identifying a suitable site and donor for the project. Caroline Lightowler who has been on the forefront traversing all odds to ensure that the community realized this dream was all smiles during the ground-breaking ceremony. She has stood alongside the local library committee and she is so passionate about the development of a library in the area. She never missed any of several meetings held at KNLS headquarters since 2006. Her appearance would always remind those who know her of the Kibera library.



KNLS Board Chairman Mr. Silas Kobia breaks the ground for the construction of Kibera Community Library

For KNLS, the issue of establishing a library in Kibera almost jeopardized her relationship with some of the well wishers who came on board on learning that the library issue had been resolved and it was so definite that a library was finally being established. That was in 2008 when KNLS had agreed to set up a container library in the area. UN-Habitat swiftly responded in support of the noble course by donating 30 computers that were delivered to KNLS headquarters for onward transmission to Kibera. Books worth about USD 2,000 were also acquired for the project courtesy of UNESCO. However, the issues of land ownership ensued and the plans were shelved. This was heart-breaking for UN-Habitat who had by then sent an appeal to well wishers to donate books and furniture for the library and the response was overwhelming. So for Helen Nyabera of UN-Habitat who was coordinating the sponsorship, it must have been a new dawn for her to witness the breaking of ground that would see the commencement of construction of the long awaited library project in Kibera. KNLS Director, Mr. Richard Atuti expounded the value of a public library facility for the community saying that "it will provide access to information which is a powerful tool for self development; and enable the young people to realize their potential and engage themselves in meaningful socio-economic activities."

We hope that leaders in Kibera will support the Ksh. 19 million project to ensure appropriate utilization of the same. The library will provide not only the reading materials but the reading space for school going children from the area who obviously know that reading space is a luxury that they may not expect their parents to provide.

The reality of 'the librarian's axiom' in economic downturn

By Caroline Kayoro

The supposed correlation between increased demand on public libraries and periods of economy stringency is described as "the librarian's axiom" (James, 1986). This axiom can be traced back over a century of literature in the field of library and information science. Warr and Payne (1983) noted a significant increase in book reading and public library visits among middle class males following unemployment. As the public's buying power shrinks, more people complete their education or upgrade their skills. People rely on public libraries for vital information on job opportunities, career planning and training, small business management, literacy programs and computer skills development.

People who are unemployed check out books to help themselves qualify for new jobs and people with less money to spend get books at the library rather than buy them. Apolloni (2009) observes that "there is significant evidence to demonstrate that libraries experience an increase of use up to 20% during an economic downturn. People know that no matter what is happening in the economy, they can get the information, services and assistance they need from the public library." The time is right for librarians to conduct a study to establish if "the librarian's axiom" is true for the public libraries in Kenya.

In difficult economic times, depression, anxiety, and other common mental health problems skyrocket. That's why it's so important that libraries offer resources that address these issues. Self-help resources are useful and can help the thousands that walk into the libraries. Public libraries can contribute to people's change in attitude by providing targeted information and library services that help the

users develop self worth and a new mindset to positively combat the prevailing challenges. Self worth is a feeling imparted by compassionate and respectful treatment by others. For most of us, a piece of glass is not the only way we see our reflection. We see it in the faces of others (Margaret Murray, 2004).

Positive examples of the economically challenged like the homeless users thriving on life skills learned from the library reveal one way in which the public library can make a significant change in people's lives during hard economic times. A homeless success story is that of Michael Brennan, the author of "All I really need to know I learned in the library". Brennan used how-to-books and computers from the local library to become a free lance journalist. His first published article earned him \$ 1000 and put a roof over his head. Brennan (1992) states in his article that without the resources of the Boston Public library he simply couldn't have done what he did. It is therefore evident that public libraries offer resources that can help disadvantaged people elevate themselves out of their low economic state. This brings forth the issue of book selection. As librarians, are we conscious of the goings on around us that will inform the type of information materials we select, acquire and stock in the public libraries?

In these difficult economic times the public library should offer a place to read about life skills, learn grammar, a nice decent environment for somebody who is trying to get a little peace of mind. Public libraries are special and unique because they:

- Provide access by all to all types of information materials
- Provide communities with public space
- Promote mutual support and

social inclusion. Hard economic times can be isolating, and public libraries bring people together in an inclusive, supportive environment and are neutral, safe and non-threatening

- Are built around trust and community, and provide family friendly environment
- Are non-judgmental and non-competitive

These values are important in making people feel respected and valued. The question we need to ask ourselves here is- How can KNLS reach out and make an impact on the many people without hope, living in the streets, the unemployed and the depressed? On the other hand, are we adequately addressing and managing stress levels among the staff? The fast-paced library environment has called for more than what the professionals did in the past both in their personal or professional lives, coupled with the fast development of information technology that has already been entrenched in the profession. These have turned the library and information profession to a stress high risk profession (Emmanuel Ajala, 2011).

Skill Soft (2006) described IT related jobs as the first on the world top-ten most stressful jobs while Swanson (1992) explained that librarians serving the youth, face many of the same demands as do educators, a group already identified as high-risk. Ferkol (1998) also declared that the level of stress in libraries and information centers will continue to rise in the future, if not properly understood and managed. The staff are also facing personal economic challenges which even aggravates the situation further. Stress assessment and its management among librarians and information managers need to be addressed in order to serve customers more effectively.

The librarian in the 21st Century

By Nancy Ngugi



The modern public library should cater for the divergent information needs of its multi-faceted customers

Way into the 21st century, it is apparent that the concept of modern librarian practice is not clear. Worse still, there is no textbook for what effective practice looks like in continually changing information and communication landscapes. Hence, librarians especially in public libraries should simply stay relevant by just “being prepared” for whatever their customers and colleagues might want. Of importance also is to take interest in what librarians in other libraries are doing to assist their customers and be willing to learn all the time. Every librarian should portray the lifelong reading traits in themselves for them to be on top of the game, taking into consideration that Knowledge is not static and it needs to be refreshed.

Professional development in the busy work life in a public library is not easy though. Exploring better ways to serve library customers and expand user services amidst dwindling budgets is also certainly an uphill task. Yet it is a must and it is worthwhile. Librarians must therefore accelerate their thinking in terms of delivering knowledge as opposed to information. A quick look at sizeable towns across our country gives us a glimpse into what the library of the future must incorporate.

There are various cyber cafes where people go to seek out and learn more about what is happening in the world around them. Wireless Internet is usually available even at food court places at the shopping malls. The cyber optic cable has also accelerated the availability and affordability of internet services. People in different professions organize gatherings to compare notes and talk about the happenings in their profession. Even perfect strangers can be found in different setups collaborating and exchanging stories about real-life struggles and triumphs.

The modern public library for example should cater for the divergent information needs of its multi-faceted customers. What is coming out clearly is that the library should be a one-stop-shop in terms of knowledge acquisition. The library especially the public library should provide the ambience for retrieval, comprehension and storage of knowledge for appropriate usage when needed.

To achieve this, Librarians must come out of their comfort zones and do comprehensive community profiles to enable them provide satisfactory services. Apart from say, demographic information about a community, there is need to establish what role the library and librarians can play in assisting the targeted community to become a middle income economy in respect to the achievement of national strategies. Basically, librarians should collate, index and present the required information to citizens in appropriate formats for simplicity.

Librarians should develop knowledge brokering skills and must constantly make new connections that will enhance the flow of knowledge among communities. Information seekers are so overwhelmed by the amount of information available. But they need librarians to organize that information in an orderly manner. In addition, Librarians should persuade Kenyans to be meeting for reading sessions and form book clubs. Reading sessions should also be incorporated in the famous “chamas” that have dearly been entrenched into women’s weekend affairs. Men should also organize themselves into critical reading clubs to fill the dent created by Mututho law.

This means that the Librarians’ place can no longer be behind the reference desk. They must get out and become involved with everybody and everything so that they can see problems and opportunities from many different perspectives.

American Corner activities at the Kisumu Library

By Moses I. Mwandih

US Embassy's through its Public Affairs Section, Nairobi has sponsored several programmes in Kisumu Library in this last quarter of the financial year 2010/2011. These include:

Study and stay in U.S.A

This was an open forum on what you need to know about study and visit in the U.S.A. The function was facilitated by the U.S. Educational advisor, Dr. Mari Nelson and Embassy Consular officer Ms. Kara Babrowski on 1st April 2011. The programme comprised short presentations and open session of questions and answers on the education and scholarship opportunities in the US, visa and immigration processes. Participants were drawn from Masinde Muliro, Nairobi, Maseno, Great Lakes and KCA Universities. Others included Kisumu and Sigalagala polytechnics, secondary schools and the members of public. Information Resource Officer Ms Sheilla Weir and Ms Mary Elise Lynch a Fulbright student from USA were also present. Over 600 participants attended the forum.

In addition, a book reading session for book club members from 4 primary schools was facilitated by Sheilla Weir where 375 pupils participated. The book "Of Thee I Sing: A Letter to My Daughters," a children's book by Barack Obama formed the basis for discussion. The book clubs are part of the American's Corner's activities in Kisumu.

Prison Outreach Program

A function at the Kodiaga Women prison was

organized for the inmates through the American Corner programme. Activities for the day included: beauty contests, catwalks, dogwalks, dances, comedy etc and donations. This partnership is in support of the rehabilitation and empowerment of prisoners through provision of information materials. During the function 4 desks, a teachers table, a chair, sanitary pads and refreshments for the 110 inmates courtesy of the American Embassy were donated.

Art Workshop

A two day art workshop was organized on 21st and 22nd May for 10 pupils from primary and 20 from secondary schools. The students came up with very beautiful drawings, some of which were selected for an exhibition in Nairobi. The workshop was facilitated by Jason Corder from USA.

Youth Leadership in the Community

A workshop on Youth Leadership in the community was held on 23rd May 2011. This was attended by students from Kisumu polytechnic, Kisumu Youth groups, Kisumu day secondary and teachers. It was facilitated by Erustus Mong'are a Kenyan but a U.S citizen and Armstrong Ongare from Aid Kenya who talked on various aspects of youth participation in leadership in the society. The youth were challenged to show leadership where they are and even stand up to elective posts and also vote wisely.

These programmes can easily be replicated in other branches to make Library a place to be.

Corruption at the workplace

For how long shall we talk about corruption in Kenya? And what is "Kenya" in this case? Mostly when we hear of or read about corruption in Kenya, we fantasize and we imagine of a country out there in space. We should come back to reality and understand that when "they" talk or we read about corruption in Kenya, they are talking about our country, and they are referring to "your" area of jurisdiction/ where you are operating from.

Experts agree that corruption is a secretive transaction by definition and as such is difficult if not impossible to measure in a dependable approach. What is more, definitions of corrup-

By Nancy Ngugi

tion may vary, as do perceptions of what constitutes corruption in any given context.

However, the cost and effects of corruption are far-reaching and unfortunately those who do not practice it are the ones who bear the most pain. That notwithstanding, the consequences of engaging in corruption can also be damaging. It is therefore important that clear strategies of fighting corruption are embraced by all and sundry. Fighting corruption starts with "you" as an individual. It is an individual's initiative. The following are some of the widely accepted tips to help you fight corruption:

Respect and protect public property; Avoid engaging in corruption; Never give or receive a bribe; Appreciate and reward hard work; Embrace honesty and trustworthiness; Report cases of corrupt practices to the Anti-Corruption Commission.

Some details to look for when determining if workplace fraud is occurring include the following items suggested by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce: Unusual occurrences in the workplace such as: Discrepancies of cash amounts; Missing merchandise or supplies; Vehicles parked close to exits; An employee's vehicle parked in a loading area; Unlocked exits, etc.



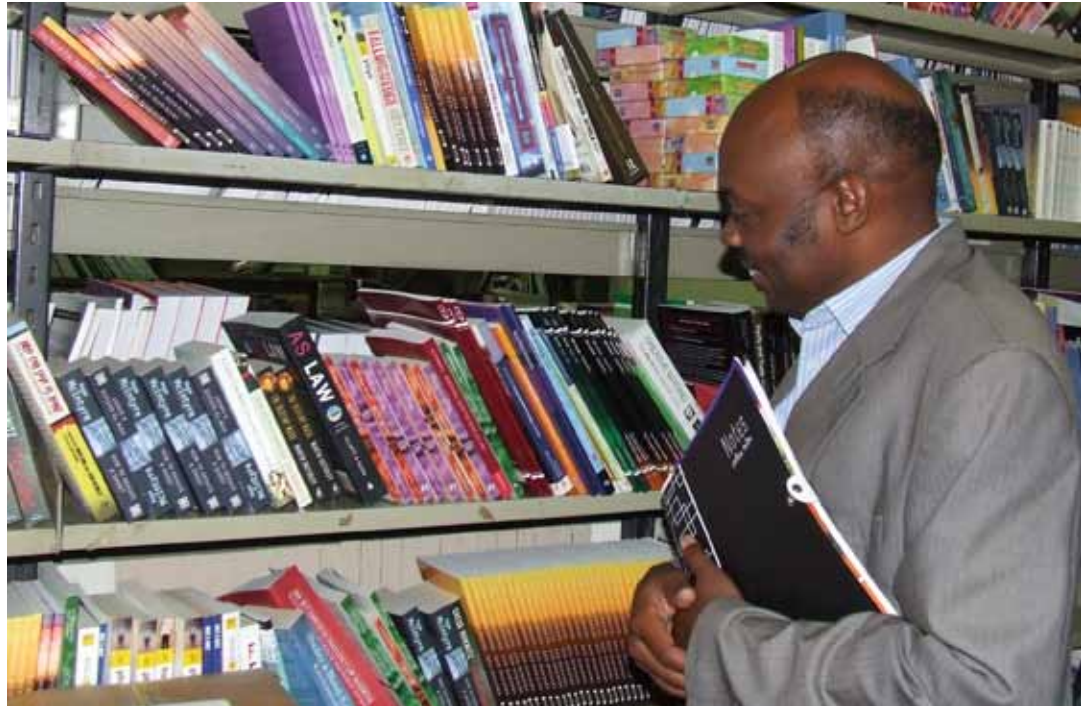
Culture and Social Services Minister, Hon. William ole Ntimama cuts the tape to officially open the Buruburu Library



Junior library users pose for a photo with the minister at the Buruburu Library



KNLS Director (right) with the project manager inspect the construction of Narok library in June 2011



Mr. Karani of Longman Publishers admiring books in Buruburu Library



Dr James Berkley of Alistaire Berkley Trust ensures that no obstacle will hinder the construction of Kibera Library



A section of the guests during the ground-breaking ceremony of Narok Library



Minister plants a commemorative tree at Buruburu library



KNLS members of staff during the opening of Buruburu library



KNLS staff join in a Maasai dance during the official opening of Buruburu library



Men of the robe were also present during the official opening of Buruburu library to dedicate the library facility to God. In the middle is Muthoga Ngera, a KNLS Board member.

Mombasa CRT story telling session



Publicity and marketing of public library service

By Nancy Ngugi, CC

Library programs and services largely need deliberate and sound plans for effective publicity so that the public will become aware of them and can take advantage of them. The library staff should consider how to market the library's most basic services such as the facilities, the collections, information access, community information, programs, extra services such as Internet access and outreach services. Marketers usually speak of showcasing ... In library terms therefore, this could mean publicizing a specific collection or displaying part of the collection so it can be discovered by the library users.

No one wants to involve themselves in marketing and publicizing something that does not live up to the customer's expectation. A good public library should contribute to the community's quality of life and therefore improving the people's living standards. Experts in the field of librarianship assert that a public library is three different, but equally important, things:

1. It is a community center. Significantly, it should be a nourishing environment, one that people enjoy using because it is comforting and attractive.
2. It is a recreation center that people should regard as an active source of pleasure, whether their taste is for genre fiction, popular science, local history, magazines, videos or programs.
3. It is an information center where people should be able to find and use resources effectively.

As you plan for marketing and publicity of library services, always ask yourself the following questions: Who needs to know about this? Why will they care about it? What is the best way to tell them about it?

This information will give you impetus on how to plan a successful marketing and publicity campaign. Ideally, marketing a collection goes beyond easy access to showcase segments of the collection and bring them to the public's attention. This increases the circulation of the collection and increases the value that will be placed on it. An effective publicity and marketing project should result to not only increased usage of library services but, increased value in the organization, education of users and changed perceptions.

Other relevant but HARD QUESTIONS as suggested by scholars include:

- Is the library building a place people enjoy visiting?
- Are the grounds attractive and well maintained?

- Do exterior signs make it very clear that this is the public library even to those with impaired vision?
- Have the library's hours and services been effectively publicized through the community?
- Is there adequate parking?
- Can the building be used by persons with disabilities or the elderly?
- Does the library have good signage with large print and maximum contrast? Do these signs clearly identify departments and services and guide people easily through the collections?
- Are collections and services well arranged and easy to find?
- Is the library's decor attractive and welcoming?
- Is the library able to support effective, up-to-date library technology that meets the community's needs?
- Are the restrooms clean, strongly-lighted and as barrier-free as possible?

The library building is the most obvious presentation of the library to the community. A library that is shabby, overcrowded, behind the times, or hard to use is sending the wrong message to the community. A library that is attractive, distinctive, comfortable and easy to use is more likely to become a vital part of the community.

Apart from using mainstream channels to market the library, especially the library collection, there are other various ways that can be employed to achieve the desired goal of ensuring optimum utilization of library resources. These may include:

1. Effective special displays/exhibitions of relevant and new information materials. This can be done by tying such displays to national events or special library days.
2. The library can also display within the library any major recreational or social interests of the community including: arts, music, genealogy records, local history, treasured cultural artifacts, etc.
3. Displays of special collections such as popular science books, popular fiction, life-skills books and fine arts materials

Showcasing such materials helps in highlighting parts of the library collection and gives users a chance to discover them. They should however be emphasized by use of captivating signs and labels so as to woo the attention of everyone visiting the library. For example (in my view) the special collection of popular science could be christened: "amaz-

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The new Nakuru Library

Marketing of public library service

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ing discoveries or mysterious mysteries!" collection of rare and older collection could be dubbed: "the comeback of times gone by!" People are attracted to appealing signs and labels and they usually want to find out the "reserves" behind them. Fliers, posters, bookmarks etc., can enhance community's awareness of the available information sources and resources in the library.

Most librarians in the public libraries majorly focus on marketing the library facility/building while leaving out the library collection. If people do not know what resources are available in the library, there is the tendency of library users bringing their own information materials and only using the library as a reading space. That is why in some of the libraries you might find very useful and relevant information materials that have not been used for some time. Thus, such displays as those alluded to above become very central. It makes no sense to put so much effort into an additional collection and then fail to market it effectively to the community. Librarians usually underestimate the amount of publicity and marketing it takes to make the public aware of even the relevant and popular collection. The number of people, who go into mild shock when they realize they can have popular and very useful and expensive information materials for a reasonable loan period, is both amusing and sad.

However, it is important to remember that a ser-

vice is most effective when it is being offered by someone who believes in the service and enjoys the work. A poor service offered halfheartedly or inadequately is certainly not worth marketing. Another key issue is that the most important information that a public library should have is community information about the community that it is serving. This should be documented and available at respective public libraries. This is the only way that the library can be able to identify itself with the community and therefore serve the members of that community effectively. It should be updated regularly. Though labour intensive, community information can attract some very pleased information consumers. Libraries can engage good volunteers to collate community information and also help in marketing and promoting it.

Most of the times we tend to blame underutilization of library resources to inadequate marketing. It is critical to understand that marketing is not an end in itself. Rather, it is a means to an end. Hence the way the library staff present themselves to the users will definitely affect the marketing efforts and the users' rating of the library. Apart from use of professionalism and use of quality procedures, library service providers need to establish close relationships with as many of their users as possible. This will encourage them to speak out especially about the things that they would probably like changed.

Ehealth project in Kisumu and Eldoret

By Omar A. Abdi

Kisumu and Eldoret branch libraries are the PLIP grant beneficiaries. The two libraries set up ehealth units to provide health information services. Each library received five computers with high speed internet connectivity, furniture and books in the field of health sciences. Access to the service point is free for all those seeking health information resources. The project was initiated with the intention of achieving the following objectives:

1. Provide reliable and accessible health information in an innovative and meaningful format to health workers and user communities
2. Work with healthcare providers to position the library as a key health literacy provider in the community
3. Engage library professionals to participate in healthcare initiatives for the benefit of the communities who are library users

A project evaluation conducted in May 2011, indicated that the project had positively impacted on the intended users and interest groups. Most of the visits done to the project libraries revealed increased usage of both the electronic and non electronic resources made available courtesy of the PLIP project. Library staff had on several occasions engaged the health workers and medical students who happened to be majority users of the ehealth service. The assessment revealed positive results in a varying degree of success on both the librarians and the users. Users (i.e. health workers and students) portrayed deep appreciation and attachment to the services offered to them. They stressed that the ehealth information services had enriched their learning and improved their medical skills. Kisumu library recorded a remarkable milestone by training 1500 medical students and 35 health workers on practical search and use of electronic resource. In addition 25 different individuals were trained on access and use of health resources at the two project libraries. The evaluation was carried out in the two libraries through the use of questionnaires, focus group and video documentaries. Out of the 50 questionnaires issued to the respondents, 44 (88%) were completed and returned.

Of all the respondents who returned their questionnaires 68% were female while the remaining 22% were male. Their age was ranging from 21 to 42 years. On how often they visited the library,

38% said that they visited the library once a week, 29% visited the ehealth section several times a week, 14% visited on holidays and weekends, 14% visited on daily basis while 5% said they visited the ehealth section once a month. Of those who visited the ehealth section, majority of them i.e. 82% said that they visited to get health information on the internet, 11% said they were attending a meeting or conference, while only 7% said they were borrowing ehealth information materials.

Information gathered through focus group discussions revealed that through the use of health information in the library, the health workers had improved their knowledge on educating the public about prevalent health conditions. Some health workers who were doing self study mentioned that they were able to get information resources that were not initially available to them. The use of ICT was the most needed initiative that the project had brought to the health workers. The technology was appropriate for the target users as it had improved their skills for service to the communities.

Below are some of the Success Stories from the library users

Were K’Nyendweh, Researcher on Polythene and Community health

“I am doing research in polythene and community health and the library is the only turning point for my research work. I got most of my literature from the ehealth resource centre. My findings will help the community on methods of disposal and management of polythene papers in this town. It happens that I spend 90% of my time using these vast health resources in the library. I feel honoured to be a beneficiary and hope that my findings will be widely distributed for the benefit of our society.”

Moses Imbayi, Library staff

“The ehealth services to the health workers has challenged staff to improve their ICT skills and made us prepare ourselves for the inevitable. We can now train the users on use of online resources. In addition to this, we are glad to serve a category of clients that were not in our priority list before the start of this project. Having taken this project from the scratch, we want to take it to another height with our gained skills and experience.

Libraries and knowledge management

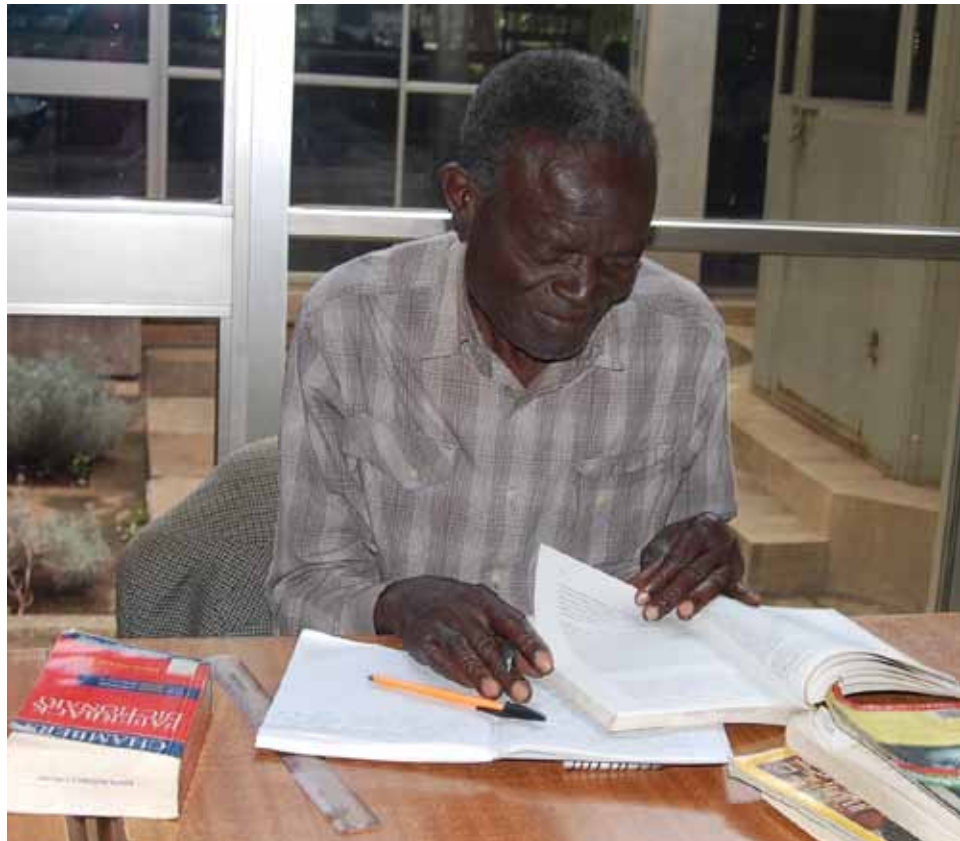
By Millicent Mlangwa

Knowledge Management is about enhancing the use of organizational knowledge through sound practices of knowledge management and organizational learning. Knowledge management is a combination of information management, communication and human resources. Knowledge management in libraries should be focused on effective research and development of knowledge, creation of knowledge base, exchange and sharing of knowledge between library staff (including its users) training of library staff, speeding up explicit processing of the implicit knowledge and realizing of its sharing (Shanhog 2000). With the help of the knowledge management process, libraries convert data and information stored in various sources into knowledge and deliver only relevant knowledge to users.

Knowledge management practices should also include encouraging library staff and users to communicate their knowledge and experience, organizing, learning, enhancing and sharing knowledge throughout the library for the benefit of the organization and its users. Libraries are moving from collection management to digital technologies offering new information services and products.

Role of Librarians in Knowledge Management

Knowledge Management has created new ground in the field of library and information science. It has also created new roles and responsibilities for Library & Information Science professionals. The role of Librarians in knowledge management is not new but is just a continuation of many roles that the Librarians have played with the help of in-



Refreshing the mind in search of knowledge for this senior citizen

formation technologies. There is need for significant change in thinking, attitude, education and training before we can confidently face the knowledge management future that awaits in many important areas of the information and library. At the very basic, the Librarian should have the following type of knowledge:

- Knowledge about library's information sources for assets, products and services
- Knowledge about where these sources are stored and their use
- Knowledge about users and researchers using these sources
- Knowledge about the current level of usage of these sources and how to increase the usage
- Knowledge about the library's own competences and capabilities
- Knowledge about the emerging library trends and technologies

Personality traits of a Knowledge Manager have been described as: Creativity; ability to learn and adapt; will; ability to create, share, harness & utilize knowledge; understanding of knowledge creation process, the impact of knowledge; the knowledge process; and the principles of "organization of knowledge."

Responsibilities of a Knowledge Manager include:

Collection Development: A thorough understanding of the research interests and projects of individual users; using digital technologies through internet.

Resource Organization: Organization of specific resources at departmental level reflecting domain knowledge and creation of hyper lined document for the collection which functions as gateway to related electronic resources.

Bibliographic Instruction: Should teach the user commu-

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Supporting the library through entrepreneurship



KNLS Buruburu library complex houses Equity Bank and Safaricom branches, an alternative revenue source for KNLS

Library and knowledge management

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nity how to use digital library to locate its potential information.

Reference Service: Digital Reference Service captures best the notion that the modern day library to a great degree is a web-based learning environment. To expand the boundaries of current reference service from the library's point of view, its natural outcome of both our commitment to digital resources and remote access.

Librarian as Knowledge Coordinator: Understanding of developing cultural and human infrastructure which will facilitate information sharing specifically conversion of tacit knowledge of librarian into explicit knowledge, which can be shared by the entire library.

Librarian as Knowledge Creator: Acting as a catalyst between the knowledge and the user. The explicit knowledge retrieved by the user through the print or electronic media applying their tacit knowledge may generate new copies, ideas that may be new contribution to knowledge. This process is called internalization and externalization of knowledge.

Librarian as Knowledge Architect: Librarian can act as both knowledge manager and knowledge architect. The knowledge architect can design and organize knowledge infrastructure including train-



A young library user in search of knowledge

ing knowledge base, libraries and database warehousing.

As libraries enter the knowledge age of 21st century, Librarians should work together with IT professionals and others to develop the appropriate knowledge management systems; by setting up virtual libraries, digitalization of knowledge services and library resources

Responsibilities of national libraries

By Betty Kalugho

What is a national library and how is it different from a public library?

A national library is specifically established by the government of a country to serve as the preeminent repository of information for that country. A library is called national when it is the official depository of printed works, a general access library, an information/bibliographic centre and a centre of coordination, planning & stimulation of the entire library system of the nation.

Unlike public libraries, national libraries rarely allow citizens to borrow books. Their collections are for reference purposes. They often include numerous, rare, valuable or significant works. National libraries are usually noted for their size compared to that of other libraries in the same country.

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA). It has described national as having special responsibilities often defined in law within a nation's library and information system. These responsibilities vary from country to country but usually include:

- The collection via legal deposit of the national imprint (both electronic and print) and its cataloguing and preservation.
- The provision of central services (eg reference, bibliography, preservation) to users both directly and through other libraries and information centres.
- The preservation and promotion of the national cultural heritage.

Many national libraries cooperate with IFLA to discuss their common tasks, define and promote common standards and carry out projects helping them fulfill their duties.

The first national libraries had their origin in the royal collections of the sovereign or some other supreme body of the state. These libraries were simply transformed in the course of time into national libraries during the eighteenth century. They were the only type of libraries that grew rapidly throughout the eighteenth century in Europe as they benefited from the spirit of nationalism. In other countries, national libraries were founded as completely new institutions.

In some countries the duty of collecting and preserving the books of the country concerned was undertaken by national museums. The other solution to the problem of national libraries par-

ticularly for small countries which achieved their independence relatively late was the establishing of dual functioning national libraries i.e. National-Academic, National-Public or National-Parliamentary.

National libraries have an important role to play in both national and international information systems such as UNESCO's national information system (NATIS) whose concept implies that the government- national, state or local- should maximize the availability of all relevant information through documentation, library and archives services just as in principle it takes responsibility for the basic education at primary and secondary levels of its citizens.



A reader selects books at a KNLS library

Creating a good home reading environment doesn't have to be expensive. Just put a few things together and happy reading!



The importance of a home library

By Anne sembeyian

Each person learns in a different way. If you want your child to learn at his /her best, then you need to create a learning environment and more so a home library that will support the child's specific needs. Here are simple tips that one, experts say, can consider in establishing a family/home library.

1. Identify a suitable place for reading in your house: You don't need much space; a corner of a room with a shelf of books, comfortable furniture, and adequate lighting are all that you may need.
2. Stock a variety of reading material: A variety of reading materials including paperback and hardcover books, newspapers, magazines for parents and kids, songbooks, catalogs, dictionaries, encyclopedias, and an atlas are necessary. These could comprise either owned or borrowed reading materials. Just make sure your family's library has something for everyone all the time.
3. Eliminate distractions: Ensure that your family reading room is free from distractions such as those caused by television, radio, computers, or video games. A noisy and busy environment doesn't help one concentrate
4. Set an example: Let your children see you reading books, newspapers, and magazines on a regular basis. If they see you reading daily -both for function and for pleasure - they will more likely become readers themselves.
5. Have adequate lighting: Either extreme, too much light or too little, can cause eye strain

and fatigue, and lower one's reading efficiency. Your child should be able to see what he/she is reading without strain. If there is adequate lighting, and your child is constantly experiencing fatigue when reading or studying, he/she may need corrective lenses.

6. Keep the temperature in the room at comfortable degrees: Stuffy and warm rooms put people to sleep, even over the most exciting and interesting books. The room where you and your family read should have plenty of fresh air and have a fairly cool temperature.
7. Assist your family members to establish personal libraries

Children, for example, often want their own place to keep their books. You can help them find a suitable place for their books. If your child's room doesn't have a bookshelf or bookcase, use a box, basket, or some other container; let your children choose the books they want to add to their collection whenever possible. A weekend book-buying trip to a bookstore would be fun; take your children to the library regularly.

Remember! "Half efforts do not produce results it produces no results, work, continuous work and hard work is the only way to accomplish results that last" a quote by Dr Gonye J.M in *Hey! Do Nothing Be Nothing* 2009). The future and destiny of your children lies in your hands.

Creating a good home reading environment doesn't have to be expensive. Just put a few things together and happy reading!

The best learning environment

By Anne Sembeyian

What is the best possible environment for learning that you would create for yourself, one where you get all fired up and excited about learning? How will you fit this charged-up experience into the total form you are creating for your life, so there is no overwhelm, no stress, just a great fit? To avoid all these;

Make sure you have ample time to read: Normally, it will take at least a few minutes to get into a book. If you're running around and are trying to squeeze a chapter into a few minutes of time, it may not work.

Your mind will be elsewhere and by the time it's centered on reading, you're back to what you were doing beforehand. Give yourself at least 30 minutes of time. This helps you become more focused on the task at hand.

Good lighting: Good lighting reduces the strain reading can put on the eyes. It is important to create a reading environment with appropriate lighting.

Sunlight streaming through the window brightens the room, but it might make it difficult to read. Facing the sun could cause shadows to be cast on your reading material, reducing the contrast of the print on the paper.

Light cast directly on the reading material, like a high intensity reading lamp, can cause glare on magazines and other paper that is slightly shiny and reflective. The best lighting is an indirect light that floods the area without making shadows

Pick a quiet place: Library is the best place to study. However when you are away from the library and you get distracted easily, it is best to find somewhere you can read and have background noises to a minimal.

Parting shot

The best learning environments are created by and constructed with our brains, our attitudes about learning, our unwillingness to waste a single moment of thought, and choices which are made.

Once made, lifelong learners cement their choices into the best form for their lives by decisive, deliberate actions. This is your life; grow it with learning that matters because it matters to you. Try again it could work this time round.

Make sure you have time to read after doing lots of work because books enable one to interact with other people worldwide. Believe or not reading is good for our health. (<http://www.lifehack.org/articles/lifestyle/an-environment-for-learning.html>)

Reasons to Read, Read, Read!

Britain's Education Secretary Michael Gove said that an 11-year-old should be reading 50 books a year. We may read for entertainment, to pass the time, to visit other worlds or to expand our sense of what is possible. We hunt for treasure, rarely satisfied, but seeking new things, clues and answers to what our lives are meant to be. At best, perhaps, we read to challenge ourselves and to be changed. Below are some reasons why you should read endlessly.

Carol Gorman's Top Ten Reasons to Read, Read, Read!

1. Reading helps you become an interesting person. (Impress your friends, dates, and future in-laws!)
2. Reading helps you learn how to write correctly. (Get good grades, make your grandmother happy when

By Sharon N. Maina

- she reads your well-written thank-you notes, and impress your future boss who'll promote you because you express yourself so well).
3. Reading develops your imagination. (Write terrific stories for school, cook up funny ideas for friends, and maybe even earn big bucks writing screen plays for Hollywood! Riverhood! Or Nollywood!)
4. Reading entertains you. (No more long boring car rides, waits in the dentist's office or too-long vacations and holidays when you can't think of anything to do.)
5. Reading teaches you about things unfamiliar to you. (Write A+ reports for school, impress your friends, and earn big prizes on TV game shows!)
6. Reading takes you to places you've never visited. (Read about actors on Broadway,

bullfighters in Spain, and astronauts in space).

7. Reading takes you to times you've never experienced. (Spend a week in Colonial times, or experience the burial ceremony of an Egyptian king, or learn what life was like when William Shakespeare was writing Romeo and Juliet).
8. Reading introduces you to people you've never met. (Find out how the Amish live, or how a celebrity spends his/her day, or what rugby or a football player's practice is like).
9. Reading introduces you to new ideas. (Learn about the beliefs of the world's religions, why some physicists believe that time is circular instead of linear, and how scientists speculate that our thoughts can influence the outcome of experiments).
10. Reading is FUN! (Laugh out loud! Gasp in disbelief! Feel your heart beating in suspense!)



KNLS staff member welcomes clients during the Buru Buru Library open day

How to deal with tough clients in a business environment

By Joseph Njeru John

In a business environment, client management is a priority. Dealing with tough client is not always easy but when executed professionally, it pays back a great deal. Yes - people may have their own shortcomings, but you need to be cautious how you deal with such customers as long as they still bring business to you. Dealing with customers who are not behaving in a manner that is expected of them requires one to be very focused and tactful. Educating, negotiating and explaining are preferred options when it comes to dealing with disagreements with a difficult client. Management experts have highlighted the following as some of the types of difficult customers and ways in which one can deal with them.

The Spartan/basic customer: This is a simple minded customer who gets angry about anything

and everything, and heaps all the blame on you. He'll be angry that you are charging him overdue fine, he'll be angry that you close the library at 6.30 pm and he will also be angry that the queue is not moving.

How to Deal with Them: Let them know that you understand their anger, and that you can empathize. They don't currently see you as a person, but rather a corporate face, so if you can emulate them to the point that they see themselves in you, they'll start acting more civilized. At a certain point you might be forced to show them the rules and regulations that guide your decisions for them to know that you are acting not at your discretion but according to the laid down procedures.

The Mind Changer: This one repeatedly changes their preferences, wants to start and cancel

a service, or wants to change the color or size of a product. They just can't figure out what they came to you for, and they're upset that your business doesn't have the limitless flexibility to satiate them. The mind changer is mostly indecisiveness, he'll want to consult Law and Agriculture books; he also wants to read a childhood story book at the same time. He wants you to leave the other clients un-attended so that you can attend to his never ending demands.

How to Deal with Them: Reason with them and let them know that it costs you time and money when they keep changing their mind. Try to shift their focus onto what they'll be getting rather than how much it costs--the reason they keep changing their mind is almost always time and money. Tell them politely that you

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Dealing with tough clients

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have other clients to attend to and they also need to be served.

The Business Owner: This one has his own business, and it runs better than “this business you’ve got here.” In “his” company, customers are treated immediately and the prices are fair. And he knows what you paid for that thing; and he wants you to give him at that price, or he’s walking away! Never mind that as a business owner, he should know how difficult it is to deal with bad clients and make a profit. In this group are people who use other types of libraries like the academic libraries and they can’t understand why you are not operating like the others.

How to Deal with Them: Talk business with them. Explain that it doesn’t profit you to make customers upset, and that there’s a very good, business reason for everything that you do. If you’ve made a mistake, own up to it, and remind them that all businesses make mistakes, and how they deal with them is what matters.

The Talker: The talker is possibly the worst type of client to have, because they may be friendly as the dickens and all around. But they’ll talk and talk for hours. These could be clients who are bored at their places of work and have realized that you might be having plenty of time spare to chit chat. Often they’ll tell you about their pets, or give you a sob story to explain why you shouldn’t charge them what you charge everyone else.

How to Deal with Them: Tell them you’ve got to help other customers, and you’ve got to go. Thank them. If you’re on the phone, use any pause after you say this to say goodbye and hang up. They’ll get the message. You should never lie to these customers, because they’ll be severely offended if they catch you in a lie.

Conclusively, any contact with any type of a client should end up in a win-win situation. Remember you are in a business, and not a personal vendetta session. If you win, the organization wins and the client wins in terms of customer satisfaction. Leave your baggage at home, at the gym, etc. Patience, respect and humility lead to a productive engagement, which is the desired goal for everyone. When you show disrespect towards your client, no one wins. For all of us, winning is always the best option.

The art of performance management

By Cyrus Ndogo, Planning

Performance Management is a process of establishing a shared understanding about what is to be achieved and how it is to be achieved. It is a system process where an organization involves its employees as individuals and members of a group in improving organization effectiveness in the accomplishment of its mission and goal. Performance management in an organization should exist at three basic levels as follows:

1. At the organizational level
2. Departmental level
3. Employee level

There are various aspects that can be considered in improving performance. These include:

- Plan well and comprehensively
- Know your baseline from which you gauge your improvement. It is important to know where you are, where you want to go and how to get there
- Set targets/aim at results
- Monitor your targets
- Take corrective action/measures
- Network
- Avoid complacency
- Work on worst case scenario
- Reward
- Penalize
- Recognize
- Appreciate
- Compliment
- Empower/delegate
- Involve
- Where and when necessary avoid
- Where necessary accede
- Train and develop
- Form teams
- Manage threats
- Provide leadership
- Above all pray God for guidance



Ronel Ellof of Pearson Foundation with junior readers at Thika Library

Demystifying AIDS

“You need to take care; AIDS is around us, the only way to be safe is to observe proven protective measures, get an HIV test, and support those infected. AIDS is our problem, and only us can address it effectively.”

– *The Kawi Campaign*

Being HIV positive isn't a death sentence. There is a wealth of information on how to live with HIV. Remember, the virus isn't in control -- you are!!

Quotes

Let books be your dining table, and you shall be full of delights. Let them be your mattress, and you shall sleep restful nights.

– *Paul Sweeney*

A Good Book on Your Shelf is a Friend that Turns its Back on you and Remains a Friend

– *www.quotegarden.com*

Feedback from a library user

I commend the KNLS team for the prompt solution and guidance provided during my recent visit to the Nyeri Library. I was frankly impressed by the seriousness with which my problem was tackled by KNLS staff.

Mr. Mutiso did indeed get in touch with me and I believe I can now access all the facilities with ease. If I may say so myself, I believe that your institution is indeed rising to the occasion and I will most definitely remain a committed customer as well as a very satisfied one. Again many thanks to you and your entire team.

– *Loise*