

***Library Practice For Young Learners (LPYL). Developing School Library Services For Primary And Secondary Schools In Disadvantaged Areas In South Africa 1997-2002: A Swedish – South African Project***

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*The LPYL project focused on human resource development and was designed to explore some of the untested innovations in the South African draft Policy Framework for School Library Standards (South Africa, 1998) among a sample of school librarians in all of South Africa's nine provinces. The project was also designed to provide mutual exchange of knowledge and expertise between Swedish and South African library personnel. Ideas from a conference in 1995 and the planning of the South African Policy Framework for School Library Standards formed the important bases for the strategic direction of the project. The two phases involved South Africa's national and provincial education departments and two South African and one Swedish non-governmental organisations.*

The LPYL project focused on human resource development rather than on the provision of material resources such as computers, books and shelving. Furthermore, the project was designed to explore some of the untested innovations in the South African *Policy Framework for School Library Standards* (South Africa, 1998) among a sample of school librarians in all of South Africa's nine provinces. The project was also designed to provide mutual exchange of knowledge and expertise between Swedish and South African library personnel. Ideas from the *School Learners and Libraries* conference 1995 (Karlsson, 1996) and the drafting of the *National Policy Framework for School Library Standards* (South Africa, 1998) formed the important bases for the strategic direction of the project.

The project comprised two phases involving South Africa's national and provincial education departments and two South African non-governmental organisations, Sweden's Bibliotek i Samhälle (BiS) and Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). For Phase One the South African nongovernmental organisation was the Library and Information Workers' Organisation (LIWO). But when this organisation ceased to operate, Education Policy Unit, (EPU) Natal, became the South African partner for Phase Two.

### **More About The Background**

In the 1990's BiS had contacts with the radical national sister organisation in South Africa: LIWO, which at the time was actively working to fight the apartheid heritage of the South African library system, and had an engagement in the Masizame library in the township of Lingelihle, Cradock. These links between LIWO and BiS, the planning of implementing a new curriculum in a democratic South Africa: *Curriculum 2005* and the initiation of a process, leading to a national policy framework for school library standards, were important factors in the background of the LPYL Project.

## Phase One 1997 — 1999: Important Activities

- Study tour to Sweden for 10 South African policy developers at national and provincial level,
- Workshop in Sweden for South African policy developers, media (school library) advisors and school librarians to meet the project partners from Sweden
- The forming of **SCHELIS**, the Standing Committee of Heads of Education and Library Information Services of all nine provincial departments
- Study tour to Sweden for 18 South African media (school library) advisors and school librarians and one national policy developer
- Support to ten pilot schools to establish library committees, formulate library policy and development plans on a local level, and try out good practice ideas
- Development and distribution of 9 000 copies of *Fifteen innovative ways with your learning resources* booklet to state schools in South Africa.

The evaluation report, written by Prof. Archie Dick in October 1999, recommended that, although the LPYL Project had achieved its key objective, it needed to progress to another phase in order to more fully realise its wider aims. A business plan was developed by EPU and BiS for Phase Two of the Project, with participation by DoE and the nine provincial departments of education, and was subsequently approved and funded by SIDA. This report deals mainly with Phase Two.

## Phase Two 2000 — 2002

To be able to develop the work of the project schools and the advisors on the provincial level, the role players of Phase One were the foundation of Phase Two. The objectives and activities of Phase Two were to expand and deepen the project. The business plan of the project accordingly states some principles:

- Continuity
- Quality and depth
- Extension not repetition
- Development not dependency
- Reflexivity
- Coherence
- Interdisciplinary co-operation

The project developed links to the Minister of Education's Implementation Plan of Tirisano. Six strategic objectives were formulated in the business plan of LPYL, Phase Two. The six strategic outcomes are:

- Capacity Building and Development
- Materials Development
- Advocacy
- Study Tours
- Information and Communications Technologies
- Case Study Research.

### **1. Capacity Building and Development**

According to the evaluation of Phase Two, some of the most valuable outcomes were the forming of library committees in the project schools and developing school library policies and plans. The visits and support from the project manager played a great role.

Networks with neighbouring libraries were established, stimulated by the local workshops, using drafts of manuals for school library work, produced by the project.

## **2. Materials Development**

Three manuals on school library management and development were developed. This item of the project has not been completely fulfilled as planned so far, owing to a failure in communication with the Department of Education, which according to the original plan were to print and distribute the manuals. Some sub-objectives linked to actions on national level in South Africa were not fulfilled being part of the issue of distributing the manuals. This might happen at a later stage, hopefully.

## **3. Advocacy**

The LPYL attendance at the International Association of School Librarian's (IASL) conference in Malmö was successful. 6-10 August 2000. LPYL was reported on by two South African participants and a member of the South African working group in two seminars at the conference in Malmö. Members of the Swedish Reference Group also attended the conference and organised an exhibition of materials relating to the Project and the work of BiS. A LPYL Project information pamphlet was developed to form part of the display.

A spin-off effect of the project is an exhibition, hosted by the NGO Afrikagrupperna in Sweden. The exhibition presents three Southern African Library Projects and it has been shown in more than 30 places and is still touring in Sweden. One of the presented projects is LPYL. This part of the exhibition will also be shown in Durban at the IASL-conference, in connection with a presentation of the project.

The closing conference 2002 in Johannesburg can be said to have been a part of the advocacy of the project with the participation of organisations within South Africa, such as Masifunde Sonke (a reading organisation on national level) and LIASA (The Library and Information Association of South Africa) for future linkage. At the conference the case study research and the evaluation were presented. Discussions were held about the future and how the project results could be used and followed up.

The documentation of the project can be seen on the project website: <http://www.foreningenbis.org/lpyl/>

## **4. Study tours**

The study tours were a minor part of Phase Two. One Swedish and one South African group made visits, prepared by seminars, and were specially aiming at:

- i) ways of defining and increasing library-related resources for school learners and educators*
- ii) strategies for implementing a school library plan, networking and lobbying at a local level.*

A lot of valuable experience was developed by those visits and in the projects that evolved. However, the main objectives above were not fully highlighted in the tour programmes, according to the evaluator.

Nine Swedish librarians met the South African participants from every project school during a weekend seminar 28th-29th of October 2000 in Johannesburg. Andrew Patterson reported about School Library statistics in South Africa. Representatives from the project schools in Free State, Western Cape and Northern Cape which no one would visit during the study tours, presented their reports. Mrs June Matlala from NCETDE talked about library policy and plan development. The Swedish group then split into three groups and travelled to different parts of South Africa:

North West Province and Gauteng (Helene Swenne, Anna Birgitta Eriksson and Maria Bergstrand)  
Limpopo and Mpumalanga (Eva Petri, Cecilia Flodström and Maud Hell)  
KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape (Tina Haglund, Karin Westberg and Malin Ögland)

In May 2001 ten South African participants visited Sweden:

Sarie Baadjies, Public Librarian, Borwa/Tweespruit Public Library, Free State and Rose Damon, Library Advisor, Western Cape, visited Eva Petri, Arboga,; Malin Ögland, Bålsta; Anna Birgitta Eriksson, Rinkeby  
Jan Beeton, Project Manager, and Zukie Jafta, Media Advisor, Eastern Cape, visited Karin Westberg, Mörbylånga; Catharina Engström, Kalmar  
Meisie Komane, Deputy Chief Education Specialist, Department of Education, North West Province, and Whisky Geraldine Monama, Public Librarian, Orlando Public Library, Gauteng,  
Susan Masenge, School librarian, Paballelo Senior Secondary School, Northern Cape, and Rodgers Sikhosana, Media Advisor, KwaZulu-Natal Education Library Services, visited Tina Haglund, Tranemo  
Motlalepula Teffo, Provincial School Libraries Co-ordinator, Department of Education, Northern Province, and Mathandi Mokumo, Teacher Librarian, Mehlwana Secondary School, Mpumalanga, visited Maud Hell, Lund.

Reports can be found on the website from the tours as well as from the different projects the participants planned and conducted in their own schools.

### **5. Information and Communications Technologies**

ICT became part of the project to make sure that this vital issue would not be overlooked in the project. The activity was primarily a seminar conducted by Futurekids at the seminar in October 2000 concerning the use of Information Communication Technology in learning and teaching in schools - an example of alternative library related resources. Some of the projects touch upon the possibility of using of computers and Internet at school.

### **6. Case Study Research**

The objective of this research was to *“To examine and understand the limits and potentialities of the north-south exchange programme for developing media advisors, school library managers and public librarians in South Africa”*. Three schools were investigated in a research project conducted by researchers from EPU assisted by local teacher librarians trained in case study methods.

In the conclusions of the report by Santha Naiker and Sandile Mbokazi *Developing Libraries For South African Learners and Teachers: Three Case Studies (2002)* it is said that one of the most important best-practice changes that could be made in South African schools was the implementing of library committees, operating effectively through regular meetings for the practice of inclusive and democratic decision-making.

The conclusion in the report of the evaluator Birgitta Alm is *“Many constructive changes had occurred in the case study institutions that were directly attributed to the exchange tours. Nevertheless, at each of the case study institutions it was evident that support was essential to assist in implementing new systems and processes for sustained, long-term development.”* (See Appendix A)

## **Conclusion**

One of the final efforts of the LPYL Project was to produce the booklet of 42 pages: *To Set the Ball Rolling (2002)*, covering many of the aspects of LPYL. This text can also be found on the website as a pdf-file. It gives the project a broader perspective by inviting key persons in Sweden and South Africa to contribute.

The LPYL Project has been a project on several levels. On the local level (project school level) the project has had many effects, as can be seen in the reports from visits to the schools.

The declared intention to sustain SCHELIS, the network of people in charge of provincial school library issues in each provincial department, initiated during Phase One of LPYL, will probably have a regional effect on future school library development.

The strength of LPYL was also supposed to be on a national level - with effects of professional interaction both nationally and internationally (Sweden - South Africa). A discussion about different aspects of north-south development projects has been initiated after the project. We have reason to believe that effects of this project can be lasting. A LPYL e-mail list, open to everyone interested in the ideas of the project has been started to make further contacts easier. Personal links have been established; contacts have already been taken and visits paid without any funding from LPYL and will hopefully continue to do so after the Durban IASL conference 2003.

## References

Karlsson, J. Ed. (1996). *School learners and libraries: proceedings of conference on 28-29 November 1995 held at the Tropicana Hotel, Durban, Kwazulu Natal, South Africa*. Dalbridge: Education Policy Unit, University of Natal.

South Africa. Department of Education. Directorate: Centre for Educational Technology and Distance Education. (1998). *A national policy framework for school library standards*. Pretoria: The Directorate. Unpublished report.

## Appendix A: Conclusions From The Evaluator Birgitta Alm

“You can say that this project is taking place on two scenes. One concrete and measurable in the different project schools and one mental insight and consciousness among those involved. In some cases, you can see a clear link between those two, when people, who have been inspired by new knowledge and new encounters have been working to realise them in practical work. In other cases, you can only have a feeling that something has taken root and could be developed if the soil will develop positively.

This project has been based on development of competence and exchange of ideas, experiences and knowledge during different meetings. All the strategic objectives have provided the participants with different kind of stimulation and competence, encounters of different kinds, such as:

- The encounters of the Project manager with people engaged in school library issues at the different project schools.
- The encounters between South African "school library people" with colleagues in Sweden and Swedish workplaces and working conditions as well as corresponding meeting in South Africa.
- The encounter of all school library heads from the provinces of South Africa.
- The encounters of public and school librarians in the community or neighbouring areas.

You may also add in the various seminars, conferences and workshops, which have been part of the project and which have contributed to an important development of competence amongst the participants and other people. All these meetings have resulted in different experiences and insights. Some of it is described in various travel, conference and project reports, where the LPYL participants, depending on different positions, have expressed what they have been inspired from and would like to develop in their own work. Samples of this personal inspiration and increased consciousness are to a certain extent documented in the evaluation report and in various appendices.

The different school libraries and schools have been the concrete scenes of the project work and in short you can say that a clear positive development has taken place at almost all the project schools. In some of the schools the status of the school library has increased in a splendid manner, in others, the development is modest and in one there has been no progress at all.

If you look at the mental and material elements mentioned above, the interesting thing is that you can see the obvious and constructive progress that has taken place despite the exposed position of material shortcomings of the schools. In my opinion, this indicates the importance of support and increased competence as well as stimulation.

The project has been about training and encouragement leading to positive effects.

The exchange tours in the project have been important stimuli and catalysts. When the visitors have stayed in their partner country the host country has tried very hard to present progressive plans and ideas. The South Africans have for instance become aware of school library committees, while Swedes have realised the advantages of making library plans.

The project has also had another important impact by initiating a national network of provincial school library heads, which has been institutionalised by the acronym SCHELIS.

The most important concrete outcomes that the project has provided on local school library level are in my opinion:

- The developing of different kinds of school library plans
- The formation of library committees
- The creation of local networks.

These outcomes are about:

Sustainability - aiming at structures and plans to make sure that what have been achieved must be taken care of and kept well;

Support among colleagues as well as in the organisational structure;

Dissemination through networks in order to provide mutual support and stimulation.

The elements of LPYL which I find have contributed to a positive outcome are:

- The carefully prepared strategy of working on three levels: national, provincial and local
- The concentration on "human development" regarding stimulating exposition to new ideas through study tours as well as knowledge development through seminars and workshops.
- The continuous support and advice, partly through competence development by provincial advisors, partly through recurrent visits by the Project Manager.
- The stimulation in a co-operative and co-ordinated work most of all initiated by networking of different kinds.
- The work to firmly establish the library in the school through committees and plans.
- The provision of basic, pedagogical school library material intended for mass distribution.

LPYL has in my opinion been a grand project. It is not one, but ten or twenty projects. Each project school and each single objective can be seen as a project of its own. That all the good efforts and the carefully prepared structure did not work out on all levels has both structural and human explanations. For instance, the role of school libraries has not been enhanced in the new curriculum. The "three-level" work lost ground during the second phase when the support from both provincial and national level was undermined. It would also have been desirable that the Project Manager might had had the chance to work until the project was really finalised - beyond the original time schedule of the project - to provide for all documentation.

However, these shortcomings are less important compared to the unique experience in which so many people met and exchanged experiences and insights. During five years many people with links to school libraries (about 70 actively engaged and a lot more involved and influenced) in two countries on different sides of the globe have expressed opinions, discussed, tested, exchanged wisdom and been engaged. The project members have obviously been involved in a process to develop democracy by providing reading and information resources to a potential pillar of democracy: the school library".

**Birgitta Alm**

School library consultant in Stockholm

Off duty information librarian at the International Library in Stockholm

1997 – 2000 librarian at a nursing school in Maputo, Mozambique

## Appendix B: Stakeholders Of The Project

**LIWO – Library and Information Workers’ Organization** formed in Durban 1990 was working during the 1990s as an “Independent activist organization involved in social transformation. LIWO aims to provide the space for critical and constructive debate and projects and to bring together LIS practitioners of all kinds in an organization working towards an equitable, non-discriminatory information system accessible to all people in South Africa” (*from Statement of Intent*). LIWO members were in 1991 actively involved in the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) of the library situation in South Africa. LIWO was the South African partner in the project during Phase One (1997–2000)

**EPU – Education Policy Unit (Natal)** was established jointly by the University of Natal and the National Education Coordinating Committee (NECC) in 1987 to provide research for organisations working towards bringing about a democratic and non-racial system of education in South Africa. Through its activities EPU (Natal) works to empower national and provincial governments, non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations to develop education policies that promote democracy, equity and educational quality. EPU have been involved in Department of Education’s Policy Framework for School Library Standards and was in 1999 commissioned to draft the Implementation Plan for School Library Policy Framework. <http://www.nu.ac.za/departement/default.asp?dept=epuune> (2003-03-25) (*From presentation brochure from EPU*)  
EPU was the South African partner in the project during Phase Two (2000–2002)

**Centre for Educational Technology and Distance Education (CETDE)** at the Department of Education in Pretoria has taken an active part of the LPYL project by having two representatives in the South African Reference Group and has facilitated and taken part of the meetings of SCHELIS. Department of Education formally endorsed Phase One of the project.

**SCHELIS** – a forum for the heads of school library support services in South Africa’s nine provinces. SCHELIS was formed 1997 as a result of LPYL and has been actively involved in the project on a consultative basis.

**Bibliotek i Samhälle (BiS)** (“Libraries in Society”) was formed 1969 in Sweden as a "politically independent organisation working on a socialist basis to promote progressive librarianship" (*from the program of BiS*). BiS has been actively involved in projects in South Africa for about ten years, during the early 1990s by supporting a resource centre in Lingelihle, the township of Cradock in Eastern Cape. In its periodical bis (quarterly), other issues relating to social commitments are also published. Website: <http://www.foreningenbis.org/>

**Sida** – Swedish Agency for International Development Cooperation. Sida has moved from aid to cooperation. Since the mid-1980s Sida has included culture in its activities. Sida’s Culture and Media Division has funded the LPYL as part of the Swedish government’s program for South Africa. Website: <http://www.sida.se/> (2003-03-25)

## Appendix C: Working Groups:

### **South African Group**

#### **Phase One:**

LIWO Working Group members: Johnny Jacobs, Jenni Karlsson, Thuli Radebe, Lyne Metcalfe  
National department representatives: June Matlala, Busi Ndawo  
IMC representatives (Part time project managers): Maureen Mosselson, Cathy Stadler

#### **Phase Two:**

School library - national level (2): June Matlala, Busi Ndawo  
School library - provincial level: Lyne Metcalfe  
School/public library - district level: Pat Magwaza  
School/public library – practitioner level: Mrs Nomvuko Nomnga  
Former LIWO Working Group: Johnny Jacobs  
EPU executive director (representing the SA partner): Jenni Karlsson  
Project manager: Jan Beeton (2000 – 2001)

## **Swedish Working group**

Helen Amborn (School librarian) (Phase 1), Barbro Bolonassos (Public librarian), Catharina Engström (School/public librarian) (Phase 2), Bodil Hildeman (Public librarian (Phase 2), Lena Lundgren (County library consultant), Kerstin Rydsjö (Teacher Swedish Library School), Lennart Wettmark (High school librarian), Malin Ögland (School librarian) (Phase 2).

## **Appendix D: Some Of The Documents From The Project**

*Alm, Birgitta (2002). LPYL: Evaluation Report. Evaluation of phase 2 of the project Library Practice for Young Learners (LPYL). A joint project between Education Policy Unit (EPU) Natal and Bibliotek i Samhälle (BiS), Sweden, 2000 – 2002. Stockholm. Available <http://www.foreningenbis.org/lpyl/evaluation-phase2.htm> (2003-03-25)*

*Fifteen innovative ways with your learning resources. (1999). <http://education.pwv.gov.za/teli2/bisliwo.html> (2003-03-25) or [http://www.foreningenbis.org/lpyl/booklet\\_text.htm](http://www.foreningenbis.org/lpyl/booklet_text.htm) (or a very big pdf-file on the website)*

*Naiker, Santha & Mbokazi, Sandile. (2002.) *Developing libraries for South African learners and teachers. Three case studies.* Durban: Education Policy Unit (Natal).*

*To Set the Ball Rolling - Library Project for Young Learners (LPYL) A Swedish – South African School Library Project 1997-2002. (2002). Available <http://www.foreningenbis.org/lpyl/LPYL.pdf>*

More can be seen on the project website.

Three draft manuals with workshop guide:

- *Developing effective school library policy and planning.* (2001). Durban: LPYL (Book One, Library Practice for Young Learners Series). Draft edition
- *Using library related resources to improve the quality of teaching and learning.* (2001). Durban: LPYL. (Book Two. Library Practice for Young Learners Series) Draft edition
- *Using library related resources to develop the information skills of educators and learners.* (2001). Durban: LPYL (Book Three: Library Practice for Young Learners Series) Draft edition
- *Guide to facilitation of workshops for Book One, Two and Three in the Library Practice for Young Learners Series.* (2001). Durban: LPYL. Draft edition.

## **Biographical Notes**

*Maud Hell* is working as school librarian in the primary and secondary school Vikingaskolan and in a branch of the public library of the university town of Lund in the south of Sweden. She has been host of South African participants of LPYL in Phases One and Two and took part in the study tour to South Africa in Phase Two. E-mail: [maud.hell.vikingaskolan@skola.lund.se](mailto:maud.hell.vikingaskolan@skola.lund.se)

*Catharina Engström* is specially working to help disabled persons using the library service of Kalmar in the south east of Sweden. She organised in Phase One the LPYL study tour in Kalmar for the South African participants of the project. During Phase Two she has been a member of the working group. E-mail: [catharina.engstrom@kommun.kalmar.se](mailto:catharina.engstrom@kommun.kalmar.se)

*Lena Lundgren* is working in Stockholm, the capital of Sweden. She is library consultant for the children and school library activity of the county of Stockholm, including meetings and education for librarians in 26 municipalities. She has been working with LPYL since the start as a member of the Swedish working group. E-mail: [lena.lundgren@kultur.stockholm.se](mailto:lena.lundgren@kultur.stockholm.se)