School library education in thirteen countries in Sub-Saharan Africa

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This paper attempts to provide a comprehensive report on school libraries and the status of training of school / teacher librarians in thirteen African countries. A full report will be presented to the IASL Research Forum 2012 in November 2012. Recently, the IASL Research SIG, Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) Information & Library Services, the ENSIL Foundation (Stichting ENSIL) and a number of other international school library colleagues have been co-operating in an attempt to collect reliable research data on public school libraries. The provision of a new form of affordable online training for school librarians / teacher librarians is introduced. It also presents an idea for a new form of affordable online training for school librarians / teacher librarians.
online training, combining the use of ICT with traditional concepts, which could eventually be used for the training of school library staff throughout the world.

Background

In most African countries primary and secondary schools that have internet access and enough books to read and study for their pupils is considered a rare luxury. The concept “school library” is often unknown to the pupil, and the more common scenario is that the student is not likely to visit a library until he/she is able to pursue higher education. For a university to be accredited, one of the conditions is to have a library on the campus. For schools it is not compulsory to have a library on their premises, yet. In 2007 and again in 2010, school libraries were included in the IFLA/FAIFE World Reports (Bothma 2007, and Bothma 2010). The following statistics for school libraries on the African continent (excluding countries in North Africa) were published:

Table 1. Estimated number of school libraries in Sub-Saharan Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Estimated number of school libraries</th>
<th>Information reported by</th>
<th>Estimated number of school libraries</th>
<th>Information reported by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PLAFAIE World Report 2010</td>
<td>(name of organisation)</td>
<td>PLAFAIE World Report 2007</td>
<td>(name of organisation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(most recent data)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(most recent data)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>Biblioteca Nacional de Angola</td>
<td>No data provided</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benin</td>
<td>No data provided</td>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
<td>National Library of Benin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botswana</td>
<td>Botswana Library Association</td>
<td></td>
<td>245</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinea Faso</td>
<td>156</td>
<td></td>
<td>Approx 50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape Verde</td>
<td>More than 43</td>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central African Republic</td>
<td>No information provided</td>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>No data provided</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (Brazzaville)</td>
<td>No data provided</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>No data provided</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cote d’Ivoire</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Universite de Cocody</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabon</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Bibliothèque Nationale du Gabon</td>
<td>No data provided</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambia, The</td>
<td>About 100</td>
<td>The Gambie National Library Service A</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>6, 918</td>
<td>Ghana Library Association</td>
<td>478</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinea</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>Bibliothèque Nationale de Guinée</td>
<td>99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>No data provided</td>
<td></td>
<td>250 (rough estimate)</td>
<td>Kenya Library Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesotho</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>National University of Lesotho Library</td>
<td>203</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>Association Maillenne des Bibliothécaires</td>
<td>90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mauritius</td>
<td>No data provided</td>
<td></td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>No data provided</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>National Library of Mozambique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Namibia</td>
<td>1, 016</td>
<td>National Library of Namibia &amp; Namibian</td>
<td>1630</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>No data provided</td>
<td></td>
<td>107</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rwanda</td>
<td>No data provided</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>National Library of Rwanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seychelles</td>
<td>No data provided</td>
<td></td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Seychelles National Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Sierra Leone Association of Archivists, Librarians and Information Scientists</td>
<td>Report not returned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>7% of schools have libraries</td>
<td>Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIAASA)</td>
<td>9416</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>No information provided</td>
<td></td>
<td>Report not returned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swaziland</td>
<td>More than 20</td>
<td></td>
<td>(i)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Tanzania Library Association</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Togo</td>
<td>No response</td>
<td>Bibliothèque et Archives Nationales du Togo</td>
<td>Report not returned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>National Library of Uganda</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>No data provided</td>
<td></td>
<td>156</td>
<td>Zambia Library Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>Several hundred</td>
<td></td>
<td>(i)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:  
(i) indicates that the respondent has requested to remain anonymous,  
(ii) indicates that the report was completed but no data on school libraries was provided.


These reports also discuss the availability of the Internet to school libraries on the African continent. Sometimes training of library staff can take place via the Internet, if reliable facilities are available. The reliability of some of the statistics on Table 1 and Table 2 has been questioned at the international level. Questions have been asked about the methods that were used in data collection, definitions which were used and the actual dates when data collection took place.

It is not the intention of this paper to corroborate or question these data and methods, but rather to illustrate the difficulties in identifying school library facilities. Only then, is it possible to start a benchmark study and compare literacy data and assess their dynamics. In a next phase it is possible to start to collect information to improve strategies for enhancing the educational roles of school librarians in various parts of the world.

UNICEF (2010) and the World Bank (2011), both confirm that 21.4% of all illiterate adults live in sub-Saharan Africa. International data suggests that school libraries play an important role in promoting reading and literacy, additionally; it is possible to do a comparative research among schools with and without a library. We may even conclude that the lack of libraries (and by extension books) throughout the African continent, also contributes to the lack of a reading culture.

Introduction

The importance of definitions

The research group agrees that first of all, for the purpose of this paper and in order to provide reliable data, agreement needs to be reached on international definitions and terminology for:

- A school library
- A teacher librarian and other school library staff
- The training required for a qualified teacher librarian.

Reliable data about school libraries could be used for advocacy, to raise the prestige of school libraries at international level. International definitions should be acceptable to both the Library and Information Science (LIS) and the educational communities, since a school library should provide a link between the library world and the world of education (Boelens, 2010). These decisions should not be made just by librarians but by librarians and teachers working together at international level. They should also be reviewed and discussed by an adjudicator such as the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

Once agreement has been reached, these definitions could then be used by the international school library or educational community to collect and compare data and to carry out accurate, qualitative, quantitative and/or mixed-methods research at international level, not only in developed countries, but also in developing and emerging nations, thus providing data and information which would be taken seriously by the international community. Also, since administrators like to be able to quantify the item under consideration, these definitions should not be open to different interpretations.

The subject of accurate international definitions in the three categories mentioned above could be discussed indefinitely, however the team has agreed that there is a need to co-operate with each other at international level, to negotiate and perhaps make some compromises. Perhaps a time limit for these discussions needs to be set - a given period of time - within which a (preliminary but workable) decision should be made.

For the purposes of this paper, the following suggestions for definitions have been received, however these suggestions will be discussed in depth by the new IASL Research SIG – Research Team later in 2012.

A school library.

The school library should be the beating heart of a school – supporting learning and teaching for the entire school community (Boelens, 2010).

A school library is a function, not a place. It is not a book collection. It is not an e-library. It is a service, offering advice, professional development and knowledge of appropriate learning and teaching materials, digital and non-digital. The most important resource services are the human
resources. Teacher librarians contribute to quality teaching and authentic learning. They are qualified to enable all members of the school community to become critical thinkers, independent learners, enthusiastic readers and global citizens able to participate in a democratic, culturally diverse and just society. (Phillips, 2011).

- The school library promotes the love of reading and provides a service for this purpose.
- One of the functions of the school library is to teach learners media and information literacy skills – to identify, select, organise and evaluate information.
- In her 2006 study, Hoskins uses the following definition:

  The name “school library” is used in its generic form to incorporate all types and models of collection development and delivery that provides materials relevant to a resource-based teaching and learning approach to learners and teachers in schools (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education 2003).

The KwaZulu-Natal school library policy ((KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education 2003) identifies three models for libraries in KwaZulu-Natal. These are:

- Classroom libraries, including shared classroom libraries;
- Permanent or mobile library collections of various types serving clusters of schools; and
- Centralised (traditional) school libraries.

A teacher librarian and other school library staff.

It is necessary that a teacher librarian be described at the international level; to identify what qualifications that person has, and what his or her specific function is within the school. The following definition was published by the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) in 2011:

Teacher librarians support and implement the vision of their school communities through advocating and building effective library and information services and programs that contribute to the development of lifelong learners. A teacher librarian holds recognised teaching qualifications and qualifications in librarianship, defined as eligibility for Associate (i.e. professional) membership for the Australian Library and Information Association [ALIA]. Within the broad fields of education and librarianship, teacher librarians are uniquely-qualified. This is valuable because curriculum knowledge and pedagogy are combined with library and information management knowledge and skills (ALIA, 2011 and ALIA/ASLA, 2002).

It should be possible or even ethical to apply this, or a similar definition from a developed country, at international level to school library staff in developing and emerging countries. Other definitions for this function are described by colleagues who have submitted information at country level. The authors also agree that in order for school libraries to be accorded their proper standing, the school/teacher librarian must be contributing to quality teaching and authentic learning.

The training that a qualified teacher librarian requires.

The training that school librarians receive comes in many different shapes and sizes, as described at country level in this paper. To date, the following suggestions which have been received for inclusion in this definition:

- A teacher librarian and other members of the library staff are service providers.
- Sometimes their only qualification is an earnest zeal to share the love of the written word, promoting the concept of reading as a pleasurable, voluntary activity, which contributes to an individual’s quality of life.

School libraries in some countries on the African continent
As described in Table 1, national governments, ministries of education, enthusiastic school leaders, teachers, librarians and charitable organizations are responsible for school libraries in schools in different countries throughout Africa.

- We need to know what the conditions are in these school libraries
- We have to identify ways to provide better facilities and resources to these libraries
- We need to know how a school librarian of teacher/librarian can be staff trained
- School library colleagues from different countries have been asked to describe the training of school librarians that takes place in their own country or region. These reports appear below, in alphabetical order by the name of country.

**Botswana**

*Training of School Librarians / Teacher Librarians in Botswana.*

*Margaret Baffour-Awuah*

In the 1980’s, the upgrading of libraries in the community junior secondary schools raised the question of staffing these libraries. Staffing junior and senior secondary school libraries with qualified individuals was a major problem in Botswana. Two factors that hampered the effectiveness of this training were: of lack of incentives, compounded by the fact that the Teaching Service Management transferred and or promoted teachers without considering their librarianship qualification. This meant a teacher librarian promoted as Head of Science has no time to spend in the library and so that training often becomes wasted.

Training programmes for teacher librarians began at the University of Botswana (UB) in 1988 and at Molepolole and Tonota Colleges of Education in 1990, the training was slow to start, involving only 20 or 30 students at a time. The course was a certificate in school librarianship, and was spread over two years, running from May to August in each year. Two years’ teaching experience was requisite for admission to the programme. Graduates of the programme were required to put the theory learnt into practice by setting up a school library where none had existed, or developing what they found in place. Unfortunately most of these teachers had full teaching load, some as many as thirty-six periods a week, which renders any library work impossible.

The division of the Botswana National Library Service (BNLS) held sensitising workshops for head teachers as well as running seminars for officials of the Ministry of Education, aimed at making them more aware of their role in the delivery of the services.

About three years ago the BNLS handed back responsibility for school and college libraries to the Ministry of Education. It has taken a bit of time for that adjustment to kick in well. At this time, the exact picture is unclear.

**Democratic Republic of the Congo**

*Library education in Beni at the Christian Bilingual University of Congo.*

*Helen Boelens, Henk van Dam, Mary Henton*

In 2011, KIT and the ENSIL Foundation were approached by the Congo Initiative with a request to provide expertise and assistance to a university library in a new university, the Université Chrétienne Bilingue du Congo (UCBC) (Christian Bilingual University of Congo) in Beni, DR Congo. It was agreed that assistance would be provided. In return, the Congo Initiative was asked to try to locate information about school libraries in that country.

Since then, much has been learned about the university library, which the Rector of the university, Dr. David Kasali, strongly supports. Although there is minimal funding, a library has been built. Its small collection consists of books in French and English, most of which have been donated by well-meaning Americans. When this co-operation began in 2011, the library had 14 computers, as the library serves as a computer space and learning lab for students. Two teachers, who had no library training and virtually no computer skills, had been appointed to run the library part-time. Their greatest strength was their enthusiasm for the library and their desire to provide good library services to the university community.

In 2012, one of the library’s computers was designated solely for the librarian’s use, however the sources of electricity and the Internet connection are very unpredictable and
unreliable. Basic two-week onsite training in ICT skills has now been provided for the librarians. They have started to enter catalogue material into an Excel file. This data will later be transferred to an online catalogue program. Also the librarians have visited a university library in another part of the DR Congo and have had discussions with the librarian, however the cost of travel and safety during the journey were problems that need to be seriously considered. The conditions described in this university library, of which its existence is a condition to accredit the university’s curriculum, may be well an indicator for the situation or rather the existence of school libraries in the primary and secondary schools in DR Congo.

At the moment, no news has been received about school libraries in DR Congo. Rumour has it that some were destroyed during the recent conflicts. Also, it is being reported that reading rooms for children are being set up in some refugee camps but this information still needs to be confirmed. In November 2012 Henk van Dam will visit UCBC to discuss further assistance to the university library, which will also mean a start for school library research in this country. The nature of this proposed assistance (university library toolkit) will be described later in this paper.

Ethiopia

CODE-Ethiopia supporting small community "libraries."
Marlene Asselin, Ray Dotron

It is very difficult to know just what is happening with regard to training for school library staff in Ethiopia. The authors are unaware of any formal programs offered at universities or colleges. NGOs do provide some training for reading room attendants and for teachers, but it is mostly focused on how to run/organize a library with some attention to the importance of literacy, how to use children’s books etc. Some relevant information has been provided by Ethiopia Reads (2009), RTI International (2010), Ambatchew (2011) and Kurtz (2011).

The authors are most familiar with that work done by CODE-Ethiopia, an NGO that supports small community “libraries” or reading rooms that are often linked to schools. Teachers send students to work on projects and to study in the reading rooms and in some cases the reading room attendant goes into the school, mostly to encourage students to come to the reading room. Also to a much lesser degree, adults from the community use the reading rooms as well, especially if they are enrolled in training programs. In some cases, teachers come to the reading rooms to get books or to prepare their lessons. This project provides a week of training when new reading rooms are set up. A Guide Book for School Librarians has been published (CODE-Ethiopia, 1997) and is still used today. Additional information about the library training program that CODE has in Ethiopia is currently being reviewed; details will be available in the near future. Training is a major issue in Ethiopia particularly in people’s understanding of what a teacher-librarian should be doing and how the library supports multiple literacies.

Ghana

School library opportunities in Ghana.
Margaret Baffour-Awuah, Helen Boelens, Henk van Dam

The IFLA/FAIFE World Report records a large number of school libraries in Ghana but as yet there seems to be little contact with them. Margaret Baffour-Awuah has recently provided the names of colleagues in Ghana. These people will be approached and asked to provide more information about school libraries and specifically about the training of school librarians. Also, Henk van Dam, who has been working on KIT projects in Ghana for many years providing assistance to university libraries, will attempt to make contact with school libraries during his next visit.

Also, in May 2012, a Dutch high school sent a group of students and teachers to Ghana for a school project. This group tried to contact school libraries and delivered some interesting books (gifts) to them. It is hoped that these attempts to make contact with school libraries in Ghana will
result in the exchange of useful, accurate information about the libraries themselves and specifically about the training of school librarians in that country.

Kenya

_Teacher Librarian Capacity Building Process in Kenya._
_Daniel Mangale_

In 2009 ABCproject Kenya started a school libraries mentorship program in Coast Province, Kenya. This program aims at helping children in public primary schools to achieve better grades and develop early reading habits. At an early stage it became apparent that most teacher librarians do not have any motivation or skills to help them to transfer skills to the children. In order to solve this scenario, we attempted to identify the actual skills which the teacher librarians already have. It became apparent that during teacher training, most of them had received Information Literacy lessons so that they could understand how to search for information and use it in their learning while at college. These are not pedagogical skills and most teachers did not believe that information literacy skills needed to be taught to children. With this in mind, we decided to start capacity building programs for two years.

During these programmes, teachers will learn basic skills for starting and managing schools libraries, acquisition of school library resources, classification and cataloguing skills. Hopefully this training will transform their ability to help children read, however after the training there was no marked improvement.

We therefore decided to start a major partnership with the local university to impact proficiency training in school librarianship. The aim of this proficiency certificate training will be to introduce school librarians to the following skills:

- Introduction to Library and Information services
- Library Management
- School librarianship (basics)
- Requirements for setting up and running school libraries.
- Introduction to information resources
- Information resources identification, selection and acquisition
- Acquisition of information resources
- Classification of school library materials
- Practical classification
- Practical cataloguing
- General management of school libraries

We hope that after this one-year course, teachers will go back to the schools and be able to be agents for change for children in rural areas. We also intend to monitor the progressive development of these teachers from module one to the third module during school visits, in order to assess the practical application of the teacher librarian's work at the school level.

ABCproject intends to ensure that this partnership with the university will continue and more teacher librarians will gain from the training so that we shall see a more vibrant mentorship process for the approximately 150 school libraries in Coast Province, Kenya.

Mozambique

_School libraries in Mozambique._
_Glória Bastos, Helen Boelens, Elsa Conde, Henk van Dam_

Henk van Dam has been working on KIT projects in Mozambique for many years, providing assistance to university libraries. Gloria Bastos and Elsa Conde both have contacts with students and school libraries in that country. School libraries in Mozambique are rare and if they exist, poorly equipped. All four authors are cooperating to propose projects that will provide assistance and training to school librarians in Mozambique. A pilot survey of school libraries in Mozambique is to be implemented later in 2012.

Namibia
School library development in Namibia.
Margaret Baffour-Awuah, Busi Dlamini

In Namibia the national Ministry of Education is responsible for school library development. Information about the state of school libraries/media centres and the need for training for school librarians in Namibia has been located but it appears to be outdated. A search for contacts and recent information will be made and if possible, a report will be presented at a later date. In the IFLA/FAIFE World Report of 2010 however, a precise number of school libraries was mentioned (1,016 school libraries). It needs to be investigated whether this number was the result of a concise manner of counting or a well educated guess.

Nigeria

Education and Training of School Librarians in Nigeria.
Virginia W. Dike

The conventional practice in Nigerian primary and secondary schools is for the school library to be under the charge of a teacher-librarian, usually a teacher, often a senior one, without library qualification. In the northern part of the country, some school libraries are managed by diploma holders. In other cases, libraries are kept open by a library assistant, clerk and student prefects. In some cases teacher-librarians are given a reduced load or even full-time assignment in the library, but most often they have a full teaching load in addition to their library duties. Nigerian school libraries, therefore, have problems of both quality and quantity in personnel. There is need for the position of school librarian and for appropriate training to equip people for this position. Since the 1960s, school library associations have pushed for a reduced teaching load and/or recognition of school librarian as a duty post, and more recently, for establishment of a full-time position for school librarians so that individuals could be employed specifically for this responsibility, and for programmes to train qualified school library personnel to effectively man such positions. So far, there has been more success with the latter than with the former, which brings me directly to the issue of education and training of school librarians.

A number of library professionals, especially those outside the field of school librarianship, hold that school libraries like any other library should be managed by a library professional pure and simple, and that such have no need for teaching qualification. Rather, teaching qualification is a temptation to use them as classroom teachers. This was the philosophy that informed the posting of librarians to federal government college libraries. The new Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria has also cast doubt on their professional status by declining to register graduates with dual qualification in education and librarianship as librarians. However, posting librarians without teaching background to schools has not been without problems. These librarians often met a senior teacher-librarian already in place and had to struggle for recognition. Moreover, they were often isolated from the teachers, who did not see the librarian as an equal, as a fellow professional and colleague. Diploma holders have even greater problems in this regard. Such experience tended to support dual qualification as the ideal for school libraries. All this, however, depends on recognition of the vital role of the school library in education and the essential contribution of the school librarian in realizing that role, recognition that will lead to development of effective school library services and employment of well qualified school librarians to manage them.

South Africa

School Librarian training in South Africa with specific comments on the Western Cape training.
Busi Dlamini, Genevieve Hart, Ruth Hoskins, Mona Niemand, Sandy Zinn
In South Africa, the Ministry of Education is beginning to do something about school library and information services and has developed the national guidelines for them. All the 9 provinces have officials or offices dealing with this function.

Conyngham, Isaacs et al. (2010) describes the urgent need for school libraries throughout South Africa. Hoskins (2006) reviews the role of libraries and teacher-librarians in KwaZulu-Natal and discusses their training at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa. Some stark realities have to frame any discussion of school librarian education in South Africa. There are wonderful school libraries in South African but they are mostly to be found in suburban middle class schools, which pay for them out of the fees levied by their governing bodies. Fewer than 10% of South African schools have functioning libraries with a dedicated staff member; and most schools with any sort of library expect a full-time teacher to run it in his or her “free” time. There are puzzling contradictions in statements on school libraries from education authorities. On one hand, the Ministry of Education has made it clear that libraries cannot be prioritized – stating that it will take 20 years to overcome basic infrastructural backlogs (Motshekga 2012); but, at the same time, it has just released National Guidelines for School Library and Information Services in which it describes a range of library models and states that “trained teacher librarians are essential” (Department of Basic Education 2012: 21). Only official policy can establish school librarian posts so the value of the Guidelines is questionable.

The weak position of school librarianship as a profession has obviously impacted on the long-standing formal school librarian education programmes. Student numbers have dropped across the country, despite evidence of a crisis looming with a large proportion of the present small cohort of school librarians close to retirement (Reynolds 2008). However, in the midst of this gloom, there are innovative school librarian education programmes - both formal and informal. The NGO Equal Education has for example entered into a partnership with the Department of Library and Information Science at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) for a series of short basic courses for library assistants who will be placed in schools to support teacher-librarians trained at UWC, but who are still tied to fulltime classroom teaching.

The programmes that remain in formal school librarian education are the Advanced Certificates of Education (ACE) at UWC, the University of KwaZulu-Natal and the University of Zululand. They are two-year programmes for qualified and practising teachers and rely on the financial support of the two provincial education departments who provide bursaries. In 2008, the Education Library and Information Service (EDULIS) of the Western Cape Education Department saw an opportunity to boost the school libraries campaign in the Western Cape by advocating bursaries for school librarian training. The result was that between 2008 and 2011, the Western Cape Education Department provided bursaries for roughly 130 teachers to receive school library education at UWC. However, as mentioned earlier, in the absence of national policy, graduates of the programme are not guaranteed library posts and most remain fulltime classroom and subject teachers.

The state of education in South Africa seems to be constantly in flux. Advanced certificates in educations or ACEs have fallen out of favour with the national education department. We will now have to develop a new qualification to start in 2014.

The outcomes of the four years of training of bursary students still need to be measured formally. But there is evidence that graduates have made an impact on the literacy and information literacy of their schools. The situation continues to exist in which school librarian posts are unofficial and not paid by the state and school library funding is sporadic. As mentioned above, new school library guidelines have been released recently by the national department of education but it remains to be seen whether they will carry much clout and bring about changes on the ground.

The School Library & Youth Services Interest Group (SLYSIG) of the Library & Information Association of South Africa (LIASA) has over the years arranged training sessions for teacher librarians. As LIASA hosts its annual conferences in different cities or provinces, pre-conferences targeting school librarians are organized and different school library themes are covered.

Swaziland and Uganda

School libraries n Swaziland and Uganda.
Margaret Baffour-Awuah
An attempt will be made to contact school libraries in these two countries using information which has recently been provided. These colleagues will be contacted and asked to provide information about school libraries and the training of school librarians in Swaziland. A progress report will be presented at a later date.

**Tanzania**

**School libraries in Tanzania.**

*Margaret Headlam*

In 2009 Margaret Headlam, a teacher librarian from Tasmania, Australia, volunteered at the School of St Jude in Arusha in Northern Tanzania, where she worked as a teacher librarian in one of the school libraries. The School of St. Jude is an English-language school which provides free education for children from the poorest local families and follows the Cambridge International Curriculum. The aim of the school is to “Fight poverty through education,” by providing students with a quality education, which will assist them to find well-paid jobs and help break the cycle of poverty. Margaret returned to Australia with a desire to help Tanzanian teachers to gain education as teacher librarians. She sourced a basic two-week course in Tanzania in 2009. Through a local Technical College (Polytechnic) in Hobart, Tasmania she has now negotiated for a course in Certificate 3 in Library services, which will be introduced in April 2012 to 12 Tanzanians who are working in libraries around the Arusha area. The course will begin with face-to-face workshops for three days and will then continue for 12 months online. The money for fees has been raised through friends and the community in Tanzania. Adult students have also been asked to contribute to their own education.

It is a very basic, legitimate course designed for Library assistants in Australia. Participants will receive a certificate that may or may not be recognised by the Tanzanian government. They can then go on to do the diploma course in the second year.

The Tanzanian Library Association may also offer courses, these will investigated later by Headlam and by a colleague from the Technical College in Hobart.

**Zimbabwe**

**Training of school librarians in Zimbabwe: Institutions of learning and qualification offered.**

*Jerry Mathema*

In Zimbabwe there is no specialised training of school librarians. Students are taught general courses in librarianship and information science where the course content has school librarianship as a subject. The whole approach that has been adopted by library training schools is to train librarians who are versatile in all aspects of librarianship, be it special librarianship (law and medical), national librarianship or public librarianship. Polytechnics (Harare, Bulawayo and Gwanda) offer National Certificates (NC), National Diplomas (ND) and Higher National Diplomas (HND) in library and information science. In terms of university education The National University of Science and Technology (NUST) is the sole provider of tuition in library and information science in Zimbabwe at the following levels of study, undergraduate Bachelor of Science Honours degree (BSc Hons), Post Graduate Diploma (PGD) and a Master’s of Science degree in Library and Information Science (MSc).

The Post Graduate Diploma in library science offered at NUST is designed to cater to teacher/ librarians who do not have qualifications in librarianship but having first degrees in other relevant subjects such as computer science, Information Technology, Education, English and History. It is conducted on block release during school holidays. Aspiring school librarians can proceed to a Master’s degree after obtaining the Post Graduate Diploma. In most schools English teachers used to run libraries and during training at teachers colleges like Hillside and Gweru cataloguing and classification were taught as subjects. This was meant to equip these teachers with library skills.
To study at the polytechnics aspiring student librarians must have passed five (5) Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council (ZIMSEC) or University of Cambridge Local Examination Syndicate (UCLES) General Certificate of Education Ordinary level subjects including English and Mathematics. At least three (3) ZIMSEC Advance level subjects are required for enrolment at NUST.

The Zimbabwe Library Association (ZimLA) at both national and branch levels have been conducting workshops and seminars for teacher librarians without the above-stated qualifications. This has been done through the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture and certificates of attendance have been issued out to the respective participants. The National Library and Documentation Services (NLDS) in conjunction with ZimLA have been very instrumental in providing expertise in the development of school library personnel through workshops and seminars. These courses are not accredited as professional but they are meant to guide these school librarians without the requisite library science qualifications to carry out their duties efficiently and diligently.

It has been observed with grave concern that a lot of students undergoing training in librarianship are there by default not by design.

- They are not interested in a career in librarianship hence low enrolment at both university and polytechnic level.
- They have been enrolled in the department because they could not make the grade in other disciplines.
- They are not well versed with issues pertaining to librarianship.
- They are coming from primary and secondary schools that have dysfunctional library services.
- They are from institutions where school library services exist but the libraries are manned by an untrained librarian.
- They perceive school librarianship as lacking in glamour, status and is inferior compared to academic, national, public or special librarianship.
- The post of school librarian does not exist in the Ministry of Education, Sports, Arts and culture hence most schools do not prioritise library services. In higher and tertiary education degrees, diplomas and certificates conferred by a university, teachers college or polytechnic without a functional library are null and void.
- The remuneration of school librarians in most government schools is the prerogative of School Development Councils and these have little financial resources to sustain salaries for librarians, secretaries, bursars and other ancillary staff. As a result there is high job turnover and eventually the library is closed. A teacher or unqualified personnel is put in charge and manipulated.
- Private schools and some mission schools have functional school libraries that are manned by qualified library personnel and they have the capacity to pay competitive salaries.

**Online toolkit for the training of teacher librarians**

**Helen Boelens, Henk van Dam**

A modern library is a function and a learning venue so it is the task of this library to use both modern technology and traditional tools to improve both literacy skills and educational quality. Table 2 above reports the increase of access to the Internet in school libraries in African countries. Using this new resource, it becomes possible to provide affordable online training to school librarians and library staff who work in these facilities.

In 2011, the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) announced the availability of a toolkit for use in university libraries throughout the African continent. University libraries at more than 40 universities have expressed interest in it, are starting to make use of it and are following online training related to its application. It is possible to adjust this toolkit for use in school libraries and also for the training of school librarians.

In an attempt to improve school libraries and to facilitate library development in Sub-Saharan Africa, a consortium consisting of the ENSIL Foundation (European Network for School Libraries and Information Literacy), the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) and a group of project partners are attempting to develop an online school library toolkit which will provide step-by-step
checklists for all possible library and learning processes. It is modelled on the existing toolkit for university libraries and will provide training for school library staff so that they can assist pupils from 4 to 18 years to improve technical reading scores, reading comprehension, information literacy skills (educational quality), reading pleasure and affinity with books. It will provide facilities ranging from simple electronic cataloguing or the acquisition of books (traditional and online) to a sophisticated monitoring and evaluation system to measure the impact of information or the mainstreaming of online communities in learning. Emphasis is placed on improving (traditional and digital) collections and facilities in a school library, providing simple training for the students, teachers and librarians who use it. The tool can be used in any stage of development of a library, and combines mobile technology with the traditional concept of a Reading Room. Furthermore it uses Open Access software.

Initially the school library toolkit will be introduced on the African continent, however, in the future, it is hoped that this universal toolkit will support any less advanced school libraries throughout the world. The project will be piloted in 3 countries (Mozambique, Ghana, and DR Congo) representing the 3 major language groups (i.e. Portuguese, English and French) in Sub-Saharan Africa. A request for the funding of the development of the school library toolkit has been made and the consortium is waiting for confirmation that it has been granted.

References


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Authors Note

Helen Boelens was awarded a Ph.D. degree by Middlesex University, School of Arts and Education in 2010. She now focuses her work on the development of and assistance to hundreds of thousands of school libraries in developing countries. She is the co-ordinator of the Research SIG of the IASL (International Association of School Librarianship). She is also one of the founders of the ENSIL Foundation (Stichting ENSIL) and is currently a Board Member of this organisation.

Henk van Dam is project officer capacity building with 22 years’ experience in the field of international co-operation and information management. He has project experience in Mozambique, Malaysia and Burkina Faso and has been on assignments for the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) to Ghana, Indonesia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique, assisting in and advising on (virtual) library processes. He assisted several universities in the establishment of repositories and the process of transforming the classical faculty libraries into student centred learning environments.

1 Note from Helen Boelens: On 2 April 2012, a pilot project began in school libraries in 19 primary schools in rural Kenya. Results will be presented at the IASL Research Forum 2012. The term “teacher librarian” seems to be used for a teacher who has been appointed to run the library (part-time). Some seem to be assisted by children who are library aides. An early review of the data which has been collected reveals that some teacher librarians have attended very short training courses, while many have had no training at all. Some trainings and workshops have been funded by Action Aid. The school leaders and the teacher librarians often indicated that the cost of further training was a problem. Data also indicated that even the cost of travelling to a (free) training session was prohibitive. Daniel Mangele will be asked to provide more information about the funding for the university modules which he has described above.

It is important to note that the data indicates that many teachers have more than 50 children in one class. In some cases the teacher: pupils ratio is much higher. Also, school leaders, teachers and children have all indicated that hardly any of the school libraries have computers or internet connections. Some did not even have (reliable) electricity. This would make the transfer of course modules via Internet almost impossible at this stage. In fact, most schools indicated that they had other urgent priorities, such as a library budget, a room for the library, plus a collection of books which is sufficient for the number of children who attend the school.

2 In 2011 the Interest Group organized a workshop for 190 teachers and charged them R 150 and R 200 to attend a full-day workshop. 310 teachers attended the 2010 pre-conference in Gauteng province. The presentations covered the following topics: Creative ideas for school libraries; Equal Education’s school library campaign; information literacy and school library Management and administration and ICTs in school libraries. There is a great need for training of school librarians in the country and the School Library & Youth Services Interest Group has taken upon itself to ensure that they reach as many school librarians as possible. Compiled by Mona Niemand (chair of the school library & youth services interest group)