

focus

on International Library and Information Work

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ILIG
International Library
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Editorial



Welcome to the latest issue of CILIP ILIG Focus.

Reflecting on the tumultuous year we've had in 2020 is, I'm sure, a sad and painful experience for many of us. The previous issue of Focus was, necessarily, a sombre one - partly due to the harsh realities of a global pandemic taking hold and also because we dedicated this to the memory of our CILIP ILIG colleague Shane Godbolt whom we miss very much still. In this issue, I have been keen to look forward to what we hope are more optimistic times ahead.

The prospect of mass vaccination and other breakthroughs in how the pandemic is being managed mean there's good reason for optimism and positivity for the future.

A continually recurring theme in this journal is the idea of those within the library sector supporting each other and helping library users across borders. This issue is no exception. Librarians in Beirut, Lebanon experienced the catastrophic impact of the huge ammonium nitrate explosion which rocked their city – this on top of all the challenges presented by COVID. What has been encouraging is the huge international response to this, including CILIP's own support in rebuilding these libraries - <https://twitter.com/CILIPinfo/status/1294209661151916037?s=20>. There's more about this later in this issue (see CILIP ILIG Business).

CILIP SPECIAL
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Also in this issue, John Vincent tells us all about Libraries of Sanctuary which provide a welcome beacon of assistance and opportunity to those migrating to the UK. We also hear about the National Dutch Reading Promotion Programme and efforts to improve literacy for youngsters in The Netherlands. Nkem Osulgwe updates us on the work of [African Library & Information Associations & Institutions](#) (AfLIA) as well. In particular, she highlights efforts to drive sustainable development for the future by encouraging openness in the sharing of information and research between African countries.

It has also been fantastic to see so many people tuning in to watch our CILIP ILIG events this year. Putting these online has also meant that many have been able to join us from all around the world. It's a great example of necessity being the mother of invention. Witnessing all the good things that have come out of the global travesties we've collectively experienced is a source of hope that the events this year will lead us to a better tomorrow.

If you missed any of our ILIG Informals, by the way, you can catch up on these on our YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/CILIPILIG>

Enjoy the break and here's hoping for a truly Happy New Year.

Philip Segall, Editor

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Welcoming New Arrivals to the UK - and to Libraries: What are the Latest Developments?

by John Vincent

Introduction

In 2015, John Vincent contributed a post to the CILIP blog (Vincent, 2015) outlining the position at the time in terms of new arrivals to the UK (who they were, for example). It highlighted some initiatives taken by libraries to support them and linked to resources available to help libraries interested in developing this work.

John has now been invited to update this blogpost for Focus. He also spoke at an “ILIG Informal” evening on this topic on 12 February 2020 (Vincent, 2020a).

The last five years – broader picture

As well as continuing austerity – and, this year, COVID-19, one result of which has been to deepen inequality worldwide, which is likely to cause an increase in numbers of people seeking sanctuary (see, for example this article, highlighting the stark divide between rich and poor countries [BBC News, 2020]) – a major (and continuing) factor in the UK has been Brexit and the related issues around migration. At the time of the Brexit vote (2016), migration featured hugely in the political ‘debate’, although it is worth noting that The Migration Observatory’s recent briefing suggests that: “[...] immigration has been mentioned by far fewer people, falling from 48% in June 2016 to 13% in November 2019.” (Blinder, 2020).

However, despite this, there is continuing and increasing evidence that new arrivals do face discrimination, for example:



John Vincent has worked in the public sector since the 1960s, primarily for Hertfordshire, Lambeth and Enfield public library services. In 1997, he was invited to become part of the team that produced the United Kingdom’s first review of public libraries and social exclusion (from which The Network, which he now coordinates, originated). He is particularly interested in supporting the work libraries do with young people in care, with LGBTQ+ people (he was, until recently, co-chair of the CILIP LGBTQ+ Network Steering Group), and with ‘new arrivals’ to the UK. In addition to writing the resource pack mentioned in the article, he also co-developed the “Welcome To Your Library” project, 2003-2007.

“About 13% of the foreign-born population said that they had been insulted because of their ethnicity, nationality, religion, language or accent.

“Both British and international evidence suggests that ethnic minorities are discriminated against in hiring decisions irrespective of the country in which they were born or received their education.” (Fernández-Reino, 2020, 2)

One of the factors that has encouraged this is the UK Government’s own ‘hostile environment policy’ (see, for example: Consterdine, 2018, Qureshi, 2020) described by the House of Commons Home Affairs Committee as follows:

“Many of the measures designed to make life difficult for individuals without permission to remain in the UK were first proposed in 2012 as part of a ‘hostile environment policy’. The aim of the policy is to deter people without permission from entering the UK and to encourage those already here to leave voluntarily. It includes measures to limit access to work, housing, healthcare, and bank accounts, to revoke driving licences and to reduce and restrict rights of appeal against Home Office decisions.” (House of Commons. Home Affairs Committee, 2018, 20)

We have seen a major effect of this policy stance in the treatment of the ‘Windrush generation’:

“Awareness of the ‘Hostile Environment’ only became widespread when it was revealed, in April 2018, that over the past few years, thousands of elderly British or ‘virtual British’ residents, mainly from the Caribbean, who came to the UK as children before 1973 with or to join parents, were finding themselves treated as ‘illegal immigrants’ and fired from jobs, denied welfare benefits, housing and health care, and made homeless and destitute. Some were detained, some deported, others refused entry to the UK when they tried to return from visits to family in the Caribbean.” (Webber, no date [c2018], 6)

The last five years – the role of libraries in the UK

The circumstances in which public libraries are operating in the UK are generally grim:

“As at 31 March 2005 there were a total of 4,367 service points that were open 10 hours or more per week across England, Wales and Scotland. At the same date in 2019 this figure stood at 3,583 – a reduction of 784 (18%).” (Woodhouse, 2020, 15)

However, despite this, there have been some notable developments in provision for new arrivals. It was particularly exciting that Thimblemill Library in Sandwell, West Midlands, was awarded the UK’s first ever “Library of Sanctuary” status by the City of Sanctuary



Art by Eritrean artist Grmalem Gonetse Kasa taken at Kent Library of Sanctuary

movement (City of Sanctuary, 2017). The City of Sanctuary movement:

“[...] holds the vision that our nations will be welcoming places of safety for all and proud to offer sanctuary to people fleeing violence and persecution. In order to realise this vision, City of Sanctuary UK supports a network of groups, which includes villages, towns, cities and regions across the UK, and others engaged in Streams of Sanctuary, Sanctuary Awards and activities intended to welcome people seeking sanctuary.” (City of Sanctuary, 2020b)

“City of Sanctuary began in October 2005 in Sheffield. In September 2007, with the support of the City Council and over 70 local community organisations, Sheffield became the UK’s first ‘City of Sanctuary’ – a city that takes pride in the welcome it offers to people in need of safety.” (City of Sanctuary, 2020a)

City of Sanctuary includes a number of Streams of Sanctuary, such as Arts, Gardens, Health, Schools, and Universities. The Libraries Stream had a ‘soft’ launch in May 2020 (City of Sanctuary, 2020c).

Following the Thimblemill Library award, a small working group from the West Midlands (including library contacts, Birmingham City of Sanctuary and Bearwood Action for Refugees) put together a proposal for a UK-wide approach to developing Libraries of Sanctuary, and - with support from Arts Council England and Libraries Connected - the group commissioned John to develop a resource pack to support libraries considering applying to become Libraries of Sanctuary.

This pack was published in May 2020 (Vincent, 2020b), and aims:

“[...] to demonstrate how a library can develop as a place of welcome, how it can apply for a Sanctuary Award, and as such become an accredited Library of Sanctuary.” (Vincent, 2020b, 1)

It outlines what Sanctuary status means: the core principles underlying it and how to apply for the Library of Sanctuary award. It also includes a range of examples of provision that public libraries can make – and case studies – plus information on the wider picture (terminology, some basic statistics about refugees) along with a list of resources and organisations that can provide information and support.

The pack includes a summary of the library and information needs of new arrivals and - drawing on work by public libraries across the UK - it also looks at the barriers that new arrivals will face and how these can be dismantled. These barriers include personal and social barriers (for instance lack of spoken English or the challenge of not having used a library before); ‘environmental’ barriers (for example not knowing where the library is and/or having difficulty reaching it/the lack of a visible welcome). The pack mentions perception and awareness barriers too (the perception felt by some that ‘libraries are not for us’; others mention their lack of confidence in using libraries). It identifies institutional barriers (these include joining procedures; use of jargon).

Here are two from the many case studies and examples:

Aberdeenshire Libraries

“Aberdeenshire Libraries organised a project with Syrian New Scots, ‘A Taste of Syria’ – they supported the group to make a film about the Syria they had left behind for a Book Week Scotland event. One of the young boys had limited English, but they arranged for an interpreter who translated his story, and ‘there wasn’t a dry eye in the house. The film wasn’t perfect but it did make those viewing it think more deeply about the New Scots they had in their communities. About a year later, they organised another three events in the communities where Syrian New Scots were living, but this time they provided lovely Syrian sweets themselves. The same young man who did not have the words in English to tell his story previously now had the ability to do so on his own” (Vincent, 2020b, 13)

Coventry's Conversation Cafés

“The Conversation Cafés have been successful in engaging new communities to practise their spoken English and participants have gained in confidence as a result. The sessions have introduced participants to the wide variety of library resources on offer to them, including free membership, specialist ESOL collections and the range of free activities across the city. To some participants the concept of a free, open, public library service is a new experience. Participants have gained in confidence and become aware of other opportunities on offer to them, such as formal ESOL* classes, volunteering and job opportunities.” (Vincent, 2020b, 19) [*ESOL - English for Speakers of Other Languages]

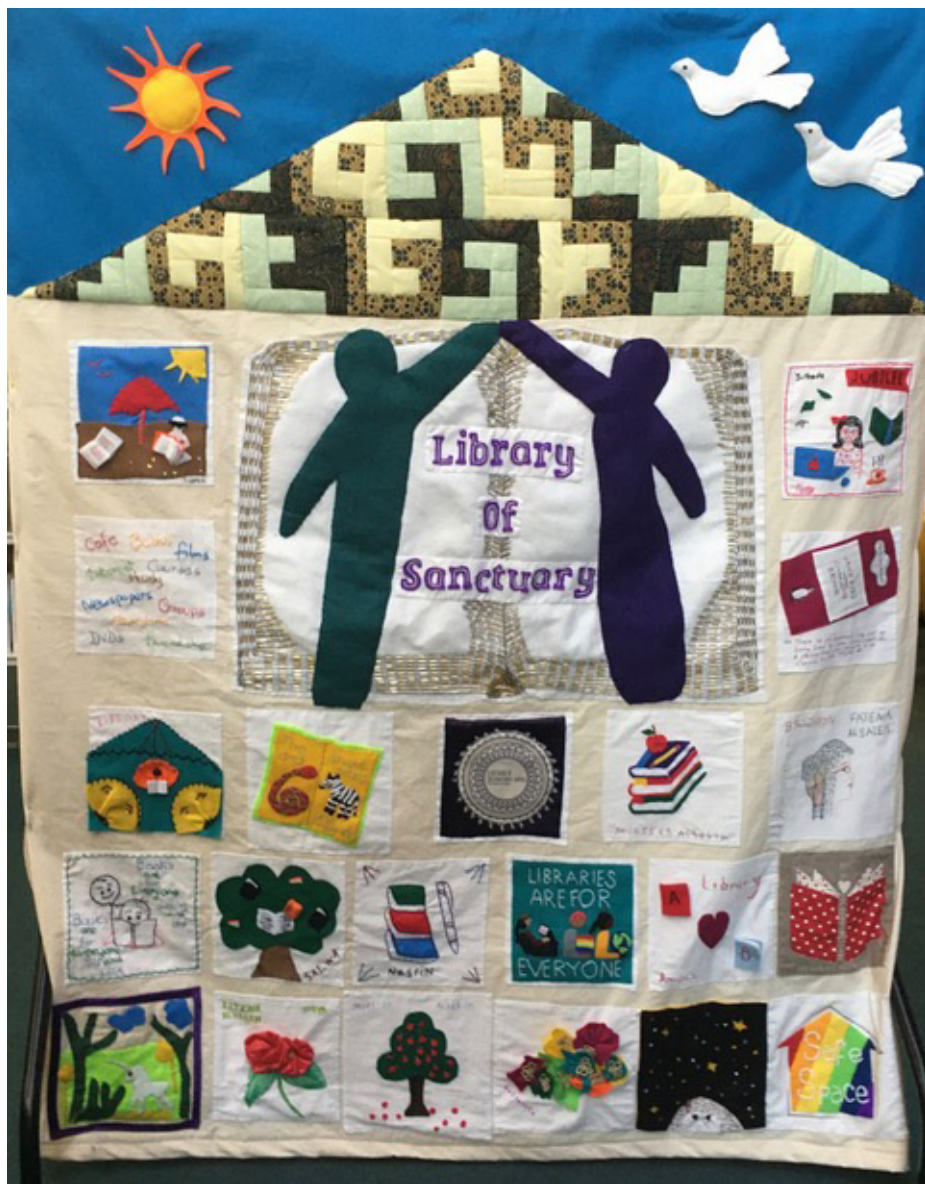
The pack also includes a case study from Brighton & Hove Libraries, outlining their partnership with The Network of International Women Brighton who designed a Library of Sanctuary banner which:

“[...] was presented to Brighton & Hove Libraries in December [2019], making a statement to the city that they are working towards becoming a Library of Sanctuary and they want to be welcoming and inclusive to all, particularly people seeking sanctuary.” (Vincent, 2020b, 22)

Great news since then – in June 2020, Brighton & Hove Libraries became the UK's second Library of Sanctuary (Brighton & Hove City Council, 2020) and, most recently,



Coventry Conversation Café – Central Library



Library of Sanctuary artwork from Brighton and Hove Libraries

Southampton Library Services have become the third Library of Sanctuary (City of Sanctuary, 2020d).

We also know that a number of other public library services is applying for or planning to apply for Library of Sanctuary status. So - despite austerity and COVID-19 - developments are continuing.

In addition, there is growing interest from other types of library and information service: most recently a Schools Library Service has expressed interest in applying the Sanctuary principles to their work. There is also interest from libraries within universities that have been awarded University of Sanctuary status.

... and internationally

As part of its celebration of World Refugee Day in 2020, IFLA published the results of an international survey of libraries' responses to refugees:

"The survey results in a nutshell:

- 353 responses from 32 countries
- 75% of responding libraries offer library cards
- Services most offered include: access to the Internet (93.2%); access to resources (83.5%); access to news (79.7%); computer classes (60.3%); language practice (56.1%); community referrals (53.6%); and story times for children (53.2%).
- 68% have offered these services for more than 5 years
- Over 50% cooperate with other organizations in the community
- Besides the 38.6% of respondents who reported having no immigrants in their community, barriers to serving this population include lack of resources (26.3%); and other agencies providing this service (24.6%)" (Bolt, 2020)

At the time of writing, it is not clear whether any information came from the UK (John has approached the authors of the news release, but has not had a reply.) The case study included, which is from Denver Public Library, gives a really useful summary of services provided and their impact.

Conclusion

As we know, migration is on the increase worldwide – and is likely to become greater as "[...] more people than ever are being forced to flee conflict, changing climates, environmental degradation, and persecution to find safety and sanctuary elsewhere." (City of Sanctuary, 2020c)

Libraries can provide a real welcome to people seeking sanctuary. They can help signpost these people to other vital services they need. It is heartening, at this time, to

see interest in this work spreading – and, if you have information about your services that you would like to share, please contact John (john@nadder.org.uk) and/or join the Libraries and Museums of Sanctuary JISCMail list (<https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?SUBED1=LIBRARIESANDMUSEUMSOFSANCTUARY&A=1>).

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[newsletter+CID_28446a45e07d47e21eea355ae97a1672&utm_source=campaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=Hostile%20environment%20the%20UK%20governments%20draconian%20immigration%20policy%20explained](#) [Accessed 14 October 2020]

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The Art of Reading - The National Dutch Reading Promotion Programme

by Adriaan Langendonk (The Reading Foundation/Dutch National library)
and Kees Broekhof (Sardes)*

Introduction by Ingrid Bon (Rijnbrink)*

Dutch libraries have a long history of national reading campaigns, programmes and activities, some of which are described below.

National literacy and reading promotion programmes have evolved into the National Reading Strategy *Tel mee met Taal* (<https://www.telmeemettaal.nl>) or Count on Skills in English.¹ In this programme the Dutch government strongly supports prevention and remedying of low literacy skills. Four ministries and several partners will continue this programme until the end of 2024. The website <https://www.bibliotheekenbasisvaardigheden.nl/> shows what public libraries do in the context of literacy support for adults.

Kinderboekenweek

In 1954 the first Kinderboekenweek (children's book week) was organized by CPNB (Collective Propaganda for Dutch Books) in collaboration with libraries and bookstores. With a special theme each year, many activities are set up by libraries, schools, bookstores and cultural centres.

Nationale Voorleeswedstrijd

The Dutch Reading Aloud Championship (<https://www.denationalevoorleeswedstrijd.nl/>)

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is organised by public libraries. Representatives from primary schools compete at municipal, province and national level. Over half of Dutch primary schools take part in this competition, which celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2018.

Nationale Voorleesdagen

The National Reading Aloud Days (Nationale Voorleesdagen) have become a real tradition over the past fifteen years in the Netherlands. The kick-off is organised in kindergartens and day-care centers throughout the country. During the National Reading Aloud Breakfast, politicians, mayors, TV personalities, firemen and others read aloud to the little ones. The book of choice usually is the Picture Book of the Year as chosen by librarians. During the Reading Aloud Days this book is for sale in a small size at a small price at every bookshop. The campaign also puts nine other children's books in the spotlight. With more activities, an app, and a website with reading aloud tips and educational information for every age group, it is one of the most important reading promotion activities in the Netherlands.

Find out more at: <https://www.nationalevoorleesdagen.nl/> (Dutch)

Scoor een boek!

This project involves a close collaboration between soccer/football clubs and schools; healthy body, healthy mind! Professional Dutch Football teams and clubs attract children to reading. <https://www.debibliotheekopschool.nl/onderwijs/scooreenboek.html>.

VoorleesExpress

The VoorleesExpress (translating as "Reading Aloud Express") <https://voorleesexpress.nl/> supports families by having volunteers read aloud to young children in families with low literacy skills.

For more examples for the age group:

0-6: <https://www.lezen.nl/nl/leeftijdsgroep/voor-en-vroegschools>

6-12: <https://www.lezen.nl/nl/leeftijdsgroep/primair-onderwijs>

12-15: <https://www.lezen.nl/nl/leeftijdsgroep/voortgezet-onderwijs-onderbouw>

15-18: <https://www.lezen.nl/nl/leeftijdsgroep/voortgezet-onderwijs-bovenbouw>

The most important development in recent times, however, is the national Art of Reading programme, which started in 2008 and which combines strategy, policy and activities into one model.

Reference

¹European Literacy Policy Network [ELINET] (2015) *Tel mee met Taal or Count on Skills*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.eli-net.eu/good-practice/examples-of-good-practice/detail/project/tel-mee-met-taal-or-count-on-skills> [Accessed 22 March 2020]

The Art of Reading (in Dutch - Kunst van Lezen) is a national reading promotion programme in the Netherlands targeting children and youngsters from birth to eighteen years of age (focussing on the zero to twelve year old age groups). The Art of Reading consists of three components: BookStart (preschool) The Library at School (primary and secondary schools) and strategic reading promotion networks.

Below, we describe the programme's background, ambitions, and the central role of the public library in its development and execution. A separate section is devoted to the digital monitoring system that has been created to monitor the impact of the programme on pupils' reading behaviour and teachers' reading promotion behaviour.

For more English information on research, BookStart and The Library at School, visit:
<https://www.leesmonitor.nu/en/promoting-reading>
https://www.kunstvanlezen.nl/?page_id=4020

The Art of Reading and the Dutch Reading Foundation

Recent years have seen a growing emphasis on a structural approach to reading promotion, inspired by such trends as the growing importance attached to the accountability of public institutions, concern about the language performance of school-going children



Kunst van lezen

and adolescents and the rise of functional illiteracy in the population at large (Buisman et al. 2013). Policymakers worry that these trends could thwart the government's ambition to ensure that the Netherlands remains among the leading knowledge economies in the world. Against this backdrop, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science initiated the Art of Reading programme in 2008. The Art of Reading not only aims to promote a love of reading, but also to improve language performance and to reduce functional illiteracy. It constitutes a break with the past in the measurable aims it sets for libraries and schools, the links it forges between cultural and literacy policies and the view it takes of language/literacy development as a joint concern of schools and libraries. Thus, by linking national and local literacy goals to the structural work of libraries, The Art of Reading aligns with the vision of public libraries promoted by UNESCO (UIL, 2016).

The Art of Reading is based on insights from research on the impact of reading on language development (Cunningham & Stanovich, 2001; Krashen, 2004), the effect of school libraries on pupil outcomes (Lance, 1993), evaluation studies of the British BookStart programme (Wade & Moore, 2000) and research on the impact of storybook reading (Bus et al., 1995; Jordon et al, 2000). Since the start of the programme, further research has appeared on the effects of leisure time reading (Mol & Bus, 2011). BoekStart (Bookstart) and de Bibliotheek op school (The Library in School) are researched as well (see below under the subheading Evidence).

Core elements of The Art of Reading, which are derived from this research base, are: the reading environment (materials as well as behaviors); the reading plan (a structured rationale, policy and action plan at school level); a monitoring system (the Library at School monitor); and professional support for schools by the local library.



BoekStart logo



de Bibliotheek op school logo

The Art of Reading is carried out by the national Reading Foundation (founded in 1988, to promote reading in Dutch and Frisian, particularly among the birth to twenty years age group) and The National Library - KB. The Art of Reading is funded by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. The programme promotes reading aloud, free voluntary reading and information literacy for children.

Count on skills action programme

Approximately 1.9 million residents (of a total population of over seventeen million) of the Netherlands between the ages of sixteen and sixty-five have low literacy skills. They struggle to read, write and communicate in the Dutch language (Rekenkamer, 2016).

The Tel mee met Taal (Count on Skills) action programme (2016-2019, now extended to 2024) is a joint effort of the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, The Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, intended to prevent the marginalisation of people with limited literacy and digital skills. Count on Skills focuses on three domains (family, employment and healthcare): See below for more information about the programme from libraries for adults with low basic skills. See for more information: <http://ec.europa.eu/epale/en/resource-centre/content/count-skills-dutch-policy-paper-new-action-programme-prevent>.

In 2016, The Art of Reading was incorporated into the Count on Skills programme. In this new context, the target set for BookStart and The Library at School was to reach 1.1 million children (from birth to twelve years old) with reading promotion activities by the end of 2019 (about half the population of this age group). By the end of 2019, the two programmes had reached about 938,000 children. Other reading promotion programmes from Dutch libraries reach another 175,000 children. A special action line within the Art of Reading aims to prevent low literacy in families at risk. In short, the joint efforts of four

Demographics and the public library in The Netherlands 2019

17,290,000 inhabitants

355 municipalities

145 local library organizations

12 provinces with 8 Provincial supporting Library institutes

1 National Library (Koninklijke Bibliotheek) and 1 Library Association (VOB)

3.8 million Library members (63% youth)

national ministries reinforce the role of public libraries as a major force for promoting literacy development by creating a lifelong reading environment of literacy services and resources for babies, children, young people and adults (the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning [UIL], 2016).

The Ongoing Reading Line

The Reading Foundation has developed the Ongoing Reading Line, from birth to eighteen years (Dormolen et al., 2005, updated version Van Montfoort et al. 2020), in which it has set out its vision with regard to reading promotion as a continuous stimulus for this age group. The Ongoing Reading Line is also intended to ensure that children do not experience difficulties when transferring from preschool to primary school or from primary to secondary school (Figure 2).

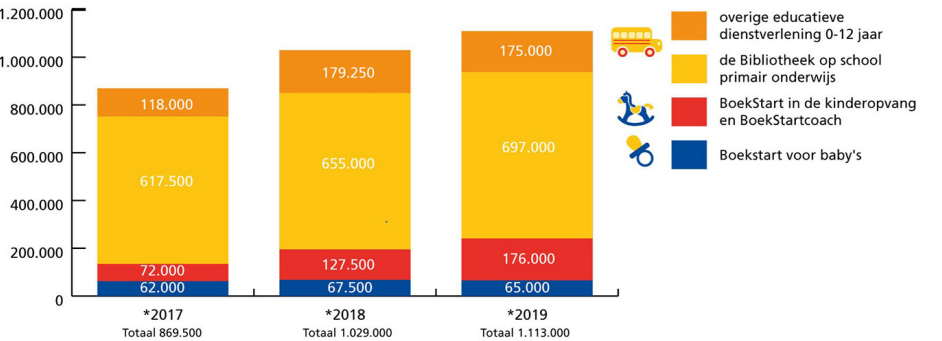


Figure 1: Total numbers of children (from birth to twelve years old) reached by reading promotion programmes from libraries

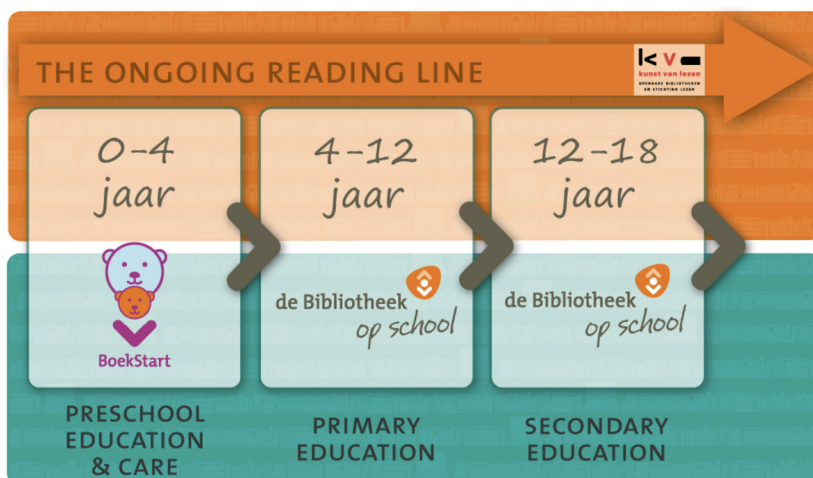


Figure 2: The ongoing reading line

The pillars of the Art of Reading

The Art of Reading has defined four interconnected 'pillars' to support successful reading promotion. In Dutch the four initial letters of the pillars constitute the word LEES (READ):

- Leesomgeving (the reading environment, including the quality of the collection)
- Expertise
- Evidentie (evidence)
- Samenwerking (collaboration)

Reading environment

The proximity of books is a major determining factor of reading behaviour (Evans et al. 2010; Nielen & Bus, 2015). The reading environment also comprises time and space for reading (Chambers, 1991). Within the reading environment, libraries are viewed as resources which support the literacy development of people of all ages – babies, children and parents – and all levels of literacy (UIL, 2016).

Expertise

The importance of a professional librarian in the school library has been evidenced by a range of research studies (e.g. 'school libraries impact studies' on www.lrs.org). The Art of Reading has initiated the development of training courses and workshops in order to professionalise library staff, childcare professionals and teachers and has hosted conferences to call attention to the importance of fostering structural approaches in reading promotion.

Evidence

Authorities increasingly call for proof of the effects of reading promotion. Two PhD

research studies of the effects of BookStart2 and The Library at School3 were initiated. The Art of Reading has also commissioned the development of digital monitoring instruments to provide insight into the development of the reading motivation and behaviour of the target groups. Brochures, fact sheets and research surveys have been published, such as Meer lezen, beter in taal ('Better in language by reading more', K. Broekhof, 2017). Practical brochures published by the Reading Foundation under the name of Kwestie van Lezen ('Reading Matters') are widely used by libraries and schools.

Collaboration (strategic)

Libraries work together with various local partners. By setting up a strategic literacy/reading promotion network, centred around the library, and involving politicians, stakeholders from day-care centres, healthcare organisations, cultural organisations and educational institutions, the programmes are more solidly embedded in local policy and easier to finance (see Figure 3).

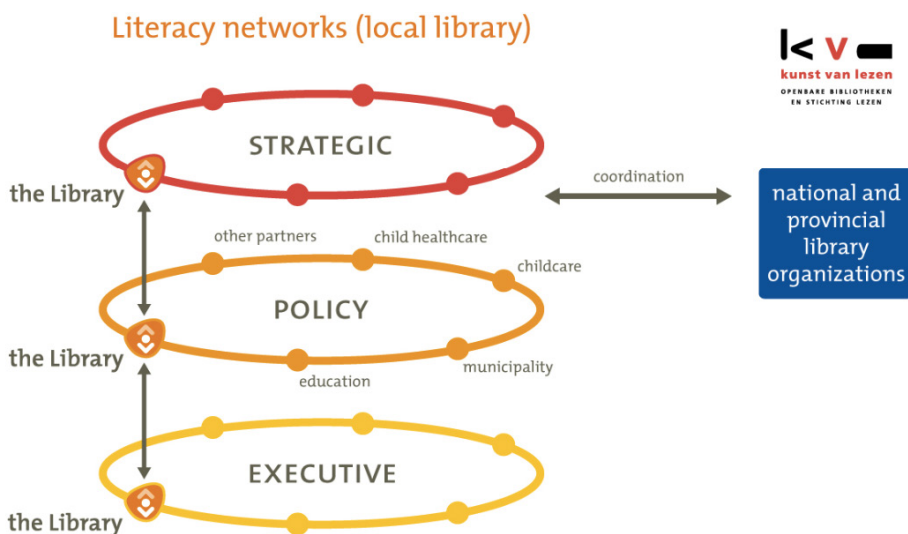


Figure 3: Literacy networks

The Library at School Monitor

The Library at School Monitor is an online instrument to collect data annually on pupil reading behaviour; teacher reading promotion behaviour; school reading promotion policies and school libraries (run in collaboration with public library staff). Libraries and schools can use these data to evaluate the results of their cooperative work and to make decisions about steps to take in order to enhance the effectiveness of their collaboration.

The Library at School monitor – primary education

Eight rounds of data collection between 2012-2020

Participants in the 2019-2020 monitor:

- 125,000 primary school pupils (ages nine to twelve)
- 17,000 primary school teachers
- 1,500 reading consultants (public library staff)

The Library at School monitor – secondary education

Six rounds of data collection between 2014-2020

Participants in the 2019-2020 monitor:

- 11,000 secondary school pupils
- 650 secondary school teachers
- 50 public library staff

The monitor collects information on the following topics:

Pupils

- reading motivation
- reading frequency
- visits to public and school libraries
- home reading culture
- perception of school library
- information skills

Teachers

- reading promotion behaviour in the classroom
- information skills
- information teaching skills
- perception of the school library

Library staff

- the school library (e.g., collection, opening hours, staffing)
- school reading promotion policy
- school media education policy
- pupils' book borrowing rates
- library services offered to schools

Data collection and feedback

The library collects the data once per year, through digital questionnaires administered to pupils, teachers and library staff. A specialised agency prepares concise standardised reports for each school in the monitor, showing key data set off against national averages (see Figure 4). Libraries can also create tailored reports, geared to a school's specific priorities. The reading consultant from the local library presents the results to the teachers.

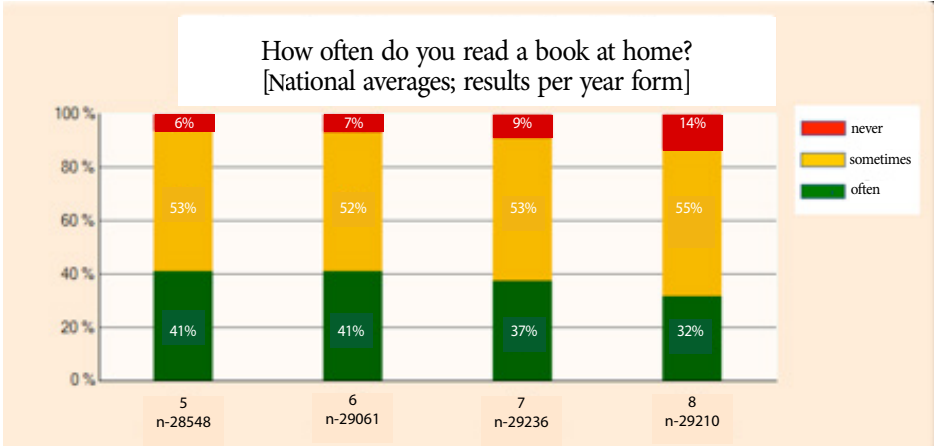
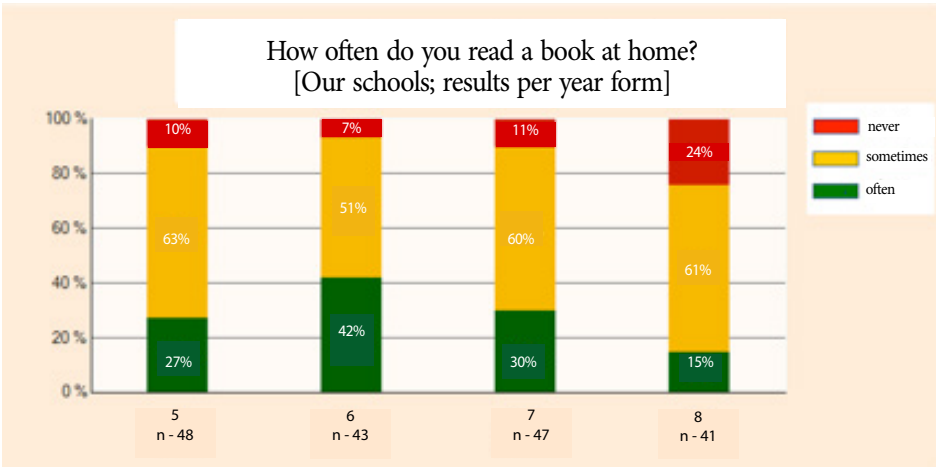


Figure 4: A page from the standard report for school X: leisure time reading frequencies per form, national averages (top) and for school X ('our school', below).



Data output levels

Data in the monitor can be viewed at six levels:

- 1. national level
- 2. provincial level
- 3. municipal level
- 4. library region level (does not always coincide with municipal borders)
- 5. school level
- 6. classroom level (also by gender)

The BookStart monitor in preschool institutions

Let us finally have a brief look at the monitor used in preschool agencies, i.e. preschool playgroups and day-care centres. The data are collected through digital questionnaires administered to three groups of respondents: staff working in preschool playgroups and day-care, reading aloud coordinators (employed by the preschool agency) and BookStart coordinators (the librarian involved from the public library).

The BookStart monitor for preschool institutions

Five rounds of data collection between 2015-2020

Participants in the 2019-2020 BookStart monitor:

- early childhood workers: 2,700
- reading aloud coordinators (preschool staff): 700
- BookStart coordinators (librarians): 66

Information in the BookStart monitor

The questionnaires in the BookStart monitor elicit the following types of information:

Early childhood workers

- group characteristics
- reading aloud practice (e.g. frequency, organisation, method)
- observed children's behaviour with books
- contacts with parents

Reading aloud coordinator

- agency's policies regarding BookStart (e.g. staff hours, in-service training, policy plan)
- reading aloud environment (e.g. presence of a reading corner)
- book collection

BookStart coordinator (librarian)

- library's policies regarding BookStart (e.g. staffing, funding)
- cooperation with other local organisations
- in-service training provision for early childhood staff working with BookStart

Use of the BookStart monitor data

The outcomes of the BookStart monitor are available to the local library and, through the library, to the preschool agencies with which the library works. This information can be used in the same way as the data collected in primary schools and secondary schools. This type of usage was explained in the previous sections and requires no repetition here.

The monitored data can also be used to gain a picture of practice and policy in the sectors concerned at the national level, to evaluate and reconsider its policies at the national level. The data are also used by the national coordinator to decide which parts

of the programme require specific attention or even additional investments. For example, one of the outcomes of the monitor was that over half of preschool staff never make use of digital storybooks, even though research has repeatedly shown the benefits of digital storybooks (e.g. Mayer et al., 2005; Smeets & Bus, 2012; Verhallen et al., 2004). The monitor findings prompted the national coordinator to set up an ‘acceleration project’ in which ten preschool agencies were given special support to boost the use of digital storybooks. The project was successfully implemented in 2018-2019; the results were disseminated through a national conference and through the online toolboxes for librarians.

The monitor as a multi-purpose instrument

Above we have described how the Library at School monitor and the BookStart monitor can be used as a powerful multi-purpose instrument for optimising the collaboration between libraries, schools and preschool agencies, providing libraries and their partners with rich data on children, early childhood professionals, teachers, schools and school libraries. It can be used as a working instrument, for making practical decisions about school-library cooperation at the everyday work level; as a policy instrument, for collecting baseline data, formulating policies, evaluating policies and accounting to local authorities; and as a research instrument – it can be used for conducting analyses to inform national project management and the scholarly community. At the local level, decisions taken on the basis of monitor data can be followed up by choosing materials, projects, activities and services which can be found in the variegated toolboxes for librarians that are part of the BookStart and Library at School programmes. Local public libraries also use monitor data to participate in dialogues with local governments about strategies to combat functional illiteracy – a role that is considered important as part of national literacy efforts (UIL, 2016). Many of the possibilities the monitor offers for informing policy and practice at the national and provincial levels have yet to be explored.

Note

The concept of the Library at School Monitor was developed by Sardes Educational Services, Utrecht, and Thomas van Dalen consulting, Amsterdam, commissioned by The Art of Reading programme. The technical infrastructure was developed by DESAN Research Solutions, Amsterdam.

Websites

www.leesmonitor.nl English section: <https://www.leesmonitor.nu/en/promoting-reading>
www.kunstvanlezen.nl English section: http://www.kunstvanlezen.nl/?page_id=4020

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ILIG on Facebook

If you're on Facebook, why don't you join us?

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Make contact with librarians around the world and start networking!



Broadening Access to Knowledge for Sustainable Development

by Nkem Osuigwe*

Introduction

Sustainable development does not happen without access to knowledge that will trigger innovative solutions to challenges in different spheres of life. At times, knowledge is out of reach for many due to lack of understanding by information professionals and creators of knowledge on how to share/free it up through adoption of practices that encourage and aid opening up learning and the entire research process including output. In these instances, underdevelopment can occur. The Openness movement, which is yet to fully hold sway in Africa needs to reach a tipping point in the continent as it has great potential for driving development by making knowledge more accessible. The concept can also escalate the roles of research and innovation in building strong science systems within countries and across borders. It can also support the private and public sectors in fashioning and fleshing out ideas for quality living.

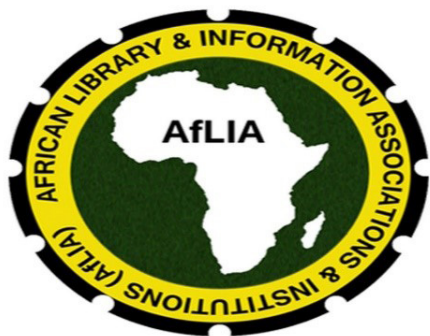
Libraries play key roles in opening up knowledge for development by propagating the principles of Openness to researchers, creators and consumers of knowledge. They are also critical in drafting policies that guide institutions as they explore how to integrate the principles of Openness into teaching, learning, research and adoption of research outputs at different levels of scholarship. Libraries also provide the physical and digital infrastructure (including skills) for preserving, curating and redistributing resources. They have a role in making these openly available to those who need them to study and collaborate in designing innovative solutions to overcome development challenges.

**Nkem Osuigwe is Human Capacity Development & Training Director at AfLIA and is based in Accra*



AfLIA

The African Library and Information Associations and Institutions (AfLIA) is the trusted voice of the Library and information sector in Africa. AfLIA strives to empower librarians with knowledge and skills that will enable them to enhance the quality of life of their user communities through 'equitable access to knowledge and information'.¹ At the same time, they are professionals who are well grounded as critical components of the information and knowledge superstructure for the continent. AfLIA recognises the gap in knowledge and practice when it comes to Openness in knowledge creation, teaching and dissemination within the African



AfLIA logo

library and information community.

The organisation sees filling the gaps as a marathon rather than a mere sprint, in order to;

- assist African librarians in understanding the whole spectrum of Openness; how it affects information provision and the skills needed to practice the concept
- support the many possible hues and layers of Openness that can be practised in Africa.

This work is necessary considering the many official and indigenous languages spoken in Africa, as well as the different conceptual meanings or 'knowing' underpinning philosophies and ideas that stem from cultural and environmental perspectives and the place of knowledge that emanates from Africa in the global body of knowledge.

Broadening Access to Knowledge

1. Librarians, Quality Education and Open Educational Resources

Quality education is the bedrock of sustainable development for Africa. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDGs 4) highlights this, while the AU 2063 Agenda aims to produce 'well educated citizens and skills revolution underpinned by science, technology and innovation'.² To achieve this, African educational institutions and lifelong learners in the private and public sectors need quality resources that are relevant, up-to-date, and easily accessible at affordable prices or at no-cost. There are more than an estimated one billion Open Educational Resources (OERs) that are free to use, adapt and reuse at different levels of education. Internet penetration in Africa has created pathways for these resources to be accessed but people need to know how to find them, which ones they can easily reuse, which they can adapt and tinker with to meet their own purposes and/or build upon to create new resources that others can use too.

It became crucial to equip African librarians with the knowledge and skills to understand Open Licensing and OERs; to identify such resources through rights and permissions and then be able to manage the processes for the use/reuse/adaptation of the resources. This in addition to assisting faculty members and students who may need help in finding and using such content and doing so easily without legal infringements. African Librarians have a reasonable understanding of publishing Open Access and how that assists in opening

up knowledge for research that can kickstart development. However, AfLIA needed to go further and ensure they learnt how to decipher quality Open Access research and understand the implications for university libraries.

In order to build the capacity of African librarians in the aforementioned areas – as well as energizing the drive towards quality education that can engender innovations that will spawn transformed communities in the continent - a three-part webinar series was held to introduce Librarians to OER, facilitate access to and understand OERs, and to support learning about Open Access publishing.

The recordings are available on AfLIA's YouTube Channel -

<https://youtu.be/FYFa9j9sFRA> - An Introduction to OER

<https://youtu.be/9dW7DDKAgSA> - Implications of Openly Licensed Resources for Librarians

<https://youtu.be/n1ZySivYQ3w> - An Introduction to Open Access Publishing

A two-year agreement was also signed with OER Africa, an initiative of the South African

AFRICAN LIBRARY & INFORMATION ASSOCIATIONS & INSTITUTIONS

OER Africa
An Initiative of Solide

Open Educational Resources (OER)
Webinar Series for African Librarians

Webinar 1.0	Webinar 2.0	Webinar 3.0
Topic: An Introduction to OER	Topic: Introduction to Open Access publishing.	Topic: Implications of openly licensed resources for librarians
Date & Time: Wed. April 3 rd 2019 11am GMT	Date & Time: Wed. April 17 th 2019 11am GMT	Date & Time: Thurs. May 2 nd 2019 11am GMT

Webinar flyer for Open Educational Resources

Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE) with the aims of;

- improving knowledge and grasp of the different layers and applications of the 'Open' concept for practical purposes of information delivery and possible integration into the African LIS curriculum;
- upskilling African librarians to be in the forefront of populating and promoting the use of online spaces with content from African institutions and libraries (advocacy, planning, implementation and information literacy to enable sustainable access) using Open licensing; and
- bringing together the concepts of Open Access, open data, OER, and open licensing to drive attainment of the various national development agenda and the regional AU 2063 Agenda³

Learning Pathways (LPs) for Identifying and Use of Open content, Adapting Open Content and Publishing Open Access were created. Pilots for the content of each of these were conducted with academic librarians from Institutions in Botswana, Ghana, Nigeria and Uganda. The entire course will be rolled out in 2021 for all librarians in these areas.

In partnership with Creative Commons, AfLIA hosted a panel discussion on Open Access to information: promoting innovation in Africa. The learning objectives were:

- to explore Openness as a critical concept for 21st century learning, teaching and development
- to identify intersections between licenses that promote Openness and knowledge exchange
- to provide a brief overview of CC licenses⁴

2. Open Science; factoring in African librarians

Outside of quality and easily accessible/affordable educational materials to drive purposive education, Africa also needs frameworks that will boost the opening up and sharing of scientific knowledge for development. Work in this area has been done by many organisations in the continent. Nevertheless, librarians play crucial roles as major players in 'making knowledge open, available and accessible to all'.⁵ In partnership with Emerald Publishing, three webinars were held: 'Open up science', 'Institutional and National Repositories in Africa: possibilities of centralized data repositories in Africa' and 'Research Data Management: practices and present challenges'.

In recent times a Memorandum of Agreement has been signed between AfLIA and the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP). This understanding enabled the fourth webinar in the Open Science series to be held, as David Ball from CILIP's UK eInformation Group (UKeIG) explained to African librarians how to build the needed connection between libraries, Open Science and sustainable development and understand the role of libraries in propagating the principles and practice of Open Science.

AFLIA AND CILIP PRESENT A WEBINAR ON

LIBRARIES, OPEN SCIENCE & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

FACILITATOR:
David Ball, Libraries and Open Science Expert &
Chair of CILIP's UK E-Information Group

**16th
SEPTEMBER 2020**

12noon GMT | 1 pm WAT
3 pm EAT | 2 pm CAT

web.aflia.net [aflianetwork](#) [AfLIACon](#)

"Libraries, Open Science and Sustainable Development" presentation title slide

3. 'Liberating' knowledge, telling the African story(ies)

Beyond the principles of Openness that encourage the expanding of gateways and removing of barriers to knowledge, AfLIA is taking broadening access to knowledge further. Knowledge and narratives that highlight the meanings and perspectives of Africans about philosophies of existence and community life rarely make it into the global body of knowledge. From AfLIA's perspective, broadening access to knowledge includes liberating knowledge about Africa and integrating such into the global knowledge system 'as there

is a tendency to regard as invisible or second-class those whose stories and philosophies are not known or integrated into the broadly accepted epistemologies of knowledge'.⁶ This is deemed necessary to enable better understanding, which will eventually engender inclusivity and equity which are built through knowledge then understanding and tolerance.

In pursuit of this, AfLIA got a grant from Wikimedia Foundation for a course that is teaching African librarians how to edit and add content to Wikipedia in English. French



Wikipedia in Africa logo

and Portuguese, as well as in their local languages, using an adapted curriculum which has evolved out of OCLC's Wikipedia + Libraries: Better Together. Furthermore, to ensure that African librarians recognise the link between opening up knowledge and translation of resources into local languages, AfLIA marked the Open Access Week celebration for 2020 with a webinar and further training that will enable librarians to translate articles on Wikipedia into their local languages. This will enhance structural equity and justice in opening up knowledge in Africa.

Conclusion

The overarching purpose of libraries has always been to open up access to knowledge and information to their user communities to help transform lives. AfLIA is steadily building the capacity of African librarians to learn best practices for broadening access through libraries that will, in turn, drive sustainable development in the African continent.

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Notes for contributors to Focus

Articles for publication in Focus are always welcome. Focus is not peer-reviewed, and articles are primarily intended to keep readers (who are professionals from a variety of different types of library and information services) informed about what is going on in the international library and information world, to introduce new ideas and programmes, report on activities and experiences, etc., rather than be 'academic treatises'.

Articles are normally between 1,500 and 2,000 words, though can be a little longer if necessary.

The inclusion of references and URLs/links to further information is valuable, as are relevant photos (640 × 480 at 300dpi), if appropriate.

Focus is published in March, July and November.

Copy deadline is normally the end of January, May and September, respectively.

Please email material for consideration to the editor at ilifocus@cilip.org.uk

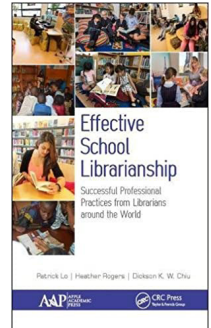
Articles should normally not have been previously published,
or be under consideration elsewhere.



Book Review

Patrick Lo, Heather Rogers, Dickson K.W. Chiu
Effective School Librarianship: Successful Professional Practices
from Librarians around the World (2-volume set)
01. Apple Academic Press, 2018. 534 p.

Effective school Librarianship is a use case guide to school librarianship. The text is a compilation of interviews with librarians from various countries. One main thematic thread of the book is the need for school librarians to be managers of information and proponents of pedagogy. In one interview with a librarian from the United States, it was noted that the school caters to 55% of children who are considered to be living in poverty or close to living in poverty. As such, access to information and resources is limited or non-existent at home. The school library, therefore, plays an important role in providing access to resources that can ensure a proper education for these students.



With this in mind, it is unfortunate that another common thread throughout the text, and well noted by most librarians, is the understaffing of most school libraries. Most interviewees mentioned that they are the only staff in the library and - in some cases - assume double duties as a teacher-librarian. This is primarily because school libraries are also underfunded. This solidifies the lack of understanding of the value of libraries by authoritative figures. One librarian in Serbia noted that the “future of librarianship looked bleak”, the book truly accentuates the fact that advocacy in librarianship is still needed, maybe more so now, than ever.

Despite being understaffed and underfunded, many of the librarians interviewed, found novel ways to ensure the continuous rollout of effective programs. One such program that stood out was the CHEAT anti-plagiarism program implemented by Christina Nord at the Sannarpssgymnasiet Library in Fennarpssvägen, Halmstad Sweden. The program equipped students with the needed skills to avoid plagiarising their work; a technique that is needed throughout a student's academic and professional life.

I am glad to say that I would certainly recommend this book for school librarians. It highlights what is taking place in the field of school librarianship globally, whilst doubling as a guide to many great program ideas that can be reused in most school libraries. I will also recommend this text to Library and Information (LIS) students who are thinking about getting into school librarianship. Most interviewees gave a brief synopsis of their career path, which is helpful if you are thinking of getting into this particular field.

Avis Holder, Librarian
(Former CILIP Anthony Thompson Award winner)

CILIP ILIG Business

Supporting Beirut's libraries

Thank you to those who donated to the Libraries Deliver/CILIP campaign to rebuild Beirut's libraries. The devastating blast on 4th August this year led to over 200 deaths and thousands of injuries. The extent of the damage this caused to three of the main libraries in the city can be seen in this video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=80&v=tjFqUPfhcwk&feature=emb_logo

Over 300 people supported the fundraising effort, donating over £6,000. Remarkably, all three libraries have already been able to reopen, partly thanks to this generosity. COVID restrictions continue in these facilities, of course but activities like reading for children, book clubs and other vital services have been able to resume. This has provided a much-needed boost for these communities.

A statement from ASSABIL follows on the next page. ASSABIL is a Lebanese nongovernmental organisation set up to establish and promote the development of public libraries in Beirut.

CILIP ILIG January Informal

EIFL Power: Electronic Information for Libraries

**Joint ILIG and UKeIG informal via Zoom on Wednesday 13th January 2021
18:00 to 19:00**

The International Library and Information Group and the UK eInformation Group of CILIP invite you to the above joint Informal. Attendance is FREE and open to anyone, but we need you to book in advance.

We are delighted to welcome Iryna Kuchma, EIFL's Open Access Programme Manager, to talk to us about EIFL's work and partnerships, which are playing a major role in enabling access to knowledge in developing and transition economy countries in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Latin America. An expert in open access, open data and open science, Iryna has been managing the EIFL Open Access Programme (EIFL-OA) since 2008. Working in collaboration with libraries and library consortia in more than 60 countries in Africa, Asia and Europe, she advocates for open access to research results, facilitates the development and implementation of open science policies and infrastructures, and provides support and training.

ILIG and UKeIG Informals are not lectures, they are informal, early evening social gatherings followed by a short talk on a theme of international interest plus plenty of time for questions and exploring possibilities for collaboration. They are open to all and absolutely free.

You'll find information on how to book your place here: <https://www.cilip.org.uk/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=1447585&group=>

ASSABIL Association remains committed to providing *Culture for All* in the face of tragedy

Lebanon was hit by tragedy once again on August 4th, 2020, when several tons of ammonium nitrate caught fire at the Port of Beirut causing an explosion to rip through the capital at 6:08pm. The 3 public libraries of the municipality of Beirut managed by ASSABIL were severely damaged. Bachoura and Geitawi municipal Libraries remained out of service until ASSABIL conducted an intensive rehabilitation project that lasted from August until November. ASSABIL was humbled by the quick and overwhelming support from organizations and individuals from across the world committed to the rebuilding of Beirut's public libraries.



Although, the tragic event of the explosion presented us with new opportunities for funding through donors tasking the NGO sector with rebuilding Beirut – the repeated failures in government formation leading the country into further economic decline complied with the inability of the state structures to effectively contain the spread of COVID-19 requires ASSABIL to consider the specific challenges the public is facing in moving forward.



Following the explosion, ASSABIL took advantage of the opportunity to make the necessary upgrades to all three libraries in order to better serve the public of Beirut. These libraries are public facilities that provide free services to more than 30,000

beneficiaries annually, and with the current economic crisis combined with the challenging events that are happening in the country the demand for services provided is increasing. The impending 'arduous and prolonged depression' that Lebanon is facing means that the population is increasingly vulnerable. More people need to borrow books, use free Internet and benefit from all other free services we provide. Since



the completion of the rehabilitation project, Library users are eager to return to ASSABIL libraries. Although the restrictions imposed by COVID-19 related precautions and lockdowns continues to present challenges to operating within public space. ASSABIL nevertheless remains committed to the public and will continue to innovate in its efforts to provide Culture for All.

For more information, email: info@assabil.com



"Damages after 2020 Beirut explosion 2" - Licensed via WikiCommons: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Damages after 2020 Beirut explosions 2.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Damages_after_2020_Beirut_explosions_2.jpg)

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

CILIP ILIG INFORMALS AND MEETINGS

CILIP ILIG Informal

EIFL Power: Electronic Information for Libraries

Wednesday 13 January via Zoom – 6pm
Joint event with the UK eInformation Group of CILIP

CILIP ILIG Annual General Meeting

followed by a guest speaker
Wednesday 12 May
(Time and location to be confirmed)

OTHER EVENTS

IFLA World Library and Information Congress 2021

August 2021 (exact dates to be confirmed)

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions 86th Annual General Conference and Assembly – virtual conference

IFLA's World Library and Information Congress will be online only for the first time. Keep up-to-date with the latest here:

<https://www.ifla.org/annual-conference>

Keep an eye on the CILIP ILIG Events page on the CILIP website for further listings and booking information:

<https://bit.ly/2zC2TQq>

