Preliminary Activities of the Advancing Library Visibility in Africa Project

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Overview

Introduction
Library Sites Workstream
Development Stories Workstream
Future Plans
Introduction

Growing excitement about connections between libraries and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

However, the role of libraries is often unrealized

Perception problem – libraries do not frame their work in terms of development, and potential partners do not see the connection

How can public libraries overcome these perception issues and fully demonstrate their value as development partners?
Introduction

• Collaboration between AfLIA and the Technology & Social Change Group (TASCHA) at the University of Washington

• Continues the legacy of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's Global Libraries (GL) initiative

• Goals shaped by GL advisory group

• Libraries as "central lifelong partners to the development of communities and the continent of Africa"

• Two primary workstreams – library sites and development stories
Library Sites - Method

- Participation in the 4th Africa Library Summit and 2nd AfLIA Conference in Cameroon in May 2017
- African Library Landscape study (2017-2018)
- Stakeholders' meeting in Ghana in March 2018
- Conclusion: geographic location and organizational information is a high priority
- Developed a Web application for collecting these data
- Pilot test – collected information about 28 libraries across 11 countries
Library Sites - Methods
## Library Sites - Methods

### Library Location Manager

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Library / Nom de la bibliothèque / Nome da</th>
<th>Country / Pays / País</th>
<th>Type of Library / Type de bibliothèque / Tipo de Biblioteca</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KNLS NYILIMA LIBRARY</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Public Library / Bibliothèque publique / Biblioteca Pública</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashanti Regional Library</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Public Library / Bibliothèque publique / Biblioteca Pública</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JF Omange Community Library &amp; Info. Centre</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Community Library / Bibliothèque communautaire / Biblioteca</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Library Sites - Methods

In-country voluntary 'champions' support the project within their library networks

- Communication with local library staff - Phase 1
- Assistance with location reporting - Phase 2
- Quality assurance - data review and validation

Deployed in Botswana, Ghana, and Kenya in January 2019

Progress update as of May 2019:

- 8 additional countries contributing data (Cameroon, Egypt, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, & Zambia)
- 9 countries have received training and data submission is expected to begin shortly (Benin, Burkina Faso, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Mali, Senegal, Seychelles, Uganda & Zimbabwe)
- 7 countries are scheduled for training (Angola, Burundi, Republic of Congo, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar)

Continue to refine the methodology
Library Sites - Challenges

- Internet access and quality can affect submission
- Technical and mapping abilities of the librarians
- Technical abilities of the Champions can impact effective provision of solutions to librarians
- Restrained support for Champions can slow process
- Difficulty assessing the accuracy of submissions
Library Sites - Challenges
Library Sites - Challenges
Library Sites - Progress

Dataset is free, open, and available for download in a variety of formats.

Updates to the dataset are currently provided every 2 weeks – more frequent updates planned if data submission rate increases.

Download dataset here:  [https://osf.io/entpf/](https://osf.io/entpf/)

Submissions are ongoing - stop by to learn how to submit your library.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>No. of Sites Approved</th>
<th>No. of Sites Pending</th>
<th>No. of Countries Submitting Data</th>
<th>No. of Countries Invited to Participate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb 2019</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2019</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>38</td>
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Development Stories

Goal: understand what types of data libraries can collect to better demonstrate their value as development partners

What data should libraries collect so that they can think more strategically about their role in development?

What data can they collect to better give voice to the local needs of the community members they support?

How can they weave these data into a persuasive story so that they are more visible to other development partners?

Preliminary list of countries for interviews: Angola, Egypt, Ghana, Namibia, Senegal, Uganda
Development Stories

Phase One: interview development organizations about the types of information they would require in order to consider libraries as partners

Phase Two: interview public librarians about their current data collection practices and capacity

Phase Three: develop data collection methods to overcome gaps between what development organizations want to see, and what libraries currently collect

This will provide libraries with tools and data to think more strategically about how they engage with the development sectors to further their own mission
Future Ideas & Plans

Perform geospatial analysis with library sites data

Increased involvement and training of library staff for data collection efforts

Utilize location data to build out open data available about libraries

Launch a sustainable open access dedicated platform for library sites

Workshops that bring libraries and development partners together in dialogue

Build out AfLIA's technical infrastructure for future data collection efforts
Conclusion

• Collaboration between AfLIA and the University of Washington

• Explores how libraries can better demonstrate their role as development partners

• Library sites workstream is putting libraries on the map

• Development stories workstream identifies key data collection needs for development partnerships

• Primary goal is to develop data and tools that benefit public and community librarians - these tools can be adapted or utilized by other types of libraries
Thank you!

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