# User-friendly libraries for active teaching and learning

## A case of business, technical and vocational education and training colleges in Uganda

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## Abstract

**Purpose** – The purpose of this paper is to report the training of college librarians, academic and management staff, IT managers and students on how to organise, manage and use a user-friendly library. In Uganda, as in many countries, the problem is that school and/or college libraries are managed by librarians who may have good cataloguing and management skills, but who do not have the pedagogic skills and knowledge of the school curricula that are necessary for librarians to be able to guide and mentor both teachers and students or organise curriculum-related activities or facilitate research. The development of user-friendly libraries contributes in improving education quality through nurturing the interest of students and teachers in literacy activities and active search for knowledge. Under the stewardship of the Belgium Technical Cooperation and the Ministry of Education in Uganda, library stakeholders were trained on how to put users – rather than themselves – in the centre of the library's operations and introduced to active teaching and learning methodologies and activities with emphasis on getting engaged in transforming spaces, services, outreach to users and collections. Several measures, short and long term were taken to address the gaps limiting the performance of the librarians. Given the disparities in the trainees' education level and work experience, the training was delivered in seven modules divided into three units for over eight months in 2015. By the end of the training, trainees developed unique library strategic plan, library policies and procedures, capacity to use library systems, physical design and maintenance systems, partnerships, library structure and staff job descriptions.

**Design/methodology/approach** – To effectively engage the participants each topic was conducted using active teaching and learning (ATL) methodologies, including: lecture with slides and hands-on practice – each topic was introduced in a lecture form with slides and hands-on exercises. The main goal was to introduce the participants to the concepts discussed, offer opportunities to explore alternative approaches, as well define boundaries for discussion through brainstorming. The question-answer approach kept the participants alert and to start thinking critically on the topic discussed – brainstorming sessions allowed thinking beyond the presentation room, drawing from personal experiences to provide alternatives to anticipated challenges. The goal here was for the participants to provide individual choices and approaches for real life problems; group discussions: case study/ scenario and participant presentations – participants were provided with a scenario and asked to provide alternative approaches that could solve the problem based on their personal experience at their colleges. By the end of the group discussion, participants presented a draft of the deliverable as per the topic under discussion. More so, group discussions were an excellent approach to test participant's teamwork skills and ability to compromise, as well as respecting team decisions. It was an opportunity to see how librarians will work with the library committees. Group discussions further initiated and cemented the much-needed librarian–academic staff – college management relationship. During the group discussion, librarians, teaching staff, ICT staff and college management staff, specifically the Principals and Deputy Principals interacted freely thus starting and cultivating a new era of work relationship between them. Individual presentation: prior to the workshop, participants were sent instructions to prepare a presentation on a topic. For example, participants were asked to

provide their views of what a "user-friendly library" would look like or what would constitute a "user-friendly library"; the college library of HTC-Mulago was asked to talk about their experience working with book reserves, challenges faced and plans they have to address the challenges, while the college librarian from NTC-Kaliro was asked to describe a situation where they were able to assist a patron, the limitations they faced and how they addressed them. Doing so did not only assist to emotionally prepare the participants for the training but also helped to make them start thinking about the training in relation to their libraries and work. Take-home assignment: at the end of each session, participants were given home assignments to not only revise the training material but also prepare for the next day training. Further the take-home assignments provided time for the participants to discuss with their colleagues outside of the training room so as to have a common ground/understanding on some of the very sensitive issues. Most interesting assignment was when participants were asked to review an article and to make a presentation in relation to their library experiences. Participant reports: participant reports resulted from the take-home assignments and participants were asked to make submission on a given topic. For example, participants were asked to review IFLA section on library management and write a two-page report on how such information provided supported their own work, as well as a participant report came from their own observation after a library visit. Invited talks with library expert: two invited talks by library experts from Consortium of Uganda University Libraries and Uganda Library and Information Science Association with the goal to share their experience, motivate the participants to strive higher and achieve great things for their libraries. Library visitation: there were two library visits conducted on three separate days – International Hospital Kampala (IHK) Library, Makerere University Library and Aga Khan University Hospital Library. Each of these library visits provided unique opportunities for the participants to explore best practices and implement similar practices in their libraries. Visual aids – videos, building plans and still photos: these were visual learning aids to supplement text during the lectures because they carried lot of information while initiating different thoughts best on the participants' past experience and expertise. The training advocated for the use of ATL methodologies and likewise similar methodologies were used to encourage participants do so in their classrooms.

**Findings** – Addressing Key Concerns: Several measures, both long and short term, were taken to address the gaps limiting the performance of the librarians. The measures taken included: selected representative sample of participants including all college stakeholders as discussed above; active teaching and learning methodologies applied in the training and blended in the content of the training materials; initiated and formulated approaches to collaborations, networks and partnerships; visited different libraries to benchmark library practices and encourage future job shadowing opportunities; and encouraged participants to relate freely, understand and value each other's work to change their mindsets. College librarians were encouraged to ensure library priorities remain on the agenda through advocacy campaigns. Short-term measures: The UFL training was designed as a practical and hands-on training blended with individual and group tasks, discussions, take-home assignments and presentations by participants. This allowed participates to engage with the material and take responsibility for their own work. Further, the training material was prepared with a view that librarians support the academic life of teaching staff and students. Participants were tasked to develop and later fine-tune materials designed to support their work. For example, developing a subject bibliography and posting it on the library website designed using open source tools such as Google website, Wikis, blogs. The developed library manual includes user-friendly policies and procedures referred to as "dos and don'ts in the library" that promote equitable open access to information; drafting book selection memos; new book arrivals lists; subscribing to open access journals; current awareness services and selective dissemination of information service displays and electronic bulletins. Based on their library needs and semester calendar, participants developed action points and timelines to implement tasks in their libraries at the end of each unit training. Librarians were encouraged to share their experiences through library websites, Facebook page, group e-mail/listserv and Instagram; however, they were challenged with intimate internet access. College libraries were rewarded for their extraordinary job. Given their pivotal role in the management and administration of financial and material resources, on top of librarians, the participants in this training were college administrators/ management, teaching and ICT staff, researchers and student leadership. Participants were selected to address the current and future needs of the college library. These are individuals that are perceived to have a great impact towards furthering the college library agenda. The practical nature of this training warranted conducting the workshops from developed but similar library spaces, for example, Aga Khan University Library and Kampala Capital City, Makerere University Library, International Hospital Kampala Library and Uganda Christian University Library. Participants observed orientation sessions, reference desk management and interviews, collection management practices, preservation and conservation, secretarial bureau management, etc. Long-term measures: Changing the mindset of librarians, college administrators and teaching staff is a long-term commitment which continues to demand for innovative interventions. For example: job shadowing allowed college librarian short-term attachments to Makerere

University Library, Uganda Christian University Library, Aga Khan Hospital University Library and International Hospital Kampala Library – these libraries were selected because of their comparable practices and size. The mentorship programme lasted between two-three weeks; on-spot supervision and follow-up visits to assess progress with the action plan by the librarians and college administration and college library committee; ensuring that all library documents – library strategic plan, library manual, library organogram, etc are approved by the College Governing Council and are part of the college wide governing documents; and establishing the library committee with a job description for each member – this has strengthened the library most especially as an advocacy tool, planning and budgeting mechanism, awareness channel for library practices, while bringing the library to the agenda – reemphasizing the library's agenda. To bridge the widened gap between librarians and the rest of the stakeholders, i.e. teaching staff, ICT staff, college administration and students, a college library committee structure and its mandate were established comprising: Library Committee Chairperson – member of the teaching staff; Library Committee Secretary – College Librarian; Student Representative – must be a member of the student Guild with library work experience; and Representative from each college academic department. A library consortium was formed involving all the four project supported colleges to participate in resource sharing practices, shared work practices like shared cataloguing, information literacy training, reference interview and referral services as well a platform for sharing experiences. A library consortium further demanded for automating library functions to facilitate collaboration and shared work. Plans are in place to install Koha integrated library system that will cultivate a strong working relationship between librarians and students, academic staff, college administration and IT managers. This was achieved by ensuring that librarians innovatively implement library practices and skills acquired from the workshop as well as show their relevance to the academic life of the academic staff. Cultivating relationships takes a great deal of time, thus college librarians were coached on: creating inclusive library committees, timely response to user needs, design library programmes that address user needs, keeping with changing technology to suite changing user needs, seeking customer feedback and collecting user statistics to support their requests, strengthening the library's financial based by starting a secretarial bureau and conducting user surveys to understand users' information-seeking behaviour. To improve the awareness of new developments in the library world, college librarians were introduced to library networks at national, regional and international levels, as a result they participated in conferences, workshops, seminars at local, regional and international level. For example, for the first time and with funding from Belgium Technical Cooperation, college librarians attended 81st IFLA World Library and Information Congress in South African in 2015. College libraries are now members of the Consortium of Uganda University Libraries and Uganda Library and Information Science Association and have attended meetings of these two very important library organisations in Uganda's LIS profession. The college librarians have attended meetings and workshops organized by these two organisations.

**Originality/value** – At the end of the three units training, participants were able to develop: a strategic plan for their libraries; an organogram with staffing needs and job description matching staff functions; a Library Committee for each library and with a structure unifying all the four project-support Colleges; a library action plan with due dates including deliverables and responsibilities for implementation; workflow plan and organisation of key sections of the library such as reserved and public spaces; furniture and equipment inventory (assets); a library manual and collection development policy; partnerships with KCCA Library and Consortium of Uganda University Libraries; skills to use Koha ILMS for performing library functions including: cataloguing, circulation, acquisitions, serials management, reporting and statistics; skills in searching library databases and information literacy skills; skills in designing simple and intuitive websites using Google Sites tools; and improved working relationship between the stakeholders was visible. To further the user-friendly libraries principle of putting users in the centre of the library's operations, support ATL methodologies and activities with emphasis on getting engaged in transforming spaces, services, outreach to users and collections the following initiatives are currently implemented in the colleges: getting approval of all library policy documents by College Governing Council, initiating job shadowing opportunities, conducting on-spot supervision, guide libraries to set up college library committees and their job description, design library websites, develop dissemination sessions for all library policies, incorporate user-friendly language in all library documents, initiate income generation activities for libraries, set terms of reference for library staff and staffing as per college organogram, procurement of library tools like DDC and library of congress subject headings (LCSH), encourage attendance to webinars and space planning for the new libraries.

## 1. Context and background

Uganda's socio-economic setting is considered highly populated and growing at 3.0 per cent annually – and is regarded among the world's highest with 47 per cent of the population less than 15 years; while 55 per cent are aged 18 years or younger [Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), 2016, p. 13]. Uganda's labour force is largely rural (77.2 per cent) with women taking 49.8 per cent of those engaged in subsistence farming [Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), 2016, p. 30]. The Education Sector Strategic Plan for the period 2003-2015 and as reviewed and adapted to cover the period 2012-2015 [Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), 2008] was focused on consolidating enrolment gains in Universal Primary Education (UPE), continuing expansion beyond primary, improving equity, improving overall governance, driving up standards and reducing wastage (Gabrscek and Gena, 2015).

Uganda's education system is structured in a hierarchical order of 7-4-2-3 and comprises of pre-primary school education of 7 years; secondary education covering 4 years of ordinary level secondary and 2 years of advanced level secondary; teacher education and business, technical and vocational education and training (BTVET) of 2 to 3 years; and tertiary education including university education for 3-5 years. Students who pass with two principle passes at advanced level secondary may choose to progress to university for bachelor's degrees or those with a minimum of one principle pass can join other tertiary institutions that award diplomas and certificates. Some tertiary institutions, like primary teachers' colleges and some nursing schools, also admit students who have only completed their ordinary level secondary education (Gabrscek and Gena, 2015).

The national vision is to use education as a basic tool for the transformation of society and for national integration and development. The vision of the Ministry of Education and Sports' is "Quality Education and Sports for All" and its mission is to "provide technical support, guide, coordinate, regulate and promote quality education and training for all persons in Uganda for national integration, development and individual enhancement". The current major education policy thrusts continue to prioritize access, equity, quality, relevance and efficiency of education service delivery in Uganda [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 2010; Uganda Government. Ministry of Education and Sports (GoU. MoES. USDP), 2008]. In 1997 Universal Primary Education (UPE) was started which led to increase in total enrolments of pupils from over 3 million pupils in 1998 to about 8.6 million pupils in 2010 all enrolled in government, community and private schools. However, the focus on increasing the number of pupils attending school led to poor quality education. Thus, the BTVET colleges in Uganda had been challenged with providing education that is: relevant to economic growth, meets the quality of skills needed in the labour market and accessible and equitable, amidst challenges of organizational effectiveness and financial and internal efficiency [Uganda Government. Ministry of Education and Sports (GoU. MoES. USDP), 2008]. As a result of these limitations, the old BTVET education system failed to produce the appropriately skilled workforce that Uganda requires to increase income and employment and to compete internationally. The colleges failed to deliver training commensurate to the required standards and few students access the training (Okinyal, 2012).

To address the above challenges and increase uptake of the increasing number of pupils leaving primary schools and ordinary level secondary schools, the universal post primary education and training (UPPET) and universal post O-level education and training (UPOLET) were launched and led to the development and expansion of BTVET hence leading to establishment of the BTVET act of 2008 (Okinyal, 2012). With technical and financial support from the World Bank and the Kingdom of Belgium, the Ministry of Education and Sports developed the BTVET 10-year strategic plan that operationalized the

BTVET act [Uganda Government. Ministry of Education and Sports (GoU. MoES. USDP), 2008]. The strategic plan was an indicator for "a paradigm shift and a reform process" [Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), 2008]. To meet the demands for skills driven quality education and efficiency in both post primary and post O-level education, Uganda government explored options to revitalize and strengthen the BTVET system. In 2012, a new and improved strategic plan for BTVET was launched under the theme "Skilling Uganda" and aimed at overhauling the current BTVET education system in Uganda. Thereafter, a Reform Tasks Force and the Executive Secretariat were established to spearhead the reforms. The 2012 strategic plan provided a framework for a modern, state of the art open system for skills development. The main goal was to ensure that the new BTVET education system emerges from "an educational sub-sector into a comprehensive and open system of skills development for employment, enhanced productivity and growth". (Gabrscek and Gena, 2015, p. 23; Okinyal, 2012). Purposely the new BTVET system would create employable skills and competencies relevant to the labour market instead of providing educational certificates, hence embracing all Ugandans in need of skills.

In view of the overarching challenges, in 2011, the Government of Uganda received a grant from the Kingdom of Belgium to finance the Ugandan-Belgian project "Teacher Training Education Project" aimed at improving the training for BTVET technical teachers/ instructors, health tutors and secondary teachers. The project was jointly executed by the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) (previously the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports (MoSTES)) and the Belgian Development Agency (BTC) between December 2011 and December 2016. The objective of the project was to provide an improved student-centred teaching and practice-oriented learning environment, supported by a strengthened support supervision and visitation (inspection) service from the central level.

In conformity with the principles of economy, effectiveness, efficiency and transparency and to foster capacity-building and ensure sustainability of the project results, four thematic teams: Institutional Development, Pedagogic Support at Institutional Level, Cross Cutting Issues and Quality of Teaching and Learning and later Infrastructure, Facilities and Equipment were constituted to lead, supervise and monitor the implementation of the project. To reach this objective, the project addressed four result areas, including:

(1) strengthening the teacher education system in relation to the colleges in the areas of communication, support supervision and visitation, strategic management and lecturers' qualifications;

(2) strengthening the management capacity of the supported colleges;

(3) improving the quality of teaching and learning in the supported colleges; and

(4) rehabilitating, extending and equipping the college facilities.

These results were achieved through capacity building at system (central) level, organisational (college) level and individual level (managers and teachers).

## 2. Business, technical and vocational education and training colleges
Business, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (BTVET) is one of the 11 departments that constitute the four Directorates within the Ministry of Educational and Sports, of the Republic of Uganda [Government of Uganda. Ministry of Education (GoU. MoES), 2012]. The four Directorates include: Directorate of Basic and Secondary Education, Directorate of Higher, Technical, Vocational Education and Training, Directorate of Education Standards and the Directorate of Industrial Training. The BTVET department is under the Directorate of Higher, Technical, Vocational Education and Training. The

Ministry also guides the activities of other affiliate institutions including, Education Service Commission, Uganda National Examination Board (UNEB) and other examination bodies including Uganda Business and Technical Examination Board, Uganda Allied Health Examination Board, Uganda Nurses and Midwives Examination Board, National Council for Higher Education (NCHE), National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), National Council of Sports and Uganda National Commission for UNESCO (UNATCOM). Students undertaking BTVET programmes are examined by the Uganda Business and Technical Examination Board after two years of study [Government of Uganda. Ministry of Education (GoU.MoES), 2012].

The education sector is run on a principle of promoting public private partnerships at all levels and the private sector has played significant roles in provision of education services especially at the post primary and tertiary education levels. For the past over three decades there has been increasing number of students in BTVET colleges and this is attributed to increased enrolments in University Primary Education (UPE) [Okinyal, 2012; Uganda Government. Ministry of Education and Sports (GoU. MoES. USDP), 2008]. The implementation of UPE increased enrolment of children from poor households and education backgrounds into BTVET colleges and significantly reduced the poverty gap in terms of access to tertiary education and skills development (Gabrscek and Gena, 2015). The effect of increased enrolment has been particularly beneficial for girls who saw a higher increase in enrolment relative to boys. According to Ministry of Education portal [www.education.go.ug], following the launch of UPE in 1997, enrolment increased from over two million pupils to the current almost eight million in primary schools – increased enrolment is directly evident in BTVET colleges. To address challenges of transition to post primary education, the Universal Post Primary Education and Training (UPPET) programme was launched in February 2007 making Uganda the first country in Africa to provide free education at this level. Consequently, enrolment in BTVET colleges has grown rapidly (Gabrscek and Gena, 2015; Okinyal, 2012).

BTVET Colleges are established and governed under the 2008 BTVET Act [Government of Uganda. (GoU.BTVET Act), 2008; Gabrscek and Gena, 2015]. While all the policy formulation and reforms to BTVET colleges is guided by this Act, the Education Act 2008 makes legal provisions for guiding implementation of BTVET education including registration and licencing, establishment of Boards of Governors, roles of stakeholders, curriculum formulation and examination and licencing and registration of teachers [Government of Uganda. Education Act (GoU. Edu. Act), 2008]. The BTVET Act provides that the objectives of BTVET colleges is to provide relevant and quality knowledge, values and skills for purposes of academic progression and employment in the labour market to a larger number of persons in an affordable way and to enhance the productivity capabilities of the individual for employment and self-employment [Government of Uganda. (GoU.BTVET Act), 2008]. The BTVET Act distinguishes between the functions of training provision and quality assurance, describes the criteria and access requirements for BTVET programmes and establishes institutional and management arrangements for defining qualifications (standards, testing and certification) and for providing training in formal and non-formal institutions. One key strategy is the development and implementation of the Uganda Vocational Qualifications Framework (UVQF) that makes it possible to recognize prior learning, even if it was gained in non-formal training or informally [Uganda Government. Ministry of Education and Sports (GoU. MoES. USDP), 2008].

Presently, there are a total of 737 registered and licenced BTVET institutions of which 137 are government BTVET institutions categorized into seven: 18 Community

Polytechnics, 26 Technical Schools/Vocational Training Centres, 5 Farm Schools, 41 Technical Institutes/Vocational Training Institutes, 7 Uganda Colleges of Commerce, 5 Uganda Technical Colleges and 35 Specialized Training Institutions. Community Polytechnics, Technical Schools/Vocational Training Centres, Farm Schools and Technical Institutes/Vocational Training Institutes are 2-3 years certificate awarding institutions; Uganda Colleges of Commerce and Specialized Training Institutions offer 2-3 years of diploma and certificate courses; while Uganda Technical Colleges have only 2 year diploma courses [Business, Technical, Vocational Education and Training (BTVET), 2017].

According to the Uganda Association of Private Vocational Institutions [Uganda Association of Private Vocational Institutions (UGAPRIVI), 2017] founded in 1989, there are 806 private BTVET institutions of which 129 are in the Eastern Uganda, 185 in Central, 107 in Northern, 95 in Southern, 114 in South Western, 93 in West Nile and 83 in Western Uganda. Not only all these institutions are legally registered and licenced by the Ministry of Education and Sports and conduct mainly formal training but also some offer non-formal training. According to the Education and Sports sector annual performance report of 2015/16 financial year, the enrolment in BTVET colleges has increased from 111,479 students in 2014/15 to 129,599 students in 2015/16 financial years giving a 16.25 percentage increase in the enrolment.

### 2.1 Project beneficiary colleges

The project focused both at central level institutions (Ministry of Education and Sports staff, Universities and other relevant national bodies) and in the following four colleges:

(1) National Teachers College Kaliro; and

(2) National Teachers College Muni for secondary teachers' education;

(3) Abilonino Community Polytechnic Instructors College for technical instructors' education; and

(4) Mulago Health Tutors College for health tutors' education.

The National Teachers' College, Kaliro is located near Kaliro town, about 40 km to the north of Iganga town and 153 km to the east of Kampala. It offers teachers' training programmes including Diploma in Education Secondary on full time and Diploma in Education Primary on part-time. The college has four academic departments -arts, science, vocational training and professional studies and teach a total of 16 subjects. Abilonino Community Polytechnics Instructors' Training College is the only provider of pre-service training for technical teachers and instructors for the BTVET system. The college is situated near Lira in Northern Uganda, approximately 200 km from Kampala. The College offers a two-year Diploma in Technical Teacher Education that turns out approximately 100 graduates every year. The entry requirement is Advanced Craft Certificate (Craft 2) and students can select from 11 different specializations according to their craft. Health Tutor's College, Mulago (HTC) trains tutors in midwifery, nursing and allied health. Mulago HTC is located within the Mulago national referral hospital at Mulago Hill in Kampala, and it is the only college of its kind in the country. Mulago HTC offers a 3-year Bachelor of Medical Education as well as the recently approved 1-year Post-Graduate Diploma in Medical Education and 1-year Higher Diploma in Clinical Instruction. Muni National Teachers' College is located in Arua district, around 7km from Arua town. The college started as a Primary Teachers' College in 1947. In 1985 National Teachers' college Muni took over the premises and the enrolment increased to over 850 students for the Diploma in Education Secondary and Diploma in Education Primary programs combined.

## 3. History of Uganda libraries

The history of Uganda libraries dates back to 1840s and its development is defined by four periods (Kawalya, 2009, p. 48) shaped by the political, economic, educational and cultural environments. The 1840s and 1945 libraries can be referred to as the 'Colonial Era' libraries period. During this time libraries were restricted to European and Asian communities and were associated with colonial activities specifically used for missionary, explorer and colonial administration (Lugya and Weech, 2015; Kawalya, 2009; and Otike, 2004). For example in 1923 the Uganda Society provided library services to the British colonialists in Entebbe (Kawalya, 2009, p. 53; Kigongo-Bukenya, 1990, p. 127). The colonialists felt Africans were illiterate and could not effectively use library services and never considering their needs. Between 1922 and 1945 the first libraries were established in Uganda for example the Kampala Public Library established in 1917 [East African Standard (EAS), 1922] and this laid the foundation for library development.

The period between 1946 and 1962 marked the establishment of public and academic libraries in Uganda and other countries within the East African Community (Lugya and Weech, 2015; Kawalya, 2009; and Otike, 2004). This period was also marked by the struggle to end the British and Belgium colonial rule leading to independence of the countries in the Eastern Africa – thus these can be referred to as 'Revolutionary' or 'Independence libraries' (Kawalya, 2009, p. 48). This period was marked by the spreading and development of formal education, book and magazine publishing and library development. However, the development of libraries was slow owing to selective education that contributed to wrong skills imparted to the natives and segregated the majority (Kigongo-Bukenya, 1990, p. 127). To bring more natives into the culture of reading, in 1946 UNESCO published the public library manifesto recommending free public library services such as information materials in the language of the served communities. The formation of libraries during the revolutionary or independence era was preceded by the Elspeth Huxley's 1945 report that led to the establishment of the East African Literature Bureau in 1948. The East African Literature Bureau was mandated to encourage African authorship, publish vernacular dialects materials and establish lending libraries. Therefore public library services for East African natives did not start until 1948 (Otike, 2004). With the main library in Nairobi, the Bureau operated branches in Kampala and Dar-es-Salaam with three services: lending, postal and book boxes; however, these were short-lived owing to the increasing population, the sheer size of the region and the independence and as a result established public libraries in Uganda and Tanzania. These were accorded a dual role as national libraries, reference and bibliographic agencies and acted as legal depository (Endra, 2002).

Following independence, the period between 1963 and 1985 was marked by political and economic instability within the East African Community. Despite the political and economic turmoil, the period during the "post-independence" libraries was characterized by Africans taking over leadership from the colonial rulers and long-term planning in all sectors of development including the development of various libraries. There was increase in book production and the library facilities relevant to the natives in East Africa improved. Most of the Huxley's 1945 report recommendations were implemented, for example the establishment of the East African Literature Bureau to oversee the publication of general and educational books and popular magazine and the promotion and mentorship of native authorship; and it is during this time that the first library act was adapted hence emphasizing the importance of libraries (Kawalya, 2009, p. 57; Kigongo-Bukenya, 1990, p. 131).

The present-day time which started in 1986 following the overthrow of the Junta government by Museveni's guerrilla war has led to the development of libraries and library

professional in Uganda. For example, in 1997, the Local Government Act was enacted and led to the decentralization of public services. Local governments took over most public services, including public libraries. In 2003 the National Library Act [Government of Uganda (Nat. Lib. Act), 2003] was enacted which led to the establishment of the National Library of Uganda. This Act repealed the Public Libraries Act, 1964 which had established the Public Libraries Board. With the enactment of the National Library Act, 2003, the National Library of Uganda became the National Bibliographic Control Agency responsible for ensuring legal deposit of materials by publishers, publishing the National Bibliography of Uganda, allocating the International Standard Book Numbers and International Standard Serial Numbers and establishing and managing a National Collection of Uganda [Government of Uganda (Nat. Lib. Act), 2003]. The National Library of Uganda is mandated with laying down national policies, giving advice, issuing standards, norms, guidelines and work manuals, providing technical and professional advisory services and coordinating and carrying out advocacy for libraries at local and international levels. In 2007 Uganda Community Libraries Association [Uganda Community Libraries Association (UCLA), 2017] headquartered in Kampala was established. Governed by the Board of Trustees, Uganda Community Libraries Association is mandated to organize an annual conference and regional workshops, distributing grants and recruit volunteers on behalf of the member libraries.

### 3.1 Academic libraries in Uganda

Historically, the first academic library was established in 1922 at the Uganda Technical College, now called Makerere University, [Makerere University (Mak.), 2012]. Academic libraries are among the well-established and equipped libraries in Uganda with a network of branches; rich, current and automated collections; free internet connected computers; access to current and comprehensive literature; and continues to be recipients to funding from collaborative partners (Kinengyere, 2007; Otike, 2004). Generally, the performance of academic libraries for example school libraries depends on the school age – schools established early have far more comprehensive collections compared to those established recently; and those then earmarked for Europeans have superior collections because they were developed on British standards. High cost private schools have superior library services, use qualified librarians with competitive salary packages. Inferior library services are found in ordinary public and low-cost private schools with inadequate library funding which in turn is insignificant for library invested (Endra, 2002). In Uganda the Business Technical Vocational Education and Training (BTVET) College libraries are established and governed by the academic boards referred to as Governing Council thus are categorized academic libraries; and drive their mandate from their parent institutions – the College Governing Board.

However, before the Teacher Training and Education project funded by the Belgium Government through Government of Uganda the BTVET College libraries were some of the poorly funded and managed academic libraries in the country. As noted by Kawalya (2009) and Lugya and Weech (2015) school library history is rooted into the colonial period and are referred to as traditional schools. Literacy studies in Africa, specifically in Uganda by Kigongo-Bukenya (1990) showed that colonialists set up libraries to support their literacy classes to the converts to teach the Bible or the Koran or scripture to others. This meant that like education, libraries were meant for the few who belonged to a religious denomination and this kind of segregation left many Africans uneducated and thus not able to use libraries.

## 4. User-friendly libraries project

From its inception, the teacher training education project fostered for capacity development of academic staff and college management but not that of the college library staff. The need to strengthen the capacities of the BTVET colleges' librarians, academic and management staff and students to develop, organize and administer their college libraries was as a result of the need to have college staff who would manage the new library structures constructed. The project was named "User-Friendly Libraries". While the construction of the libraries was supervised by the thematic team in charge of infrastructure, facilities and equipment the training of librarians, academic staff and students on user-friendly libraries was under the supervision of the thematic team for quality of teaching and learning. In Uganda as in many countries the problem is that school and/or college libraries are managed by librarians who may have good cataloguing and management skills, but who do not have the pedagogic skills and knowledge of the school curricula that are necessary for librarians to be able to guide and mentor both teachers and students or organize curriculum related activities or facilitate research. The development of user-friendly libraries contributes in improving education quality through nurturing the interest of students and teachers in literacy activities and active search for knowledge.

In April 2015, BTC put up a call for proposals to conduct a users' friendly library training for the four project-supported institutions. The paper author successfully submitted and won the consultancy with the main goal to establish users' friendly libraries integrated in the new colleges' infrastructure and promote the application of the active teaching and learning methodologies currently being introduced by the teacher training and education project in the colleges. The call for proposals required bidders to have a Master degree in Library and Information Science and demonstrated experience in conducting training in the field of pedagogy in general and in development of college libraries in particular. The author exceeded the requirements and was offered to perform this assignment. The author is a librarian by career and training with over 13 years of progressive experience in academic, corporate and public libraries; and holds a PhD, Masters of Science and a Bachelor's degree in Library and Information Sciences. Further, the successful bidder was required to have good intercultural communication skills and good written and spoken English.

A technical and financial proposal were submitted and reviewed by BTC and MoES. In view of this consultancy, the scope of the work required that trainees are acquainted with:

- increased theoretical and practical understanding of users'-friendly approach applied to a college library: its physical setting, the management of its resources, the rules for users' participation and support;
- understanding of the importance of strengthened communication between all colleges users (academic and management staff, librarians, IT managers and students) on the central pedagogic role of the college library;
- facilitation of and support to the active teaching and learning activities conducted by the academic staff and by the students whether in the classrooms, during individual studies and in the library itself (e.g. project work, contract work and corner work);
- promotion of access to local, national and global resources to facilitate self-study and research activities both for teachers and students;
- promotion of innovative, participatory and collaborative activities to support teaching and learning, that can be held inside or outside the library;

- teachers' and students' reading habits; and
- teachers' and students' competences, cultural background and self-esteem.

The main activities of the assignment included: a visit to two colleges to understand the scope of the consultancy, prepare and present inception report with outlines and timeline for each module, prepare training materials and presentations, delivery of training in Kampala to 30 trainees, writing short training report after each module, write draft and final report including recommendations and training materials, present draft and final report including recommendations and training materials and revise draft and submit final report including recommendations and training materials.

The consultant developed six modules as opposed to four that were suggested by BTC in the bid. Based on trainees' level of education and as was agreed with BTC the modules were revised to meet the needs of the trainees. The training was delivered in three trainings with each training having three modules and was conducted between April and December 2015. Three modules in the first quarter: Information Institutions, Resources and Services; Library User Services; and Library administration; two modules in the second quarter: Library Buildings: Architecture and Space Planning; and Technology Resources and Services; and one module in the third quarter: Marketing of Library and Information Services.

Multiple active teaching and learning methodologies were suggested in each module. In special cases, site visits to two academic libraries and one public/community library was conducted. Two specialists (one in library buildings and another in library technologies) were invited to share their experiences with the trainees. Trainees reviewed scholarly works to understand and appreciate the scholarly world of librarianship. The training deliverables included: inception report and training schedule, short training report after each training module, including all results achieved and materials used during the training, a draft of final report including recommendations and all training materials and a revised final report and all training materials.

It was expected that by the end of the training, trainees would have: developed unique library vision, mission and mandate (per college); understood the physical design of their respective library and the need to set up a maintenance system; developed library regulations: operating hours, borrowing system, users' identification, etc.; developed capacity to use modern IT resources for the management of the library and to facilitate users' access to knowledge and information; developed the libraries' collection policy; set-up a Library Committee per college – involving teachers and students under the guidance of the Librarian – in charge of designing, implementing and monitoring; acquainted with the existing library collection: inventory, cataloguing, labeling, repairs and disposal; developed an action plan for the development of partnerships with different stakeholders who can support the User-friendly libraries in the future; developed the job descriptions of the library staff and an organogram showing the links between the library and the other college departments; and developed an action plan for each college library, to be presented for approval at the college governing council.

This paper draws from the user-friendly libraries training activities conducted between April and December 2015. It reports the training of college librarians, academic and management staff, IT managers and students on how to organise, manage and use a user-friendly library. The overall training objective was to strengthen the capacities of the colleges' librarians, academic and management staff to develop, organize and administer their college libraries. The final goal was to establish and integrate user-friendly libraries into the new colleges' infrastructure and promoting the application of the active teaching and learning methodologies currently being introduced in the colleges under the teacher

training education project. To ensure sustainability all project stakeholders worked together including all college users (academic and management staff, librarians and students), the relevant Ministry of Education and Sports departments as well as national experts already involved in the teacher training education project.

The paper further details critical issues observed during the on-spot assessment visit to two colleges; presents short and long-term lessons learnt and addressed during the trainings; lists beneficiaries and participants; states the key deliverables and responsibilities; and describes active teaching and learning methodologies used in delivering the trainings. Accountability for the training activities and topics covered is provided and finally discusses the action plan mechanisms and support supervision plans proposed to the college libraries.

### 4.1 Scoping into college library work practices and activities

To understand college library operations, the level of education of library staff and their awareness with library practices and physical infrastructure two colleges – HTC-Mulago and NTC-Kaliro were surveyed between 10th and 12th June 2015, respectively. The survey assessed the library as a service and academic good or social institution – the "User-Friendly Library". The colleges were surveyed on 14 topics, including: goals/Library mandate, infrastructure – physical spaces, access to materials and services – spaces, toilets, circulation desk, reference/information desk, library administration, collection development and management, library user services, compliance with technology, human resources, marketing strategies and information institutions and networks with professional organizations. The survey results reported in the inception report provided grounding for preparing the training. The inception report provided critical issues surrounding librarians' performance, outline of short and long-term approaches for staff professional development, guided the design and development of the training materials, assignments, methodology and discussions – deeply engaged the college librarians and administrators to identify adaptable strategies. The results from the survey and interaction with the librarians informed the inception report.

### 4.2 Key issues and challenges in college libraries

Significant disparities in the academic training of the librarians was observed – the highest trained librarian was a library and information science (LIS) master's student while the lowest trained had a Uganda Certificate of Education without formal or informal LIS training. Despite the level of academic training all college librarians had never taken part in any formal or informal professional development training, be at local, regional or international conference, seminar or workshop, either face-to-face or online. Henceforth, on top of unlocking the librarian's world of librarianship, the importance of participating in professional trainings is undisputed.

As a benchmarking strategy to spur changes in their libraries, college librarians have visited other libraries in Uganda for example, Makerere University Library and Uganda Christian University Library. While the benefits accrued from the visit are many, little has been put to practice. Failure is attributed to: limited skills to perform technical ICT tasks, non-responsive ICT managers and college administrators, stigmatization involving discriminatory behaviour, beliefs that other stakeholders have poor perception of the library; beliefs that – their success is overlooked, -not rewarded by their supervisors, – the library's role to academia is ignored and therefore little can be done to rescue the situation.

The librarians' mindset (attitude & way of thinking) towards their job as librarians was extremely disoriented and ideologically distorted. Despite minimal resources, librarians

showed no sign of innovative thinking towards identifying better ways to serve their patrons (library users). The dust, cobweb, scattered and disorganized spaces, littered tables and poor collection management techniques all point to the fact that college librarians pay little attention to their job.

Librarians are not involved in the college academic work, be attending academic boards or department meetings, participating in academic planning or contact with the teaching staff. This isn't attributed to non-enthusiastic librarians but non-responsiveness of the academic staff and institutional administrators. The academic staff and the college administration assume that librarians are merely custodians of books – responsible for issuing and receiving books.

The poor academic relationship between teaching staff and librarians is partly blamed on librarians. The librarians have not, whatsoever exhibited any kind of positive contribution towards the teaching and learning of the students. The librarians have continued to show that they are actually "custodians of books" without innovatively identifying ways to support the teaching staff.

The librarians are challenged by limited budget and financial resources – this wasn't a shocking discovery but operating without a strategic plan was surprising. This means the library was not budgeted for in the next over ten or so years. While the library would be looked at as an income generating unit to sustain its own activities with its own generated finances, this was not the case. A fully functional secretarial services bureau and binding unit could fetch the library money that can support its operational budget. This will leave the library fee paid by the students to cater for buying library materials/books if not diverted.

While the librarians showed knowledge of and experience with Web 2.0 & 3.0 technologies, there was no single evidence that such technologies were used in library work, not even one had a library Facebook or Twitter account. No single library had a functional integrated library management system (ILMS). Though the librarians showed knowledge of library functions, policies and procedures, disappointingly their knowledge of library operations never matched users changed and still changing needs such as open access, collaborative learning, technologies used in academic life, etc.

The physical infrastructure limited, poorly planned and managed and depreciated. Limited evidence of support from the college administration with preserving, conserving and restoring the collection. There was no sign of library documentation, be a library strategic plan, library manual, brochure, marketing flyer nor policies and procedures and library signage. While there were notices pinned and wall writings to guide patrons through the library, librarians could only talk about these with no single policy document passed and approved by the college as a policy guide.

The librarians didn't subscribe to or had any knowledge of the professional groupings at local, regional or international levels, e.g. Uganda Library and Information Science Association (ULIA), Consortium of Uganda University Libraries (CUUL), Research Network of Uganda (RENU), Association for Health Information and Libraries in Africa (AHILA), Standing Conference of Eastern, Central and Southern African Library and Information Associations (SCECSAL), International Network for Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP), Electronic Information for Libraries (EIFL), Mortenson Center for International Librarianship, University of Illinois at Urabana-Champaign and International Federation of Library Institutions and Associations (IFLA).

### 4.3 User-friendly libraries': Training development and delivery

The issues identified above required short and long-term solutions. The user-friendly libraries training was one step ahead in addressing these issues. Given the disparities in the

trainees' education levels and work experiences the training was delivered in eight modules divided into three units for over eight months. Unit one covered: defining the college library's vision, mission, mandate and objectives (strategic plan); physical design of the college library; library manual covering regulations (policies and procedures) or dos and don'ts. Unit 2 covered: collection development and management Policy; the relationship between the Library to the college, formation of college library committees; and library partnerships and networks and stakeholders at national, regional and international levels. Unit 3 included: the use of modern IT resources for the management of the library and to facilitate user's access to knowledge and Information; and income generation in the library. It is a collective responsibility for all stakeholders to ensure that library patrons get the best of the library services in the colleges.

*4.4 User-friendly libraries delivery methodology*
To effectively engage the participants each topic was conducted using active teaching and learning methodologies, including:

- Lecture with slides and hands-on practice – each topic was introduced in a lecture form with slides and hands-on exercises. The main goal was to introduce the participants to the concepts discussed, offer opportunities to explore alternative approaches, as well define boundaries for discussion.
- Brainstorming: question and answer – the question-answer approach kept the participants alert and to start thinking critically on the topic discussed – brainstorming sessions allowed thinking beyond the presentation room, drawing from personal experiences to provide alternatives to anticipated challenges. The goal here was for the participants to provide individual choices and approaches to real-life problems.
- Group discussions: case study/scenario and participant presentations – participants were provided with a scenario and asked to provide alternative approaches that could solve the problem based on their personal experience at their colleges. By the end of the group discussion participants presented a draft of the deliverable as per the topic under discussion. More so, group discussions were an excellent approach to test participant's teamwork skills and ability to compromise, as well as respecting team decisions. It was an opportunity to see how librarians will work with the library committees. Group discussions further initiated and cemented the much-needed librarian – academic staff – College management relationship. During the group discussion, librarians, teaching staff, ICT staff and College Management staff, specifically the Principals and Deputy Principals interacted freely thus starting and cultivating a new era of work relationship between them.
- Individual presentation: prior to the workshop, participants were sent instructions to prepare a presentation on a topic. For example, participants were asked to provide their views of what a "user-friendly library" would look like or what would constitute a "user-friendly-library"; the college library of HTC-Mulago was asked to talk about their experience working with book reserves, challenges faced and plans they have to address the challenges; while the college librarian from NTC-Kaliro was asked to describe a situation where they were able to assist a patron, the limitations they faced and how they addressed them. Doing so did not only assist to emotionally prepare the participants for the training but also helped to make them start thinking about the training in relation to their libraries and work.

- Take-home assignment: at the end of each session participants were given take-home assignments to recap the training material but as well prepare for the next day training. Further the take-home assignments provided time for the participants to discuss with their colleagues outside of the training room so as to have a common ground/understanding on some of the very sensitive issues. Most interesting assignment was when participants were asked to review an article and to make a presentation in relation to their library experiences.

- Participant reports: Participant reports resulted from the take-home assignments and participants were asked to make submission on a given topic. For example, participants were asked to review IFLA section on library management and write a two-page report on how such information provided supported their own work; as well a participant report came from their own observation after a library visit.

- Invited talks with library expert: two invited talks by library experts from Consortium of Uganda University Libraries; and Uganda Library and Information Science Association with the goal to share their experience, motivate the participants to strive higher and achieve great things for their libraries.

- Library Visitation: There was two library visits conducted on three separate days – International Hospital Kampala (IHK) Library, Makerere University Library and Aga Khan University Hospital Library. Each of these library visits provided unique opportunities for the participants to explore best practices and implement similar practices in their libraries.

- Visual aids – Videos, building plans and still photos: these were visual learning aids to supplement text during the lectures because they carried lots of information while initiated different thoughts best on the participants' past experience and expertise. The training advocated for the use of active teaching and learning methodologies, likewise similar methodologies were used to encourage participants do so in their classrooms.

*4.4.1 Unit 1 training.* Unit 1 training took place at Silver Springs Hotel, Bugolobi from 5th to 8th August 2015. The training had 22 participants from the 4 project supported colleges. The participants included: college librarians, IT Specialists, teaching staff and college administrators. The main goal was to strengthen trainees' capacities in developing, organizing and administering college libraries through: developing a unique library strategic plan per college, setting up a library committee per college, developing a college library organogram, developing library staff job descriptions, understanding the physical set-up and maintenance of the library and its assets and developing a college library action plan. To fully realize these goals due dates were set for each outcome in the action plan and the responsible team leader (most especially the college librarian) per college selected to report on behalf of the College. A Gmail account userfriendlylibraries@gmail.com and Facebook fun page "User-Friendly Libraries" were created to allow participants share experiences using a single shared platform.

*4.4.2 Unit 2 training.* Unit 2 training was held at Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) headquarters (known as City Hall) from 5th to 7th, October 2015. Committee Room 2 was the training venue and participants held hands-on practice from the KCCA Adult Library and Children Library. Twenty participants including librarians, IT Specialists, teaching staff and student representatives from the four project support colleges participated. The main goal was to strengthen trainees capacities in developing, organizing and administering college libraries through: developing a unique library manual per college;

developing a unique library collection policy per college; developing an action plan for the development of partnerships with different stakeholders who can support the user-friendly libraries in the future; developing memos to initiate relationships with local, regional and international library organizations and associations; and developing action plan to implement the library manual and collection policy. During the recap of Unit 1 training action plan, participants reported implementing a great deal of activities amidst financial and institutional challenges. Among other things, participants reported: re-organizing collections, dusting books, shelves and removed cobwebs, increased library opening hours, improved customer care – user-friendly libraries, conducting library surveys and feedback and improved relationship between librarians, administration and other library stakeholders. Overall, there is a growing sign of attitude change of not only librarians but also other library stakeholders.

*4.4.3 Unit 3 training.* Unit 3 training was held at the Virtual University of Uganda, Plot 425, Zzimwe Road, Muyenga, Kampala, Uganda from 1st-3rd December 2015. Participants held theoretical and hands-on practice on library technologies. Fourteen participants including librarians and IT Specialists from the 4 project support Colleges took part. The training was designed as a practical and hands on training blended with individual and group tasks, discussions and presentations by participants. Unit 3 training strengthened trainees' capacities in developing, organizing and administering College libraries using Koha Integrated Library Management System (ILMS). Trainees developed skills to use Koha ILMS for performing library functions including: cataloguing, circulation, acquisitions, serials management, reporting and statistics; developed skills in scholarly electronic resources searching and discovery – information literacy skills; and skills in designing simple and intuitive websites using Google Sites tools and other open source tools. The staff of HTC-Mulago shared their experiences with the new and expanded library space in the new building. This was much enriched learning experience for the other three colleges still under construction. Additionally, participants were awarded certificates and prizes for successfully accomplishing unit 1 and 2 action plans.

## 5. Addressing key concerns

Several measures, both long and short term were taken to address the gaps limiting the performance of the librarians. The measures taken included: selected representative sample of participants including all college stakeholders as discussed above; active teaching and learning methodologies applied in the training and blended in the content of the training materials; initiated and formulated approaches to collaborations, networks and partnerships; visited different libraries to benchmark library practices and encourage future job shadowing opportunities; and encouraged participants to relate freely, understand and value each other's work to change their mindsets. College librarians were encouraged to ensure library priorities remain on the agenda through advocacy campaigns.

### 5.1 Short-term measures

The user-friendly libraries training was designed as a practical and hands on training blended with individual and group tasks, discussions, take-home assignments and presentations by participants. This allowed participates to engage with the material and take responsibility for their own work. Further, the training material was prepared with a view that librarians support the academic life of teaching staff and students. Participants were tasked to develop and later fine-tune materials designed to support their work. For example, developing a subject bibliography and posting it on the library website designed using open source tools like Google website, Wikis, Blogs; develop library manual including

user-friendly policies and procedures referred to as "dos and don'ts in the library" that promote equitable open access to information; drafting book selection memos; new book arrivals lists; subscribing to open access journals; current awareness services and selective dissemination of information service displays and electronic bulletins.

Based on their library needs and semester calendar participants developed action points and timelines to implement tasks in their libraries at the end of each unit training. Librarians were encouraged to share their experiences through library websites, Facebook page, group e-mail/listserv and Instagram; however, they were challenged with intermittent internet access. College libraries were rewarded for their extraordinary job.

Given their pivotal role in the management and administration of financial and material resources, on top of librarians, the participants in this training were college administrators/management, teaching and ICT staff, researchers and student leadership. Participants were selected to address the current and future needs of the college library. These are individuals that are perceived to have a great impact towards furthering the college library agenda.

The practical nature of this training warranted conducting the workshops from developed but similar library spaces, for example Aga Khan University Library and Kampala Capital City, Makerere University Library, International Hospital Kampala Library and Uganda Christian University Library. Participants observed orientation sessions, reference desk management and interviews, collection management practices, preservation and conservation, secretarial bureau management, etc.

*5.2 Long-term measures*
Changing the mindset of librarians, college administrators and teaching staff is a long-term commitment which continues to demand for innovative interventions. For example:

- Job shadowing allowed college librarian short-term attachments to Makerere University Library, Uganda Christian University Library, Aga Khan Hospital University Library and International Hospital Kampala Library – these libraries were selected because of their comparable practices and size. The mentorship programme lasted between 2-3 weeks.
- On-spot supervision and follow-up visits to assess progress with the action plan by the librarians and college administration and college library committee.
- Ensuring that all library documents – library strategic plan, library manual, library organogram, etc are approved by the College Governing Council and are part of the college wide governing documents.
- Establishing the library committee with a job description for each member– this has strengthened the library most especially as an advocacy tool, planning and budgeting mechanism, awareness channel for library practices, while bringing the library to the agenda – reemphasizing the library's agenda.

To bridge the widened gap between librarians and the rest of the stakeholders, i.e. teaching staff, ICT staff, college administration and students, a college library committee structure and its mandate were established comprising of: Library Committee Chairperson – member of the teaching staff; Library Committee Secretary – College Librarian; Student Representative – must be a member of the student Guild with library work experience; and Representative from each college academic department.

A library consortium was formed involving all the four project supported colleges to participate in resource sharing practices, shared work practices like shared cataloguing, information literacy training, reference interview and referral services; as well a platform for

sharing experiences. A library consortium further demanded for automating library functions to facilitate collaboration and shared work. Plans are in place to install Koha integrated library system.

Cultivating a strong working relationship between librarians and students, academic staff, college administration and IT managers. This was achieved by ensuring that librarians innovatively implement library practices and skills acquired from the workshop; as well show their relevance to the academic life of the academic staff. Cultivating relationships takes a great deal of time, thus college librarians were coached on: creating inclusive library committees, timely response to user needs, design library programmes that address user needs, keeping with changing technology to suite changing user needs, seeking customer feedback and collecting user statistics to support their requests, strengthening the library's financial based by starting a secretarial bureau and conducting user surveys to understand users' information-seeking behaviour.

To improve the awareness of new developments in the library world, college librarians were introduced to library networks at national, regional and international levels as a result they participated in conferences, workshops, seminars at local, regional and international level. For example, for the first time and with funding from Belgium Technical Cooperation, college librarians attended 81st IFLA World Library and Information Congress in South African in 2015. As well college libraries are now members of the Consortium of Uganda University Libraries and Uganda Library and Information Science Association and have attended meetings of these two very important library organisations in Uganda's LIS profession. The college librarians have attended meetings and workshops organized by these two organisations.

### 5.3 Key achievements and outcomes

At the end of the three units training participants were able to collectively develop: Unique College Library Strategic Plan (Vision, Mission, mandate and objectives) developed per College; Library Organogram developed unifying all the 4 project-support Colleges; College Library Committee – structure developed unifying all the 4 project-support Colleges; Library staff job description; Library Action Plan with due dates, deliverables and responsibilities for implementation; agreed on the Organisation of key sections of the library such as reserved and public spaces; Furniture and equipment inventory (assets); Unique College Library Manual developed per College; Unique Library Collection Policy developed per College; Initiated partnerships with KCCA Library and Consortium of Uganda University Libraries; Developed skills to use Koha ILMS for performing library functions including: cataloguing, circulation, acquisitions, serials management, reporting and statistics; Developed skills in scholarly electronic resources searching and discovery – information literacy skills; Gained skills in designing simple and intuitive websites using Google Sites tools; action Plan due dates, deliverables and responsibilities developed and implemented; and improved working relationship between the stakeholders was visible.

To further the user-friendly libraries principle of putting users in the centre of the library's operations, support active teaching and learning methodologies and activities with emphasis on getting engaged in transforming spaces, services, outreach to users and collections the following initiatives are currently implemented in the colleges: getting approval of all library policy documents by College Governing Council, initiate job shadowing opportunities, conducting on-spot supervision, guide libraries to set up college library committees and their job description, design library websites, develop dissemination sessions for all library policies, incorporate user-friendly language in all library documents, initiate income generation activities for libraries, set terms of reference for library staff and

staffing as per college organogram, procurement of library tools like DDC and library of congress subject headings (LCSH), encourage attendance to webinars and space planning for the new libraries.

## 6. Conclusion
Detailed programme to follow-up with the action plans from the training to ensure sustainability of the skills acquired by the trainees is currently being implemented. The follow-up action plan will build on the existing resources and demand result oriented actions from the college librarians. Based on the progress so far made, there is no doubt that the college librarians and the entire stakeholders have the capacity to cause change in their libraries. What needs to be done now is to keep motivating college librarians through a well laid out action points as a guide under the supervision of a professional. If given the required support from college management and the Ministry, it is hoped that these libraries are on the right trajectory not only in supporting active teaching and learning but also positively influencing the change in the communities around them. In a future article we hope to report on the implementation plans including progress with seizing the achievements. The future article will address issues of approval of library manual, library collection development policy by the College Council, constitution of a library committee, implementation of the library organogram, weeding policy and action plan, establishment of college library consortium, creation of income generating activities for the college library, implementation of Koha integrated management system, library website design, job shadowing practices, support supervision, participation in CUUL and ULIA, library spaces and user-friendly libraries.

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