Engaging Diverse Communities: Developing Library Services that Develop Communities

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Abstract

Library services that effectively engage with all groups of people within their communities lead to community development. This paper takes ideas gained from attending World Library and Information Congress 81st IFLA General Conference and Assembly, with the theme Dynamic Libraries: Access, Development and Transformation, held in Cape Town in 2015, and applies them to the Western Australian context. Includes recommendations for Western Australian Public Libraries.

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Engaging Diverse Communities: Developing Library Services that Develop Communities

Public Libraries in Western Australia today are situated in very diverse communities. Meaningful engagement with the many groups within these communities will be key to the longevity of library services. Engaging with all individuals and groups within the community will allow the community to develop, raising the quality of life of all members of the community. Public Libraries need to ensure that they are engaging with all groups within their communities in order to empower individuals and groups within the community to develop to their full potential, and thus develop the community as a whole. Public Libraries, by providing services including, but not limited to,

- Access to information

- Preserving and facilitating access to cultural heritage

- Providing activities and training sessions

work to reduce inequality and provide people with the skills and confidence to better their own position in society, which has a wider flow-on effect for the local economy. The focus here is on services and programmes, rather than library spaces. Activities and events that bring diverse groups of people together have the potential to benefit all groups involved, fostering greater understanding of one another and developing greater community spirit, in addition to achieving a specific aim or developing a particular skill. Serving all groups within a diverse community will elevate the community's regard for the library.

The greeting from the National Committee of the South Africa section in the final announcement of the World Library and Information Congress 2015, states that libraries need to connect with civil society to demonstrate the value they add in areas such as:

- Eradicating poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and ignorance

- Early childhood development

- Youth services

- Women's health

- Local economic development (Molawa & Satgoor, 2015, p. 8)

As described in the principles of the Lyon Declaration on Access to Information and Development, access to information can support individual and community development by empowering all people to:

- Exercise their rights – civil, political, economic, social, cultural

- Be economically active, productive and innovative

- Learn and apply new skills

- Enrich cultural identity and expression

- Take part in decision-making and participate fully in society

- Create community-based solutions to development challenges

- Ensure accountability, transparency, good governance, participation and empowerment (IFLA, 2014)

Libraries have the power to be pivotal in the development of the communities they are situated in by:

- Providing access to information that supports individuals and groups to guide their own development

- Focusing on issues that are relevant to the local population

- Preserving cultural heritage and ensuring future access to it

- Providing space and opportunity for community participation in decision making

- Offering training to help people gain the skills they require to fully engage in the information society (IFLA, 2014)

It is important to recognise that the biggest potential for community development is by enabling the most disadvantaged and marginalised groups in the community equal access to information, and access to and assistance in the use of technology, and that this necessitates access to these, including access to the internet, being free of charge.

Public Libraries can be viewed as "neutral spaces, rising above societal complications to address the needs of a diverse population" (Grotelueschen, 2015, p. 2). Libraries have the ability to find "creative ways to address the social issues" affecting their communities through creating new services and programmes that "help develop all sectors of the population", thereby "inspiring change in their communities" (Grotelueschen, 2015, p. 2).

> By bringing people together to build skills, knowledge, and support, the library is helping communities become stronger, healthier, and more peaceful, prosperous and connected. Public libraries and librarians are recognizing the potential in creating community spaces with reactive and inclusive programming for the changing community (Grotelueschen, 2015, p. 4).

Public Libraries must seek to gain a thorough understanding of who makes up the community they are situated in and that their needs are; design programmes and services tailored to those needs; evaluate programmes and services to ensure the community's needs are continually met; and measure the impact the library is having on the development of the community.

Understanding the Community and Designing Services that Cater to their Needs

In order to best tailor its services and programmes to a its particular community, ensure every member of the community has their information needs met, and has access to the full range of library and information services, a Public Library must undertake community analysis to understand exactly who makes up the community. In addition, Public Libraries must seek to truly understand the needs of the community in order to provide targeted services that cater to the actual, rather than perceived, needs of the community. A number of tools exist for a community needs assessment, including:

- Profiling

- Committees to identify needs

- Researchers

- Interaction

- Individual information requests/ suggestions

- Involving representatives from different groups in collection development

- Design Thinking

Ensuring that the needs of all members of the community are catered for and involving them in the process will ensure that the community has a sense of ownership of the services and resources offered by the library, making them powerful advocates.

One method of understanding the needs of the community and coming up with services is through implementing the Design Thinking for Libraries Toolkit, created by design company IDEO in partnership with Chicago Public Library and Aarhus Public Libraries. The toolkit is available free of charge (www.designthinkingforlibraries.com) and is under Creative Commons license. It has the potential to be an incredibly valuable tool for Western Australian Public Libraries to use in designing services to meet the unique needs of their communities. An overview of Design Thinking is provided here, but it is recommended that Public Libraries access all resources available. Design Thinking can be described simply as human-centred design. It is a creative approach to problem-solving, starting with the people being designed for, and ending with new solutions tailored to their needs (Bech-Petersen & Saenz, 2015). It can be used to find innovative solutions, and successful outcomes are achieved where feasibility, viability and desirability meet (Bech-Petersen & Saenz, 2015). There are three main phases involved in the Design Thinking process: inspiration, ideation and iteration.

INSPIRATION is about framing a design challenge and discovering new perspectives on the opportunity.

IDEATION is about generating ideas and making them tangible.

ITERATION is about continual experimentation based on user feedback.

I have a challenge.

I've learned something.

I have a prototype.

How do I approach it?

How do I interpret it and express my ideas?

How do I test it with users and refine it?

(IDEO, p. 3)

Design Thinking starts with a "design challenge", identified by asking questions about the library and its services, for example:

- "What is something you want to change in your library?"

- "Is there a problem or an opportunity that you've been thinking about?"

and listening to the things library staff and/ or users complain about or wish could be better (IDEO, p. 4). Design challenges should be framed as questions, in the format of "How might we?" questions, as this puts the design team in the "mindset of arriving at impactful solutions" and helps to "generate as many ideas as possible along the way" (IDEO, p. 4). It is crucial that the challenge is defined well, if it is too broad it will not be possible to "arrive at an actionable solution", and if it is too narrow, the design team will "risk constraining the kinds of solutions" they come up with (IDEO, p. 4). The process of defining the design challenge involves

identifying the target group and their behaviours; identifying the types of solutions the library

wants to pursue; deciding how success will be defined; and identifying any obstacles (Bech-

Petersen & Saenz, 2015). A "How might we?" question follows the format:

> How might we (do something) in order to (fulfil a particular need) for (target group of
>
> users)?

The first phase of design thinking is inspiration. Inspiration starts with the library user's

experience. This requires those undertaking a design project to empathise with the user (Bech-

Petersen & Saenz, 2015), necessitating research into the user experience, including user

interviews, expert interviews, observation, immersive experiences and analogous experiences

(Bech-Petersen & Saenz, 2015). Inspiration comes from being open, listening and observing. It

involves talking to people, particularly the people being designed for. For example, if the library

is designing a new programme for young adults, it is important to talk to them about their

everyday life, routines, interests and values, not just about the library. Immersive experiences

and analogous experiences help the design team to develop empathy by experiencing the world

from another point of view. Visiting other places helps the design team to "see the world with

fresh eyes" and help find new ways of looking at the library (IDEO, pp. 6-7).

The second phase is ideation, where the design team generates "a lot of new ideas in

order to create a design solution" (IDEO, p. 8). The ideation process involves brainstorming and

prototyping. The aim of brainstorming is to generate as many ideas as possible; to identify

themes and cluster similar ideas together; and to decide on the idea most likely to address the

user's needs (Bech-Petersen & Saenz, 2015). Effective brainstorming encourages "wild" ideas;

"builds on the ideas of others"; ensures all ideas are heard; and aims for quantity – "the key to having a great idea is having a LOT of ideas" (IDEO, p. 9). Prototyping involves making an idea from the brainstorming process tangible, so that feedback can be received on it. The form the prototype takes depends on the design challenge and type of solution, for example, a simple 3D model, a digital mock-up or a role play (IDEO, p. 11). The third phase of Design Thinking is iteration, which involves running a pilot project to gain feedback from users (IDEO, p. 13). It is important to ensure honest, critical and constructive feedback is received, in addition to any positive comments, to allow the design team to learn what is and is not working, in order to improve and evolve the idea (IDEO, p. 13).

Two examples of libraries that have successfully implemented Design Thinking are DOKK1 Aarhus and the Chicago Public Library System. For the new library project DOKK1 Aarhus, the team wanted to focus on what the library users wanted, and decided they were going to continuously look at the needs of their users and transform the library based on user surveys and feedback (Bech-Petersen & Saenz, 2015). For the Chicago Public Library System, a large system with a wide range of branches, Design Thinking was used at both branch and city-wide level. At branch level, it was used to take into account the differing needs of individual branch demographics, making sure they have targeted services, and at city-wide level to provide services that apply to the entire population (Bech-Petersen & Saenz, 2015). Bech-Petersen and Saenz stated that it is important for public libraries to notice details about the libraries, their communities and their users; about who the users are and what their behaviours are. They noted the importance of library staff at all levels slowing down and taking the time to notice details, as this will inform how Public Libraries best design their services and programmes. It is important

to be creative and think outside the obvious, and then analyse what you have and tailor it to what the users actually need. It is crucial that the focus is on the people who are using the library's services, and who the library want to use their services – who they are, what they value and how they see the world. Based on that understanding, libraries can come up with an answer that might work, and then test it. The very first and most important step in Design Thinking is to build empathy with users, and it needs to be revisited throughout the design process (Bech-Petersen & Saenz, 2015).

Innovation is an often used word when developing new ways of delivering services and designing new programmes. Innovation does not necessarily mean doing something entirely new and unique, however. It could be re-packaging an existing service or programme, or using an existing programme or service to target the needs of a different group in the community (Bech-Petersen & Saenz, 2015). An example of this is the SeniorGamer programme in Norway, which will be discussed in more detail in the Senior Citizens section of Services Engaging Specific Target Groups. Drammensbiblioteket, the Public Library in Drammen, identified that they had a large target group of an aging population with, or at risk of, dementia. In investigating potential programmes to address some of the needs of this group, they identified that their existing X-Box Kinect console for use by children after school, and unused during the day, had many potential benefits for the target group. In looking for ideas that will fulfill the needs of their community, Public Libraries should be willing to look for ideas from outside the library sector and investigate how they could be applied, for example seeking inspiration from the retail sector, from community events and fairs, and other community and public spaces and services. Ultimately though, when seeking ideas for new ways of providing services or new programmes

to run, it is crucial to always come back to focusing on each library's unique community, who

the users are, and what their wants and needs are. A model that works well for some libraries

may not be suitable for another.

Western Australian Public Libraries should employ tools such as SWOT (strengths,

weaknesses, opportunities and threats) to evaluate their past and current services (Thorpe &

Galassi, 2015, p. 3), and for each identified target group within the community, ask and reflect on

questions such as:

- What do we do well for the target group?

- What are the collection strengths in relation to the target group?

- What opportunities do we have to collaborate with other partners to serve the target

  group?

- What are our strongest contributions to the target group and what can we improve?

  (Thorpe & Galassi, 2015, p. 3)

This process should involve staff at all levels, not just managing and senior staff. In many cases

it is the lower level staff members who have the most contact time with the library users and

therefore have the most opportunity to observe their behaviours and hear their comments. In

addition, the more views are heard, the clearer the picture of the library's service strengths and

weaknesses will be. Thorpe and Galassi also recommend benchmarking, via an environmental

scan and visits to other cultural institutions to seek inspiration from the sector both nationally

and internationally (Thorpe & Galassi, 2015, p. 3).

Western Australian Public Libraries should identify key strategic documents that they should be aligned with, and ensure that they are key players in achieving the goals set out in them, such as how the State Library of New South Wales identified the key goal of the report NSW 2022 of "Fostering Opportunity and Partnership with Aboriginal People", and to support Aboriginal culture, country and identity, and acknowledged that their "collections and services can contribute to this wider goal of building capacity and working in partnership with communities" (Thorpe & Galassi, 2015, p. 7). Western Australian Public Libraries should develop a Business Plan that ensures the library will provide inclusive and engaging services. Business Plans should recognise that all target groups within the community are partners and collaborators to the projects within the plan, and should be flexible and responsive, to "incorporate projects and partnerships identified through community consultation as they come to hand" (Thorpe & Galassi, 2015, p. 7). Business Plans should also be connected to the priority areas of relevant policy and strategic documents, as well as to best practice (Thorpe & Galassi, 2015, pp. 7-8). Strategic directions for future programmes should be to "plan proactively instead of reactively" and to "seek input and build partnerships with communities based on local community needs" (Thorpe & Galassi, 2015, p. 8).

Developing partnerships with relevant groups in the community has many potential benefits. Partnerships can be seen as a form of marketing, in that the act of building relationships with other groups and organisations in the community builds awareness of the library and its services, as well as allowing those other groups and organisations to refer new users to the library (notes from presentation). Partnerships can also provide additional resources, including human resources for designing and implementing programmes. Increasing numbers of new

library projects are being built as part of larger community multipurpose centres/ hubs, and this leads to opportunities for forming partnerships with the other co-located organisations.

Measuring Impact

Just as it is vital that Western Australian Public Libraries understand the communities they are situated in and design programmes and services targeting the needs of all groups within those communities, it is vital that Public Libraries develop ways of ensuring that those programmes and services are in fact having a positive impact on the development of their communities. Western Australian Public Libraries should refer to relevant ISO standards for the measurement of impact, including ISO 2789:2013 International Library Statistics and ISO 11620:2008 Library Performance Indicators (Streatfield, Markless, & Cottrill, 2015, p. 3) and ISO 16439:2014 Information and Documentation Methods and Procedures for Assessing the Impact of Libraries (Patel, Skarzynski, & Nassimbeni, 2015, p. 4). It is important for libraries to be able to quantify how their services are improving people's lives by supporting their development and helping them "be better informed, better connected, and more engaged as learners, curators and producers" (Schrag, Mefford, Cottrill, & Paley, 2015, p. 2). Being able to quantify this will help to ensure support and funding for libraries into the future.

The Global Libraries initiative of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has introduced a Common Impact Measurement System (CIMS), "to equip public libraries with evidence of their ability to drive development … in measurable results like job skills developed, education attained, employment found, money saved, and livelihoods improved" (Schrag, Mefford, Cottrill, & Paley, 2015, p. 3). It is based on a framework that includes "indicators across seven categories

where public libraries are known to be capable of making a difference to their users", which are then broken down into (42) required impact indicators, and a further 53 optional indicators (Streatfield, Markless, & Cottrill, 2015, p. 3). The seven categories are shown below:

Category	People use public library services to…	Public libraries are…
Digital Inclusion	• Access technology • Build skills and confidence with technology • Make use of digital content that meets their needs • Make use of digital services that meet their needs	• A place where individuals or groups can become more digitally included
Culture & Leisure	• Enrich their lives • Preserve or promote their cultural heritage • Enjoy recreational activities • Enjoy leisure activities	• Social hubs • A place for community engagement
Education	• Gain knowledge or skills • Impart knowledge or skills • Improve academic performance • Acquire job-related skills • Engage in lifelong learning	
Communication	• Communicate with others • Connect with others • Enhance their sense of inclusion and community	
Economic Development	• Identify employment opportunities • Increase income and productivity	

	• Improve livelihoods	
Health	• Access resources to inform health-related decisions • Improve their own or others' mental health • Improve their own or others' physical health	
Government & Governance	• Access government information and services • Engage in civic activities • Interact with government officials	

(Schrag, Mefford, Cottrill, & Paley, 2015, p. 4)

While the CMIS was developed to measure the impact of the Global Libraries programme grantees, it is a useful metric for all public libraries to measure their impact to inform programme and service directions by identifying areas of strength and weakness, and to provide evidence that can be used for advocacy efforts and funding requests.

Another method of measuring public library performance and impact is impact assessment theory, linking an individual's interaction with the public library and the resulting change in behavior (Patel, Skarzynski, & Nassimbeni, 2015, p. 4). Similarly to gaining data for understanding the needs of library users, data for measuring impact can be gathered through interviews, focus groups, discussion groups, and surveys or questionnaires (Patel, Skarzynski, & Nassimbeni, 2015, p. 5). The value of a public library to its community can be either intrinsic or extrinsic. The intrinsic value is the "immediate perceived benefit of using the library", for example a percentage of library users feeling that the use of the computers at the library had contributed to an improvement in their computer skills, or that library users felt that they had benefited from attending a workshop at the library (Patel, Skarzynski, & Nassimbeni, 2015, p.

12). Extrinsic benefits are less tangible, but are "potentially of greater value", such as improved levels of social cohesion through connections "between the visitors to the library and staff as well as other community members" (Patel, Skarzynski, & Nassimbeni, 2015, p. 13). As with assessing the needs of the community, "context specific assessments" are important in measuring impact, as "they take into consideration challenges unique to a community. These challenges, when addressed, ultimately relate to both community and individual wellbeing" (Patel, Skarzynski, & Nassimbeni, 2015, p. 14).

In the EU context, a study was undertaken to "collect impact data that would be compelling to EU decision makers" (Streatfield, Markless, & Cottrill, 2015, p. 4). Impact specialists identified focus areas that would be "most applicable to advocacy" and "identified three priority areas where "public libraries as institutions can help meet specific EU 2020 policy objectives:

- "Non-formal and informal learning: new skills and knowledge gained through learning experiences such as organized group trainings and one-on-one consultations with librarians"

- "Social inclusion: access to public services, such as resources for employment, training, housing, and health among disadvantaged and socially excluded members of society"

- "Digital inclusion: access and skills to take advantage of the benefits of digital technology" (Streatfield, Markless, & Cottrill, 2015, p. 4)

The survey questions were designed to align with the wording of the EU2020 priorities and how official EU sources present social and economic data, so that the results could be easily compared with existing data (Streatfield, Markless, & Cottrill, 2015, pp. 4-5). It may be of

benefit to Western Australian Public Libraries to undertake a coordinated project between all Western Australian Public Libraries, and the State Library of Western Australia to:

- Assess the impact of our services

- Align to State development goals

- Compare our level of service and impact on a national and international level

- To identify areas of weakness to improve

- To celebrate our successes, and

The EU study found "clear evidence of the social and economic impact of public libraries and library services", including that:

- a quarter of a million adults in the EU secured jobs through public library computer access

- "85% of those using Internet in the public library reported a positive benefit across a range of areas, including helping them save time and money, improving their skills, providing access to government services, and increasing their access to employment and health related resources"

- "more than 70% of public library users believed that libraries are effective at meeting the needs of their local communities and more than half said that public libraries deserve more financial support than they receive now" (Streatfield, Markless, & Cottrill, 2015, p. 6)

A Western Australian study would provide evidence for a coordinated advocacy effort for Western Australian Public Libraries. Data collected could be used in a variety of ways, such as to create infographics that could be used on social media to share impact data.

Services Engaging Specific Target Groups

It is important to note that there is some overlap between groups and that many people may belong to multiple groups.

People with Special Needs

A third of the Western Australian population is affected by disability. Disabilities can be:

- Sensory – affecting vision and/ or hearing

- Neurological – affecting ability to control movements

- Physical – affecting mobility and/or ability to use upper or lower body; generally relating to the musculoskeletal, circulatory, respiratory and nervous systems

- Intellectual – intellectual and developmental disabilities which can relate to difficulties with thought processes, learning, communicating, remembering information and using it appropriately, making judgements, problem solving

- Cognitive – affects thought processes, personality and memory, e.g. from injury to the brain

- Psychiatric – affects emotions, thought processes and behavior (Government of Western Australia, Disability Services Commission)

With regards to library services to people with special needs and IFLA, people with special needs are defined as "those persons whose living conditions and/ or physical, mental or cognitive disabilities prevent them from accessing current library services" (Mortensen, 2015, p. 1). Different communities may identify different lists of groups of people within their communities who fit this definition.

Being involved in the community is important to all people, and "most people take for granted the ability to go about daily lives in the community without experiencing any barriers" (Government of Western Australia, Disability Services Commission). Factors affecting a person's ability to access information, services and facilities include:

- Degree of disability

- Type of disability

- Physical environment

- Staff attitude and understanding (Government of Western Australia, Disability Services Commission)

In order to have the same opportunities to participate in community life as other people, services and facilities should address the requirements of people with disabilities (Government of Western Australia, Disability Services Commission). People with disabilities should be able to expect that the Public Library is a place in the community is somewhere they can go without difficulty. Improving access and inclusion for people with disabilities also has benefits for other groups in the community who regularly visit libraries, including families with prams, senior citizens and people from CaLD backgrounds (Government of Western Australia, Disability Services Commission). It is incredibly important for people with special needs to be included, and especially, that they feel that they are included (Mortensen, 2015, p. 2). Mortensen states that people with special needs:

- "May lack basic library experience and habits"

- "May not have experienced much pleasure in reading"

- "May not understand the value of the library with regard to leisure, events and learning"

- "May be unable to come to the library" due to being hospitalised, homebound or incarcerated, or because the building is inaccessible (Mortensen, 2015, p. 2)

Others may be "familiar with the library services, but might have special reading needs" (Mortensen, 2015, p. 2). It is important to remember that people with special needs are as unique and individual as those without special needs. They each have a unique set of barriers to accessing services, be they physical, cognitive or perceptual, as well as motivators for seeking services. Western Australian Public Library should access the profiles on different regions in Western Australia through the Disability Services Commission (DSC) which give an estimate of the number of people with disabilities in that area, the number of people using services offered by DSC and the number of people receiving a Centrelink Disability Support Pension and/ or Carer Allowance (Government of Western Australia, Disability Services Commission). Other organisations working with people with disabilities in the community may be able to provide additional information on people's needs and may be able to provide contacts for libraries to consult with.

People with special needs should be involved in generating ideas for programmes and services, and asked to provide feedback on existing programmes and services, "in order to optimize the library services" (Mortensen, 2015, p. 3). In this situation, library users with special needs are partners with the library that serves them. Public libraries should also seek to establish with other professionals and organisations serving people with special needs in the community, as "working with partners provides access to information and knowledge about the user group, and introduces the possibility of involving users in the service" (Mortensen, 2015, p. 3).

Consultation with people with a disability, and related groups, organisations and professionals is in line with the ALIA Policy Library and information services for people with a disability.

In order to engage effectively with people with special needs, library staff need to understand special needs, including an awareness of communication needs (Mortensen, 2015, p. 3). Mortensen argues that "professionalism combined with enthusiasm and visibility is necessary" (Mortensen, 2015, p. 3). The DSC states that:

> Staff awareness of barriers in the delivery of services is an important factor in creating accessible services. Disability awareness should be an integral part of staff awareness training programs for all staff, but especially for direct service or advisory staff (Government of Western Australia, Disability Services Commission).

For Public Libraries, that includes all staff. Library staff should:

- Be "knowledgeable of the many and various reading needs of a range of clientele"

- Have empathy

- Have good interpersonal skills

- Never forget that "people with special needs are just as diverse as all library users, they only have special needs" (Mortensen, 2015, p. 3)

Maarno states that "it is essential to include accessibility issues in the education of future librarians" (Maarno, 2015, p. 4). An example of this in Finland is Celia Library (a library specifically serving people with print disabilities) collaborating with Turku University of Applied Sciences to "develop a customized course about accessible library services and literature", including a lecture by an accessibility expert, workshops on audio books and a teamwork

assignment to organise events or presentations about the use of audio books for particular target audiences (Maarno, 2015, p. 4).

It is vital that libraries support people who require or prefer alternative (non-print) ways of reading, including the use of PCs, smartphones, iPads and tablets, and other reading tools (software), and alternative formats, such as ebooks, audio books, and DAISY books (Mortensen, 2015, p. 2). Libraries need to have different resources and services that will appeal to people with the full range of special needs, as well as ensuring that the building is physically accessible and that the website and elibrary services meet accessibility criteria (Mortensen, 2015, p. 3). There is also an issue surrounding copyright and the creation of materials in accessible formats. It is hoped that the ratification of the Marrakesh treaty "in many countries will contribute to facilitate access to published works for persons with difficulties accessing printed materials" (Mortensen, 2015, p. 3).

An example of a library service providing considerable services to people with special needs is Yarra Plenty Regional Libraries (YPRL). For YPRL, the keys to being in a strong position to provide programmes and activities for all people of all are:

- Staff enthusiasm and creativity – YPRL staff "have brought their own life experiences, expertise and knowledge to develop and implement programs"

- Having partnerships in place and being "confident about forming new ones with relevant organisations"

- Seeking grants for new initiatives

- Being "seen by the community as inclusive, safe places" (Mackenzie, 2015, p. 2)

Weaknesses they have identified include:

- "Lack of awareness by the library of special groups in the community and their needs. These groups can lack visibility because they are not aware of what libraries can offer and therefore they do not use libraries"

- Staff "not always comfortable interacting with people with special needs", so there is a need for additional training

- Resourcing and funding constraints restricting the expansion of programmes to reach special groups, particularly as it is often "necessary to go outside the library to reach these target groups" (Mackenzie, 2015, p. 2)

Western Australian Public Libraries should encourage all of their staff to share their experiences and knowledge to enable the service to achieve its full potential. Western Australian Public Libraries must also ensure that their staff are comfortable telling their supervisors when they feel they need additional training or feel that they are not equipped to deal with something so that that can be addressed. Some of the groups of people with special needs YPRL have developed programmes to cater for include:

- Families with preschool children where the parents' educational levels are low

- Primary school age reluctant readers

- Adults with low literacy levels

- People who are deaf/ hearing impaired

- People on the Autism Spectrum (Mackenzie, 2015, p. 2)

Families with preschool children where the parents' educational levels are low

It has been identified that frequent reading to children is the best opportunity to improve learning outcomes (Mackenzie, 2015, p. 2). *The Reading Rover* programme, inspired by Columbus Metropolitan Libraries' Reading Corps programme, it delivers pre-literacy programs to vulnerable children, with the aim to create a community of:

- "informed families who understand how important it is to read to their children"

- "confident families who know how to read stories for learning and understanding"

- "involved families who read and talk to children regularly" (Mackenzie, 2015, p. 3)

The Reading Rover is an outreach programme, with a staff member trained in early literacy visiting community spaces in a brightly decorated van, to promote the library service and provide children with an opportunity to gain "ready to read" skills (Mackenzie, 2015, p. 3). *The Reading Rover* includes:

- Tubs of picture books

- A pop-up library enabling parents to borrow books for their children

- Read with Me programme – training programme for parents, running for four to six weeks with sessions including:

  o Facilitator reading one or two stories

  o Shared-reading session – parents/caregivers read to child one-on-one

  o Focus on information sharing

  o Early literacy tips and techniques

  o Songs and rhymes

  o Linked activities

  o Emphasis on what parents/ caregivers can do at home

        o   Families are encouraged to attend storytimes at the libraries (Mackenzie, 2015, p. 3).

Funding came partly from a grant, and the programme was developed and delivered in partnership with the Member Councils of the area and other organisations. The programme's impact is measured through specific performance indicators and feedback (Mackenzie, 2015, p. 3).

Primary School Age Reluctant Readers

The Doggy Tales programme, based on Salt Lake City's R.E.A.D. (Reading Education Assistance Dogs) programme was started as part of National Year of Reading celebrations in 2012, and targets primary school age reluctant readers to help them become more confident. The programme:

- "provides children with a non-judgemental comforting and safe canine audience as they practice their reading"

- "develops children's verbal communication skills"

- "presents reading as a joyful experience"

The programme is run through the use of volunteers (Mackenzie, 2015, p. 4).

Adults with low literacy levels

The *Live Reads on the Road* programme targets adults who struggle with everyday literacy tasks, and aims to introduce them to the benefits of reading and libraries through storytelling (Mackenzie, 2015, pp. 4-5). As YPRL were aware that some community members, particularly those with low literacy skills, may not be comfortable going to a library, they partnered with community organisations to take storytellers out to groups of people attending other programmes

at other facilities (Mackenzie, 2015, p. 5). Over a period of 12 months, adult storytimes were held monthly, featuring celebrity as well as staff storytellers, and community members were encouraged to join the library service (Mackenzie, 2015, p. 5). Some examples of the application of the programme and feedback include:

> The Banyule Community Health – Knit 'n Natter invited the library back for a second visit. The audience there was particularly responsive; talking about the stories after the reading was finished. Livingston also seemed to enjoy it very much and asked for a return visit. Attendees of the program at both centres later visited the library.
>
> Eltham Health Centre hosted storytimes for a couple of Dementia and PAG groups. Staff indicated that some people had attended the Health Centre's other programs for many weeks but had not been as responsive as when they joined the storytime sessions; staff were very enthusiastic for the program to continue as it had a very positive effect on participants.
>
> (Mackenzie, 2015, p. 5)

<u>People who are deaf/ hearing impaired</u>

One of the Member Councils of Yarra Plenty has the highest rate of hearing impairment in Victoria. Programmes deigned to cater to this group include:

- Auslan storytimes run monthly at one branch, attracting people from a wide geographical area

- Performances of *The Grimstones* – "a puppet theatre conceived and performed by a deaf performer"

- Hosting Opera Australia's production of *Hansel and Gretel* with Auslan shadow interpretation, providing "a unique and highly valuable experience for the members of the deaf community who were there"

(Mackenzie, 2015, p. 5)

Yarra Plenty Regional Libraries have also developed a staff training module on programmes for deaf people for use by all Victorian public libraries (Mackenzie, 2015, p. 6).

People on the Autism Spectrum

Serving people on the Autism Spectrum is a special focus of the Mill Park Branch of YPRL, "encouraging families with children on the spectrum to feel welcome and included" (Mackenzie, 2015, p. 6). Programmes include:

- Sensitive storytimes

- The reading tent

- Sensitive Santa

- Lego Club

- Raspberri Pi sessions (Mackenzie, 2015, p. 6)

The following feedback was received from an 11 year old participant:

I do not fit in with a lot of the kids at school. When I started doing the Raspberry Pi workshops at the library, I felt immediately comfortable with like-minded people. I normally stutter at school for fear of saying the wrong thing and being disliked, but with this group, we think similarly, we have the same social difficulties and my stutter is gone. I am good at computers, and love learning how to make my own computer games. I have now learnt how traffic lights work through basic coding and now feel very excited that

this is something I might be able to do as a job in my adult hood. Before these classes, I

was very fearful that I would not be able to find a job that I could do. I look forward to

each class and what I can learn next.

(Mackenzie, 2015, p. 6)

People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds

Western Australia is already one of the most diverse states and territories in Australia and

is also the fastest growing, which contributes to the diversity (Government of Western Australia,

Department of Local Government and Communities, Office of Multicultural Interests, 2013, p.

2). People from more than 200 different countries live, work and study in Western Australia

(Government of Western Australia, Department of Local Government and Communities, Office

of Multicultural Interests, 2013, p. 2) (Government of Western Australia, Department of Local

Government and Communities, Office of Multicultural Interests, 2014, p. 2). 31% of Western

Australians are born overseas and 52% of Western Australians have at least one parent born

overseas (Government of Western Australia, Department of Local Government and

Communities, 2015, p. 22). 15% of Western Australians speak a language other than English at

home (Government of Western Australia, Department of Local Government and Communities,

2015, p. 22) and as many as 270 languages and dialects are spoken (Government of Western

Australia, Department of Local Government and Communities, Office of Multicultural Interests,

2014, p. 2). Western Australian public libraries should access the Office of Multicultural

Interests' (OMI) community profiles for information on the people in their area. There are more

unemployed overseas-born Western Australians than Australia-born, and less overseas-born

Western Australians are employed full-time and part-time than Australia-born (Government of

Western Australia, Department of Local Government and Communities, Office of Multicultural Interests, 2013, p. 6), perhaps highlighting a need to focus on job skills, resume and interview skills and job searching programmes for overseas-born Western Australians. Key issues of concern cited by people from CaLD backgrounds are:

- Health and wellbeing

- Parenting and family support

- Skills development

- Employment outcomes

- English language support

- Strengthening the capacity of CaLD community organisations

- Leadership development (Government of Western Australia, Department of Local Government and Communities, 2015, p. 22)

Effectively engaging people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds (CaLD) comes back to knowing and understanding the make-up of the particular community in order to create services that will suit them. This should be based on a thorough needs assessment, by actively engaging in dialogue with people and groups in the community and by ensuring that it is included in mission statements and strategic documents. Western Australian Public Libraries should ensure that their staff are comfortable and competent in engaging with people from CaLD backgrounds. This can be done by encouraging staff to complete Cultural Competency training such as the DiverseWA online training course offered by the Office of Multicultural Interests available to anyone with a .wa.gov.au email address, and by accessing the IFLA/UNESCO Multicultural Library Manifesto Toolkit, which can be used as a training tool. Individual modules

of the toolkit can be used with worksheets to increase understanding of concepts of library services to multicultural populations. The opportunity exists for public libraries to find themselves "at the heart of the community by addressing shared societal challenges that transcend language and culture", providing a "community space that is able to support the demands of all cultural, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds", and "to further bridge community understanding and help communities find common ground" (Grotelueschen, 2015, p. 3).

The principles of the IFLA/UNESCO Multicultural Library Manifesto are that libraries should:

- Serve all members of the community without discrimination based on cultural and linguistic heritage;

- Provide information in appropriate languages and scripts;

- Give access to a broad range of materials and services reflecting all communities and needs;

- Employ staff to reflect the diversity of the community, who are trained to work with and serve diverse communities. (IFLA/UNESCO, 2012)

It is also stated that "special attention should be paid to groups which are often marginalized in culturally diverse societies: minorities, asylum seekers and refugees, residents with a temporary residence permit, migrant workers, and indigenous communities" (IFLA/UNESCO, 2012). Services and programmes targeted to CaLD library users should be core to a library's activities, not additional. They should be designed to meet specific local needs and documented in a policy and strategic plan based on community needs analysis. They should also be developed in

cooperation with relevant user groups and professionals (IFLA/UNESCO, 2012). The core actions for libraries outlined in the Manifesto are that libraries should:

- Develop culturally diverse and multilingual collections and services, including digital and multimedia resources;

- Allocate resources for the preservation of cultural expression and heritage, paying particular attention to oral, indigenous and intangible cultural heritage;

- Include programmes supporting user education, information literacy skills, new-comer resources, cultural heritage and cross-cultural dialogue as integral parts of the services;

- Provide access to library resources in appropriate languages through information organization and access systems;

- Develop marketing and outreach materials in appropriate media and languages to attract different groups to the library. (IFLA/UNESCO, 2012)

Aboriginal People

The Aboriginal population in Western Australia is diverse in areas such as culture, language and politics, among others. For example there are approximately 118 distinct language groups in Western Australia (Government of Western Australia, Department for Child Protection). 34% of Western Australia's Aboriginal population live in the Perth metropolitan area, and 66% live in regional areas (Government of Western Australia, Department for Child Protection). Principles that are essential for services to Aboriginal people, including public libraries are to:

- respect, value, understand and be sensitive to Aboriginal culture and its diversity in Western Australia"

- devote time to building and maintaining relationships with Aboriginal people and support

  Aboriginal people to "actively participate in the development, implementation and

  ongoing guidance of service delivery"

  be responsive, flexible and accessible to individuals, families and communities

(Government of Western Australia, Department for Child Protection)

The participation of Aboriginal people in planning programmes and services is in line with ALIA

policy on Libraries and information services and Indigenous peoples (Australian Library and

Information Association). When planning and evaluating services, it is important to "involve as

many local Aboriginal Elders, leaders, representatives from all the local family groups and local

Aboriginal organisations", and ensure that the views of the whole community are heard

(Government of Western Australia, Department for Child Protection). It is necessary to "check

that the community wants the intended program or service, is engaged throughout the project and

has meaningful input into its development, understands the program/service benefits and

confirms that the program/service is appropriate and culturally sensitive" (Government of

Western Australia, Department for Child Protection).

Values of significant importance to Aboriginal people that need to be remembered when

engaging with Aboriginal people include:

- "giving and keeping your word"

- "the importance of family relationships (kinship)"

- "reciprocation (if you give to someone or do someone a favour, you expect to receive a

  favour when you need it in the future)"

- "the obligation to share shelter, food and other material resources with family"

    (Government of Western Australia, Department for Child Protection)

An example of the implications of the value of the obligation to share resources with family for

libraries is the lack of family card membership option at many public libraries. This could be

seen as ethno-centric in favour of Western culture as it inhibits the sharing of resources. This also

has implications for CaLD groups that share this value.

For Aboriginal Australians, collections relating to Aboriginal culture and languages "may

contain the fragments of culture, and knowledge of community and family connections, that may

have been disrupted through European settlement of Australia" (Thorpe & Galassi, 2015, p. 5).

These materials as well as having clear importance to Aboriginal people, have benefit to the

wider community, in that access to them "provides the opportunity to gain a deeper

understanding of the richness and vibrancy of Indigenous people, culture and history" (Thorpe &

Galassi, 2015, p. 5). This was a driving point behind the State Library of New South Wales'

Rediscovering Indigenous Languages project:

> By increasing the discoverability of these collections, and creating educational resources
>
> to better understand them, the library can make an important contribution to improving
>
> the social and emotional wellbeing of communities (Thorpe & Galassi, 2015).

Western Australian Public Libraries should analyse the representation of Aboriginal subjects and

authors in all areas of their lending collections, e-resources and local history collections and

archives. They should analyse how discoverable these resources are to the public and investigate

ways to build awareness of the resources. Libraries should partner with local Elders and

Aboriginal groups to curate and generate relevant content and cultural knowledge in a sensitive

manner, as well as promoting the library service. This should be done in a manner that emphasises the ways in which both parties will benefit.

Public libraries have the power to work at local level to support Aboriginal culture, country and identity. The NSW Government Plan for Aboriginal affairs: education, employment and accountability OCHRE (Opportunity, Choice, Healing, Responsibility, Empowerment)

notes the importance of Indigenous people being given an opportunity to heal past trauma caused by colonisation. It speaks of the powerlessness and loss of control faced by Indigenous people due to the legacy of colonisation and the consequences of successive government policies. To address this disadvantage, and increase the levels of wellbeing in the community, the report points to the importance of Government changing relationships with communities to ensure that real change is made. Libraries and other cultural institutions can be active participants in this process. The library collections are a vital resource for understanding history, and are important links for Indigenous people and the wider community in understanding the past (Thorpe & Galassi, 2015, p. 7).

This is equally applicable to Western Australia, and Western Australian Public Libraries should investigate practical ways of applying these points, working in partnership with Aboriginal groups in their communities, and in partnership with each other where appropriate. Western Australian Public Libraries should also investigate ways of measuring the benefits to the community.

Western Australian Public Libraries should explore the ways that Aboriginal communities want their cultural heritage materials to be treated and accessed. This necessitate building a

relationship of mutual respect with the community, and to "respect cultural norms related to culturally-sensitive materials" (Salvatore, 2015, p. 7). There are several special considerations for librarians working with Indigenous cultural heritage materials to take into account:

- Work with the community to identify which materials have priority for preservation

- Ensure the community understand the implications of preservation, e.g. the implications of scanning restricted materials

- Ensure the community is aware of what happens around born-digital media and information

- Ensure the community is aware of the "complex lifecycle of a record and the authenticity and reliability of a record as it moves through the digital sphere"

- Address who is in control of the dissemination of information (Salvatore, 2015, p. 9)

Young People

Engaging young people is a way to ensure community development for the future. Western Australia has the fastest growing youth population of any of the states and territories, and key issues of concern cited by this group are:

- Mental health

- Study problems

- Coping with stress

- Alcohol and drugs

- Bullying

- Safety in public places (Government of Western Australia, Department of Local Government and Communities, 2015, p. 12)

Public Libraries are well placed to address these concerns, and should seek to involve the young

people in their communities in developing the programmes and services aimed at them, in a way

that will work for them. Libraries should also work with young people to provide programmes

and activities for entertainment and connecting with each other on a social level. Libraries should

seek opportunities to engage young people as a resource for presenting programmes to other

groups in the community, such as teaching ICT skills to Senior Citizens; facilitating or helping

out with activities for younger children; and having English language conversation sessions with

people learning English. This empowers young people to actively engage with their communities

in ways that will have wide benefits for community development. 14.1% of young people aged

12 to 24 in Western Australia have countries of birth where English is not the main language and

17.1% have CaLD ancestry (Government of Western Australia, Department of Local

Government and Communities, 2015, p. 22). Public Libraries should find out what their

challenges are and seek to address them, as well as provide them with opportunities to celebrate

and share their culture with others.

An example of engaging with children and youth to allow for future community

development is Masiphumelele Library. Masiphumelele is a high-density settlement in the South

Peninsula of Cape Town. The population is predominantly Xhosa-speaking and a large

proportion are children and youth (Alexander, 2015, p. 2). Challenges faced by residents of

Masiphumelele include:

- Hard living conditions, particularly during winter

- HIV/AIDS

- Tuberculosis (TB)

- Insufficient services, housing and amenities

- High risk of flooding (Alexander, 2015, p. 2)

There are a number of positives though, a good primary school, clinic, high school and library, supported by a range of NGOs, and while the area still displays the "economic divisions of apartheid", progress is being made to bridge the divide, with the library playing a key role (Alexander, 2015, p. 2). The library provides educational initiatives, particularly in the areas of early childhood learning and gender and HIV/AIDS; provides informational and recreational activities for youth and adults and offers support for formal and informal education through reference, study and internet services (Alexander, 2015, p. 2). Masiphumelele library make use of outreach and partnerships in order to provide services to help develop the community. Each outreach activity is designed to

> Aid in the social development of the individual young person, thereby feeding into the social cohesion of the community as a whole. The programmes are also designed to provide integrated progressive skills so that the individuals build on past skills as they progress (Alexander, 2015, p. 3).

Masiphumelele Library's programmes aimed at preschool and primary levels include:

- Reading Enrichment Programme – Wordworks run weekly reading enrichment classes in which students (Grade 1-3) are linked with a volunteer to work through an organised programme

- School Readiness Programme – children from local crèches are given instruction by trained volunteers in skills that will prepare them for their first year of school

- Parent Programme – an evening programme run by Wordworks where "parents learn to prepare their children for school"

- Stay and Play – a morning of activities and social interaction for mothers and toddlers

- Nursery School Outreach – through partnership with Nal'ibali (a national reading campaign in South Africa to "spark children's potential through storytelling) local nursery schools are visited four days a week, to encourage storytelling at local nursery schools and at the library

- Computer Classes – fun and interactive sessions held weekly

- Lalela Art Project – to enable children to develop creative skills

- Homework Club – a programme led by volunteers to help children with their homework, and to facilitate "exercises and games to improve reading, mathematics and writing skills"

- Recreational Afternoon Activities – held four times a week, including storytimes, puzzles, games, craft and films (Alexander, 2015, p. 3).

The library runs a range of youth programmes to "provide guidance, direction and support for young people" (Alexander, 2015, p. 3). These programmes include:

- IkamvaYouth – a programme targeting over 100 Grade 9-12 students focusing on tutoring, mentoring, career guidance, computer skills and media skills

- GirlzGroup – weekly meetings for girls of all age involving discussions, workshops and outings with the "aim of empowerment, wider exposure and sharing life skills"

- Weekly Reading Club – run in partnership with Nal'ibali, to discuss books

- Computer Classes (Alexander, 2015, p. 3).

A newly updated computer room and the installation of wifi have enabled further opportunities for young people to access information for their personal development and entertainment (Alexander, 2015, p. 3). The library's focus is on totally inclusive approach, with

education, encouragement and support "provided to people of all ages, abilities and strengths" (Alexander, 2015, p. 3). Partnerships have been integral to the growth and success of programmes at Masiphumelele library. By focusing on NGO partners that "complement the values and goals of the library" and engaging volunteers, the library has been able to extend the range of programmes it is able to offer (Alexander, 2015, p. 5).

Offering work experience placements to young people helps build awareness of library careers for young people as well as equipping them with job skills. Young adults can be engaged as a resource for delivering programmes. At Espoo Library in Finland, Young Adults are involved in teaching seniors how to use tablets in the library, a programme that has gained positive feedback from both groups:

> Older people loved the idea of their own teacher and young adults also felt proud to be able to guide and help the elders. Both age groups said in the feedback that they were happily surprised how easy it was to get along and how they talked about so many other topics than just the tablets (Kettunen, Pohjola, & Forsten, 2015, p. 6).

Senior Citizens

Senior Citizens are a user group that frequently access public library services, and public libraries should be open to seeking new ways to involve them in programming in ways that will increase their quality of life. "Social participation and social support are strongly connected to good health and wellbeing throughout life" (World Health Organization, 2007, p. 38). Participating in activities allows older people to

- Continue to exercise their competence

- Enjoy respect and esteem

- Maintain or establish supportive and caring relationships (World Health Organization, 2007, p. 38).

Participating in activities fosters social integration and is key to staying informed (World Health Organization, 2007, p. 38). Many Senior Citizens are at risk of social isolation, which can have a significant impact on mental and physical wellbeing, increasing the risk for problems such as:

- Depression and anxiety

- Poor nutrition

- Heavy drinking

- Falls

- Re-occurring hospitalisation and institutionalization

- Premature mortality

- Elder abuse

- Cognitive decline including dementia

Engaging library services and programs can help reduce this risk by increasing opportunities for making social contacts, engaging with other people and social integration (Government of Western Australia, Department of Local Government and Communities, p. 3).

As affordability and accessibility are concerns for senior citizens accessing activities in the community (World Health Organization, 2007, p. 38), libraries are ideally placed to provide suitable activities, generally being well-placed for access via public transport, being places familiar to the group, and having the capacity to offer free events and activities. Senior citizens who responded to the World Health Organization's study stated that they would like activities

that foster integration with community, other age groups and cultures (World Health Organization, 2007, p. 38).

Where possible, libraries should seek to implement activities that involve multiple age groups coming together, as "better integration of generation is seen as a way to counter ageism in society, which can also mar older people's experience when participating, or even discourage their participation" (World Health Organization, 2007, p. 42).

> Intergenerational opportunities enrich the experience for all ages. Older people pass on traditional practices and knowledge and experiences, while younger people offer information about newer practices and help older people navigate in a rapidly changing society (World Health Organization, 2007, p. 43)).

Many libraries around the world are already implementing programmes with young people teaching senior citizens ICT skills, and libraries should acknowledge the potential benefits of senior citizens teaching some of their skills to young people. Western Australian Public Libraries should seek volunteer senior citizens who are willing to share a skill, and seek suggestions from young people for what skills they would like to learn.

As stated, some of the challenges faced by this user group are illness, the risk of social isolation and loneliness (Hillestad, 2015, p. 2). There is awareness around challenges faced by many in this user group around the use of technology. Hillestad notes that the increasing use of technology in health care can be a source of anxiety for some elderly people, and that exposing them to technology through enjoyable activities can help make them more comfortable with other forms of technology (Hillestad, 2015, p. 2). The main target group for the Seniorgamer programme at Drammensbiblioteket in Norway is elderly people with dementia and cognitive

impairment. The program uses computer games in a way that provides physical activity in a social setting, impacting positively on both the physical and mental health of the participants. The programme has had a positive response from both the target group and health professionals:

> Computer games contribute to increased physical and mental activity. Furthermore, they help to fight social isolation and create positive moments in a safe and social environment (Hillestad, 2015, p. 2).

Drammensbiblioteket has extensive experience using gaming with young people and wanted to see if the elderly would also benefit. They carried out the project to establish the programme in partnership with groups with expertise in health science, technology and innovation, and worked with health organisations in the municipality (Hillestad, 2015, p. 2). This involvement of people from various professional backgrounds and "different approaches to the issues of activity, aging, dementia and heath", has enabled Drammen Public Library to run an "exciting, creative and innovative project" (Hillestad, 2015, p. 2). The library established that the target group often have prejudices towards the idea of playing video games, and need to see the kind of games and be comfortable with the idea before they will want to participate. The library tested different consoles and games, and established that games that use a motion sensor, operated only by hand and body movements, were most suitable for the target group. Of this type of game, Hillestad says

> To participate the gamers are 'forced' to both engage in physical activity and concentrate, in a way that isn't perceived as tiring. It is necessary to choose games without too many effects and speed. In all the games, we have found bowling is a winner (Hillestad, 2015, p. 2).

Drammensbiblioteket collaborated with health care providers in the community to establish contact with people with dementia who are living at home. The library often has groups of people with dementia visit as it is perceived as "a safe haven, free from focus on disease" (Hillestad, 2015, p. 3). In addition, the library's central position in the community as "a meeting place for young and old" makes it an ideal location for this kind of programme (Hillestad, 2015, p. 3). The library has engaged in outreach with this programme, by collaborating with residential and service centres to help them establish gaming activities. Of this, Hillestad states:

> The feedback and response from employees in the nursing homes has been a good help in facilitating this project… Their response has shown that this is not only a good activity because it is fun. It also provides activity and training. Because the seniors want to join the game, they are willing to leave their crutches and walkers (Hillestad, 2015, p. 3).

In order to further assist the target group and their families, the library provides appropriate health information targeted at those who have received a diagnosis of dementia and their relatives, and hosts relevant events (Hillestad, 2015, p. 3).

There is now a move towards establishing a national model for the Seniorgamer programme in Norway, and it has been found that the programme can easily be established in libraries of all sizes (Hillestad, 2015, p. 3). Libraries can use the same consoles that are used by children at other times of day, or purchase them specifically for the programme. Employees who are dedicated to the programme are an essential element of its success:

> They must connect with the local organizations for volunteers and health care professionals in their municipality. In our experience this secures that Seniorgamer becomes a positive and lasting activity (Hillestad, 2015, p. 4).

Engagement with the Seniorgamer programme has been shown to have a positive influence on the quality of life of the participants:

> We have experienced that even people who suffer from a severe degree of dementia have learned to play and that they get many 'strikes'. This sense of mastery and pleasure creates golden moments that last. Some of our gamers has even bought game consoles themselves and are very proud to teach their grandchildren to play (Hillestad, 2015, p. 4).

This programme could be a suitable one for Western Australian Public Libraries to adapt and implement. There is an increasing prevalence of dementia in Western Australia (Government of Western Australia, Department of Local Government and Communities, 2015, p. 10) and many libraries already have game consoles for use by children after school. Libraries wanting to implement this type of programme should identify suitable partners including organsisations, agencies and universities for promotion and evaluation. It could also easily be adapted for other target groups such as people with disabilities.

Many people with dementia may have lost the ability to read, "but listening to good stories and calm music can help to stimulate the memory, as well as provide enjoyment and entertainment" (Mortensen, 2015, p. 2). One method used to stimulate people with dementia is reminiscence. Some libraries have created reminiscence kits, consisting of a variety of materials and items such as short stories, illustrated books and items from "old times", to stimulate memory and help people with dementia to remember and communicate (Mortensen, 2015, p. 2). This could be a worthwhile variation on the Home Reader Services that currently exist in Western Australian Public Libraries. A volunteer could take a reminiscence kit out to a person with dementia in the community, either for a family member or friend to use with the person, or

in the case that the person doesn't have anyone nearby, the volunteer could spend some time engaging with the person using the kit.

Gaining skills in the use of ICT has the capacity to improve the quality of life of senior citizens. In a local example, in 2012 City of Swan staff identified the need to develop a series of tablet classes at Bullsbrook Library with the following objectives:

- "to provide adult lifelong learning programs for senior citizens"

- "to provide clients with the tools to use all the library services, including the eLibrary service"

- "to assist clients to use their tablets for reading, to stay connected and to freely access information that will enrich their lives" (Meyer, 2015, p. 2).

Key notes made by Meyer about the programme are:

- Some participants attended without a device, because they wanted to learn more before making a purchase

- The library regularly purchases tablet magazines, to be user both for preparing for classes and for participants to borrow

- Each session has a set theme or subject and participants receive an information sheet to take home, including "step-by-step" instructions, which have also been made available for staff and patrons to use (Meyer, 2015, p. 3)

There are classes on both android tablets and iPads, and drop-in sessions. Classes are capped at eight participants per session to allow for group manageability and so the participants do not feel too overwhelmed. Participants learn how to do at least one operation on their device at each

session (Meyer, 2015, p. 4). Participants who want extra assistance have the option of booking a one-on-one session (Meyer, 2015, p. 4). Participants:

- Have acquired skis in technology that they can use in their everyday lives

- Actively participate in classes

- Are enthusiastic to learn more

- Are enthusiastic about showing others what they have learned

- Can communicate on different levels

- Can meet their information needs

- Can access e-resources (Meyer, 2015, p. 4)

The acquisition of technology skills has allowed the participants to become "part of a strong community" due to their ability to:

- "bridge the intergenerational gap by playing games on their tablets with their grandchildren"

- Send and receive emails

- "keep in touch with family who live abroad through social media"

- "share their photos and what is happening in their lives with family and friends on social media"

- Use their tablet to read ebooks while travelling

- "use recipe applications to find and share new recipes with friends"

- Access government information and services online (Meyer, 2015, p. 4)

Increasing literacy levels creates opportunities for lifelong learning, leading to personal growth. Individuals within the senior citizens user group who have low literacy levels can have difficulty

making informed decisions regarding their health and finances (Meyer, 2015, p. 5). Benefits for

participants include:

- Opportunities to learn how to access important information

- Use apps to assist in their health management, e.g. prescription reminders

- Access health information

- The ability to participate in conversation about current events through access to news

- Those with limited mobility are able to access information from where they are

    (Meyer, 2015, pp. 5-6)

People who are Homeless

Public Libraries have many features that appeal to people who are homeless. They

provide sources of entertainment; they are places of relative safety where users can find some

peace and alone-time; and there are public facilities (Bolt, 2015, p. 3). In addition to these basics,

public libraries have the ability to assist people to find jobs, and provide assistance and

programmes for education and entertainment (Bolt, 2015, p. 4). The American Library

Association (ALA)'s resolution on "Library Service to the Poor" which includes people who are

homeless, states that:

> It is crucial that libraries recognize their role in enabling poor people to participate fully
>
> in a democratic society, by utilizing a wide variety of available resources and strategies
>
> (Bolt, 2015, p. 4).

Relevant Policy Objectives include:

- "Promoting the removal of all barriers to library and information services, particularly

    fees and overdue charges".

- "Promoting training to sensitize library staff to issues affecting poor and homeless

  people and to attitudinal and other barriers that hinder poor people's use of libraries".

- "Promoting networking and cooperation between libraries and other agencies,

  organizations, and advocacy groups in order to develop programs and services that

  effectively reach poor people" (Bolt, 2015, p. 4).

The above statement and objectives are equally applicable to Western Australia and is also in line

with ALIA policy. The ALIA Statement on public library services clearly states that "the

satisfaction of a person's information needs must be independent of an ability to pay" (Australian

Library and Informaton Association). A principle of the Statement on free access to information

is that "freedom can be protected in a democratic society only if its citizens have unrestricted

access to information and ideas" (Australian Library and Information Association). The

promotion of the removal of fees and overdue charges is likely to be a contentious issue for

Public Libraries in Western Australia, with the question of how best to provide a service that

allows equal access to information for all people, as well as ensuring that the service is

financially viable a complex one. A sample of the range of fees in Western Australian libraries

currently is shown in the table below.

Charge	Examples of range
Overdues	$0.60 per item per week $0.20 per item per day, up to max. $2 per item and borrowing suspended if total reaches $10 - Admin fee $5.50 on items 4 weeks or more overdue $0.30 per item per day, up to max. $3 and borrowing suspended if total reaches $10 $0.20 per item per day, up to max. $5 per item $1.50 per item 5 weeks or more overdue

	• $10 per account sent • $5 for account 4 weeks overdue • $0.25 per item per day and borrowing suspended if total reaches $10 • $1.50 per item
Wifi	• Free • Free for members, 1hr session • Guest pass $2.00 per 30mins • Free, limited to 4hrs • $1 for 30 mins, $2 for 1hr, $6 for 3hrs
Public PCs	• Members free up to 2hrs per day • Members free for 30min or 1hr sessions, max. 2 sessions per day • Guest pass for non-members, visitors & members who have forgotten card $2 with ID, max. 2 sessions per day • Members e-mail/internet $1.15 per 10 mins, non-members $2.30 first 30mins then $1.15 per additional 10 mins • Free • Email kiosks $1 for 30 mins • Free for members; $2.00 for non-members up to 1hr • Guest pass for non-member or member without card $2.00 per 30mins max. 1 hr • Members free 1hr session • $4 for 1hr session • Members free 30mins per day, extra time can be purchased if required • $1 for 15mins, $2 for 30 mins, $4 for 1hr • Guest pass for non-members $1 for 15mins • Guest pass for non-members $2.50 per 30mins • Guest mass for non-member & members who have forgotten card $1 per 30 mins

As a starting point, consistency in policy and charges across Western Australian Public Libraries would be beneficial, particularly as people can be members of multiple library systems, and the

differences are difficult for users to understand, and a source of frustration. While there are practical implications for unlimited access, for example number of people waiting for a limited number of PCs, access should be unlimited where possible. Charging for the use of Public PC access while offering free wifi gives unfair privilege to those who have their own laptop/ device.

Barriers to serving the poor and people who are homeless identified by ALA and referred to by Bolt include:

- "Library card or access policies requiring a fixed address"

- "Prohibitive fines, fees, or other penalties or the perception that services incur fees"

- "Staff who are not trained in service to people who are poor or homeless or who are made uncomfortable by prejudices against people who are poor or homeless"

- "Limited promotion at the community centers and organizations which serve people experiencing poverty or homelessness"

- "Limited access to the building by either limited means of transportation or service hours"

- "Lack of programs or resources that address people's experiences or current situations" (Bolt, 2015, pp. 4-5)

These barriers would be similar to those that exist in Western Australia. Particular emphasis should be drawn to the point of "the perception that services incur fees", as there is a strong need for advocacy and increasing awareness of free services. A coordinated advocacy effort between Western Australian Public Libraries would be of benefit, as would networking and building partnerships with other agencies and organisations.

Three examples of libraries in the United States of America providing effective services to people experiencing homelessness are Denver Public Library, Dallas Public Library and Salt Lake City Public Library.

Denver Public Library

Denver Public Library established a Homeless Services Action Committee in 2012 as a result of a group of staff members being concerned about better serving users who were experiencing homelessness. They reached out to other organisations in the community serving homeless people in order to achieve the following goals:

- To connect with the population of people experiencing homelessness

- To refer people experiencing homelessness to relevant services they are in need of

- To reduce the number of incidents at the library requiring professional intervention

- To train staff to better serve people experiencing homelessness

- To remove barriers to accessing the service

- To work with as many community agencies as possible

- To make the library safe and productive for all (Bolt, 2015, p. 6)

In order to achieve their goals, Denver Public Library hired a social worker to develop programmes and services for people experiencing homelessness. The role of the social worker was to:

- Connect users with social services they may need

- Remove barriers faced by people experiencing homelessness from receiving services

- Reduce the number of security and emergency incidents in the library (Bolt, 2015, p. 6).

This would allow people experiencing homelessness who wanted to improve their lives "find jobs, find housing, apply for benefits, and participate productively in society" (Bolt, 2015, p. 6). Prior to the social worker being hired, Denver Public Library staff often felt as though they were being put in the position of having to offer social services when they had not been trained to do so (Bolt, 2015, p. 6). The library working with other agencies in the community through the social worker allows them to work towards the goal "to increase empathy and compassion leading to more community effort in the resolution and prevention of homelessness" (Bolt, 2015, p. 7).

Dallas Public Library

Dallas Public Library established their Homeless Engagement Initiative in 2013. An early assumption of the Dallas Public Library was that people experiencing homelessness lacked education, however 80% of the homeless population in Dallas hold either a secondary or college degree (Bolt, 2015, p. 7). They established a range of activities to engage this population:

- Coffee and Conversation – aimed at providing a place where the homeless population of Dallas can have open dialogue on topics of relevance to them. Topics discussed have included the needs of people who are experiencing homelessness; literature and literacy; art and culture; craft; sports; and fitness and health. Staff spent two months getting to know their users better and personally inviting them to the first session of the programme. Other marketing was through fliers. The only cost for the programme is that of the refreshments provided at sessions. Dallas Public Library collaborated with other agencies and organisations to add value to the programme, with presentations from

groups such as the hospital, City of Dallas Housing, HIV testing and Girl Scouts (Bolt, 2015, p. 7).

- Street View Podcast – podcast hosted by a homeless community member and recorded at the Central Library, featuring interviews with people who are both serving and experiencing homelessness, providing a voice for the homeless community.

- Art and Creativity – aimed at helping people experiencing homelessness "keep busy" in the library, providing them with the opportunity to watch movies, discuss books and engage in craft activity. One successful activity of the programme was to provide cameras for people to take photos of the urban environment which were then displayed in an exhibition (Bolt, 2015, p. 8).

The programmes are provided with the assistance of volunteers from AmeriCorps. The focus is on what people have in common, regardless of their housing status, and on continuously engaging in active dialogue (Bolt, 2015, p. 8).

Salt Lake City Public Library

Salt Lake City Public Library initially received backlash from City residents when the library proposed offering services to people experiencing homelessness and to keep the library open 24 hours a day (Bolt, 2015, p. 8). The programme for serving people who are homeless at Salt Lake City Public Library is driven by six principles:

- Homelessness is a condition, not a characteristic

- People who are homeless are constituents of the library

- The library needs to be knowledgeable of all community services that can help people who are homeless

- The library needs to embrace a leadership role in the community's response to homelessness

- Bring service providers into the library

- Provide the same level of service to all who come to the library (Bolt, 2015, p. 9)

Salt Lake City Public Library has established itself as a major point of contact in the community for people who are homeless as well as a point of service. Library staff worked in partnership with other organisations to establish a community approach to serving people who are homeless, with the library's key roles being to create day services to help people, and to locate these services where the people are (Bolt, 2015, p. 9). The library employs three social workers and intend to hire a fourth. The library also serves as a "host venue" for the Volunteers of America programme (Bolt, 2015, p. 9). One of their successful programmes is Project Uplift – a community fair with representatives from various community agencies and services, including food, gifts, haircuts, photos, and individual consultations (Bolt, 2015, p. 9).

An example of library services to people who are homeless with less official support and resources, is that of Zagreb City Libraries (ZCL) in Croatia. Bunic, referring to her experiences establishing this programme, states that those who work with people who are homeless need a support network as much as the people who are homeless themselves do, and that a wide range of knowledge is needed for working with people who are homeless, because:

> Each homeless person is unique with regards to the factors that led them to becoming homeless and with regards to motives and personal capacities to find a way out of this situation (Bunic, 2015, p. 3).

The first programme Bunic established for people who are homeless at ZCL was creative workshops, then information literacy workshops in partnership with an individual from within the target group who then became a ZCL volunteer. According to Bunic, this volunteer was an important link between the homeless community and the library, as well as the other organisations they partnered with, as "experience has shown that homeless people mainly participate because of a personal recommendation or a person they trust" (Bunic, 2015, p. 4). In 2011 Bunic and the ZCL received a grant from EIFL (Electronic Information for Libraries) for a project called A Book for a Roof, a one year project with the main objective being to encourage people who are homeless to enter the labour market. As part of this project, information literacy workshops were held at both the city library and the biggest homeless shelter in the suburbs (Bunic, 2015, p. 4). The biggest challenge faced during this project was gaining trust and achieving regular attendance, but evaluation showed that

> participation in information literacy workshops and psychological and social job-seeking
>
> workshops contributed to an increase in job-seeking frequency among participants
>
> with some finding a job as a result (Bunic, 2015, p. 4).

ZCL worked to raise awareness of homelessness, and formed partnerships with other organisations working with people who are homeless in the city. One product of collaboration with a partner organisation was the production of a leaflet containing useful contacts for people who are homeless, and through another partnership, second-hand computers were donated to a shelter and a drop-in centre (Bunic, 2015, p. 4).

Bunic runs programmes with very little support from colleagues or the local community and expansion of services is limited by cuts to funding and personnel. She believes that "libraries can truly help the homeless and that they have an important place in the network of organisations

that care for them", however she wonders how long an individual can persist when not provided

with training and support (Bunic, 2015, pp. 4-5). Barriers identified for library staff participating

in library services for homeless people include:

- Other tasks they are engaged in

- Not wanting to

- Lack of training in crisis communication (Bunic, 2015, p. 6).

Both the examples from the USA and ZCL provide support for services to people who are

homeless as being positive for driving social capital, increasing the well-being of people who are

homeless and providing opportunities for people who are homeless to create a better future for

themselves. They also highlight that having documented policies and objectives, and supportive

working groups and networks makes an enormous difference to the success and sustainability of

programmes.

People who are Imprisoned

The IFLA Guidelines for Library Services to Prisoners state that:

> The prison library should offer materials and services comparable to community libraries
>
> in the "free" world… Prison libraries should emulate the public library model, while at
>
> the same time providing resources for prison education and rehabilitation programs, as
>
> well as other prison-specific requirements, e.g., legal collections (Peschers, 2015, p. 2)

Currently in Western Australia, Department of Corrective Services Policy Directive 21 Provision

of Library Services states that the intent is "to ensure that prison library services meet the

recreational, educational, and other information needs of prisoners", meeting ALIA and

community standards "as far as practicable" (Government of Western Australia, Department of

Corrective Services). The policy states that each prison will provide library services either

through the Department or through community-based services (Government of Western

Australia, Department of Corrective Services). Banksia Hill Detention Centre does not currently

have a direct relationship with any public libraries, however this is being investigated

(Government of Western Australia, Department of Corrective Services, 2015). Prisoners are

encouraged to use library services and are informed about them during their orientation

(Government of Western Australia, Department of Corrective Services). As is the case with

public libraries, prison libraries are required to accommodate the needs of people with

disabilities, and those from CaLD backgrounds (Government of Western Australia, Department

of Corrective Services). Youth detainees have access to the prison library for "both recreational

and educational purposes" (Government of Western Australia, Department of Corrective

Services, 2015). Library space and resources are also used by teachers, service providers,

chaplains and custodial staff (Government of Western Australia, Department of Corrective

Services, 2015). Prison library resources include:

- General knowledge section

- Fiction books

- Non-fiction books

- DVDs

- Information magazines

- Prison inspection reports

- Legislation (Government of Western Australia, Department of Corrective

  Services, 2015)

Public Libraries in Western Australia should investigate how they can contribute to increasing the level of service currently provided by prisons in Western Australia, and address any weaknesses or fill any gaps through building partnerships.

In the German context, prison library services are statutory in principle, but in reality, get "little practical support regarding budget, personnel and appreciation" (Peschers, 2015, p. 3). Different states and cities in Germany have organised the provision of library services to people who are imprisoned in different ways:

- Bremen - the central prison library is a branch of the public library system and there are joint events between the prison library and the public library (Peschers, 2015, p. 4).

- Hamburg - partnership exists between the legal authorities and the metropolitan public library system, whereby a sub-unit of two librarians Hamburg Public Libraries is responsible for the acquisition and administration of eight libraries in six prisons, with all media costs being covered by the legal authorities and the legal authorities contributing an annual allowance to the library system to cover nearly all other costs. In addition, in three of the city's prisons, people who are imprisoned have access to the 1.7 million media items of the city's library system via interlibrary loan (Peschers, 2015, pp. 4-5).

- Berlin – there is a prison library with self-check at Heidering prison, but no professional cooperation with the public library.

- Greiz – "the public library in Greiz cooperates in an extremely exemplary and innovative manner with the Hohenleuben prison by way of joint events and media loans. Prisoners have in their prison cells very restricted access to some preset websites, including the

online catalogue of the public library through which they can borrow some items every week anonymously. The public library in Greiz won the German Reading Award 2015".

- Wittlich – there is "professional exchange for advice and occasional events" between the public library and the prison (Peschers, 2015, p. 5).

Mortensen states that investigations have shown that:

> The majority of inmates in prisons have limited education and life skills, and do not come from a background where reading is a frequent or popular pastime. A significant number of prisoners have low literacy and few have been regular users of libraries during their lives on the *outside*. Many inmates have reading difficulties and the library collection should therefore include materials in print and other formats (Mortensen, 2015, p. 2).

Public libraries that are already/ intend to commence working with prisons need to be mindful of the incidence of reading difficulties for serving people who are currently incarcerated, and also consider how best to promote library services to those approaching release, considering they may have little experience (or little positive experience) with libraries and reading, and the potential benefits access to library and information services for informational and recreational purposes has for their futures in free society.

Recommendations for Western Australian Public Libraries

- Undertake detailed community analysis.

- Seek input from target groups in the community for developing programmes and services.

- Create responsive and inclusive Business Plans and policies.

- Measure the impact of programmes and services.

- Ensure that they are navigable for library users and non-users they want to attract with the least prior knowledge and experience of libraries.

- Consider the appropriateness of English-only text based signage in multilingual communities.

- Consider the multitude of potential applications for the use of technology to optimise user experience of the library, but do this with the actual experience and skill levels of the community in mind – libraries must ensure they are not prohibiting their least experienced and skilled users from accessing the services and information they require, thereby increasing rather than reducing the digital and knowledge divide.

- Ensure they are not unintentionally limiting the people who can access their services, through real or perceived barriers, policies and procedures.

- Assess how policies affect access to services by people who are homeless or who otherwise have no fixed address, people who may not satisfy current identification requirements, and people who have recently arrived in Western Australia and do not know anyone else in the state. Also investigate how they can facilitate overcoming these barriers, enabling these individuals to improve their own situation.

- Ensure ICT service are accessible to all, including:

- Language barriers to accessing information and e-resource content through library websites

- Availability of e-resources in languages other than English

- Adequate e-resources available to those who cannot access the library building or require alternative formats

- Adequate accessible hardware

- Seek opportunities to establish or enhance outreach to groups who cannot attend library buildings

- Ensure they are visible to all groups in their communities by being present at community events and by establishing contact with relevant organisations.

- Ensure staff are comfortable interacting with all groups of people in the community, being aware of:

  - Cultural differences and how to overcome them

  - Mental health issues

  - Alternative and augmentative communication methods

- Seek to develop meaningful partnerships with different departments within their own organisations and with external groups and organisations in order to deliver effective programmes.

- Seek opportunities to partner with universities to implement programmes based on research/ undertake assessments, e.g. accessibility assessments for disability and mental health.

- Identify the cultural breakdown of their community through statistics, and utilise the Office of Multicultural Interests listing of ethnic and cultural groups in order to establish contact with all relevant groups with a view to building partnerships.

- Make use of the Office of Multicultural Interests listing of ethnic media contacts, in conjunction with relevant groups, to advertise services and programmes.

- Libraries that are part of local governments that are not already partners with the Disability Services Commission You're Welcome – AccessWA should take a leadership role within their local government to campaign for their participation.

- Investigate opportunities for partnering with organsations such as PCYC serving at-risk youth to provide these young people with additional opportunities to create better future outcomes for themselves.

- Ensure that the library's staff culture enables staff of all levels to feel confident in passing information and observations on library users, and ideas for possible solutions on to their supervisors and managers, and that supervisors and managers will take their input seriously and act on the information provided.

- Opinions and ideas of library staff of all levels should be sought and acted in areas such as how to reach users; developing new services; and arranging spaces for wayfinding.

Case Studies

Harare Library

- Harare is a sub-section of the suburb of Khayelitsha, outside Cape Town. 52% of the population live in formal dwellings and 48% live in informal dwellings. Unemployment in the area is at 37% (Patel, Skarzynski, & Nassimbeni, 2015, p. 3).

- The library opened in 2011 and is situated in a multipurpose centre, Harare Square, which was upgraded through a project called Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading.

- The library was "constructed and partially stocked using funds from foreign donors, Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading and Carnegie Corporation, and the City of Cape Town (Patel, Skarzynski, & Nassimbeni, 2015, p. 3).

- The area received a Conditional Community Libraries Grant. These grants target communities with "the objective of providing and improving library infrastructure and services to meet community needs and to promote a culture of reading", aiming to combat low literacy levels (Patel, Skarzynski, & Nassimbeni, 2015, p. 1).

Facilities and features

- Fundla Udlale - dedicated early years space, based on the Baltimore County Public Library Storyville Concept – the space is divided into sections that allow young children to learn through play while developing essential skills

- study hall

- area for teenagers to hang out

- meeting rooms

- gaming room.

- recreational features - outside chess area and a big blackboard used by children as an expression board

ICT

- information kiosks with touch screens to allow users to access the OPAC, library website and other community information

- touch screens in Fundla Udlale to allow children to play educational games

- mini laptops for Fundla Udlale to facilitate young children gaining familiarity with technology

- Smart Cape PCs

Services

- Storytelling sessions – different age groups on different days

- Bulk loans

- Class visits

- Holiday programmes

- Library orientation

- Literacy programmes

- Reading programmes

  - Know your alphabet

  - Form words, then sentences

  - Punctuation

  - Word search

- Tuition

- Talent search for teens – partnership with Isiphiwo Arts Entertainment – drama, music, poetry

- Life Skills – partnership with Generation of Leaders Discovered – examples of topics covered include life orientation guides and peer pressure explained

- Labour Issues (adults) – In house Department of Labour Office

- Teen Book Club

- DVDs in AV area weekly

- Baby Boomers Day in Gaming Centre – playing games on the Wiis, car racing/ driving skills

- Grassroots Education

  o Storytelling

  o IT

  o Writing on the blackboard

  o DVDs

  o Puppet shows

  o Indoor games

  o Play

- Gaming centre

- Early Childhood Development, Health and Nutrition, Youth and Economic Development – partnership with Catholic Welfare Department – train/ capacitate ECD principals and communities

- Career Development Workshops – partnership with AEDC and Cape Town Activia

- CV and cover letter development

- Job hunting skills

- Interview management

<u>Library use and impact</u>

- The biggest users of Harare Library are:

  - Those under 40 years (88%)

  - Those under 25 years (50%)

  - School students (26%)

  - Tertiary students, or students completing correspondence courses (20%)

  - Unemployed people (32%) (Patel, Skarzynski, & Nassimbeni, 2015, p. 6)

- The library offers respite from the challenges faced by learners from informal settlements (Patel, Skarzynski, & Nassimbeni, 2015, p. 9).

- Borrowing items is not a primary reason for people to use Harare Library. The primary reasons are:

  - To use computers

  - To use a photocopier

  - To work or study

  - To look for jobs (either online or in newspapers)

  - To do research for formal education (Patel, Skarzynski, & Nassimbeni, 2015, p. 10)

- For children with no access to technology at home, the library provides exposure to allow them to develop the ICT skills that will allow them to succeed at school in the current information environment.

Figure 1 Harare Library front

Figure 2 Harare Library exterior community artwork

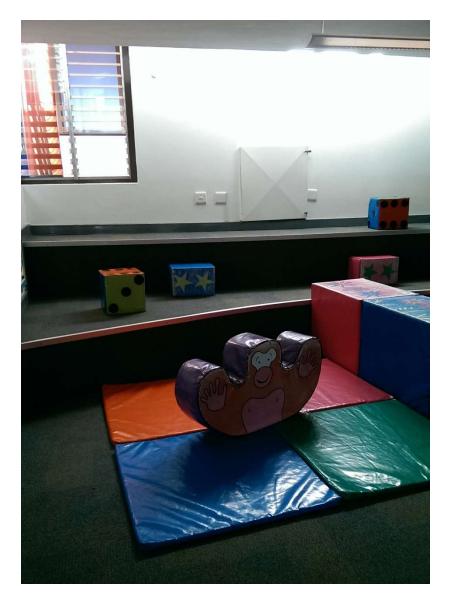*Figure 3 Harare Libary interior community artwork - circulation desk*

Figure 4 Fundla Udlale - play space

Figure 5 Fundla Udlale

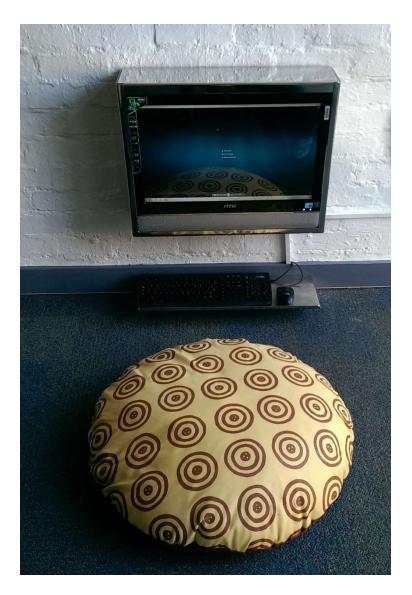*Figure 6 Fundla Udlale - mini laptops*

Figure 7 Fundla Udlale - touch screens

Elsies River Library

- Elsies River is an impoverished township on the Cape Flats.

- The area is affected by:

  o high illiteracy levels

  o unemployment

  o gangs

- high levels of communicable and lifestyle related diseases.

- The primary source of income in the area is from government social grants.

- Through library services, the staff of Elsies River Library with the assistance of the Elsies River Friends of the Library aim to:

  - Reduce the vulnerability of the community

  - Improve the community from within

  - Improve literacy levels

  - Cultivate a love of reading

  - Increase and develop knowledge

  - Implement programmes to create access to socio-economic opportunities

  - Inspire residents of the community

  - Create a safe environment for residents to relax in

  - Provide opportunities for residents to develop skills

Services and Programmes

- Storytelling

- Bulk loans

- Class visits

- Library orientation

- Literacy programmes

- Reading programmes - staff and volunteers run a one-on-one reading programme with children who have difficulty reading to build their confidence and inspire a love for reading

- Chess club

- Holiday programmes

- Computer training

- Teen zone

- Book club – meets monthly:

  o promotes reading for pleasure

  o provides the opportunity for readers to share with each other

  o partners with other groups in the community to provide information on topics of importance to the community, such as health

- The library hosts regular meetings with parents of toddlers to:

  o advise them on suitable books

  o show them how to tell stories to their children and what to focus on at home

  o emphasise the importance of sharing stories for providing a connection to heritage, strengthening language skills, developing reading skills and fostering imagination

- Community Dialogue sessions for youth – allows them to discuss topics such as politics, religion, drugs, safe sex, HIV and AIDS and how these issues affect the community, particularly youth. Young people are encouraged to offer opinions and propose solutions, and to develop leadership skills.

- Heritage and cultural programmes:

  o Book launches

  o Cultural activities

  o Family history programmes

Figure 8 Elsies River Library exterior

Figure 9 Elsies River Library entrance

Figure 10 Elsies River Library interior

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