

African Library Summit 1 and 2: an overview

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MY BRIEF: SUMMIT 1 AND 2

- Reflect back to conference delegates the themes from plenary and drilldown sessions, questions, and exhibition posters
 - Reflect on the themes, tensions, and blind spots
 - Connect themes with frameworks and action plan to be developed
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SUMMIT 1: THE FUTURE OF AFRICAN LIBRARIANSHIP - EXPECTATIONS AND SUCCESSES

Expectations

- Draw up an Action Plan
- Formulate practical outcomes
- First of a series of summits on the continent
- Start a Forum for the African LIS community
- Where are special libraries in a future African librarianship?
- Construct a bridge from developing to developed world
- Scale the peaks from which we can see the promised land of a future African librarianship

Successes

- Action Plan led to actual new initiatives
- African Public Libraries Summit
- African Library and Information Association
- Forum of National Libraries of Africa
- Summit 2
- Special libraries added
- Forthcoming publications on summits 1 and 2
- Francophone and Lusophone Africa (attendance and simultaneous translation)
- A programme with international representation
- Summit 2's focus on emerging leaders

SUMMIT 2: THE HORIZON AND BEYOND - NEW EXPECTATIONS

Unisa Management; Unisa Council; Organisers of Summit 2

- How leadership should change to meet the future
 - Change as 'new normal'
 - Sustainable innovation in LIS organisations
 - Access to information and preserving cultural heritage
 - Take outcomes back to countries and integrate into work
 - Look forward to new action plan, and possibly Summit 3
 - What do we see beyond the horizon?
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LEADERSHIP - THE HORIZON AND BEYOND

Summit 1: Leaders who have seen the promised land

- Can leadership be taught?
- Need to be passionate; mentorship
- Some leaders leave an infrastructure behind
- Leadership is about knowing and believing in oneself
- Embedded librarian, eg. placed with faculty
- US embassies can benefit national libraries and lib associations

Summit 2: Leaders who will enter the promised land

- Top ten leadership qualities
- Emerging leaders among established leaders
- The Madei Mangori 'test'
- Who are Africans - new African Library & Information Association?
- African Diaspora leadership?
- Laying down leadership

LEADERSHIP – SOME KEY POINTS

- Ten leadership qualities: understand context; practical and solution-oriented; voice of the followers (political process); taking responsibility; courageous (calculated risks); trustworthy; create and catch the vision; leading by example; compassionate and empathetic (firm but fair); accepting criticism (mental toughness).
- Also credibility; commit for the long term; tolerant; consultative; network; good judgement and political sense.
- Global Leadership Programme projects include Africans: copyright limitations and exceptions; change agents; building strong library associations

INNOVATION - THE HORIZON AND BEYOND

Summit 1 (exploratory)

- IK is ebbing away and should be collected as a national resource but what about ownership and the interest of international organizations
- Are libraries collaborating with funders, eg IFLA on advice for projects such as Indigenous languages, a portal to African research, mobile technologies
- There is a need for a common portal to prevent silos
- Similar to European companies that ask Africans to digitise for them and give free access, it is necessary to think big to digitize into a server and give back to country from which data is captured
- National language policies marginalize other indigenous languages, and governments need to re-visit language policies

Summit 2 (focused)

- Solving problems not solutions without problems - **How do innovations do better what libraries have always been doing?**
- Innovation possible within sections of larger environments
- Africans do innovate - *Ex Africa semper aliquid novi* (Pliny the elder - 2000 years ago)
- From Africa, the hopeless continent (2000) to Africa rising (2011)
- Modernisation vs Africanisation
- Do what Africans do naturally to relate to each other (oral/literate/digital)
- Digital preservation of cultural heritage and 'cultures of scholarship'

WORLD CAFE WORKSHOP ON LEADING INNOVATION

Bringing together the themes of Day 1 and Day 2

- Notes for successor
- How to make libraries build/sustain innovative organizations
- Challenges of leadership
- Elements of innovation in a knowledge society
- Dos and don'ts of leadership
- What are the components that make an African leadership system

AFRICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS

Summit 1 (A dream)

- A register of professionals, and codes of ethics
- Channels of communication include websites, newsletters, advocacy, international days journals to raise visibility
- Engage with bills and implications of laws that impact on LIS
- Establishment, sustainability, funding, office space
- *How will national associations relate to an African Library Association?*
- *Are there examples of continental associations in other professions?*

Summit 2 (The future)

Launch of African Library
and Information
Association

Today

TRAINING OF LIS PRACTITIONERS: LEADERSHIP FOR CHANGE

Summit 1

- Concerns about course offerings and overloaded curriculum
- Second Masters programme providing breadth instead of depth
- Internship not working because there is no standard and poor communication
- MOU necessary but who designs this? Other ways of improving practical work include private sector involvement, role models, experienced librarians
- Future librarians should be multi-skilled
- Library schools are not accredited - Library Associations should get involved
- Formal agreements between employers and LIS educators are necessary

Summit 2

????

PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY INFORMATION PRACTITIONERS – LEADERSHIP FOR CHANGE

Summit 1

- Partnerships between academic libraries, local authorities, traditional leaders, philanthropy
- Public libraries in forefront of 'realization of knowledge-based societies'
- Public libraries should become community universities
- Stakeholder challenges for rural community development
- Training, advocacy, lobbying and ICT
- How to disseminate indigenous/African knowledge (EIFL-PLIP)

Summit 2 (ethics, mentoring, gender)

- Mentorship should go beyond one-on-one and extend to all staff
- Emerging leaders should take the initiative and offer themselves to be mentored
- A leader must be ready to *live by example*, in accordance with an established code of ethics
- Gender should be linked to human rights and mentorship
- Thinking beyond the immediate environment that benefits the community, and not only in terms of provision of information

PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY INFORMATION PRACTITIONERS – SUSTAINABLE INNOVATION

Recommendations

- Adapt a Code of Ethics using IFLA, ALA, National Institutions and Associations Codes of Ethics as guides. For enforcement, create an Ethics and Integrity committee within the organization
- A policy on mentorship that includes succession planning must be well-structured and linked with organizational goals
- In order to leave a legacy, a leader must have a plan that outlines his or her vision, and inspire followers to help accomplish it

Leadership is not just about human capital. It should be embedded in the organizational principles, and recognize that each staff member has leadership potential that should be nurtured

ACADEMIC, RESEARCH, SPECIAL LIBRARIES – LEADERSHIP FOR CHANGE

Summit 1

- Africa's rich resource of unexplored collections still untapped, eg. Unisa Archives as African IK resource
- African digital library initiatives to pool skills
- Academic librarians ageing, and in South Africa 51% will retire in about 5 years
- Technology is normal part of lives of younger colleagues, and represents an opportunity
- Recommended that current leaders should recruit and integrate them into positions or projects sooner than the usual or probationary period

Summit 2 (ethics, mentoring, gender)

- Should nurture professionalism ourselves
- Younger generation should interact with academic community (IPR plagiarism)
- Ethics Council for Librarians
- Leader feedback loop to discover mentoring needs
- Mentoring strategy and succession plans
- Familiar with institutional and international gender policies

SCHOOL LIBRARIES – LEADERSHIP FOR CHANGE

Summit 1

- An ongoing struggle for better school libraries
- Strategies required: producing evidence of their impact on school outcomes;
- Principals are key targets, as well as teachers' conferences as places to lobby and teach the teachers
- Re-defining School library (library programmes - cheaper; flexible; dual-use; collaboration)
- Special needs schools cannot be overlooked
- Advisory bodies have faded away and high-ranking officials should head school libraries
- Policy not just about norms and standards but Information Literacy education as well

Summit 2 (ethics, mentoring, gender)

- Unethical not to build school libraries; ensure ring-fenced funding for school library development
- School Library Guidelines available but implementation is slow or non-existent
- Questionable procurement practices; publishers bribe principals.
- Private and old model C schools have mentoring systems in place to assist underprivileged schools in establishing school libraries
- Schools should cater for children with special needs and include them in their library program
- Girl learner drop-out rate at secondary level is very high. We need to attract vulnerable learners to assist in the school library

SCHOOL LIBRARIES: SUSTAINABLE INNOVATION

Belief Statement

Noting and strongly believing that education in the 21st century needs school libraries for it to be effective, we recommend that:

Leading innovation

- We should identify leaders who share the vision to develop school libraries;

Initiate innovation

- We should build teams across all library and information services sub-sectors to initiate programmes for the development of the school library sector; and,

Sustain innovation

- We should establish a strong advocacy and sensitization programme to convince decision-makers to support the development and implementation of school library policies (and funding).

LIS in Francophone and Lusophone Africa: Leadership for change

Summit 1

- Difficulties of LIS development after colonialism;
- lack of framework
- lack of national policies, networks
- Recommendations include better training and more LIS schools
- Training of librarians in Cameroon and Senegal

Summit 2 (ethics, mentoring, gender)

- Code of ethics for Africa, and ethics included in LIS curriculum
- Strong library associations to protect interests of profession
- Performance indicators to ensure quality culture in service delivery
- Customer charter for equal access to information
- Refresher courses on leadership in library schools
- Minimize the influence of politics in recruitment/promotion
- Equal opportunities for competent and experienced women

LIS in Francophone and Lusophone Africa: SUSTAINABLE INNOVATION

Recommendation 1 : Lead innovation

- The leadership of the library must be able to share the vision of innovation with the staff, as well as all the stakeholders in the strategic planning and implementation.

Recommendation 2 : Initiate innovation

- Set up a creativity and innovation team within the library to ensure the implementation of innovative ideas on a continuous basis.

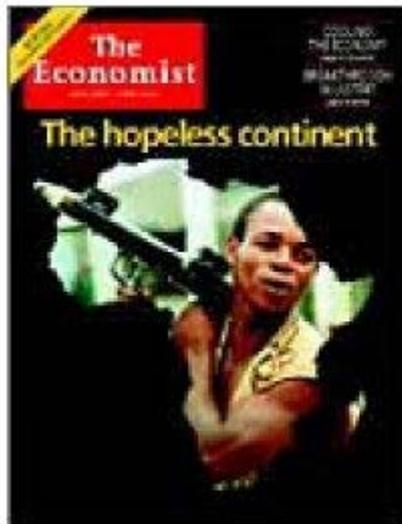
Recommendation 3 : Sustain innovation

- Establish a mechanism for the evaluation and follow up of innovative projects, while at the same time ensuring the availability of adequate resources (financial, material and human).

University of South Africa Library

African Library Summit 2013

The Horizon and Beyond



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