



SDG Stories from Asia and Oceania





Introduction

Libraries are key institutions for achieving the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Asia and Oceania Section, one of the largest Sections in IFLA (to 2021), has collated this collection of SDG Stories from libraries in the Asia–Oceania region. The collection is the result of a call made to members, to share SDG stories from their respective countries for inclusion in the booklet. The booklet aims to showcase how libraries of the Asia and Oceania region are supporting the UN SDGs.

To clarify, an SDG story is a narrative about an activity, project or programme implemented by libraries and their partners, which is addressing community needs, and making a significant impact on community life at local, national or regional level.

The stories in this booklet are organised according to the six subregions of Asia and Oceania: West Asia, Central Asia, South Asia, South East Asia, North East Asia and Oceania. We are pleased to share at least one story from each of the subregions for inclusion in this first stage of the project. We hope that a follow-up edition of the booklet will enable the inclusion of additional stories from the region, particularly from countries that are not represented this time round.

Following the implementation of IFLA's governance and structural review just before this booklet was published, the IFLA subregion known as West Asia became part of a new regional division known as Middle East and North Africa. The other five subregions are now part of the new Asia and Oceania Regional Division.

We are grateful to LIANZA (Library & Information Association NZ Aotearoa) for their assistance in formatting this document.

Please enjoy our SDG Stories.

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Committee Members

IFLA Regional Section for Asia and Oceania

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West Asia: Lebanon

American University of Beirut



Bring a book – take a book

The American University of Beirut (AUB) Libraries collaborated with the Neighborhood Initiative at AUB in 2014 and launched the "Community Book Exchange" (CBE) programme. The initiative has continued since then and has taken the academic library beyond the university walls, to serve the local neighborhood and the community-at-large.

The idea behind this initiative is to provide a platform for readers to exchange used books with fellow readers. The aim is sharing resources, and making reading accessible and free for the community while also supporting the community's environment and people's wellbeing. The theme is quite simple, "bring a book, take a book". Library users, or visitors, can exchange any number of books, with the same number of books from the CBE collection that now includes more than 900 books, all of which were donated by community members from AUB and the neighborhood (the books are not part of the library's collection). The books are of different genres and in different languages and target all age groups. All the exchangeable books are kept at the Reference Desk area and the current list of books is published on Goodreads.

On average, 20 patrons participate in the book exchange on a monthly basis, bringing books they have already read, and taking other books from the CBE collection. Once every semester, the programme holds a Community Book Exchange meet-up, where some of the books are placed on display to remind the community of the programme, and to allow for personal interaction and idea-sharing while books are being exchanged. The meet-ups usually include book readings, storytelling, or music performances. The book exchange can be done all year long, during opening hours, and is not restricted to the meet-ups. The programme has its own Facebook page to make room for more conversations about books, and about reading in general.

Relevant links

URL 1 : <https://www.facebook.com/aubneighborhoodinitiative/videos/2209659599319310/>
 URL 2 : <https://www.facebook.com/aubneighborhoodinitiative/videos/232581997277788/>
 URL 3 : <https://www.facebook.com/bookexchangeaub/>
 URL 4 : <https://www.goodreads.com/user/show/24629815-community-book-exchange>
 URL 5 : <https://www.aub.edu.lb/Neighborhood/Pages/default.aspx>



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Relevant SDGs



West Asia: Jordan University of Jordan



Ensuring access to research

98% of theses and dissertations from the Union of Arab Universities have been made available through a unified electronic repository, making research easier for hundreds of thousands of academic staff, students, and researchers in the Arab-speaking world.

The University of Jordan Library has been a Theses Deposit Centre since 1986. The Library collects theses from local students and from member universities in the Association of Arab Universities, also referred to as the Union of Arab Universities. The Association, based in Jordan, aims to support, connect, and enhance collaboration among the universities in the Arab World.

Scientists and researchers take existing findings and theories, question them, refine, or replace them, and seek to further develop ideas. Global access and sharing allows for faster progress and less duplication, leading to enhanced knowledge sharing which positively impacts education, research, and science.

In 2005, the Library commenced digitisation of the theses, which continues today. Today, the electronic repository holds more than 86,000 titles and is available to students and researchers of all member universities. Most theses (about 27,000 titles) come from Jordanian universities, followed by Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Iraq, and Algeria. In 2019, the repository searchers totaled over 188,000 users onsite at the University, and close to 154,000 globally online.

The project continues, providing benefits not only to students and researchers, but to repository and library staff. A survey of postgraduate students at the University of Jordan confirmed that theses and dissertations are an important source of information in their academic studies, and evaluation results show that the digitisation project has had a positive impact on accessibility and ease of use. Library staff have revealed that the project decreased costs and space necessary for maintaining the physical repository.

The establishment of the theses repository ensures a smooth deposit process, and enhances communication and collaboration among Arab university libraries.

Relevant links

URL 1 : <https://librarymap.ifla.org/stories/Jordan/PLATFORM-TO-ACCESS-THESES-AND-DISSERTATIONS-FROM-ACROSS-THE-ARAB-WORLD-ENHANCES-RESEARCH/161>



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Relevant SDGs



South Asia: Sri Lanka National Library and Commonwealth of Learning



Skills Online Sri Lanka – Employed for the Unemployed

In mid 2020, the National Library of Sri Lanka (NLSL) formed a partnership with Commonwealth of Learning (COL) – Coursera Workforce Recovery Initiative (CWRI) with the aim of helping job-seekers in Sri Lanka to upskill and reskill to enter into the job market as well as reinforce job related skills to regain employment. COL-CWRI offered learners unlimited and free access to 5,000 courses designed to skill and reskill them. In June 2020, the NLSL implemented the programme under the topical theme 'Skills Online Sri Lanka Programme (SOSLP) – Employed for the Unemployed'.

SOSLP collaborates with diverse local organizations such as Vocational Training Institute, public libraries, educational institutions, and employers. NLSL, together with its partners, extensively promoted the initiative and attracted unemployed people, especially youths, women and the differently-abled people across the country.

NLSL successfully completed the programme in March 2021, producing more than 4,300 learners who earned 21,343 certificates from world renowned universities and institutes. Remarkably, the adoption rate of the programme has been 89.8%. This achievement was made possible through awareness sessions conducted at various locations country wide along with virtual sessions and help desk activities including close coaching and mentorship. NLSL and the Colombo Public Library provided their ICT facilities, including Wifi to the needy learners to access the learning platform and complete the courses.

The SOSLP initiative resulted in positive outcomes. It has helped unemployed to find jobs, secure jobs and improve livelihood. A wide range of courses that can meet requirements as well as the potential of learners have enabled the employed people to hone their skills – for career advancement through promotions. Some of the skilled learners have set up small-businesses, created avenues for self-employment to sustain their livelihood. Some have even become entrepreneurs.

Nearly half of the learners enrolled into the programme were females – which means that SOSLP has also contributed immensely towards gender equality, thereby strengthening female participation in the workforce. As a result, COL extended its support to NLSL for another 3 years from April 2021 to March 2024 through its 'Skills for Work' initiative.



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Relevant links

<https://www.soslp.lk>

Relevant SDGs



South Asia: Sri Lanka Colombo Public Library



Empowering women entrepreneurs

With the aim of uplifting the livelihood of less privileged communities in Colombo and its suburbs, the Colombo Public Library launched an 'Entrepreneurial Skills Development Programme' for women. It was launched in 2019 to coincide with the International Women's Day celebrations at the library. To deliver the programme the library established a partnership with the Small Enterprise Development (SED) division of the Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs.

A series of entrepreneurial skills development workshops were conducted by the SED resource persons. The topics covered at training workshops include how to select a self-employment opportunity, where to get vocational training, how to do financial administration, how to prepare microfinance and marketing strategies and available market opportunities. Thereafter, the participants who were interested in starting a business were registered at the SED to provide further training, depending upon their interests. The library together with SED assisted trained participants by referring them to the relevant microfinance organisations.

The first workshop was conducted at the Kotahena Branch Library where a majority of people live in under-served settlements and belong to low income earning groups. The workshops have continued since then due to the overwhelming community demand.

As a result of training workshops, several women have started small scale businesses especially in the food and bakery products and apparel industry. Using the skills and knowledge gained, many of them have linked with popular supermarket chains to market and sell their products. The library also provided opportunities to showcase and sell their products at various events organised by the library.

The programme has directly contributed to the improvement of family income and thereby betterment of the daily lives and wellbeing of these women and their families. The programme has also contributed to the promotion of female labour force participation in Sri Lanka.

Relevant links

<http://www.sed.gov.lk/sedweb/en/>



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Relevant SDGs



North Asia: Kazakhstan Nazarbayev University Library



Inclusive education – Human Library

At Nazarbayev University Library, Human Library events started in 2016, and the Library has hosted five of these activities. People with disabilities, members of the LGBTQ+ community as well as young women in science were invited to participate. The events are part of the library's inclusive education program to address discrimination and other social issues, so that young people will understand that it is possible to live in a harmonious society without physical or mental abuse.

In the human library, people “read” other people instead of books. The event invites a set of “human books” that represent various stereotypes. The goal is for the books to open and share what they feel and how they were able to conquer different types of discrimination. The readers, in turn, ask questions to fully appreciate the life of the human book and promote a broader understanding between one individual and another. Human Libraries create an avenue for people to share their stories by creating a dialogue. This helps them to be better understood by the community, diminishing prejudice and discrimination.

Relevant links

<https://nu.edu.kz/news/third-human-library-nazarbayev-university>

<https://librarymap.ifla.org/stories/Kazakhstan/%E2%80%9CHUMAN-LIBRARY%E2%80%9D-IN-KAZAKHSTAN-PROVIDES-SAFE-SPACE-FOR-DISCRIMINATED-COMMUNITIES/138>



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Relevant SDGs



North Asia: Kazakhstan Nazarbayev University Library



Week of Women

Since 2017, the Nazarbayev University (NU) Library, in partnership with the NU Schools and the Consortium of Gender Scholars, has organised a week-long information programme around International Women's Day. The annual "Week of Women" programme supports the global campaign #BalanceforBetter – a call for action aimed at increasing gender equity and promoting women's rights.

"Week of Women" aims to raise awareness of women's social and political achievements. It provides a space to discuss how the university community can work to promote inclusivity, achieve gender equality, and deliver quality education in support of women's advancement in Kazakhstan. The week-long programme offers events such as panel discussions with mother scholars, book displays and book talks, women's storytelling events, film screenings, and engaging contests and competitions. More than 100 participants, including students and academic staff, take part in the "Week of Women" events annually.

The work of the library extends to its allies in the university. This is reflected in the recently concluded 1st Annual Gender Forum where researchers, policymakers, and practitioners converged. The library was a partner in the event, organised by the Consortium of Gender Scholars. Following the event, an institutional repository for gender studies was created, with a dedicated collection supporting gender research.

In 2018, the library team conducted a survey to evaluate the impact of the programme. All surveyed respondents agreed that the programme fosters movement toward a gender-balanced society. Nearly one out of every three respondents claimed the programmes have a positive impact on eliminating forms of discrimination in public and private spheres.

Relevant links

<https://librarymap.ifla.org/stories/Kazakhstan/LIBRARY-RAISES-AWARENESS-AND-FOSTERS-RESEARCH-ENABLING-GENDER-BALANCE-AND-EQUALITY/148>
https://youtu.be/nN_Wk5GzXqE



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Relevant SDGs



Southeast Asia: Philippines National Library of the Philippines



Book cart for street children

The National Library of the Philippines (NLP) building is located just at the side of (Jose) Rizal Park or Luneta Park which serves as "home" for some street children/out-of-school youth. NLP felt the need to educate this marginalized sector in the society. In July 2016 NLP, therefore, launched the Book Cart Program in cooperation with one of our partners, the Library Renewal Partnership (LRP).

This programme delivers storytelling, read aloud and other children and youth activities to children and youth in the Park. The Book Cart is at the Park at least twice a week. The activities/sessions will last for 2–3 hours and include time for the children to browse/read books on their own. In the activities, proper grooming and hygiene, good manners are also taught. In partnership with other NGOs, food, hygiene kits, learning materials and other basic needs are also given occasionally to the children. The NLP's reference librarians who are also children's librarians are implementing this project.

For the almost three years that this programme has been implemented, the approximately 30 children and youth who are regular beneficiaries have learned to appreciate and love books and reading. They were able to learn word meanings, their reading skills improved, but most of all, they appreciated going (back) to school. They have also learnt proper hygiene, etiquette and good manners. The statistics may seem small, but they reflect our regular programme beneficiaries. These children and youth always look forward to the Book Cart. Some testimonials from parents of these children/youth stated that their kids' interest in books and reading was developed, and also their interest in school. The guards in the Park also testify that they have observed that those children and youth have learned to follow the Park rules and are now respectful.



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Relevant SDGs



Southeast Asia: Singapore National Library Board



Skills for work for the disadvantaged

As an organisation that espouses social inclusion and equal opportunities for all, National Library Board (NLB) partnered with Autism Resource Centre (ARC) to develop a satellite digitisation centre for people with special needs. The partnership provides a learning and working opportunity for people with special needs, so that they can adapt to an external controlled special needs environment and achieve higher levels of independence.

The Digital Services Centre, located at the Enabling Village, was launched in December 2015. Since then, individuals with autism are employed as Digital Services Assistants to carry out digitisation work of NLB's heritage collections such as school magazines, music scores and annual reports. Through this partnership, the ARC beneficiaries have digitised more than 1.06 million pages of heritage materials for the library. NLB worked very closely with the ARC job coaches to redesign the job scope for the digitisation process into bite-size tasks, to fit the individual learning abilities of the autistic community. A structured training programme with a two-year acclimatisation process, along with strong support from the job coaches and NLB, has enabled ARC staff to improve on their performance output.

Soh Jun Yi Mitchell, Digital Service Assistant, said, "I enjoy working with computers and high-tech machines. It's what I've loved since I was young." Li Xin Yang, Digital Service Assistant, added, "Working gives me peace of mind. I can focus without distractions and improve on my work skills."

The collaboration between NLB and ARC exemplifies how libraries can play a significant role as advocates of inclusive hiring. Currently, fourteen individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder are employed at the Digital Services Centre. Through regular employment with NLB, the ARC staff have gained greater confidence to integrate into the community, and are able to contribute back to society.

Relevant links

<https://librarymap.ifla.org/stories/Singapore/LIBRARY%E2%80%99S-DIGITISATION-CENTRE-PROVIDES-TRAINING-AND-EMPLOYMENT-FOR-PEOPLE-WITH-SPECIAL-NEEDS/156>



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Relevant SDGs



Southeast Asia: Thailand

Thai Library Association and Stock Exchange of Thailand Foundation



ศูนย์เรียนรู้ต่อเนื่องอย่างยั่งยืน
Continuous Learning

Library in the Cloud ReLearn & ReSkill ReLearning Space@Library

ห้องสมุดประชาชนจังหวัดสุราษฎร์ธานี
สอนอาชีพ “การทำผ้ามัดย้อม”

วันที่ 9-13 พฤศจิกายน 2563 ศูนย์การเรียนรู้ต่อเนื่องอย่างยั่งยืนสุราษฎร์ธานี
สอนอาชีพ “การทำผ้ามัดย้อม” ตำบลคลองจนาก อำเภอเมือง จังหวัดสุราษฎร์ธานี เพื่อสร้างอาชีพที่ 2 ให้แก่ชุมชน

Relearning Space @ Library

The 'Relearning Space @Library' project began in 2020 by Thai Library Association and the Stock Exchange of Thailand Foundation with the aim of reskilling the community for their second career. Provincial Public Libraries Surat Thani, Provincial Public Library, Thailand Uttaradit, Phetchabun, Lumpang and Ubon Ratchathani Public Libraries are participating in the programme. Their librarians support and train people in the communities towards second careers by using the public library spaces as 'Sustainable Learning Centres for All'.

The Learning Centre Labs at these public libraries are the workshop space, gallery and coffee corners delivering training classes according to the communities' interests. Activities available include online training on digital skills, book repair, sewing and dressmaking, batik painting, hair cutting, cookery, food preservation and processing, and amulets and astrology.

The Learning Centre Labs also provide library materials in the Relearn space which enables participants to reskill by using the library as a source of information combined with local knowledge to develop the economics in the society. People in the communities have enhanced their skills and earned more income to support their daily life and are selling new products in the library corners, the community markets and e-commerce portal. The libraries also provide opportunities to display and sell products at libraries and organise various events to market products.

2021 evaluation reports that at least: 80% of participants in the community have new careers, 50% of people with a new career gain more income, 5% increase in the economic value of the community, 20% increase of happiness of people with new career and community consumers. Overall, the Relearning @Library has had a positive impact on its communities.

Relevant links

- URL 1: <https://relearningspace.com/>
 URL 2: <https://www.facebook.com/ThaiLibraryAsso/>
 URL 3: https://web.i-regist.com/bigboss/index.php?warehouse_id=TLA01
 URL 4: <https://www.facebook.com/ThaiLibraryAsso/videos/830643180821152>
 URL 5: <https://relearningspace.com/index.php/th/re-learning-space-th/re-learning-space-uttaradit-th/54-the-continuing-education-center-book-held-in-uttaradit>



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Relevant SDGs



Southeast Asia: Thailand Rangsit University Library



Think green – go green

Since 2016, the Rangsit University Library has adopted, developed, and implemented the Thai Library Association Green Library Standard and National Green Office Standard in pursuing a sustainable environmentally friendly organization. The projects and activities responded to environmental and sustainable development goals. They included environmental conservation policy development; management review and continuous improvement; self-awareness communication; energy and resource management; waste and wastewater management; environment and safety management; green procurement; green information resources; networking and partnership in development; greenhouse gas management and carbon offsetting.

Regarding green practice implementation, the Library can monitor the energy, paper and water consumption as well as other activities. Additionally, the Library has continued to provide the academic service activities that meet the SDGs. Presently, at least 12 UN SDGs have been relevant to the library activities.

Through the project, the Library was able to create and increase self-awareness among library users, especially students, on environmental concerns and global responsibility aspects. Since the successful implementation of the project, the Library has become a helpful and supportive organization for the local community and others as well. There have also been opportunities to share and transfer the green environment knowledge to the wider community.

The continuous effort of the team, supported by management, has been recognised through several awards: the Library received the TLA Green Library Award in 2017; National Green Office Gold Award (Excellence) and Carbon Neutral Library (Organization) Certification in 2019; the IFLA Green Library Award 2020 from the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions.



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Relevant links

URL 1: <http://rilj.rsu.ac.th/journal/54/article/244>

URL 2: <http://rilj.rsu.ac.th/journal/54>

URL 3: <http://library.rsu.ac.th/ifla/rsulibstenvmanagemreport2020.pdf>

URL 4: <http://library.rsu.ac.th/greenoffice/>

URL 5: <http://library.rsu.ac.th/greenlibrary/index.html>

Relevant SDGs



East Asia: Macao Library and Information Management Association



Reading promoters: a driving force of quality learning environment

As a part of the strategy to improve the learning environment in Macao, the library community advocated for the establishment of the occupation of Reading Promoter in schools. This job was eventually created in 2007 to reinforce reading promotion at kindergartens, primary schools, and secondary schools. Schools are required to hire Reading Promoters according to the number of enrolled students.

Reading Promoters are held to high standards to assure quality performance. To become a Reading Promoter, one has to first be a holder of a Bachelor's degree in library and information science or similar fields and then complete the Reading Promoter Training offered by the Education and Youth Bureau and Macao Library and Information Management Association.

We can observe that the Macao library community has already contributed to SDG 8 even years before the 17 SDGs came along. The job description of Reading Promoters is very self-explanatory: promote reading at schools. They are generally stationed at the school library, working alongside school librarians. Reading Promoters organize innovative extracurricular activities to assist students' navigation in the world of words with joy. Some of these activities are storytelling, puppet theatre, board games, hide-and-seek in classic literature, family reading, and rewriting endings. These activities are not whims pulled out of thin air. They are developed based on clear purposes like stimulating creative thinking, enhancing public speaking skills, and developing self-confidence in students. Appreciation of this form of reading promotion is reflected in the active participation of students, teachers, and parents.

The significant improvement in PISA scores and narrowing of gender gaps in all three subjects (reading, mathematics, and science) over the past five editions indicates that constant reading promotion at school improves the overall learning environment. This essentially brings Macao closer to achieving SDG 4 and could be partially attributed to the efforts of Reading Promoters.



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Relevant SDGs



East Asia: Macao

Patane Library



Reintegration of cultural heritage

Patane Library is a public library consisting of seven connected houses built in the 1930s with a veranda incorporated to the sidewalk. This style is a fusion of European and Southeast Asian architecture and there are not so many of these buildings in Macao nowadays. The ground floor of the houses were used to store hardware and shipbuilding parts while the upper floor was the residence.

Prior to the revitalisation project, the houses had been idle for a long time and the structure was in a dire condition. The Cultural Affairs Bureau, whose responsibility includes cultural heritage and public libraries, recognised their historic and cultural significance and initiated an ingenious project to reintegrate them to the everyday life of the neighbourhood. In the span of six years, the seven houses were transformed into a public library with a brutalist interior integrated with elements from the original design. The clash of the old and the modern, the East and the West gave birth to the quaint Patane Library that is now a landmark building embracing its own new interpretation of cultural exchange. In addition to basic library services, Patane Library features a multimedia zone for regular film screenings, concerts, and other activities. These diverse activities, together with its long opening hours and inviting atmosphere, attract a variety of residents in the neighbourhood every day. Since its inauguration in 2016, the library has been a crucial social infrastructure of the area and a cornerstone of social inclusion. Providing a quality learning environment for all is one of the missions of Macao Public Library. Patane Library offers students, children, young adults, adults, elderly, people with disability, people with a migration background, and so on an option of free and non-judgmental space to pursue their learning goals.

Relevant links

<https://www.library.gov.mo/en/branch-libraries/public-library/macao/Patane-library>



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Relevant SDGs



East Asia: Republic of Korea National Library of the Disabled



Chaeknarae – adding wings to books

Since 2011, the National Library for the Disabled (NLD) has been providing the Chaeknarae service for people with mobility disability (people with disability, people who need long-term care etc.) to apply and receive library materials at home. Public and academic libraries and libraries for people with a disability can sign up as Chaeknarae service providers.

As of December 2019, 914 libraries provided 79,940 books 21,027 times to people with a disability. In March 2016, the library opened Chaeknarae website (<http://cn.nl.go.kr>) where users with a disability can apply for the Chaeknarae service online whenever, wherever they want. The Chaeknarae website allows users to search books in participant libraries, track shipping etc.

Starting from 2019, the NLD provided a mobile web service and linked Chaeknarae and Chaekbada (interlibrary loan) service for users to use the service more conveniently.



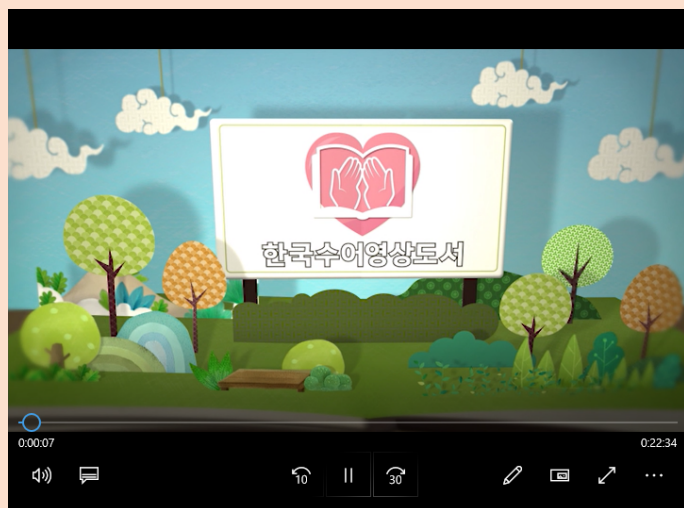
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Relevant SDGs



East Asia: Republic of Korea National Library of the Disabled



Enabling the differently-abled

The National Library for the Disabled (NLD) produces and shares various alternative materials like digital audio books for people with visual disability (totally blind people, people with low vision), accessible e-books for people with a disability etc. To make it more convenient for people with a disability to use alternative materials, the NLD constructed a national alternative materials union catalogue and developed an application (Windows, iOS, Android) and reader for the catalogue. The library also enacted and is implementing voice conversion regulations. Through this initiative, people with a disability can use full-text alternative materials real time whenever, wherever they want and have equal access to educational information. In addition, the library converts the contents of books to Korean sign language and is providing them in video form for people with a disability.

During the last three years, the NLD completed creating literature materials such as children's classic stories and has been providing legal information (on pregnancy/child care, reporting sexual harassment, criminal cases etc.) in Korean sign language in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and Welfare, Ministry of Justice etc. By providing information in Korean sign language to people with hearing disability who use Korean sign language as their first language, the Library is contributing to reducing information inequality. The NLD plans to continuously put its effort into ensuring universal access to information and basic cultural rights of people with a disability.



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Relevant SDGs



Oceania: Australia Wollongong City Libraries



Fine free library

Wollongong City Libraries went fine free on 1 July 2019. Library customers are no longer financially penalised for items that are not returned. While overdue fines have been eliminated, we still need to provide an incentive for borrowers to return items on time. We have introduced a suspension of their borrowing rights until the overdue items are returned. The rationale for this change was to encourage our members to return items, no matter how overdue.

The rationale for this approach was the substantial amount of recent research indicating that fines were counter-productive and counter-intuitive, resulting in many lower-income members and families being disproportionately affected financially. They stopped visiting the library as a result. Six months after going fine free, there are less than 100 books (of 300,000) recorded as being lost. It is difficult to compare data but over the previous 12 years we had 13,000 lost items.

Our library members have reacted positively to the change and it has reduced the amount of difficult conversations for staff, reduced administrative costs, as well as reducing financial pressure on our library members.

Wollongong City Libraries have joined an increasing group of libraries who have improved their customer experience and accessibility with this development.

Relevant links

<https://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/my-community/news-and-alerts/news/news/2019/july-2019/libraries-are-now-fine-free>



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Relevant SDGs



Oceania: Australia Wollongong City Libraries



Gingerbread house decorating

Gingerbread house decorating was a hit programme at the Celebration of Ability Festival 2019 at Wollongong City Libraries. Each year, Wollongong City Council together with neighbouring Shellharbour Council, produce a calendar of events that celebrate and acknowledge the International Day of People with Disability. Wollongong City Libraries deliver inclusive programmes as part of this festival, and throughout the year.

The Gingerbread House is one of the activities offered in the festival. The sweet smell of icing, jellies and other sugary treats was accompanied by some laughing and joking by our participants. An Auslan* interpreter was available to pass on any instructions, share jokes and assist with the stickier elements of roofing for members of our deaf community. A group of participants from a local disability organisation attended with their carers and were proud of their colourful results. They tested each ingredient before they stuck it on their creation. This activity enabled people to come together for a festive, enjoyable experience.

Providing activities that promote lifelong learning, in a safe, inclusive environment has been a priority for us. This will be on the calendar for 2020, with participants seeking assurance that we will do it again another year.

(*Australian sign language)



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Relevant SDGs



Oceania: New Zealand Rotorua Library Te Aka Mauri



Good health and wellbeing

Te Aka means the vine or interconnection and Mauri means life force or essence. The name Te Aka Mauri reflects the shared vision to create a facility of excellence that advances community wellbeing and understanding all under one roof.

Te Aka Mauri incorporates the services, spaces and collections of a cutting-edge public library with the wrap-around services of a children's health hub, creating a truly collaborative and accessible health and well-being project. The services and spaces offer untold opportunities for learning, inspiration, education and health services to the community and visitors to the Rotorua District, now and into the future. A one-stop hub with a range of services and amenities that contribute to wellbeing literacy, learning and community connectedness.

Relevant links

<https://www.rotorualibrary.govt.nz/about-te-aka-mauri/childrens-health-hub>



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Relevant SDGs



Oceania: New Zealand Auckland Libraries



Supporting rough sleepers

A 2015 study into the experience of people living and sleeping 'rough' in Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand's largest city, revealed that the homeless community placed a high value on the services and spaces of Auckland Central Library as a safe space. As a result of the report's findings, Library staff worked with the local rough sleeping community on meaningful ways to identify how library spaces and resources could better be used to support these vulnerable members and underserved members of the community.

The combination of co-design and listening at Auckland Central Library has resulted in new services that include:

- A weekly book group, where not having a fixed address is not a barrier to borrowing books from the library's collection.
- Monday morning movies and morning tea for which participants select titles from the Library's DVD collection with the Library having obtained the licensing permissions to screen them publicly and without charge.
- A media club established which enables participants to blog about life on the street with the vision to grow community understanding and awareness.
- A Human Library event was held which enabled members of the housed community to book time with someone living rough, to hear their stories first-hand in a bid to help break down stereotypes, increase compassion and grow empathy. Part of this event was a life-sized maze built in the Central Library, where visitors were able to walk through the maze lined with quotes, photos and stories contributed by some of Auckland's rough sleepers. Recording contributed to this being a very powerful medium.

Relevant links

<https://www.publiclibrariesnews.com/users/guest-posts/a-home-for-the-homeless-rachael-rivera-and-the-auckland-library-streeties>



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Relevant SDGs



Oceania: New Zealand Waimakariri Libraries



Free seed banks

A seed bank is a place for the community to exchange spare vegetable, fruit and plant seeds that supports and promotes seed saving, domestic and community garden food growing.

Forty minutes by road north of Christchurch in the South Island of New Zealand, all three libraries of the Waimakariri District offer their community's free seed banks within the community libraries. Local schools upcycled old-style school desks, repairing and repainting them to be used as seed banks.

The initial collection of seed envelopes was created by local children at after-school care programmes, using paper from withdrawn library magazines and newspapers as raw material.

The concept of a seed bank supports :

- banking – making a seed deposit
- withdrawal – taking seeds home
- growing the resource – encouraging users to bring more seeds to the bank, grown from those they have taken
- seed banks will also take an 'I owe you' too.

Started in 2019, this collaborative partnership between a local environmental education provider and libraries, then extended to include two food swap community groups, encouraging keen gardeners of all ages to think about how they can share their excess garden produce.

Reliable and equitable access to food or 'food security' has been identified as a significant gap in communities across New Zealand. In the Waimakariri District, this was particularly evident in the results of Social Services Waimakariri Community and Social Sector surveys, which have informed the COVID-19 event response and recovery. Consequently, food security has become a priority in the District's COVID-19 Recovery Strategy. Waimakariri Libraries are extending their seed banks to include in-library and outreach programmes that support those in the community new to growing their own food, through events, learning programmes and information sharing. Libraries are frequently aware of community deprivation and hardship. The seed bank and community education programmes build on the range of library services and resources available to empower and educate communities.

Relevant links

<https://libraries.waimakariri.govt.nz/about/library-news/2020/waimakariri-libraries-seed-bank>



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