

THE ROLE OF LIBRARIES IN THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN KENYA

Grace Wambui Kamau
Lecturer
Department of Information & Knowledge Management
The Technical University of Kenya
Tel.: +254-722-674329
Email: grace.kamau6@gmail.com

Ashah Owano
Information Resources Manager
National Museums of Kenya
Tel. : +254-722-773856
Email: maryowino715@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) after the expiry of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) timeframe of 15 years in September 2015. The SDGs, also known as Global Goals, comprise of a set of 17 goals aimed at ending poverty, hunger, ensure healthy lives and well-being, education, gender equality and women empowerment, availability and sustainable management of water, access to modern energy, economic growth and productive employment, resilient infrastructure including roads, protecting the planet, ensuring that all people enjoy peace and prosperity, strengthened implementation and revitalization of global partnerships for sustainable development. The goals build on the successes of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) but include new areas such as climate change, economic inequality, innovation, peace and justice among others.

The aim of this paper is to discuss the role of libraries in the achievement of SDGs in Kenya and suggest ways through which Kenyan libraries can fully contribute towards the achievement of the Goals. The methodology is based on literature review. The results demonstrate how information as a resource cuts across related strategies and activities, aimed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The paper contends that the government cannot achieve the SDGs in isolation, but also through re-engineering of libraries. This study has made suggestions on how libraries in Kenya can re-strategize in order to effectively participate in the achievement of the SDGs. Based on the literature, the challenges facing libraries in Kenya are highlighted and recommendations made on how to address the challenges to enhance the achievement of the SDGs to enable Kenya to be globally competitive.

Keywords: Libraries, Sustainable Development Goals, Kenya

INTRODUCTION

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) after the expiry of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) timeframe of 15 years in September 2015. The SDGs, also known as Global Goals, comprise of a set of 17 goals aimed at ending poverty, hunger, ensure healthy lives and well-being, education, gender equality and women empowerment, availability and sustainable management of water, access to modern energy, economic growth and productive employment, resilient infrastructure including roads, protecting the planet, ensuring that all people enjoy peace and prosperity, strengthened implementation and revitalization of global partnerships for sustainable development. The goals build on the successes of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) but include new areas such as climate change, economic inequality, innovation, peace and justice among others.

The United Nations General Assembly (2015) set 17 goals and 169 targets essential for human development. The SDGs and the targets are integrated and indivisible, global in nature and universally applicable. The Assembly takes into account the different levels of national development and capacities. The new goals and targets came to effect in January 2016 to be achieved by 2030.

Kenya is a signatory to the Sustainable Development Goals and is committed to achieving the goals. Kenya formally launched its drive for the SDGs on September 14, 2016 with a rallying call "Leave no one behind" (Ministry of Devolution and Planning, 2016). The Ministry of Devolution and Planning in collaboration with other stakeholders has developed an elaborate road map to guide the transition strategy from MDGs to SDGs and to avoid pitfalls experienced during the implementation of MDGs. Kenya's Vision 2030 developed in 2005 provides a suitable framework for the implementation of the SDGs. The Vision 2030 is hinged on three pillars, economic, social and political pillars. The economic pillar's key goal is to sustain economic growth of 10 per cent annually. The social pillar aims at building a just and cohesive society, enjoying equitable social development in a clear and secure environment. The political pillar's goal is to build an issue-based, people-centred, result-oriented and accountable democratic political system. The SDGs and MDGs have been mainstreamed in the economic and social pillar of Vision 2030. A committee called Inter-agency Technical Working Group has been established to spearhead the implementation of SDGs in the country. The committee comprises of key ministries, Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) and National Council for Population and Development (NCPD). Despite the efforts made by the government, poverty levels in Kenya remain high, and according to IFAD (2015) Kenya is still faced with the challenges of poverty and income inequalities. The global index cites Kenya as a food-insecurity country, with an estimate of about 10 million Kenyans still suffering from chronic food insecurity and poor nutrition. Agricultural sector remains the backbone of the economy, employing 70 per cent of the rural population and accounting for about 65 per cent of export earnings. IFAD further states that the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund projects affirm that while Kenya has experienced some economic growth, poverty alleviation remains a challenge. Almost Half of her population of 43 million people live below the poverty line or are unable to meet their daily nutritional requirements. Kenya is ranked 145 out of 187 countries in the United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Index, measured in terms of life expectancy, educational attainment and standards of living. It is clear that the government cannot win this war alone but it calls for combined efforts of various organizations including libraries.

AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of this paper is to discuss the role of libraries in the achievement of SDGs in Kenya and to suggest ways through which Kenyan libraries can fully contribute towards the achievement of the Goals.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are:

1. Highlight Kenya's efforts towards the attainment of SDGs.
2. Show the role of the library in development.
3. Discuss libraries' role in the achievement of SDGs in Kenya.
4. Identify the challenges facing Kenyan libraries in the actualization of SDGs.
5. Suggest ways by which the challenges can be addressed.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed desktop research based on literature review of the United Nations Vision 2030 Agenda to be achieved through the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The study identified and reviewed 17 sustainable development goals. Some of the goals were merged in the discussion due to their interconnectedness. The literature review covered the following goals, which have been described in depth later in this article:

Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries

Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts*

Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

LIBRARY'S ROLE IN DEVELOPMENT

Information is a vital component for development. Development of any country as opined by Onoyeyan (2014) requires adequate, relevant and up-to-date information on food security, health, education, gender equality, water management and sanitation, democracy, environmental conservation etc. Forsyth (2005) asserts that libraries are an integral part of community development as they provide access to information and works of imagination in a variety of formats. A study by Wand (2016) in Middle East and North African (MENA) countries, demonstrated that there is a statistically significant correlation between access to information centres and social economic development.

The different types of libraries play crucial roles to the communities they serve. For example according to Ojiambo and Kasalu (2015) academic libraries such as Moi University Library, University of Nairobi and Kenyatta University provide various information services in support of learning, teaching, research and extension. The services in return contribute to development of the Kenyan nation. They further stated that special libraries particularly Government and parastatal libraries acquire relevant information resources in support of the vision, mission and objectives of their parent organizations, and hence improve the effectiveness of performance and decision making of staff and stakeholders; while the libraries in the agricultural sector provide information to decision makers, agricultural planners, administrators, researchers, extension agents, students and farmers. As for school libraries, they emphasized their importance in the development of the teaching and learning as well as equipping students with reading culture and lifelong learning skills.

The library plays the role of educating the community it serves by providing information resources that meet the needs of that community. According to Ojiambo and Kasalu (2015) community include students, teaching, non-teaching staff and researchers in academic environment and research organizations; employees in organizations, business community, agriculturalist, farmers and children including unemployed persons. They argued that in one way or another the entire community search for information and knowledge that can help them achieve their desires and objectives including educating themselves, libraries and information centres are the only place that provides a variety of information that can help its users to support education, learning and other information needs. This notion is supported by IFLA/UNESCO public library manifesto which notes that the public library is the local centre of information, making all kind of knowledge and information readily available to its users (IFLA, 1994).

As stated earlier libraries play different socio-economic roles depending on its type. For example according to (Ojiambo and Kasalu 2015) National and public libraries:

- provide information in all formats to their community at all level to help them make informed economic decisions
- provide mobile library services to the rural community
- promote literacy and reading culture
- provide practical and cost-effective solutions for eradicating literate environments in Kenya including poor communities where books and other information materials are shared
- Support and sustain independent lifelong learning by helping develop a reading culture in children through setting up tents for reading and other activities like games, story-telling etc.
- Supplement formal and informal education.

- Provide opportunity for people of all age to learn how to use information and associated technology
- Train people of all classes, age and sex in the use of information technology

The above roles are supported by Macharia (2012) whose study results affirmed that the use of mobile libraries and telephone transformed Kisumu Town, and that farmers were able to adopt new farming techniques which improved their income among other economic benefits.

The university libraries and those of research organizations provide information and services like teaching information literacy, access and use of ICT, access to reading materials which has enabled the country to build human capital that has transformed Kenyan economy. In addition to university libraries being centres of learning, teaching and extension, information resources and services they provide have led to the development of new innovations that have improved science and technology in Kenya.

LIBRARIES' ROLE IN THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SDGs IN KENYA

Nabarro (2016) expressed that there are four principles that underpin the SDGs namely: that the goals are connected and indivisible, linking development, human rights, peace and security; they are universal, that is, they apply to every person everywhere; they are inclusive in that all people should participate in their implementation; as they are being implemented, no one should be left behind. The only unifying factor for the four is information which widely available in libraries.

The National Development Plans which include single national development plan, broadband, digital inclusion, and social development plans are a clear indication of how libraries shape government spending and prioritize programme. The plans demonstrate libraries contribution across all the SDGs, since they are well positioned to partner with government and others to implement national strategies and programmes that benefit library users. By enhancing access to information and libraries support poverty eradication, agriculture, quality education, health, public access to ICT and universal service provision, culture, economic growth and all other Goals. Access to information is a cross-cutting issue that supports all areas of development.

According to IFLA Public access to information enables people to make informed decisions that can improve their lives. Communities that have access to timely and relevant information for all are better positioned to eradicate poverty and inequality, improve agriculture, provide quality education, and support people's health, culture, research, and innovation. Libraries guarantee access to information a vital cross-cutting target that supports all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As Kenya aspires to be a knowledge society she has to do more than Internet connections because worldwide, libraries including public, parliament, national, university, science and research, school, and special libraries ensure that information and the skills to use IT are available to everyone, making them critical institutions for all in the digital age.

Libraries provide information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure, help people develop the capacity to effectively use information, and preserve information to ensure ongoing access for future generations. They provide an established, trusted network of local institutions that effectively reach new and marginalized populations like those in Northern Kenya. However, for libraries in Kenya to fully participate in the achievement of SDGs, there is need to transform from the traditional Western model of only stocking reading materials and expecting that public will use them to a model where the service focuses on the community's way of life. With the new developments in ICTs, national libraries in Africa can no longer remain as isolated facilities, and they need to strategically position themselves to be part of the development agenda (Mulindwa, 2015). In order for national libraries in Kenya to help the country in

achieving the SDG, they need to be more innovative and actively participate in various sectors by adopting new strategies as discussed below.

Poverty Eradication

Librarians need to identify issues that affect the communities they serve and customize their services along these lines. These issues revolve around education, food security, income from agricultural produce, crop diseases, maternal and child health, HIV/AIDS and youth unemployment. To achieve this, librarians need to consult with other workers in the community such as education, health, agriculture, environmental and other workers who are experts in their respective fields. Librarians should partner with them by providing supporting information and suitable environment in which to address these issues. As Mulindwa (2015) asserts, all this culminates into the eradication of poverty and provides a conducive environment for development thereby addressing SDG 1.

Agriculture

The world experiencing food insecurity with Kenya's per capita food availability decreasing by 10% since the 1970s largely driven by a 44% decrease in maize production. Kenya's mainstay is agriculture and 80% of agricultural GDP comes from the smallholder farms (Central Bank of Kenya, 2008). It is evident that the agricultural sector in Kenya plays a crucial role in addressing the national goals of poverty eradication, increasing rural incomes, creating employment, and guaranteeing food security leading to the realization of SDG 1 and 2. Therefore, access to outputs of agricultural research such as information and knowledge is of critical importance to the livelihood of many people in the country. National libraries in Kenya can play a critical role in ensuring that the information reaches the target audiences. They can achieve this by collaborating with agricultural programmes to assess the information needs of the farmers and disseminate relevant information to them. Through partnership and collaboration with Agricultural Extension Agents, libraries can provide them with timely and relevant information to support agricultural production. Libraries can also provide access to agricultural information to farmers from rural areas via the internet. A good example of such is the AgroLib-Ja project service coordinated by Public Library 'Radislav Nikčević' based in Jagodina, Serbia and sponsored by the Electronic Information for Libraries, Public Library Innovation Programme (EIFL- PLIP) (EIFL.net, 2016). This service connects farmers to information through a network of four rural libraries. It offers farmers free access to computers and the internet, technology training, and access to new stocks of books and journals on agriculture. The library developed a web-portal for farmers with agricultural information and links to rural development agencies, articles about modern farming methods, and news and information about the weather, market prices and agricultural fairs and events. A popular feature of the website is the AgroLib online market, which offers free advertising space for farmers to advertise their produce. The service also organizes regular events and lectures where farmers can interact with representatives of local government, farm support agencies and agricultural research stations.

Health

Although we live in the information age, tens of thousands of people die every day because the parent or the health care provider lack information and knowledge they need to save them. Many others suffer serious harm due to ineffective or unsafe care. Information can play a key role in both preventive and curative interventions. Provision of information to health care providers will empower them with the knowledge and skills to deal with diseases. In order to address SDG 3, libraries in Kenya should also endeavour to make information available for various types of clientele in the community. They should make available information on breastfeeding, immunization and family planning and maternal health needs, prevention of HIV/AIDS and the other major diseases like Malaria and TB and promote the use of such information. They can make such information available in libraries and also partner with other stakeholders in the dissemination of information. They could for example disseminate brochures, booklets

and videos through Family Planning clinics, VCTs and Information Kiosks, Huduma centres etc. KNLS, for example set up e-Health Sections in the branches with support from EIFL- PLIP. The spaces provide access to e-resources for health workers. Additionally the branch libraries provide information on HIV-AIDS to the community. KNLS has in the past also organized Talks on HIV-AIDS by inviting facilitators to speak and discuss with the public (Jemo, 2008). Another example is Ghana's project in the Northern Regional Library in the town of Tamale supported by Public Library Innovation Programme (EIFL- PLIP). Using a database of pregnant women, the library sent text messages with advice and health tips to guide the women through pregnancy, and reminders to visit clinics regularly for check-ups (EIFL.net, 2016).

Education

Information is crucial for education to take place. Ng'anga (1998) emphasized the fact that information is a vital commodity that empowers people to make choices in all areas of development including opening up closed communities to the outside world. Easily accessed information is backbone of development. He observed that among the roles of libraries and information centers in the rural areas is to support education both formal and informal. Libraries supplement education by providing reading materials. Many schools and educational institutions do not have learning centers where students can get books. It is therefore the duty of the libraries to assist such institutions to establish and organize learning resource centers. In addition to libraries providing a conducive environment for reading and studying, they stock materials for children and adults in support of education in as much as it a catalyst in self advancement in all aspects of life. The County Libraries Services Bill, 2015 clearly states the various functions expected from the county libraries that include: conducting campaigns to eradicate illiteracy in the County; promotion of reading for knowledge; encourage the use of libraries by school children and partnership with the education sector to facilitate the establishment of libraries in schools, colleges and other institutions (Kenya Gazette, 2015).

With developments in ICTs, national libraries in Kenya should take advantage of ICTs in providing support in education. The Kenya National Library Service (KNLS), for example, has come up with various projects to address this issue (KNLS, 2016). One of the projects is the e-resource Public Access Centres project launched in May 2013 in ten KNLS rural libraries with sponsorship of the Communications Authority of Kenya (CAK). This project provides access to affordable ICTs to rural people and those in remote areas. According to KNLS, the project has been well received by the community and it has also strengthened the relationship between KNLS and CAK in providing information to Kenyan citizens. KNLS has also partnered with World Reader, a US company, and e-Limu, a Kenyan company, to provide tablets loaded with e-learning materials. In the libraries of Kibera, Kisumu, Meru, and Wajir. The tablets were provided by World Reader and the content by e-Limu. The KNLS branches then work with schools in the nearby areas that do not have access to textbooks.

Another project by KNLS is a blended-learning pilot project utilizing the Learning Circles model sponsored by the Electronic Information for Libraries, Public Library Innovation Programme (EIFL-PLIP). The project is anchored on the rationale e-learners can be isolated and lonely. By combining online courses with face-to-face facilitation, Learning Circles make use of digital resources, but deliver them in an engaging and supportive environment. Each Learning Circle comprises about eight to fifteen learners. The Learning Circles meet regularly in their local public library over a period of six to eight weeks while working through their online courses. During meetings, learners discuss their courses, teach each other, share content and technical knowledge, work through problems and solutions, and motivate and encourage each other to study. Librarians act as meeting hosts and study group facilitators, stimulating discussion and helping learners to conduct research and use online research tools. The piloting of the project is being done in two branch libraries namely Buruburu branch in Nairobi and Nakuru branch in Nakuru County. Librarians at the selected libraries will be trained to facilitate Learning Circles. According to EIFL Lessons learnt from the pilot project, which ends in June 2017, will be used to guide

development of further online learning support programmes in public libraries in Kenya and other countries in Africa.

Promoting Peaceful Co-existence

The library is open to all regardless of age, culture, religion, tribe, socio-economic status, education and political affiliation. It is therefore well placed to promote peaceful co-existence to bring about the realization of SDG 10. Libraries in Kenya should endeavour to promote peaceful co-existence through organizing activities that bring different communities together. A good example is to be found at KNLS Kibera Branch. Inspired by the need to promote peace after dissatisfaction that arose after the general elections of 2012/2013, a programme branded as 'Kibera Library Peace Ambassadors' was started. The library provides a cohesiveness programme using tablets and computers. The peace initiative aims at contributing towards reduction in the rate of violence and crimes through training youth on how to use tablets and computers.

Promoting Economic Development/Enterprise Development (Employment)

Unemployment is high in Kenya especially among the youth. Entrepreneurship and innovation are considered as solutions to address this problem. Libraries in Kenya can play a role in promoting sustainable, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all as stated in Goal 8 of the SDGs. They can provide access to information on employment. They can also provide relevant information for business in the community's different areas of interest. Libraries can also provide training on ICT skills to increase to marketability of members of the community. A case in point is the Internet Access and Training Programme (IATP) in the Northern Regional Library in the town of Tamale, Ghana. The programme builds young people's leadership and ICT skills, to increase their ability to get jobs and become leaders and role models in their communities (EIFL.net, 2016).

Digital Library

Key sectors targeted by Kenya's Vision 2030 are Education and Research since they are closely related to the MDGs now expanded into the SDGs. Science, Technology and Innovation are key foundations to Vision 2030 because they enhance the attainment of other pillars in the Vision 2030. However, Waga, Makori and Rabah (2014) observed that the absence of a common digital platform for collaboration hampers this capacity. The implementations of Cloud Computing enriched with a package of e-learning and research portal connected to online libraries, not only fast tracks the attainment but also drives the country towards a research and innovation based economy. Researchers working in isolation and often have less innovations due to the high cost of their trade, just like the educationists suffer from classroom shortage, insufficient qualified teachers and absence of proper teaching aids. This is sufficient evidence of the gap of a digital platform that unites Education and Research sectors resulting into high cost of living caused by the local industry dependence on imported technology due to the absence of innovation.

In some instances, Digital libraries require establishment and expansion of the existing information storage systems. In the academic arena, universities have identified open access as an as part of research strategy of drawing attention to its research output. The library plays a vital role in this by providing free access to peer reviewed scholarly and academic literature, enabling researchers anywhere to access and read it. The major channels to achieve this are through publishing in open access journals and depositing scholarly materials in institutional repositories. It is evident that institutions benefit from open access through higher usage of their research resulting in greater visibility of their research and higher rankings, while enhancing the profile of the institution. Open access has penetrated to other social and economic sectors through the diffusion of knowledge.

Kenya National Library Services (KNLS) has taken a lead on digital inclusion through several programmes that it runs in order to transition their library centres into knowledge hubs that empowers the readers into development. One of the outstanding features of the transformation is the use of technology in storage, dissemination and convenience in the delivery of services to our users (Atuti, 2016). KNLS has partnered with Worldreader to introduce the use of e-readers that carry over 1,500 books per device. This has changed the information seeking behavior of Kenyan communities where KNLS libraries are and also revolutionized the way users access information from KNLS chain of libraries enabling readers to borrow the e-readers and buy more books per fortnight, as they strive to contribute to the country's socio-economic development. The partnership between KNLS and Digital Opportunity Trust (DOT) has seen youth train on life skills and entrepreneurship which has helped a number of them setup businesses thus alleviating unemployment. Other than partnering with Microsoft to be a Certified Microsoft IT Academy for purposes of offering IT programmes, through Electronic Information For Libraries (EIFL), KNLS also transformed the public library's service delivery to the public.

Cultural Heritage

The library plays an important function of being a stimulant for sharing and re-use of information and knowledge as qualified in Mahatma Gandhi's quote that says, "no culture can live, if it attempts to be exclusive". It is important to share culture since it is human desire to preserve culture for future generations. According to White (2012) libraries are rich repositories of historically and culturally significant collections, many of which are not available anywhere else in the world. Copyright exceptions help libraries preserve or replace a damaged work while it is still in copyright and a good example is the digitization efforts for the preservation of information materials including old newspapers (Taifa Leo) as was done by the Kenya National Archives and Documentation Centre, before this cultural heritage would be lost and not available to future generations. At the moment many works are "born digital" and not available in print format e.g. websites or some electronic journals, and it is only the legal means that enables preservation and replacement of works in a variety of media and formats – including format shifting and migrating electronic content from obsolete storage formats – many of these works will inevitably be lost to future generations of historians. Library exceptions facilitate knowledge acquisition by students, academic researchers and the general public or citizens, as ensuring equitable access to knowledge, and to providing preserving the unique cultural, artistic and scientific heritage of a country.

Indigenous Knowledge Systems

In the global economy, Knowledge management (IK) is seen to be increasingly growing because of its importance in fostering knowledge creation, codification and transfer, utilization and its ability to improve knowledge capital of an organization, and therefore requires significant attention. However, despite emerging interests in IK Njiraine, Ocholla and Onyancha (2010) observed that not enough is known about how IK is managed in Kenya, particularly issues relating to IK policies and legislation, training, and diffusion and use (e.g. information centers and media) that reflect on IK. It is perceived as historical and ancient practices of the African, yet African indigenous ways of knowing are as diverse as approximately the forty two ethnic communities in Kenya especially in the rural areas. It is evident that majority of Kenya's population live in rural areas and directly depend on natural resources for their livelihood. The local communities use their indigenous knowledge systems to relate to such resources. Most of the practices have evolved over time and regions as individuals and communities adapt to challenges posed by their social and natural environments.

Njiraine et al (2010) while quoting Wane (2002) pointed out that in the process of learning the old knowledge, new knowledge is discovered and this is what makes indigenous knowledge more dynamic, they argued that there is need to understand the complexities of its evolution due to its transition, enrichment, and its devaluation during the colonial era. In Kenya IK is developed and sustained through

traditional education, as avenues for skills acquisition, training and youth socialization. Among most Kenyan communities, knowledge transmission occurs within the context of family, community, clan tribe, and cultural age groups. It is a lifelong learning process involving progression through age groupings, seniority, and wisdom of elders. Libraries being memories of the world are the best well placed to initiate and conduct programmes for children and the youth so that they can learn and preserve their culture through indigenous knowledge. According to Kenya (2010) in a Kenyan community one among the benefits of IK include the use of a combination of indicators to predict weather patterns to influence farmers' planning and decision-making like the appearance and behavior of flora and fauna. At the National Museums of Kenya (NMK) through Elimu Asilia (www.elimuasilia.org), libraries working with researchers and volunteers interact with local communities in the collection, preparation, preservation, sharing, re-packaging e.g. in form of exhibitions, exchange and dissemination of IK on culture, environment, health and history and other fields where NMK undertakes research for the memory of the Kenyan nation for sustainability and eco-social development. The focus on IK is due to community dependence on traditional knowledge and practices in sustainably exploiting their environment, preserving their culture and reconstructing their history, through time and across generations. The aim of Elimu Asilia platform is to:

1. raise awareness and promote appreciation of IK
2. Enhance collection, preservation and availability of indigenous knowledge on culture, environment and history, and
3. Enhance access to and use of indigenous knowledge in digital format while promoting online communities

Women and girls

According to the United Nations Vision 2030 Agenda it is hoped that women and girls will have no limits on their aspirations for the future, no matter where they are born. During the UN meeting on Status of women, Kenya was represented by the First Lady Margaret Kenyatta and the Devolution Cabinet Secretary Ms Anne Waiguru the Kenya Government representative at the 59th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women which opened on Monday, 9th March 2016, at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The representatives said the Government promised to take action to improve the status of women, and reported that the implementation of the Beijing Platform of Action was on track and also cited that the government's public procurement affirmative action policy for women, the youth and disabled.

Libraries in Kenya have a role to play in sensitizing women with information concerning areas like political participation, improved access to water supply, modern cooking fuels, better soil nutrients in order to have better or raised yields as recommended in the SDGs. There is need to package information that stresses the importance of women as potential leaders and make efforts to enhance the public's perception of potential women leaders.

CHALLENGES FACING KENYAN LIBRARIES IN THE ACTUALIZATION OF SDGs

Full participation of libraries in Kenya in the achievement of SDGs is hampered by a number of challenges. The main challenges include: inadequate funding, inadequate staffing, poor infrastructure, inadequate facilities etc. Ojiambo and Kasalu (2015) lamented that libraries in Kenya are poorly funded by their parent organizations. Krolak (2005) points out a lack of professional staff in some libraries in developing countries. This is because of the assumption that anybody can run a library. This lack of professionalism results in low level of innovative skills among librarians as well as lack of research skills required for user needs assessment. Additionally, staff may not be well endowed with ICT skills. Due to

inadequate funding, national libraries in Kenya lack suitable facilities as well as ICT infrastructure necessary for effective services.

CONCLUSION

This paper has shown the role of libraries in development. It has established libraries' contribution across all the SDGs. By enhancing access to information, libraries support poverty eradication, agriculture, quality education, health, public access to ICT and universal service provision, culture, economic growth and all other Goals. Access to information is a cross-cutting issue that supports all areas of development. However national libraries in Kenya are still constrained by various challenges.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. There is need to sensitize library professionals in Kenya on their role in the achievement of SDGs so that they can fully participate in SDGs activities through workshops, seminars and conferences
2. National libraries in Kenya should be supported through adequate funding to ensure that they provide adequate information resources, facilities and infrastructure.
3. Libraries in Kenya should be more proactive in forming partnerships with the private sector and other agencies in order to promote changes needed in the achievement of SDGs.
4. Recruitment of library professionals should be considered as a priority for libraries to fully participate in the attainment of the Goals
5. Training of librarians should be reviewed to include other areas that promote the achievement of SDGs.
6. There is need for advocacy and lobbying by librarians to attract funding.
7. In order for national libraries in Kenya to help the country in achieving the SDG, they need to be more innovative and actively participate in various sectors by adopting new strategies.

REFERENCES

- Central Bank of Kenya (2008) Kenya: Portrait of a country. Nairobi: Central Bank of Kenya, p. 135.
- Electronic Information for Libraries website (2016) Retrieved October 13, 2016 from <http://www.eifl.net/>
- Elimu Asilia, About Us. Retrieved October 20, 2016 from: www.elimuasilia.org.php/about-us ,
- Forsyth, E. (2005) Public Libraries and the Millennium Development Goals. IFLA Journal 31(4), 315-323. Retrieved September 15, 2016 from <http://ifl.sagepub.com/content/31/4/315>
- IFAD (2015 (Reported Sept. 2016)). Investing in Rural People in Kenya. Retrieved October 10, 2016 from <https://www.ifad.org/documents/10180/bf67bad8-a182-4c79-a919-433af31eba02>
- <http://www.ruralpovertyportal.org/country/home/tags/kenya> Accessed:10/10/2016
- Jemo, R.M. (2008) Public Libraries and Democracy: The Kenyan Experience. Paper presented At Goethe-Institute/Kenya National Library Service Workshop on "The Role of Libraries in Promoting

Democracy, Ensuring Free Access for all” held At CPA Conference Ruaraka, Nairobi, 23rd to 25th July 2008.

Kenya, Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology (2010). Mapping and Documenting Indigenous Knowledge in Science, Technology and Innovation in Kenya: concept note in indigenous knowledge. Retrieved October 20, from www.education.go.ke/index.php/downloads/.../8-knowledge-management

Kenya, Republic of (2010). The Constitution of Kenya. Kenya National Council for Law, Nairobi

Kenya National Library Service website (2016) Retrieved October 13, 2016 from <http://www.knls.ac.ke/>

Kenya Republic of , (2015). The County Library Services Bill, 2015, In Kenya Gazette Supplement No.56 (Senate Bills No.6) Special Issue, Government Printer, Nairobi

Macharia, James Tutu (2012). The Impact of Kenya National Library Services (KNLS), Kisumu Provisional Mobile Library Services on Education in Kisumu County, Kenya. In Library Philosophy and Practice e-journal). Paper 879 Retrieved October 10, 2016 from <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/879>

Ministry of Devolution and Planning (2016) The National Launch of the Sustainable Development Goals in Kenya. Daily Nation 14 Sept. 2016, p. 42.

Mulidwa, G.K. (2015) National Libraries in Africa: Refocusing Their Work to Ensure Delivery of Services. Library Trends, 64 (2), Summer, pp. 72-83.

Nabarro, D. (2016) It is one year and SDGs are on track. Daily Nation, 27 Sept. 2016, p. 18.

Njiraine, D.; Ocholla, D.N.; Onyancha, O.B. (2010). Indigenous Knowledge Research In Kenya And South Africa: An Informetric Study. African Journal Of Indigenous Knowledge Systems Vol 9 (2) 2010, P.194-210. Retrieved October 20, 2016 from Journals.Co.Za/Content/Linga/9/2/EJC61594

Njeri, Rugene (2016). Kenya Commits to achieving gender equality by 2030. Daily Nation, Thursday March 12, 2016

Ojiambo, J. and Kasalu, J.S. (2015). Development of Libraries in Kenya and their Role in Economic Development. Paper presented at: IFLA WLIC 2015 - Cape Town, South Africa in Session 78 - Library History SIG. In: IFLA WLIC 2015 - Cape Town, South Africa. Retrieved October 10, 2016 from <http://library.ifla.org/1220/1/078-ojiambo-en.pdf>

Onoyeyan, G. and Adesina, O. I. (2014). A Literature Review of the Role of Libraries in the Provision of Information towards the Attainment of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Nigeria. Library Philosophy and Practice (ejournal). Paper 1069. Retrieved September 15, 2016 from <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/1069>

United Nations (2015) Sustainable Development Goals. Retrieved September 15, 2016 from

<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

United Nations General Assembly (2015) Resolution 70/1 adopted 25 September 2015. Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Retrieved September 15, 2016 from http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E

Waga, D.; Makori, E. and Rabah, K. (2014). Utilization of Cloud Computing in Education and Research to the Attainment of Millennium Development Goals and Vision 2030 in Kenya. *Universal Journal of Educational Research* 2(2): 193-199.

Wand, P. A. (2016) Information centers and socioeconomic development in MENA: Finding a quantitative relationship. *IFLA Journal* 42(2), 109–117. Retrieved September 15, 2016 from <http://ifl.sagepub.com/content/42/2/109.full>

White, Ben (2012). Guaranteeing Access to Knowledge: The Role of Libraries. *WIPO Magazine* 4/2012