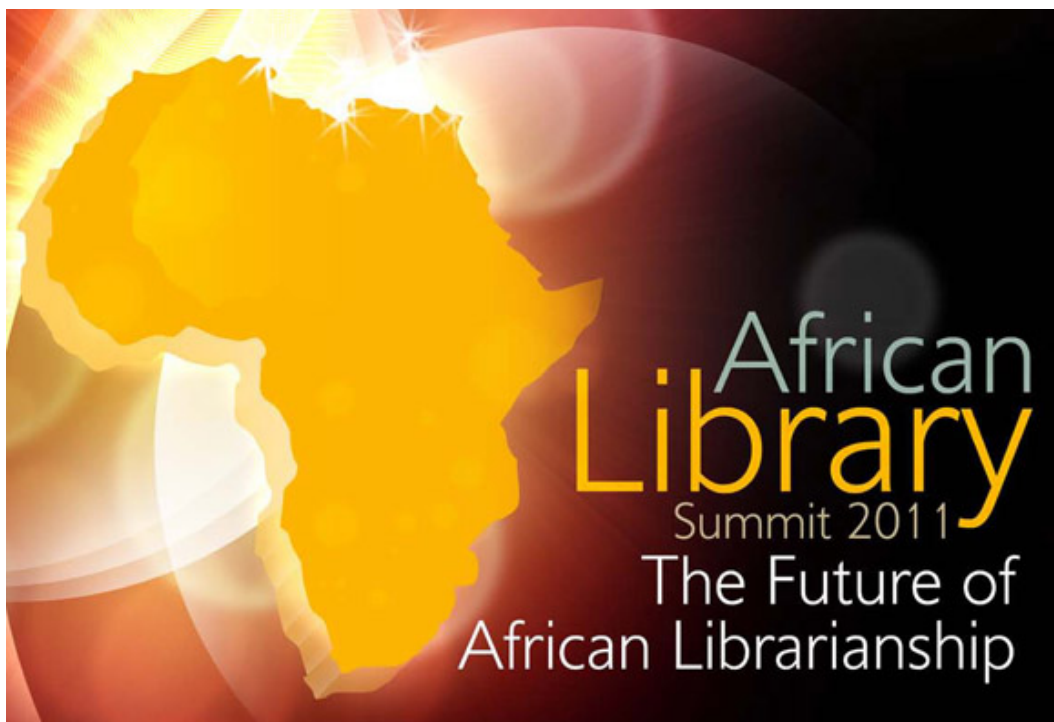


FRAMEWORK FOR AFRICAN LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT

Outcomes of the African Library Summit

10 – 14 May 2011



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THE FUTURE OF AFRICAN LIBRARIANSHIP

African Library Summit: 10 – 14 May 2011

FRAMEWORK FOR AFRICAN LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT

1. BACKGROUND

The African Library Summit, "The Future of African Librarianship", was held at Misty Hills, Gauteng, South Africa from 10 to 14 May 2011. As we move into the 21st Century, libraries in Africa are being offered a unique opportunity to rethink their roles, challenges and responsibilities. Governments are giving prominence to the development of knowledge-based societies to support them in meeting their Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), with the overall strategic objectives of equity, quality, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, economic growth and pro-poor approaches.

Libraries should optimize this opportunity to enhance and to demonstrate their efforts to meet the information needs leading to the realization of the goals and the impact they make on the knowledge society. Libraries have a legal mandate to provide information to nations and have collaborative networks enabling them to share skills and resources and to achieve economies of scale.

Knowledge-based societies arise from effective education and training systems, value-added services and innovation. Libraries and related services are well positioned to stimulate, provide and promote access to information and knowledge and can play a crucial role in knowledge development.

There are, however, concerns regarding infrastructure and skills, training, funding and inflexible delivery models. These strengths and weaknesses should form a basis for debate and discussion on a way forward.

The African Library Summit created a platform to engage on these matters and offered participants an opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to achieving the goals of libraries on the continent and to building capacity for success. Library leaders on the continent worked together to identify future roles of African leadership in the digital age, to stimulate creativity in the profession, to map out strategies for collaboration and to compare African librarianship with global library trends.

A total of 158 delegates participated in the summit and these included policy makers in African library and information services (LIS), LIS leaders and senior management and senior LIS educators and senior researchers. A total of 24 countries from the African continent and 4 countries outside the continent were represented at the Summit.

This Summit was the first event of its kind and the main purpose was to create an opportunity to debate the future of African Librarianship.

The Summit had the following major objectives:

- To establish an action plan for collaboration in the African LIS environment
- To determine the role and future of African academic, community, public, research and school libraries in the knowledge society
- To conduct a gap analysis by comparing African librarianship with global library and information service trends
- To provide guidelines for the training of African LIS practitioners in the 21st century
- To identify the future roles of African library leadership in the digital age

- To stimulate creativity in the LIS milieu
- To identify new LIS initiatives in Africa

The Summit received high-level support both nationally and internationally and this was demonstrated by generous funding and input from influential organizations. Hosted by the Unisa Library, the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) Regional Office for Africa and the IFLA Africa Section and with the support received it was well positioned to deliver on the required outcomes.

The Summit was a practical event, focusing on charting a way forward for the profession in Africa as opposed to a "Talk Shop". The programme was well designed to achieve the goals of the Summit and to ensure valuable practical outcomes. In that sense the Summit was the first step in an ongoing programme to find collaborative ways to develop libraries on the continent.

The Summit created a wonderful opportunity for debate amongst African library and information service policy-makers, library and information leaders, senior library managers, senior library and information services educators and senior researchers in the profession. The interaction with international colleagues who have demonstrated long-term interest in and sensitivity and commitment to Africa proved to be mutually beneficial for all participants.

2. CONTEXT FOR FRAMEWORK FOR LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT

One of the key objectives was to compile a framework for African Library Development. For this purpose various drilldown sessions were conducted during the Summit. These were designed to ensure optimal participation and input from participants and to focus on specific areas in each session.

The themes of the drilldown sessions were carefully designed to feed into the sessions to develop the frameworks for each area. Representatives from various sectors in the profession engaged in sessions that led to the final drilldown sessions to propose a framework for African library development for various sectors of the profession.

These areas included Academic Libraries, Public Libraries, LIS Education and Training, African Library Associations, Collaboration, Integration and Innovation, Policy, Leadership and Development and LIS Development in Francophone Africa.

The sessions leading to the final session to develop the frameworks included a comparison to global Library and Information trends with a gap analysis, the place of collaboration in the African Library and Information milieu, the roles of the various sectors in the 21st century, African Library and Information leadership in the digital age, the role of libraries in community developments, identifying possible new Library and Information Service initiatives in Africa, open access and its impact on the African Library and Information Services environment, library knowledge development (including indigenous knowledge), social networking in African libraries and quality in library services on the African continent.

To provide a context and direction for the development of the frameworks, Prof A Dick, Department of Information Science, University of Pretoria, provided an overview of the proceedings of the Summit with a special focus on the outcomes of the various drilldown sessions. Within this context a future vision for African Librarianship was recommended to inform discussions on the frameworks for the sectors. A summary of the presentation is attached as Annexure A.

3. FUTURE OF AFRICAN LIBRARIANSHIP: FRAMEWORKS FOR LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT

Within the context and based on the information, participants discussed the challenges, opportunities, possible structures, time frames and recommendations to compile frameworks for:

- Academic Libraries;
- Public Libraries;
- School Libraries;
- LIS Education and Training;
- African Library Associations;
- Collaboration, Integration and Innovation;
- Policy, Leadership and Development;
- LIS development in Francophone Africa.

3.1 The Future: A Framework for Academic Libraries

The proposed Framework for Academic Libraries includes establishing a portal to link all repositories in African academic institutions to form a research-based African Academic Digital Library. Academic librarians should lobby institutions to pass Open Access mandates and develop Open Access policies (including selection, submission, copyright and publishing). The framework provides for succession planning and mentoring and general human resource development. Investigation on whether academic status will be a preferable model for librarians in academic institutions is recommended (including investigation of current models in Africa and a literature review). Information literacy should be extended to include the total academic life of the student and Library users with special needs should be provided with equitable services.

3.2 The Future: A Framework for Public Libraries

Within the Framework, Public libraries should examine the broadest context and develop strategies to reach the underserved and disadvantaged. They should innovate and provide a wide range of services: informational, recreational and educational services that meet context and needs. Public libraries should be open, flexible, multipurpose community spaces and become enabling environments. They should add value, tap into opportunities through one voice in Africa and aggressively align with and advocate within government strategies to participate in the national development process. Public libraries should embrace production of content activities, form strategic partnerships and develop strategies for sustainability.

3.3 The Future: A Framework for School Libraries

The Framework for School Libraries encourages all sectors of the LIS profession to support school library advocacy. Evidence of the impact of school libraries should be gathered and presented to principals, teachers, governments, corporate and NGOs. Case studies of effective library services can be provided. Targeted influential role players, for example principals, teacher unions and quality assurance officials, should be included in the advocacy for school libraries. The framework provides for the development of a funding model for school libraries. Special attention should be given to the library needs of learners with special needs. Governments should be convinced to develop school

library policies and should include frameworks for school library programmes, like literacy, reading and information literacy.

Directorates/specialised units in education ministries/departments should be established to implement and monitor the school libraries policy at national levels. The Framework advocates building teacher-librarian education into teacher training institutions and among practising teachers and establishing posts for teacher-librarians/school librarians. Mandatory information literacy training in the teacher education curriculum should be implemented. Coalitions and networks should be established, for example the African Network for School Librarianship, private sector and NGOs. Partnerships with government and NGOs and ICT organisations should also be established.

3.4 The Future: A Framework for LIS Education and Training

The Framework for LIS Education and Training provides for the indigenization of LIS curricula and/or internationalization. The role of Library Associations in LIS Education and Training should be strengthened.

It advocates a balance between theory and practice, a longer duration for internships, the use of specialists from industries to teach and establish advisory boards. Partnerships between LIS educators are recommended as a local arrangement as well as the revival of SLISNET, South Africa's interest groups for LIS education and the African Union (AU) framework. The infusion of critical aspects of content into the curriculum, core curriculum, options and the need for more engagement should receive attention. Provision for specializations in LIS offerings should include specializations at postgraduate level. Considering the limited published works on library issues in Africa, consideration should be given to indexing and abstracting in LISA and LISTA, as well as the enhancement of the quality of African journals. New journals and open access publishing should be considered. The Framework advocated for a market needs assessment to inform appropriate curriculum review. The changes in titles of disciplines should follow the changes in the curriculum, e.g., KM, IM and IS.

3.5 The Future: A Framework for African Library Associations

An Exploratory Task Team will be established to explore the idea of an African Library Association (AFLA). A request will be submitted to all library associations to consult their constituencies and to seek consensus amongst library associations on this matter. The Team should draft a template for this purpose and identify all relevant stakeholders. In consultation with stakeholders, the terms of reference for AFLA should be developed. Discussion sessions will be arranged during SCECSAL and WALA.

The Framework also provides for capacity building for library associations. This will include mentoring, the establishment of associations where one is not present and the reactivation and strengthening of inactive or semi-active library associations to help them become more functional. Library associations should foster collaboration with governments and seek permanent office space within institutions such as national libraries. Focus on efficient communication networks should include the establishment of websites, newsletters, discussion groups, listservs and other communication tools. Collaboration should be established to share best practices and to address funding and budgeting issues. Library associations should establish regulatory systems such as registration councils, commissions and committees to register librarians, to draft codes of ethics, for the accreditation of programmes and to set and maintain standards.

3.6 The Future: A Framework for Collaboration, Integration and Innovation

This Framework will cut across other sections with the focus being on collaboration, integration and innovation. The Framework recommends the persuasion of LIS professional areas of concern, bodies and institutions of the benefits of various kinds of collaborative commitment and to be willing to relinquish some areas of absolute autonomy. It encourages multiple institutions/units/bodies to perceive integration as best practice arising from collaboration where appropriate, for example shared platforms. Integration is essential when separate units/institutions/groups are funded from a common base. It is recommended that advocacy techniques be implemented to persuade the highest level of government and organizational management in fields of LIS to recognise the crucial role of collaboration and integration. Innovation at all levels should be embraced and change should be managed. Professionals should think out of the box and keep abreast of/ahead of and utilize current technology at all levels – mobile technology /mobile phones may be the most powerful communication technology in Africa. Strategic planning should include new concepts/developments/initiatives/goals that are currently available as well as future potential technologies.

3.7 The Future: A Framework for Policy, Leadership and Development

A framework should be developed on the continent for library and information policies, including national policies in countries for national libraries and national policies on information services. Provision for the implementation of succession planning, mentorship and training programmes in general and especially to ensure smooth transition to the next generation of leaders should be made. Leaders should be “grounded” in librarianship with the required qualifications and experience. Registers for professional librarians (Librarians Registration Council) should be established in countries. A process of accreditation/chartership should be considered. Training in the fields of policy making, leadership and development should receive priority attention.

3.8 The Future: A Framework for LIS Development in Franchophone Africa

The Framework includes the following recommendations:

Créer, revitaliser de solides associations de bibliothécaires. Renforcer les capacités des professionnels. Révision des Curricula et augmentation du nombre d'écoles de formation. Développer des politiques nationales de bibliothèques et services d'information. Modernisation des méthodes de conservation et de préservation de l'information. Réseautage et mutualisation de l'information. Encourager la mise en place de structures de leadership. Démontrer le caractère indispensable des bibliothèques et services d'information dans le développement.

4. MOTION ON AFRICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS

A motion compiled by the Drilldown Session on the Development of a Framework for African Library Associations was discussed and accepted by the participants. The motion is to set up an exploratory committee to investigate the formation of a continental African Library Association. The Motion is attached as Annexure B.

5. STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

A Statement of Commitment was developed by the participants and it was signed at the closing session of the Summit. The statement is attached as Annexure C and may be accessed online at:

<http://libinf1.unisa.ac.za/infoweb2/news/enotices/docs/Signed%20African%20LIS%20Summit%20statement.pdf>

6. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Information on the African Library Summit may be accessed at the website:

<http://www.cvent.com/events/african-library-summit-2011/event-summary-50a1a753e73942619ba3bca44e41d9cd.aspx>

Presentations, information, the signed statement of commitment and summaries of the drilldown sessions may be accessed via the Unisa Institutional Repository at:

<http://uir.unisa.ac.za/>

7. SPONSORSHIPS

The African Library Summit was made possible by generous donations from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Carnegie Foundation, the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), Sabinet, Exclusive Books, SWETS and the funds of the Unisa Strategic Projects Coordinating Committee (SPCC).

8. CONTACT INFORMATION

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9. CONCLUSION

The outcomes of the Summit are indicative of the objectives set having been achieved, thanks to the commitment and contributions of the participants. In addition to the frameworks for library development in the identified areas, the Summit developed a Statement of Commitment. This was signed by all participants and will be used for future developments and engagements.

A motion on the establishment of an integrated African Library Association was accepted by the participants without any hesitation and with overwhelming support.

Positive feedback from participants as well as the strong recommendation to follow up with future summits are also an indication that the Summit achieved its goals.

THE FUTURE OF AFRICAN LIBRARIANSHIP: OVERVIEW AND REVIEW

By Prof AL Dick, Department of Information Science, University of Pretoria, South Africa

MY BRIEF

- Reflect back to you the themes from plenary and drilldown sessions, questions and exhibition posters
 - Reflect on the themes, tensions and blind spots
 - Connect themes with frameworks to be developed
 - Expectations
 - **Unisa Top Management, Library Management, DAC**
 - Formulate practical outcomes
 - Draw up an Action Plan
 - Start a forum for the African LIS community
 - First of a series of summits on the continent
 - **IFLA President**
 - Turn around the downward movement of African libraries
 - Construct a bridge from developing to developed world
 - Redefine libraries for the 21st century (*libraries as publishers?)
 - Scale the peaks from which we can see the promised land of a future African librarianship
 - Is an African librarianship possible?
- Or,
- What kind of African librarianship do we want?

Regions: PEAKS AND VALLEYS

- North (Egypt) – From Ramses papyrus rolls to digital library projects
- East (Uganda) – Indigenization of LIS curriculum/services
- South (South Africa) – Regional and wider continental integration through SADC, AU and UN
- West (Nigeria) – Wide disparities and collaboration among Anglophone countries
- Francophone; Lusophone; EIFL-PLIP 6 - country study?

Perhaps our diversity is our strength

- Library 1.0, or 2.0, or 3.0, or all three?
- African Library Association – real or virtual? Mandated with specific tasks?
- Which context/s for an African librarianship?

Information Society:

- Singular and one-directional
- Technology focus
- Information as a commodity
- Information infrastructure and channels
- Digital divide/s: *access and connectivity barriers*

Knowledge societies:

- Plural and multi-faceted
- People focus
- Knowledge as a human right
- Knowledge infrastructure and content
- Knowledge divide: *educational, cultural, and linguistic barriers*

Knowledge(-based) economy:

- Markets
- Knowledge for profit
- Democratic deficit
- A pluralistic/flexible approach?
- Mismatches, disconnects, tensions and/as common themes?
- People, technology and development
- Africanisation and internationalization
- Library school and library association
- Education and training
- Open access and copyright
- Value of African IK and intellectual property

Other cross-framework themes:

- Advocacy
- Demonstrating value
- Digital libraries
- Open-access initiatives
- Information literacy
- Social networks
- Needs of people with disabilities
- Community development
- Indigenous knowledge
- Intellectual property
- Partnerships at local and international levels
- **Freedom of access to information and freedom of expression? Legacy brings responsibility*

Can we know what kind of future we want without knowing our past?

Not a chronology but a more complete record of African libraries, reading and writing traditions

- Science and scholarship in Africa precedes European colonialism and the introduction of European languages
- 18th century Enlightenment philosophers (Hegel; Kant) and anthropologists (Levy-Bruhl) dismissed Africans and African philosophy as primitive, but African scholars were already discussing Aristotelian logic in the 11th century in Timbuktu
- Timbuktu (in Modern day Mali) was a centre of learning and Islamic knowledge from the 11th century, with a highpoint in the 16th century
- Private Manuscript libraries; Public libraries were open to all; book sales outstripped other trade
- Ajami literature up and down the continent (Arabic script in non-Arabic language – Wolof, Hausa, even Afrikaans)

The Future: Academic Libraries

- Africa's rich resource of unexplored collections still untapped, for example 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 a normal part of lives of younger colleagues and represents an opportunity
- Recommended that current leaders recruit and integrate them into positions or projects sooner than the usual or probationary period

No mention of the academic/support staff status of academic librarians, different staff unions, appointments process - that can complicate relations and collaboration.

The Future: Public Libraries

- 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)

How do we respond to the state's mentality about removal of tax on knowledge (VAT on books) only benefiting the rich?

Where are special libraries in a future African librarianship?

The Future: School Libraries

- 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
- Redefining school libraries (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 also Information Literacy education

How do we address structures for policy implementation when the National Department of Education (DoE) has no budget and provinces make financial decisions?

The Future: LIS Education and Training

- 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

What strategies and structures are necessary to empower library associations to accredit LIS programmes

The Future: African Library Associations

- A register of professionals and a 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?

The Future: Collaboration, Integration, Innovation

- 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, for example IFLA, on advice for projects such as on 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 digitize for them and give free access, it is necessary to think big to digitize into a server and give back to the country from which data is captured
- National language policies marginalize other indigenous languages and governments need to re-visit language policies

How do we collaborate with galleries, archives and museums as memory and knowledge institutions?

The Future: Policy, Leadership and Development

- 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, for example placed with faculty
- US embassies can benefit national libraries and library associations

How do we prevent making a braai (barbeque) with the timber we grow, and institutions' open recruitment/appointments policies?

The Future: LIS Development in Francophone Africa

- 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
- Envisioning the future of African Librarianship as one or more frameworks?
- Eight frameworks or one framework with eight components or pillars connected by a set of common themes or a core philosophy?

MOTION

Following the recommendation by the participants of Drilldown Session T:

We the delegates at the African Library Summit held at Misty Hills, from 11-13 May 2011;

NOTING: That we are meeting here as leaders and experts, high level practitioners and researchers;

MINDFUL: of our different countries, geo-political and economic environments;

AFFIRMING: our commitment to the development of the LIS profession in Africa;

HEREBY: Propose a motion to set up an Exploratory Committee to investigate the formation of a continental African Library Association

Proposed by: Mr John Tsebe, South Africa

Seconded by: Ms Helena Assamoah-Hassan, IFLA Governing Board

Ms Naomi Haasbroek, IFLA Africa Section Chair

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT BY DELEGATES OF THE AFRICAN LIBRARY SUMMIT

We the delegates of the historic African Library Summit, gathered at Misty Hills Country Hotel, Conference Centre & Spa, Muldersdrift, Gauteng, South Africa, on 11-13 May 2011.

Noting that we gathered as experts and professionals concerned about the development of our profession,

Affirm our commitment to African Librarianship and building 21st Century Libraries,

Realising and acknowledging our diversity as a continent,

Mindful of our varied political and economic landscapes,

We commit ourselves to:

- develop a generic framework for the development and sustenance of Library and Information services;
- develop broad guidelines with minimum standards to assist our various governments in meeting the MDG's and development in general;
- develop and sustain local, national, regional and international partnerships to assist us to achieve our varied professional mandates (consider Anglophone, Lusophone and Francophone cooperation);
- engage our various governments to develop or improve legislation and policies that positively affirm the development of LIS as a right for both individual and collective development;
- build a future that is informed by our past legacy and that situates LIS at the centre of development processes and human information needs;
- be a common LIS community able to share ideas and resources across our professional segments;
- embrace existing and emerging technologies and innovation for the enhancement of our service to society;
- encourage the development of strong professional associations capable of influencing and bench-marking our varied work and its quality;
- collaborate with related and allied professions for the development of strong memory and knowledge institutions;
- encourage research and scholarship in LIS and allied and related professions for the growth of both conceptual and practical knowledge;

We recommend that:

- an exploratory Task Team be set up to consider the feasibility of establishing a Federation of African Library Associations;
- each national Library Association in Africa should establish a chartering body to register and regulate the LIS Profession and accredit LIS education programmes;
- African Knowledges in various indigenous languages be recorded and published;
- strategies for advocating the following should be developed for the following sectors:
 - o school libraries
 - o public libraries
 - o libraries for disabled users
- strategies for developing strong LIS leaders be developed;
- strong National Library Associations be build.

We therefore sign this statement on this **13th Day of May 2011** at **Muldersdrift, Gauteng, South Africa**.