



Highlighting diverse accomplishments of LIS professionals, associations, institutions who have demonstrated outstanding leadership, innovation, advocacy and service throughout the year 2025



We are excited to announce that effective January 2026, the SSA RDC Newsletter will adopt a quarterly release cycle for our official newsletter to ensure regular updates from our community.

Welcome Address from the Chair



Celebrating Excellence, Service, and Impact across Sub-Saharan Africa



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

December invites us to pause.

It is a season that gently calls us to reflect on the year behind us, to give thanks for the journeys we have taken together, and to celebrate the people whose commitment and quiet dedication continue to shape our collective story. In this spirit, the IFLA Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Division Committee (SSA RDC) is deeply honoured to devote this December Newsletter to celebrating you, our Library and Information Science (LIS) professionals and Institutions across the continent.

Across Sub-Saharan Africa, librarians and information professionals continue to lead with courage, creativity, and conviction often in contexts marked by limited resources, competing demands, and complex social challenges. Yet, despite these realities, our community has recorded remarkable achievements this year: awards won, institutions strengthened, services reimagined, communities empowered, and new leaders emerging with fresh ideas and bold visions for the future of libraries. This special edition is therefore more than a newsletter. It is a tribute.

A tribute to seasoned professionals whose lifelong service has laid strong foundations.

A tribute to emerging professionals whose innovation and passion are redefining librarianship.

And a tribute to associations and institutions whose collective efforts continue to advance equitable access to information, knowledge, and opportunity across our region.

By showcasing these honours, awards, and recognitions, we seek not only to applaud individual excellence, but also to affirm a deeper truth: Sub-Saharan Africa is rich in LIS talent, leadership, and impact. These stories deserve to be seen, celebrated, and amplified—within our region and beyond it.

As we close the year, may this issue inspire pride in how far we have come, encouragement for the work still ahead, and renewed commitment to collaboration, mentorship, and professional solidarity. Let us continue to lift one another, tell our stories boldly, and build a vibrant, inclusive, and resilient library ecosystem for Africa.

On behalf of the SSA RDC, I thank every colleague who shared their achievements, every reader who finds inspiration in these pages, and every LIS professional whose daily work—often unseen—continues to change lives.

May we carry this spirit of celebration, gratitude, and hope into the new year.

With warmest regards and deep appreciation,

Dr. Monica Mensah Danquah

Chair, IFLA Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Division Committee (SSA RDC)



Celebrating Professor Kgomotso H. Moahi: A Pioneer in African LIS and Higher Education Leadership



On November 28, 2025, Professor Kgomotso H. Moahi became the first woman to assume leadership of a public institution in Botswana, being inaugurated as the 2nd Vice Chancellor of Botswana Open university (BOU). Her elevation to this position comes after decades of leadership at the University of Botswana, where she held the title of Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and became the first Motswana woman to attain the status of Full Professor in Library and Information Science (LIS). She has a PhD from the University of Pittsburgh and has occupied significant executive roles such as Deputy Vice Chancellor and Acting Vice Chancellor. Currently, she is leading BOU's 2036 Strategic Framework to promote inclusive lifelong learning.

In addition to her administrative accomplishments, Professor Moahi is a prolific researcher whose research connects Information Technology with Social Development. She has produced more than 80 papers concentrating on health informatics, information ethics and the preservation of African traditional knowledge. She is a pivotal role in national policy having contributed to Botswana's Maitlamo (National ICT Policy) and now heads the creation of the national Open Data Policy. Through her comprehensive research and guidance of other LIS professionals, she continues to be a prominent champion for the ethical use of technology and open science across the SADC area.



Image Source: BIUST Website (www.biust.ac.bw)



Mr. Khutsafalo Kadimo serves as the Senior Librarian, Research Support Services in the University of Botswana's. He has consistently advocated for evidence-based research, achieving international recognition in 2023 as a Cunningham Memorial International Fellow by the Medical Library Association (USA), also he currently serves as the World Health Organization|Research4Life Developing Countries(Group B) Representative, EIFL Country Copyright and Open Access Coordinator, and Secretary for the Botswana Library Consortium. The year 2025 saw Mr Kadimo being elected to serve as the President of The Association for Health Information and Libraries in Africa (AHILA) at the conference held from September 30 to October 4, 2025, in Lusaka, Zambia. Following his tenure as Vice President, Kadimo currently directs a network of health information experts spanning over 45 nations. His election represents a shift toward a more digitally integrated future for African medical libraries. Under his leadership, AHILA is set to prioritize digital health literacy and strengthen the Network of African Medical Librarians (NAML), ensuring that high-quality health and medical data is accessible to those who need it most.

Advocacy for a Presidential Library: The LIS community has long championed the establishment of a Presidential Library in Botswana. The idea was first introduced in 2018 by the **Botswana International University of Science and Technology (BIUST)** Library through a project known as The Presidential Collection @BIUST . This initiative laid the foundation for a premier repository of textual records, drawings, paintings, photographs, artifacts, and other visual materials that capture and preserve the legacy and eras of all Botswana's presidents. In June 2025, the Government of the Republic of Botswana took a decisive step by authorizing creation of a Presidential Library through legislation. The Botswana National Library Services (BNLS) and the Botswana National Archives & Records Services have been mandated to lead this national initiative. A multi-stakeholder task team has been convened, with key responsibilities that include reviewing the current National Library Service Bill and preparing submissions for parliamentary deliberation, as well as offering guidance on the architectural and design framework of the Presidential Library. This development marks a significant milestone for the LIS sector in Botswana.



The Presidential Collection @BIUST



University of Cape Town- Leading Change for Social Justice in Library Education

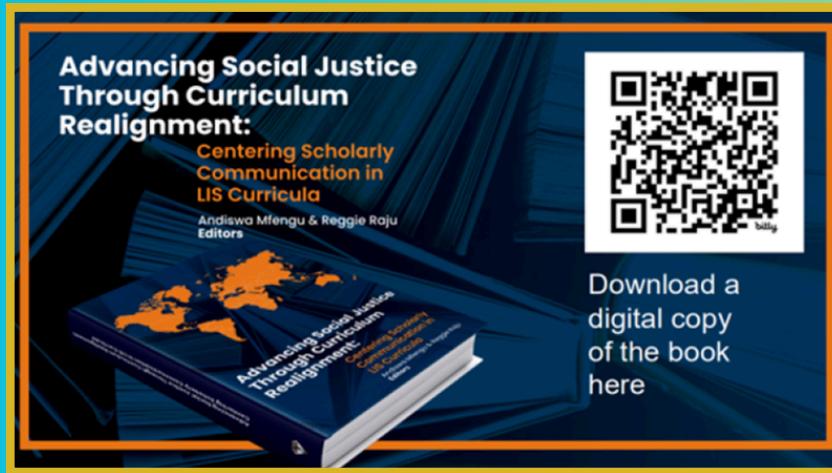


Image Source: [UKS website](#)

A new open-access book published by the University of Cape Town (UCT), featuring prominent Sub-Saharan African scholars, establishes a roadmap for decolonised and equitable Library and Information Science (LIS) education across Sub-Saharan Africa. The book, ***Advancing Social Justice Through Curriculum Realignment: Centering Scholarly Communication in LIS Curricula*** (UCT Libraries Press) addresses an urgent need to modernise LIS curricula and places African scholarship at the forefront of the global movement for equitable access to knowledge. The system through which research is created, evaluated, disseminated, and preserved is no longer a niche topic. It is now viewed as a crucial tool for knowledge democratisation and inclusive participation in global knowledge systems. The book argues that LIS curricula must be realigned to prepare the next generation of professionals to lead this transformative change right from the start of their careers. A major highlight of this collection is the significant contribution from leading LIS educators and practitioners across the Sub-Saharan African region, demonstrating the continent's thought leadership on issues of social justice and decolonisation. Their collective work forms a practical and theoretical foundation for curriculum reform that is locally relevant and globally resonant.

The book edited by Dr. Andiswa Mfengu and Dr. Reggie Raju from the University of Cape Town (UCT) is a direct outcome of a focused scholarly event at the 2nd Global Summit on Diamond Open Access held at UCT. It has Achieved global relevance through deep inclusivity featuring 19 essays by 23 authors spanning Africa, Latin America, Europe, North America, and Australasia. The collection shatters mainstream academic norms by promoting multilingual engagement, with essays written in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Setswana. This, along with the accommodation of varied English styles, ensures the book reflects the true linguistic and cultural diversity of the world's scholarly community. Contributions from the Sub Saharan Africa include the following:

1. Emerging Perspectives in Scholarly Communication for LIS Curricula- Reggie Raju
2. Scholarly Communication for Social Justice and Decolonised Education: Implications for LIS Curriculum Realignment- Kgomotso H. Moahi
3. A Hermeneutical Consideration of What Knowledge is Produced Before How it is Shared- Jaya Raju
4. Investigating, Writing and Teaching Social Justice Themes in Library and Information Studies- Archie L. Dick
5. A Scoping Review of Two Decades of Research on Scholarly Communication and Social Justice in Library and Information Science in Africa- Monica Mensah Danquah
6. Decolonizing LIS curricula: advancing social justice through scholarly communication in Africa- Wole Michael Olatokun
7. Propelling towards global realignment of LIS curricula through scholarly communication at the University of Botswana- Olugbade Oladokun

The collaborative success of this book is a testament to the fact that African library professionals are not just participants in the global conversation; but are actively shaping it. "By providing an open-access blueprint for curriculum change, their regional scholars are ensuring that future LIS graduates are equipped to be architects of a more equitable and inclusive information society."

The Champion of African Open Knowledge: Dr. Collence Takaingenhamo Chisita

Affiliation: Department of Information Systems, Durban University of Technology, South Africa

Award: Open Knowledge Award of Excellence for African Librarians, AfLIA (2025)

Date Awarded: 21 May 2025

Event: 6th Conference & 8th African Library Summit, Windhoek, Namibia



Dr. Chisita received the award on 21 May 2025 during the Cultural Night and Awards Ceremony held as part of the 6th Conference and 8th African Library Summit in Windhoek, Namibia. As part of the award, he received a customised honour plaque and an all-expense-paid trip to attend the conference. The plaque recognised his outstanding leadership, advocacy, and lifelong contributions to advancing open knowledge, open science, and inclusive information practices across Africa and beyond.



He has authored books, chapters, and journal articles, and is a frequent keynote speaker at IFLA, AfLIA, EIFL, UNESCO, and other international events. His work focuses on knowledge societies, indigenous knowledge systems, digital inclusion, and open scholarship, and he has mentored emerging African LIS professionals while facilitating workshops, webinars, and conference sessions across the continent.. Consequently, Dr. Chisita plays an active leadership role in professional associations. He is a Standing Committee Member of the IFLA Indigenous Matters Section (IFLA-IMS) and serves as Secretary of the AfLIA Library Education and Training Section (LETIS)



Ghana Stories



Dr. Philip Kweku Kankan, Head of the Department of Information Studies, celebrated a significant milestone with his promotion to the rank of Associate Professor. This achievement distinguishes him as the only Library and Information Science professional in Ghana currently in active service with a professorial rank. His promotion is a well-deserved recognition of years of dedicated teaching, impactful research, and committed mentorship. It marks not only a personal triumph but also an important moment for the LIS profession in Ghana, signaling a continued trajectory of academic excellence and leadership. Congratulations Prof.



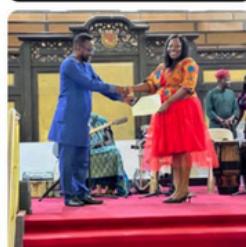
Congratulations

On your promotion as a
Principal Librarian
at the University of Ghana
Balme Library



Mr. Samuel Bentil AGGREY

Mr. Samuel Bentil Aggrey, serving as the Acting University Librarian of the University of Ghana Library System, reached an important milestone in his career when he was promoted to the rank of Principal Librarian. His rise reflects years of steady leadership, commitment to service, and a passion for strengthening library operations. His achievement inspires many within the profession.



Following her election as the Chair of the IFLA Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Division Committee (SSA RDC) in August 2025, **Dr. Monica Mensah Danquah** as senior lecturer at the Department of information studies, University of Ghana continued to receive significant recognition for her leadership, scholarship, and service within the LIS profession across the region. In October 2025, Dr. Danquah was honored as the Librarian of the Month by Librarian Spotlight Africa, a continental initiative that celebrates librarians who demonstrate exceptional impact and innovation. This recognition highlighted her dedication to advancing LIS education, professional development, and equitable information access across diverse communities. Shortly after, on 28 November 2025, Dr. Danquah was awarded the Most Promising Early Career Researcher at the Awards and Dinner Dance organised by the College of Education, University of Ghana. This prestigious award acknowledged her growing research portfolio in areas such as digital health information services, scholarly communication transformation, social justice in LIS, and evidence-based professional practice. Together, these recognitions reflect her unwavering commitment to strengthening librarianship in Sub-Saharan Africa and her rising influence as a scholar, leader, and advocate in the global LIS community. Congratulations Dr. Monica Mensah Danquah

FotoGrid



Dr Lawrence Tetteh Akosen

Dr Lawrence Tetteh Akosen completed his Doctor of Philosophy degree at the Department of Information Studies at the University of Ghana and officially earned the title of Doctor. His thesis topic was on Digital transformation in higher Education in Ghana.



Dr. Nasir Koranteng Asiedu

Dr. Nasir Koranteng Asiedu completed his Doctor of Philosophy degree at the Department of Information Studies at the University of Ghana and officially earned the title of Doctor. His thesis topic was Effect of Leadership Behaviour and emotional intelligence on employee performance in public university libraries in Ghana.



Dr Francis Afedoh the Librarian for the Ghana Tertiary Education commission in Accra Ghana, completed his Doctor of Philosophy degree at the University of South Africa and officially earned the title of Doctor. His achievement marks the end of a demanding academic journey and the beginning of new possibilities in research and practice. His determination and resilience shine through this moment.

Dr Afua Frempong Kore the Librarian for the Ghana Communication Technology University completed her PhD in Information Science from the University of South Africa. Her work reflects deep inquiry and an enduring commitment to advancing knowledge in the field. Her milestone stands as a testimony to persistence and academic passion.

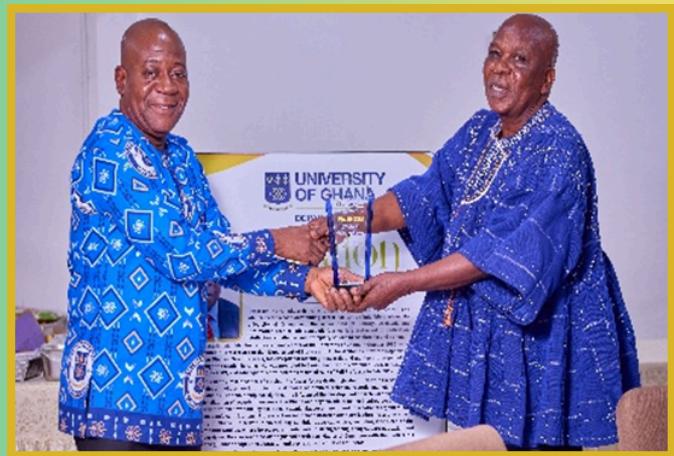
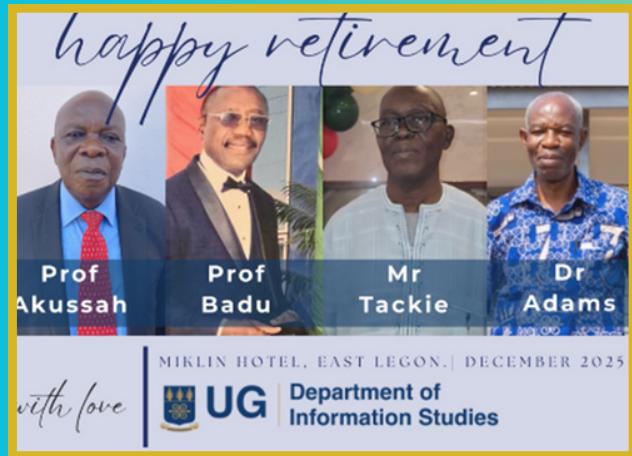


Aba Amandzewaa Anaman the Librarian of the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana, after her second election as the national secretary of the Ghana library association has received a nomination to serve as the Publicity Secretary for AFLIA LETIS. This recognition speaks to her growing influence within the African library sector and her dedication to professional visibility, communication, and service. Her nomination positions her to contribute meaningfully to a wider community of practice.



Mrs Janet Odetsi Twum Librarian for the Ghana School of Law successfully completed her law studies and earned the title of Esquire. Her achievement demonstrates admirable dedication to personal growth and professional expansion. With this new qualification, she steps confidently into a broader landscape of opportunity and service.

Department of Information Studies University of Ghana, Celebrates its Retirees



In December this year, the Department of Information Studies marked a significant moment in its history by celebrating the retirement of several long-serving lecturers who have been with the Department since its inception. As the pioneering and, for many years, the only Library and Information Science school in Ghana, the Department owes much of its growth and impact to the dedication, expertise, and mentorship of these esteemed educators. Their contributions have shaped generations of information professionals and strengthened the foundation of LIS education in the Ghana. These included Professor Harry Akussah, Professor Edwin Ellis Badu.....

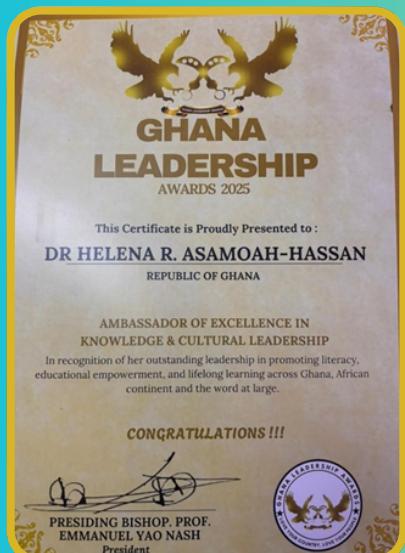




On December 19, 2025, Dr. Helena Asamoah-Hassan, Executive Director of the African Library and Information Associations and Institutions (AfLIA), was honored at the Ghana Leadership Awards as the "Ambassador of Excellence in Knowledge & Cultural Leadership." Selected as one of 36 distinguished recipients in an event organized with the Global Economic Forum, she was recognized for her exemplary leadership and service to humanity. The award highlights her significant contributions to the socio-economic advancement of Ghana and the wider African continent through her dedication to cultural and intellectual growth.

Throughout her illustrious career, Dr. Asamoah-Hassan has become a visionary figure in promoting literacy, educational empowerment, and lifelong learning globally. Her work serves as a powerful testament to the impact of library services in building informed and inclusive societies. By inspiring library professionals and institutions across Sub-Saharan Africa, she continues to champion the vital role of knowledge centers in fostering community development and lasting social change.

Dr. Helena Asamoah-Hassan





The SSA RDC professional community reached a milestone with the successful election of its Regional Division Committee. With an impressive 52.48% turnout, the election results demonstrated a strong, collective commitment to the future of the region and to ensure fair representation across the continent, a national cap system was applied, limiting each country to two representatives. This democratic process resulted in a diverse group of the following 20 elected members representing 14 countries Sub Saharan Africa. The new committee brings a wealth of geographic and cultural insights to the regional leadership. We congratulate our new leaders as they begin their journey in building a connected and impactful professional landscape for Sub-Saharan Africa.



Ntombikayise N. Mathabela



Namutanya Hamwaalwa



Buhle Mbambo-Thata



Monica M. Danquah



Allan M. Hagwelele



Caroline Ilako



Siviwe Feketshane



Lilian M. Letshabo



Richard O. Seglo



Kwame Kodua-Ntim



Nthabiseng Kotsokoane



Melba Sitwala



Nerisa J. Kamar



Purity Kavuri



Berthilde Uwamwezi



Jerry Mathema



Victoria Okojie



Kenneth Abong



Gilbert Niyomugabo



Juliana Manyerere

Photo Cred: Wikimedia commons

The committee's mandate focuses on regional advocacy, capacity building and the promotion of IFLA's membership across Sub-Saharan Africa. By defining targeted action plans, the Committee strengthens the voice of libraries and ensures that priority regional issues are elevated to the global stage in close coordination with IFLA Headquarters and the Regional Office for Africa



Knowledge Empowering Youth Trust Receives the Library of Congress Literacy Award

Since 2008, Knowledge Empowering Youth (KEY) has expanded access to literacy for children in under-resourced communities through libraries designed as dynamic learning environments. Operating in 46 schools, KEY reaches more than 57,000 students and 1,300 teachers with a model that addresses key education gaps by combining curated book collections, technology, structured literacy programming, and student leadership frameworks adaptable to local contexts – equipping learners to thrive nationally and globally.

In recognition of this work, KEY has been named a 2025 Library of Congress Literacy Awards Successful Practices Honoree for its innovative methods and effective practices to promote literacy. The award acknowledges KEY's transformation of underfunded school libraries into vibrant, techno-integrated hubs in Kenya, Ghana, and Tanzania, which serve as an inspiring model for others interested in literacy promotion.

Built on standardized yet flexible systems and grounded in school and community ownership, the model enables local capacity building, sustainability, and cost efficiency. As a result, KEY is further known for its exemplary, innovative, and replicable strategies to promote literacy in underserved communities, demonstrating a scalable approach that strengthens literacy, life skills, and civic engagement across diverse settings



Authors: Gladys Kerich, KEY's Programs Manager & Nyakundi Nyambane, Head Librarian KEY Librarian & PhD Student at University of Maryland, College Park



National Library of Nigeria H/Q, Abuja.

Mrs. Folasade Adepoju is the 2025 Educator Awardee of National Digital Stewardship Alliance (NDSA). This is in recognition of her academics, trainers, and curricular endeavors, promoting effective and inventive approaches to digital preservation education through academic programs, partnerships, professional development opportunities, and curriculum development.



Delta State University Abraka.

Dr. Violet Ikolo was elected as Vice President, Association for Health Information and Libraries in Africa (AHILA) and recognized for her extensive expertise in medical librarianship and her commitment to improving health information access across Africa. She has been a pivotal figure in health literacy. Her election reflects the confidence her African peers have in her ability to steer the association's strategic goals, particularly in bridging the health data gap and managing digital health information resources. Her role as a "Bette Evidence for Training Champion" (associated with Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health) further solidified her reputation as a leader capable of connecting African libraries with global health evidence networks.



The State House Library, Abuja.

Dr. Grace Temilolu Ikenna was elected "Member of the Standing Committee for the IFLA Preservation and Conservation (PRESCON) Section for the 2025–2029 term. Her election signifies international trust in her ability to contribute to global standards on how libraries preserve physical and digital materials, a critical issue for African archives facing climate and infrastructure challenges. As a researcher at the State House Library (the Presidential Villa), she occupies a unique position that bridges high-level government policy with practical librarianship. She has been active in the LD4 Linked Data Community, advocating for better data management in African libraries.



Dr. Ayodele John Alonge was elected the "Information Coordinator of the IFLA News and Media Section 2025- 2027" This international election places him in a key leadership role within IFLA, specifically overseeing how news and media information is managed and shared within the global library community. Dr. Alonge was recognized for his extensive background in "New Media" and digital transformation. His work as the Coordinator of the Nigerian Library Association (NLA) Digital Communication Crew proved his ability to manage professional information platforms effectively. As a Senior Lecturer at the University of Ibadan and a researcher in digital transformation, he was viewed as a strategic choice to bridge the gap between media studies and library science. His role involves ensuring that news regarding library innovations and media literacy from across the globe (with a focus on highlighting African perspectives) is accurately coordinated and disseminated to the international library community.



Khalifa Isyaku Rabiu University Kano State

Mr. Nazir Muhammad was honored as the "Best Librarian for November 2025" by Librarian Spotlight Africa. This prestigious award recognizes his commitment to advancing knowledge access in Northern Nigeria through digital innovation, strategic partnerships, and community outreach. As the Pioneer University Librarian at Khalifa Isyaku Rabiu University and Chairman of the Nigerian Library Association (Kano State Chapter), he continues to champion initiatives that empower both the profession and the communities he serves



Skyline University Nigeria (SUN), Kano State

Mr. Kabiru Danladi Garba CLN was presented an Award of Recognition by Qatar National Library (QNL) in its capacity as the IFLA Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), for valuable contribution to the IFLA Library Map of the World project, in which the National Collection of Qatar (NCoQ) Library under Qatar Museums is proudly featured and represented.



Umar Musa Yar' Adua University, Katsina State

Dr. Lawal Umar, FNLNA has reached a significant milestone in his distinguished career with his inauguration as the 23rd President of the Nigerian Library Association (NLA). he was also conferred as a Fellow of the Nigerian Library Association (FNLNA), a testament to his expertise and dedication to the field. As a visionary leader, Dr. Umar is a staunch advocate for professional capacity building, specifically focusing on the integration of core library practices with emerging technologies. He is also an advocate for building bridges and engagement with the hash tag "Bring Back our Members" #BBoM

Admiralty University of Nigeria, Ibusa, Delta State.

Mr. Sylvester Israel Ebholu has won several awards including the Award of Excellence from Kwara State University, Malete, having delivered a Keynote on Digital Wellness in University Communities. He also received the Best Oral Presentation Award at the Admiralty University of Nigeria Research Week and was recognized by the Nigerian Library Association with the Dr. Victoria Okojie Award for his advocacy and promotion of library services .Furthermore, he was honored with the Outstanding Career Mentorship Award by the Federal University of Petroleum Resources, Effurun and was officially inaugurated as the Public Relations Officer (PRO) of the Nigerian Library Association.

University of Abuja

Dr. Victoria Okojie has was appointed Provost of the Edo State College of Education. Her leadership prowess was further solidified by her recent election to the IFLA Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Division Committee (2025–2027). This international victory is far more than an award; it represents a high-level global vote of confidence in her professional expertise. Drawing on decades of service, Dr. Okojie remains a preeminent force in advancing librarianship in Nigeria and a powerful advocate for the African library voice. She continues to serve as a central bridge, connecting Nigerian libraries with global best practices and elevating the region's profile on the world stage.

African Library and Information Associations and Institutions (AfLIA)

Continued recognition as a Global Library Champion.

While Dr. Nkem Osuigwe's major "Wikimedian of the Year" award occurred previously, in 2025 she continued to receive international acclaim for her leadership as the Director of Human Capacity Development and Training for AfLIA (African Library and Information Associations and Institutions).She is consistently honoured for leading the decolonization of knowledge, promoting open educational resources (OER) and managing the WikilnAfrica initiatives that empower African librarians to tell their own stories on the global web.



Namibia Stories



The National Information Workers Association of Namibia (NIWAN) advances capacity building through strategic partnerships



NIWAN has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to strengthening the skills and professional competencies of all Information Professionals in Namibia and beyond. The following are some of the Capacity building programmes undertaken so far:

- NIWAN student drive was an initiative to advance students representation in the association, coaching and mentorship efforts
- Awareness to all new members about what the association is all about, benefits and their expected role in helping to greater heights as members.
- With the support of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), NIWAN was able to undertake a training programme on Measurement, Evaluation and Demonstrating the impact of Library Services..
- Financial Wellness Session which was held by the National Information Workers Association of Namibia . The session was held on Friday, 20th September 2024
- Libraries and Sustainable Development Goals session which was held on 12th June 2025 were 20 Library and Information Professionals trained by UNDP's focal person.
- NIWAN officially launched and held a Research Writing and Publishing Seminar which took place on the 25th September 2025. The session was attended by 50 participants.
- Enhancing Library Impact through Partnership: Building a shared future for Africa session which was held on 4th July 2024 and was attended by 91 participants from across the globe.
- Building Bridges, crafting our Future: Exploring the power of collaboration among Libraries and Information Science Professionals. Customer Care in Libraries, a session that was delivered in collaboration with representatives from Namibia, Rwanda and Zimbabwe. This was attended by 130 participants from all over Africa.
- Effective Communication in the ERA of AI- this was delivered in collaboration with colleagues from Nigeria and South Africa and was attended by 150 participants from across the globe.
- In Collaboration with AFLIA, about 10 Namibian Librarians were enrolled for the course “Advancing Open knowledge in Africa through Persistent Identifiers and Open Research Infrastructure”.



Prof. Namhila Ellen Ndeshi a Pro-Vice Chancellor for Finance, Administration and Resource Mobilisation at the University of Namibia (UNAM) was this year honored for her outstanding contribution to the Association of Parliamentary Libraries in Eastern and Southern Africa (APLESA) during this year's APLESA Conference which was held in Swakopmund, Namibia.

This award was in honor of her contribution made to the association during the time she served as APLESA Chairperson from 1988-2000.

She pioneered the setting up of the Namibia Parliament Library and the establishment of the Namibia library network systems, infrastructure, operation systems as well as policies and regulations. She has played a critical role in the information sector in Africa through regional bodies such as SCECSAL which led to her being honored for her significant contributions towards the growth and expansion of the Standing Conference of Eastern, Central and Southern African Library and Information Associations (SCECSAL). Further more she has made significant contributions to the IFLA-Africa Section, UNESCO Memory of the World and also published many books. Her success reflects her exceptional abilities and unwavering determination and she remains an inspiration to Many Information Professionals in Namibia and beyond.

LSA
Librarian Spotlight Africa
"amplifying impact to inspire positive change"

Librarian of the Month

for February 2025

Sat. 15th Feb. 2025. 19:00 GMT+1

Melba M. Sitwala

Meet Melba Sitwala, a passionate librarian and mentor whose dedication to capacity building and uniting information professionals in Namibia sets her apart. As the University Librarian at the International University of Management (IUM) and President of the Library Association of Namibia (NIWAN), her commitment to nurturing future leaders and strengthening the library profession exemplifies LSA's values. Join us in celebrating her impactful contributions as Honouree of the Month for February 2025.

LIVE

Ms. Melba Sitwala is a University Librarian at the International University of Management (IUM) and current President of the National Information Workers Association of Namibia (NIWAN) was honored as the Librarian of the Month for February 2025. This recognition was for her dedication to capacity building efforts, coaching & mentorship for both early career and practicing information professionals in Namibia and beyond. Passionate about her work, she has strategically established strong partnerships with other African librarians. She has volunteered with Library Aid Africa to groom African Librarians across Africa on how Libraries can help realise the SDGs from 2020 to date. She has hosted several webinars as well.



As a community activist and SDG Advocate, Sitwala distributes sanitary towels to different schools for learners that cannot afford to buy. This initiative helps to realise SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being where girls are sensitized menstrual health and hygiene. Additionally, it helps also with the realization of SDG 5: Gender Equality as it accords opportunity for girls from vulnerable families who can't effort to buy sanitary towels to be in school. Equally, this initiative also supports SDG 4: Quality Education by helping to reduce school absenteeism caused by lack of menstrual products



Tanzania Library Service Board (TLSB), Arusha Regional Library Expands Reach Through Community Programs

Arusha, Tanzania – The Arusha Regional Library, established in 1970 under the Tanzania Library Services Board (TLSB), has marked 2025 as a year of dynamic outreach and community engagement. From national celebrations to grassroots initiatives, the library has strengthened its role as a hub for knowledge and empowerment.



Library staff educating citizens on digital services and resources.

Celebrating International Women's Day

The library played a central role in Tanzania's national launch of International Women's Day, hosted in Arusha. For a full week leading up to March 8, library staff ran exhibitions at the regional stadium, introducing citizens and foreigners alike to its services. More than 550 visitors – including men, women, and children – engaged directly with staff, learning how library resources can support education and equality.



Arusha Regional Library's in-reach marketing program held on the library grounds.

Showcasing New Books

In August, the library hosted an “Exhibition of New Arrival Books” within its grounds. The three-day event drew an impressive 1,510 participants, who explored new titles while regular services continued uninterrupted. The initiative demonstrated the library’s commitment to making resources accessible and visible to the public.



Image; Arusha Regional library staff team (from the left) Mr. Ally (Librarian), Ms. Rafiki Kilonzo Mvamba (Regional librarian) and Ms. Joyce Kamage Selele (Library assistant) with their marketing and library awareness tools at Faraja Orphanage Children's Home in Shangarai village, Meru District, Arusha.

Reaching Vulnerable Groups

On September 8, staff visited Faraja Orphanage Children's Home in Shangarai village to mark Literacy Day. The team donated subject books, storybooks, toys, and educational materials, while also helping children form reading clubs. The visit underscored the library's dedication to inclusivity and nurturing a culture of reading among vulnerable groups.

Supporting Entrepreneurs

In November, the library extended its outreach to the Maasai Market in Arusha City, engaging directly with 280 entrepreneurs. The program highlighted how access to library resources can support small businesses, offering tools for productivity and growth.



(On the left) Maasai market small businesswomen reading some of the library resources, (On the right) Library services awareness is provided to entrepreneurs.

A Year of Impact

Through exhibitions, outreach trips, and targeted programs, the Arusha Regional Library has reached thousands of people across different sectors of society. Its 2025 initiatives reflect a broader mission: to bring knowledge closer to communities, empower citizens, and reinforce the library's role as a cornerstone of education and development in Tanzania.



Technical Workshop: Improving Repository Infrastructure and Data Management in Ugandan Universities

Mr. Kamanda Francis, Assistant Librarian at Kyambogo University Library, recently participated in a high-level technical workshop organized by the Consortium of Uganda University Libraries (CUUL). Held from 8th-10th December 2025, the training brought together repository managers and IT staff from over 15 Ugandan universities. Funded by the Invest in Open Infrastructure (IOI) Fund and hosted at the Uganda Christian University's Ham Mukasa Library, the workshop focused on the theme: "Improving Repository Infrastructure and Data Management in Uganda Universities."

The intensive sessions provided hands-on training in DSpace installation and upgrades, community and collection architecture, content (item) management, and the technical administration of registries and user permissions.

Strategic Recommendations and Key Observations

As a result of the training, several critical benchmarks were established to modernize institutional repositories (IRs) across the region:

System Upgrades: While most IRs were running DSpace versions 7.6.2 or 8.2, a transition to DSpace 9.0 was strongly recommended to leverage the latest security and functional enhancements.

Persistent Identifiers: A push for institutions to subscribe to Handle services was identified as a priority to ensure long-term, reliable access to digital assets.

Metadata Excellence: Most repositories were found to be compliant with Dublin Core and CORE vocabularies, maintaining high standards for global discoverability.

Analytics and Visibility: The workshop recommended the integration of Google Analytics or Matomo to better track usage and demonstrate the impact of research outputs.

Policy and Licensing: Participants were urged to publicly document their IR policies and customize default DSpace deposit licenses to align with their specific institutional mandates.

This collaborative initiative proved immensely beneficial, bridging technical gaps and fostering a unified approach to open access among Ugandan university libraries





Professor **Joseph Kiplang'at**, PhD, currently serves as the Vice Chancellor of Kenya Highlands University, having been installed on April 17, 2025. A distinguished scholar in Information Science, he previously dedicated eight years to senior leadership as the Deputy Vice Chancellor at both the Technical University of Kenya and Africa International University. His academic contributions include extensive publications in refereed journals and books, alongside his role on the Editorial Board for Electronic Library.

Professor Kiplang'at is a prominent figure in the global LIS community, holding memberships in the Kenya Library Association and the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative (DCMI). He is a frequent speaker and researcher, recently presenting on the 4th and 5th Industrial Revolutions in LIS education and KM curriculum frameworks at major conferences like SCECSAL. Beyond research, he remains committed to mentorship through doctoral supervision and external examination for universities worldwide.



Mr. David Kipchirchir Koech is a dedicated library professional at Kabarak University's Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi Library and an active member of the Kenya Library Association (KLA). As the founder of the Library Matters Initiative Africa (LMI-AFRICA), he is a passionate advocate for Open Access and Open Educational Resources (OER) across the continent.

The year 2025 marked a period of significant recognition for David, beginning with his selection as the Distinguished Librarian of the Month for April by the Librarian Spotlight Africa (LSA) initiative. His commitment to the field earned him a prestigious scholarship from the University of Minnesota's Center for Open Education Network (OEN) to specialize in open librarianship. Additionally, his expertise is recognized internationally through his appointment to the INFOLIBNET Advisory Team in Ethiopia, where he contributes to the development of information networks.



Observer: **Monica Mensah Danquah**
(Chair IFLA SSA RDC) Senior Lecturer,
University of Ghana

Chairperson: **Ogou-gara Richard SEGLO**
Sociologist & Cultural Heritage specialist University
Abomey-Calavi Benin

Editorial Team



Kenneth Abong
Assistant Librarian
Aga Khan University Uganda



Chief editor for this edition
Lilian Mmapula Letshabo
Librarian
Botswana University of
Agriculture & Natural Resources



Melba K. Sitwala
University Librarian
International University of Management (IUM)

Please look out for our upcoming Webinar themed : **"Building Sustainable Library Systems through Partnerships, Advocacy, and Community Empowerment"**

We are honored to feature **Damilare Oyedele**, a renowned Librarypreneur, as our keynote speaker. The session will be moderated by Melba Sitwala, University Librarian at The International University of Management.

 **28th January 2026**  **2:00 PM (Nairobi) | 11:00 AM (Accra)**



lletshabo@buan.ac.bw

richardseglo1@gmail.com

