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## **Dynamic Partnerships for Sustainable Development of Public Libraries for Young People in Zambia**

**Jane Kinney Meyers**

Lubuto Library Partners, Washington, DC, USA and Lusaka, Zambia

mayazi@verizon.net



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### **Abstract:**

*Partners are more important for libraries than ever. While perhaps largely due to resource constraints, it is also related to understanding that the strengths and mutual benefits derived from collaboration and partnership will contribute to appreciating what libraries can contribute to their nations' achieving the SDGs. In essence, libraries partner with their national governments to that end.*

*Partnerships have always defined and animated Lubuto Library Partners' work. Pioneering partnerships with the Zambia Library Service and those offering LIS education in Zambia and worldwide ensure that collaborative efforts to strengthen and expand libraries' services to young people in the country and region are effective. It has been especially important in an environment that previously offered no children and youth library services or training, or that have suffered the deleterious effects of book donation programs, that, through cooperation and partnership, youth services be understood, owned and sustained.*

*Private and public sector partnerships are needed, in tandem, with national and international entities, as well as with each individual library. Major partnerships finance Lubuto's library development, training and advocacy activities. Partnerships with local businesses and community members help sustain the libraries. Partnerships with arts, health, ICT and other organizations enrich libraries through programs, services and resources. In turn, those agencies gain by using the library as a platform to reach their intended audiences.*

*Initiatives such as preservation and promotion of indigenous children's literature are nurtured by partnerships. Examples of partnerships with the Zambian Education Publishing House and a foreign technology company will illustrate the rich benefits to be derived from public-private collaboration.*

*This paper describes a wide array and variety of partnerships that have guided and supported LLP's scope and activities, along with interesting and exciting partnerships that make Zambia's Lubuto Libraries rich places that play a central role in the lives of their users.*

**Keywords:** Africa; Public Libraries; children; youth; partnership

## INTRODUCTION

In recent years there has been a growing recognition in the library world that partners are more important than ever. While perhaps largely due to resource constraints and the need for sustainable support, this recognition is also – positively – reflects an understanding that the strengths and mutual benefits derived from collaboration and partnership will contribute to societies appreciating what libraries can contribute to their nations’ plans toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. In essence, libraries partner with their national governments to that end.

Partnerships have been so central to the founding and growth of Lubuto libraries in Zambia that their parent organization changed its name to Lubuto Library Partners (LLP) in 2014. The new name underscores the fundamental importance of the partnership between libraries and both the societies and communities they serve. It especially highlights Lubuto's pioneering partnerships with the Zambia Library Service and the library profession in Zambia and worldwide. Partnerships have always defined and animated LLP’s mission, objectives and growth strategies. This paper describes a wide array of partnerships that brought the Lubuto Library Partners into existence, guided its plans, and expanded its scope and activities, along with examples of some innovative partnerships that can help libraries to become rich places that play a central role in the lives of their users.

The greatest level of sustainability is provided by libraries having many different kinds of partners. The realities of contemporary public finance indicate that both private and public sector partnerships are needed to sustain public libraries, along with the local and national government entities that are their traditional supporters. International partnerships, through professional associations, with foundations, educational institutions or other types of support organizations (like LLP) can open a world of possibilities to raise the profile and recognition of the importance of public libraries. Partnerships with local businesses and community members can also help sustain public libraries. Partnerships with arts, health, ICT and other organizations can enrich libraries through programs, services and resources. In turn, those agencies gain by using the library as a platform to reach their intended audiences. Everyone wins in an effective partnership.

The Lubuto Library Model provides working examples of all of these types of partnerships as well as establishing partnerships with community-based “host” organizations that specifically support each new Lubuto public library. Major partnerships finance all of Lubuto’s training, advocacy and library development activities, as well as – and perhaps most importantly – both traditional and innovative initiatives that have brought attention and support to the library profession in Zambia.

To understand how this model works in Zambia to strengthen the library profession, LLP’s mission and mode of operation should be explained. Lubuto Library Partners ([www.Lubuto.org](http://www.Lubuto.org)) is an innovative development organization that builds the capacity of public libraries to create opportunities for equitable education and poverty reduction. Its mission is to empower African children and youth, especially those not in school and highly vulnerable, and help them develop the knowledge and skills to reconnect with their culture and community and participate fully in society.

To guide and inform our library colleagues, other stakeholders and society at large in the role that public library youth services can play in national development, Lubuto constructs enduring, indigenously-styled open-access libraries stocked with comprehensive collections of purchased, library-bound books and appropriate technology. Featuring effective outreach programs, these libraries serve as safe havens and are the center for programs that offer education, psychosocial support and self-expression through reading, music, art, drama, computers, mentoring and other activities. In other words, LLP promotes high-quality, impactful library services by creating libraries—that are completely owned by partner organizations—and educating librarians in developing and offering services and programs that best serve their users. The overarching purposes is to advocate for support for libraries and the role they can play, particularly in serving young people in African countries like Zambia, whose population is overwhelmingly young, yet whose libraries and

library schools have not focused on youth services. Library services to children and teens must be understood, owned and sustained; youth services are highly valued and appreciated when their impact is seen and communicated to stakeholders. Additionally, overcoming the deleterious effects of book donation/dumping programs on libraries (who are not supported with acquisitions budgets nor empowered to have meaningful collection development and book selection) and African publishers (whose market is essentially destroyed) requires urgent collaborative efforts among libraries. LLP has established evidence-based collection development for Zambia's public youth libraries that will establish the return on investment for library acquisitions budgets. The positive response by Zambia's publishers to LLP's partnership efforts has been striking.

## **ESSENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS WITH GOVERNMENT AND THE LIBRARY PROFESSION**

LLP's ongoing partnership with members of the library profession in Africa has been of fundamental importance. Leaders in the library profession worldwide have guided LLP activities since inception, but the first implementations and development of the Lubuto Model began in Zambia. Thus, with Lubuto's fundamental emphasis on local ownership, Zambia's library establishment has always been understood and respected as the ultimate "owners" of Lubuto Libraries, and recognition of that has underpinned a strong partnership relationship. This collaboration draws strength from the shared aims of the partners, recognizing LLP primarily as providers of technical assistance and training in an area that has not been developed in Zambia's public libraries or LIS education. LLP establishes professionally planned public libraries working with national authorities, a critical distinction from the recent emergence of "community library" programs, ranging from flagrant book-dumping schemes to more well-intentioned but equally destructive and ineffective library development by non-professionals that essentially passes by local librarians and national systems.

LLP's fundamental partnerships are with the key institutions of the library profession in Zambia – the Zambia Library Service (ZLS), the Library and Information Association of Zambia (LIAZ), the University of Zambia's Department of Library and Information Science (UNZA LIS) and other institutions guided and supported by Zambia's library professionals.

The Zambia Library Service (ZLS), as a department of Zambia's education ministry, manages the public library network throughout Zambia. In addition to ensuring the establishment and coordination of libraries, ZLS is responsible for assisting other organizations providing library and information services. LLP formalized its partnership with the Ministry of Education and the Zambia Library Service in a 2008 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that identified Lubuto as a National Partner in attaining the objectives of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), expressing the ministry's recognition of the effectiveness of the Lubuto model in contributing to achievement of the MDGs. ZLS management recognized the value of their partnership with LLP in strengthening their support within their Ministry and in 2010 asked LLP if we could build Lubuto Libraries along with ZLS libraries in each of Zambia's provinces. A detailed proposal for this plan was prepared and presented to the Minister of Education, was eventually approved by the Ministry and formalized (with a schedule of proposed initial Lubuto Libraries) in an amendment to the original MOU, which was signed in May of 2014. The amended MOU outlines details of how LLP and the Zambia Library Service would work together to extend high quality library services to youth through Lubuto Libraries at each of the ZLS Provincial Libraries, and follow-up plans included staff to be provided by the Ministry.

Because the level of partnership reached between the Government of Zambia and Lubuto Library Partners is unusual strong for library development efforts and because details of the specific responsibilities of both parties might be helpful for colleagues in other environments, language from the actual agreement is excerpted and shared here:

*"The Ministry recognizes LLP as a National Partner in attaining the objectives of the MDG's specifically increasing the literacy rate of children and youth and contributing to gender equity in Zambia; in providing access to high-quality non-formal educational opportunities to all children and*

*youth in Zambia, with special outreach to those who do not attend school; for the building of libraries to serve children and youth in Zambia in support of the Zambia Library Service programme, supplying these libraries with carefully selected collections of materials in various media (including digital) from international and local sources, and building librarians' capacity in offering children library services, in order to manage these collections and deliver services; [and] in providing professional leadership in specialized library services for children and youth and building that capacity among Zambian library and educational personnel.*

*LLP together with the Ministry will provide leadership in establishing standards of good library practice, in supplying excellent and well-balanced book collections and appropriate ICT, developing effective, accessible services and programs, and constructing appropriate library buildings that are environmentally suitable and connected to Zambian vernacular building patterns, to meet national needs as identified by the Ministry or the hosting agencies.*

*LLP will work in close partnership with the Ministry in planning, management and Lubuto Library system and policy incorporation into the Ministry's existing library policy. New service and collection policies will thus require joint development by the Ministry and LLP. LLP will assist the Ministry with stakeholder advocacy with a goal of obtaining development funding and ongoing direct financial support for Provincial and Lubuto libraries. Additionally, LLP will recognize and cooperate with other key Ministry bodies including the University of Zambia, Copperbelt University, technical, educational and vocational colleges thereby enhancing the network of competent accredited educational support structures.*

*With each Lubuto Library to be constructed, **LLP** shall:*

- a) Mobilize community support and participation in library programs, outreach and other activities.*
- b) Provide a complete, balanced collection of books organized according to its specially-developed classification scheme and arrange for acquisition of local and specialized publications. LLP shall also endeavor to provide periodic updates to the book collection.*
- c) Provide continuous professional development (CPD) to staff that will run the Lubuto library.*
- d) Supervise the library's operations and programs.*
- e) Measure the use and impact of the libraries in meeting objectives as outlined in section 2 above, and train and provide tools to library staff for monitoring and evaluating the libraries' collections and services.*
- f) Work with Ministry/Provincial library staff to plan and schedule existing Lubuto library enrichment programs such as LubutoLiteracy, LubutoMentoring, LubutoArts, LubutoLaptops, LubutoDrama, LubutoStorytime, and develop new programs as possible for all libraries in areas such as early childhood education, health & HIV/AIDS and environment.*
- g) Establish effective outreach programs adapted to community demographics and sensitive to the particular needs and circumstances of the most vulnerable youth, with special attention to overcoming constraints experienced by girls.*
- h) Provide technical assistance to the Ministry for the maintenance of the physical condition of the library buildings including painting and structural maintenance.*

*In developing and implementing its corporate objectives, LLP will assist the educational community in Zambia to improve its outreach to OVCY thereby promoting community benefits. It will evaluate ways in which public library services can be provided more efficiently and effectively, according to professional standards.*

*With individual Lubuto Libraries, **the Ministry** shall:*

- (a) Sustain Lubuto Libraries after their establishment through the provision of staff, electricity, water and sanitation, etc.*

- (b) *Maintain the book collection (which is non-circulating, so books do not leave the library) and organization scheme as provided by LLP, and regularly carry out enrichment and outreach programs according to procedures provided by LLP's trainers.*
- (c) *Agree to allow all vulnerable children... to use the library, provided they are able to follow library rules.*
- (d) *Keep the library open and accessible for a minimum of 45 hours per week, during regular hours, to be determined with high priority given to the needs of OVCY in the catchment area.*
- (e) *In collaboration with LLP, endeavor to get ongoing evaluation of the book collections and services of the libraries including but not limited to measuring the impact of the services provided.*
- (f) *Ensure that library staff keeps accurate daily statistics of library use, disaggregated by gender and including all participants in library programs as well as visitors to the library, according to systems provided by LLP, and report those statistics to LLP on a monthly basis.*
- (g) *Make reasonable efforts to make library staff available for professional development that will from time to time be provided by the LLP."*

The Ministry has continued to support the incorporation of Lubuto Libraries into Government plans and systems, having noted the exceptional reach and impact of the libraries: more than 800,000 visits by some 85,000 young people to three libraries that opened in 2007, 2010 and 2014. By early 2016, the Ministry of General Education (as it is now named) commenced a process of institutional assessment that, taking into account the challenges faced by Zambia's children and youth, will include the role of public libraries in development. As a result of years of advocacy, the Ministry chose this opportunity to incorporate public libraries into the national education system and focus public library services on children and youth, the majority of whom are in the rural areas. The Ministry requested LLP to propose the best structure of staff establishment that would effectively and efficiently sustain Lubuto Libraries as well as other professionally resourced public youth libraries in the country. LLP responded with a proposed staffing structure that will sustain a library:

- Attracting and serving 2,000+ children and youth per week;
- With a balanced and comprehensive collection that includes all materials in print in Zambian languages;
- Offering ICT and internet- based information and digital literacy programming;
- Open and offering reader's advisory services 48 hours per week;
- Serving children through 38+ hours per week of integrated programming that includes drama, arts, mentoring, music, literacy, book clubs, outreach and other special programs.

The operations of such libraries were determined to require the following complement of staff to provide constant reference/reader's advisory services, effectively supervise all spaces, services and functions of the library, to facilitate programs, to manage daily operations including data collection, volunteers, and staff, and to carry out professional library services and activities:

- Library Manager (Degree holder in Library Studies)
- Library Officer (Diploma holder in Library Studies)
- Library Assistant (Certificate holder in Library Studies)
- Library Office Assistant (Grade 12 Certificate holder)
- Program and Outreach Coordinator (Diploma holder in Social Work)

Details on the professional activities necessary for an effective youth library service, and the job requirements of each position are too lengthy to include in this paper, but LLP would be happy to share them on request.

In late May, 2016 the first Government-supported staff member was assigned to a Lubuto library – the Mumuni Library, hosted by the Nabukuyu community in Zambia's rural Southern Province.

Lubuto's partnerships with those offering LIS education in Zambia and worldwide ensure that our efforts to strengthen and expand librarianship in the country and region are effective. It has been especially important in an environment that previously offered no children and youth library services or training that, through cooperation and partnership, youth services be understood, owned and sustained. The University of Zambia has been the major educational institution training librarians in Zambia, at the undergraduate level and in a newly developed Master's program – but they have offered no courses in children's or youth services, despite the fact that youth account for nearly 70% of Zambia's population. LLP worked with the LIS department to recruit a children's services professor through the U.S. Fulbright program, but no formal course was added to the curriculum during the professor's one-year tenure at UNZA. Now LLP is working with UNZA's LIS program to develop a course in children's/Lubuto library services, a partnership activity that is expected to help provide and strengthen the workforce for current and future children's libraries in Zambia.

ZLS, UNZA LIS and the Zambia Library and Information Science Association (LIASA) have seen the benefits of Lubuto's innovations and progress in bringing more libraries, and broader understanding of the value of libraries, to Zambia. Under a three-year grant from the U.K. foundation Comic Relief and the Open Society Initiative South Africa (OSISA), the third Lubuto Library was constructed in partnership with a community organization in Zambia's rural Southern Province. ZLS, LIASA and UNZA LIS colleagues and Ministry officials travelled in large numbers to celebrate the library's opening in November 2014 as a victory for the library profession in Zambia. News that funding has been secured for creating the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Lubuto libraries has been equally greeted by the enthusiasm of LLP's colleagues in Zambia, and worldwide.

## **PARTNERSHIPS FOR CONSTRUCTING AND ESTABLISHING LIBRARIES**

Lubuto Libraries are established with extensive consultation with their community-based host organizations, including library committees and other bodies related to their functioning within the community. Presentations on the libraries' programs and services emphasize the community's role and opportunities for community members to contribute their talents and interests to the libraries' programming. It has been through these means, and publicity of the upcoming library, that individuals desirous of contributing to the libraries and offering programs have been identified for existing Lubuto Libraries. Community members are inspired by the programs and often enthusiastic to participate in and lead programs themselves.

The relationship between LLP and the host organization is governed by an MOU that clearly identifies the responsibilities of each organization. LLP's main role after the initial creation of the facility and provision of an opening-day collection is in training, which begins during construction and continues long after the library opens. LLP has maintained a close training and support relationship with all of the libraries it has created to date.

LLP negotiates private and public sector partnerships in tandem through their regional office in Zambia and the U.S. headquarters, as well as with each individual library Lubuto creates. Major partnerships finance the establishment of libraries and the operations of the Lubuto organization, which not only creates the libraries but carries out extensive projects that reach beyond library walls. Partnerships with local businesses and community members, especially through library committees, help sustain the libraries.

The first Lubuto Library at the Fountain of Hope Drop-in Centre was constructed completely with funding mobilized from individuals and library colleagues, primarily reached through professional associations. The funding partner for construction and stocking of the second library, Ngwerere, was the international business information company Dow Jones & Co. (with some Zambian Government contribution), but significant additional funding was needed through small grants and individual donations to support the ancillary activities that made the library operational. The cost of creating the Mumuni Library was completely underwritten by Comic Relief through and with OSISA, with

OSISA the recipient of the three-year Comic Relief grant and supplementing it with additional funds in annual grants to Lubuto.

In 2014 and again in 2015, Lubuto received grants from a U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) program, American Schools and Hospitals Abroad (ASHA), which, along with complementary funding for community mobilization and training, will finance the construction and stocking of the fourth and fifth Lubuto Libraries, the fourth in a peri-urban area of Lusaka and the fifth in the Southern Province town of Choma. The ASHA program is unique in USAID in that it only funds construction and rehabilitation of buildings and purchase of commodities. In fact, funding construction is unusual in most international aid programs, and ASHA's significant support and interest in environmental impacts allows us to include solar power installations with these constructions. Perhaps even more significantly, the ASHA-supported library grants allow LLP to purchase the entire 4,000-volume opening-day collections.

Such major funding partnerships must always further the objectives of the financing organization as well as those of the recipient partner. ASHA is a bilateral aid donor interested in being understood as promoting values of democracy and inclusion. Dow Jones & Co., as a print, online and digital publisher, stated that their objective in supporting Lubuto's work was to illustrate "the power of words to inform and educate." The individuals who supported building the Fountain of Hope Library wanted to further understanding of children's literature and library services in an environment where little such knowledge existed, and to meet the needs of the unserved. The objective in establishing the Mumuni Library was to meet the expressed needs of a rural community that fully reflected and served their culture. Comic Relief's and OSISA's interests were to improve access to quality education in Zambia and to advocate for Lubuto's model of high-quality, impactful library services for young people. Both organizations have indicated that their funding strategies will change at the end of the current grant period, so LLP will investigate whether their new priorities fit with shared library development objectives of the Zambian government (and perhaps others in the region).

The search for new partners focuses on identifying funding opportunities with congruent interests and goals. Many international and local businesses in Zambia share concern for health and education of local populations that Lubuto Libraries can effectively promote. LLP is currently seeking funding for support to adolescent girls through a grant opportunity from a program fighting the spread of HIV/AIDS by supporting girls to stay in secondary school.

## **COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS**

### **Library-based partnerships for sustainability, services and resources**

Partnerships with arts, health, ICT and other organizations enrich libraries through development of new programs, services and resources. In turn, partner agencies gain by using the library as a platform to reach their intended audiences. The programs are developed by LLP with community members to show that relevant programming, integrated with a library's collection, services and outreach, are what makes a successful, impactful and sustainable library. Lubuto has established programs in mentoring (psychosocial support, values and life skills), the visual and performing arts, reading (including daily read-alouds, early childhood and family literacy programs, teen book and chess clubs and many other variations of this classic library programming), guided computer and internet use, computer-based literacy education, regular film screenings, and music. Program development is ongoing and responds both to community needs and to the interests of a significant number of volunteers that engage with the libraries. It is especially through the establishment of these community connections that the libraries will be sustained in terms of the impact of the strong popularity of the programs and general awareness of this impact and community desire to support their youth through library programs.

### **Partnerships for professional activities beyond the libraries**

Lubuto's activities beyond the libraries' walls, such as preservation and promotion of the creation of local language children's literature, are also nurtured by partnerships. Following are a few examples

of how partnerships inspired by valuable mutual interests lead to innovation with wide benefits to society.

### ***Innovation partnerships:***

*Mother tongue literacy:* LLP's staff had long recognized that many of its most marginalized users had very poor and even non-existent reading abilities. They were also aware that to learn to read effectively children need to initially learn to read in their mother tongue. Inspired by a small grant from EIFL's Public Library Innovation Programme, LLP created a set of 700 computer-based lessons (100 in each of seven Zambian languages) to teach children to read. Then USAID offered a much larger challenge grant to organizations with innovative approaches to improving early grade reading. Lubuto winning this "All Children Reading" (ACR) award provided the opportunity to create a new and dramatically improved set of lessons, with the generous support of the ACR partners: USAID, World Vision and AustralianAID. The new lessons were designed by a University of Zambia reading expert who had also designed the new reading curriculum recently introduced by the Zambian government. The lessons thus extend the school curriculum to computer and mobile platforms, reaching beyond the classroom to computers and mobile devices everywhere these languages are spoken as the mother tongue. In May, 2016 Zambia's Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) formally approved the entire set of lessons for use in Zambian schools, "not only for literacy but also to complement computer/technology studies." The CDC wrote, "The 'Lubuto CDs for Literacy Lessons in Kiikaonde, Silozi, Lunda, Luvale, Chitonga, Icibemba and Cinyanja' are **recommended** for use as supplementary materials to aid the teaching and learning of Literacy in Zambian schools. The Author can now produce the CDs for distribution to schools." (Zambia Ministry of General Education, Curriculum Development Centre Material Verification Report, May, 2016.)

### *Sparkup:*

LLP continues to work with Sparkup, an Israeli educational technology company, to develop customized versions of their device, a book reader that attaches to picture books and automatically "reads" a prerecorded book to a child in any language. LLP recognized that Sparkups could allow them to record translations of the English-language titles in the library collections to Zambian languages. Sparkup proposed adapting them for LLP so that they accommodate readings of the same book in several languages, allowing the reader to switch from one language to another by pushing a button, and they developed and sent a prototype with three-language capacity to LLP in August of 2015. Plans are underway to develop a Sparkup with the capacity for eight languages. LLP has also provided feedback to Sparkup to inform the development of a device with the necessary features and durability to be well-suited for public library use, and will work with Lubuto library staff to identify and record suitable picture books. Lubuto Libraries already offer a place where children can learn the love of reading and thus become long-learners and participants in culture; Sparkup will enable children to enjoy books at their own time and pace, and in their home language.

***Research partnerships:*** Lubuto's partner Comic Relief was interested in funding a "learning research" project as part of its three-year grant to Lubuto that would help us address and clarify aspects of the Lubuto Library model. CR supports research as part of their grants because they want to promote learning that can be applied broadly, for their other grant-making and by other organizations. We developed and presented several different research questions and eventually settled on examination of our library collections as a critical issue with wider relevance to other libraries potentially serving young people in the region. It was intended to empower Lubuto Library staff to actively manage library collections to make them responsive to changing community needs.

The research project ("Evaluating Lubuto Library Collections") has benefited Lubuto libraries in many ways, including new collaborations and systems development in addition to better information about the composition of an effective collection. Its preliminary results were presented by the lead researcher, Elizabeth Giles, at the 2015 IFLA Conference in Cape Town. In addressing the longstanding concerns about book donation programs of IFLA's children and youth section, it is our hope that African libraries may have strengthened collection development and acquisitions functions

that will lead (rather than follow) book donation efforts that may continue into the future. Additionally, we hope that a well-defined core collection for African children and youth will provide a valuable guide for collection development throughout the region and strengthen the case for increased investment in improving the quality and impact of library services for young people.

In conversations with sexual and reproductive health research organizations, such as the International Center for Research on Women and the Population Council, LLP learned that such organizations struggle to reach out-of-school children and other vulnerable children in critical studies that take place through schools and clinics. There is a demonstrated need for public libraries such as Lubuto's to provide researchers access to the most vulnerable groups of young people, just as there is value in connecting young library users to new, research-driven programs and informational services. LLP will coordinate with research organizations that are seeking to reach out-of-school children and other vulnerable groups of children, such as young mothers, children with disabilities, and children living on the streets. The libraries will provide such organizations a neutral environment that schools and clinics cannot offer, while providing direct benefits to youth who participate in research activities and/or programs.

***Publisher-library partnership:*** A preservation effort LLP embarked upon several years ago has led to a unique partnership with the Zambian Education Publishing House (ZEPH) that will support their sales of reprinted Zambian literature. While Lubuto libraries' policy is to include 100% of what is published for young people in Zambia, that literature is scarcely in print in Zambian languages—but that wasn't always the case. A large body of high-quality literature for young people in many Zambian languages, available in hundreds of community libraries, was dispersed or destroyed after Zambia's independence as a result of political considerations and official indifference. Guided by Zambian advisors, LLP spearheaded a major preservation effort, identifying and digitizing those materials which have been preserved in libraries worldwide and in private collections in Zambia and elsewhere.

ZEPH, whose predecessor NECZAM published most of the old materials, has been strengthened in recent years and is now reprinting some of the old titles. Some of the authors and works being reprinted were very popular and in strong demand, and ZEPH is selling the republished books at a very reasonable cost, with new computer-designed cover art. Commercial bookstores in Zambia are not allowed to raise the sale price and thus it is not profitable for them to carry the ZEPH titles, so discovery and sale of these materials has been limited. In discussion with ZEPH's publishing and marketing officials LLP established that the digital editions they were preserving not only would not hurt sales of the reprinted books but, along with stocking them in non-circulating Lubuto libraries, would actually promote knowledge of and sales of the books. LLP and ZEPH are now partnering in construction of a special ZEPH sales kiosk adjacent to a Lusaka Lubuto library, which will be staffed by ZEPH, so that people encountering the books in the library or online (on Lubuto.org) could then purchase the printed books inexpensively from ZEPH if they would like to own copies.

***Literary and arts partnerships:*** Through partnership with interested international organizations and individuals, LLP has carried out a number of activities to promote the writing and publishing of quality children's literature in Zambia. LLP was instrumental in establishing the Zambian Board on Books for Young People (ZBBY), a national chapter of IBBY, whose dues have been paid annually on ZBBY's behalf by the USBBY. With support from IBBY, Lubuto and ZBBY organized and hosted two workshops in October 2010 that underscored the importance of preserving traditional stories and making cloth books for children in local languages. With support from a member of the African Studies Association, in 2012 Lubuto organized a week-long "Writing for Children" workshop taught by award-winning Zambian (but resident in South Africa) children's writer Ellen Banda-Aaku. Finally, the digitization project not only involves partnership with ZEPH but with partners around Zambia and worldwide who volunteer their time and access to materials to support our shared goal of preserving Zambia's literary heritage for future generations.

## **LIBRARIES' FUNDAMENTAL PARTNERS: USERS**

LLP and Lubuto Libraries would not exist without the wide array of partnerships, for many purposes, which have moved the organization's activities, and the library world in Zambia, forward during the past decade. Partnerships are essential to ensure sustainability of libraries. But the most important partners to any library are its users. What the factor that makes Lubuto libraries truly impactful is the fundamental relationship between them and the children and youth in whose lives the libraries have come to occupy a central place. As that generation grows, the memories of the importance of libraries in their childhood will provide the ultimate sustainability of the public library in their society.