



Supporting Societies' Needs: a Model Framework for Developing Public Library Policy

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Supporting Societies' Needs: a Model Framework Public Library Policy

Preface

The attached framework has been developed following a six-month period of research of which the following key activities were included:

- desk research leading to preparation of a background paper on the history and current best practice in preparation of library policy¹;
- development of case studies to illustrate forward-thinking/innovative national or sub sector library policy²;
- development of a draft public library policy framework;
- facilitation of consultative meetings and workshops to discuss and finalize documents.

Preparation or revision of a public library policy

Preparation or revision of a public library policy cannot begin until the current performance, infrastructure and financing capability of the sector is fully understood.

Development or revision of a public library policy must therefore be seen within a process that includes:

- a) assessment of the present performance and infrastructure of the public library sector or subsector based on the stated requirements for development of the country and the needs of its citizens. The assessment of libraries will therefore be based in the context of the government's development policies, usually articulated through 'Vision' documents, national development plans, economic plans, employment plans etc.;
- b) understanding and analysis of the realistic and achievable financial capability of government and complementary sources towards the public library sub sector;
- c) analysis and understanding of the potential future impact that libraries could and should contribute to the countries' development;
- d) preparation of the public library policy document;
- e) preparation of comprehensive and implementable short, medium and long term Action Plans for the public library sector. This should include annual plans developed in line with 3 – or 5-year rolling plans. The action plans should include both work plans and budget plans;
- f) development of strategies and instruments for ongoing monitoring, evaluation and feedback of results into the planning and policy implementation processes.

¹ NIDA *Supporting societies' needs: developing a model framework for library policy: Part 1: Background*, 10pp, 2011

² NIDA, *Case Studies of best practice in library policy: Colombia, Finland, Namibia, New Zealand*, 2011
Network for Information & Digital Access (NIDA)

Framework for Renewing or Developing a Policy for Public Libraries

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The need for a renewal or development of policy in the public library sector

1.2 National strategic areas

1.3 Resource availability

1.4 a) Major objectives of a national strategy for libraries

or where relevant

b) Major objectives for the public library sub sector

2 KEY LIBRARY STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

2.1 Leadership and coordination in the public library sector

To include:

2.1.1 Ministries/Departments

2.1.2 Councils or Committees

2.1.3 Any other relevant body

2.1.4 Coordination and cooperation within the sector

For each of the above, text to be provided on:

VISION

MANDATE

2.2 Legislation

[Legislation lays down statutory obligations e.g. central government responsibilities, local government responsibilities, legal deposit etc). Legislation is best developed or updated after development of library policy. Library legislation may be part of or complementary to other legislation e.g. for IT, for education etc.

2.3 Human resources

2.3.1 The needs of users

2.3.2 Professional capacity

2.3.3 Staff structures (incl. jobs, careers, remuneration)

2.3.4 Education and training

2.3.5 Role of professional bodies

2.4 Financial resources

2.4.1 Government

2.4.2 Private

2.4.3 Financial control

3 INFRASTRUCTURE

3.1 Buildings

3.2 ICT

4 SERVICES

In line with specified vision and user needs:

4.1 Information resources for public library and information services

4.2 Internet and technology activities

4.3 Services promoting utilisation of resources e.g. reference, loans, information literacy etc).

[N.B. The form of services should be developed in line with the vision and priorities being considered, for example may focus on or include specific areas such as

- local content
- information for development (including specific rural development, health, small business, education services developed to needs of each local community)
- additional and specific services for disadvantaged or marginalised communities e.g. visually impaired, minority languages.

5 ADVOCACY

5.1 Strategy

5.2 Implementation and review

6 PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT & IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7 ACTION PLAN

[N.B. An Action Plan must be developed in line with public library policy and vision. Action planning is best accomplished through 3- or 5- year rolling plans, with annual 1-year current plan, reviewed and updated quarterly..

Action Plans should include both narrative Work Plan and Budget Plan.]

8 NEXT STEPS

[To include the modus operandi for implementation and updating the policy.]