Impact of EIFL-PLIP Continuous Professional Development / Training of Trainers (ToT) programme in Namibia
Project implementation period: 2018-2020

"Through your coaching in the EIFL-PLIP CPD-ToT programme, I have become more confident, adaptability and willingness to accept and manage change has been boosted. Now I am able to train librarians because I have no fear factor or hesitancy. Role plays and feedback encourage me to discuss issues openly and honestly well you engaged the participants. The biggest value of the program is collective collaboration with team EIFL trainers. All I have learned will forever have an impact in my librarianship journey." - Victoria Isaacks, National Library of Namibia[1].

Many public librarians in Namibia lack skills to implement new and innovative services in their local libraries. Attempts were made to remedy this issue by using external trainers, a costly and unsustainable approach. The Namibia Library and Archives Service (NLAS), with their international partner EIFL, proposed a novel strategy - one which would build the training skills of local librarians, and result in a more cost-effective and sustainable professional development programme. The final goal of this initiative is to stimulate service innovation in public libraries while enabling a better use of technologies of interest to local communities.

Expected outcomes of the programme were as follows:

- To equip NLAS selected librarians with knowledge and skills to deliver various subject courses to their peers.
- To test their new competences in a number of cascade trainings for other public librarians, employed at NLAS public libraries across the country.
- To develop guidelines for the librarians' professional development stakeholders outlining how subject training, started with this initiative, will become institutionalized and continued by NLAS.

---

[1] *Note: Original language from response to invitation to share feedback for PLIP anniversary communication.*

17 talented public librarians were selected to participate in an intensive 18-month train-the-trainer (ToT) programme[2]. The participants were prepared to deliver training to their colleagues in Namibia on subjects that would enable the better use of technologies for new service development. During 2018-2019 selected librarians went through TOT programme which included workshops on training abilities as well as 7 subject areas (in total, 17 days in-person training):

- "Training abilities", 24-25 September 2018, facilitator Susan Schnuer, EIFL.
- "Internet Searching and e-resources", 26-28 September 2018, facilitator Raymond Chepkwony, Kenya National Library Service.
- "Design Thinking", 25-26 February 2019, facilitators Lisbeth Mærkedahl and Bente Birch Møller, Aarhus city libraries, Denmark.
- "New library services and Project Management", 27-28 February 2019, facilitator Asia Kamukama, Maendeleo Foundation, Uganda.
- "Performance and Outcome Evaluation", 24-25 June 2019, facilitators Kristina Paberza, IFLA, Ugne Lipeikaite, EIFL.
- "Communications and Advocacy", 26-27 June 2019, facilitator Kaspars Ruklis, Latvia.
- "Advanced ICT and digital skills training for community", 11-13 November 2019, facilitators Jeff Nyoka, City of Johannesburg Library Services, Christelle Lubbe, the Library and Information Services Department of the City of Cape Town, South Africa.
- "Library Spaces", 14 November 2019, facilitators Kaltuma Sama and Margaret Mbithuka, Kenya National Library Service.

The programme also included one-on-one coaching sessions, where NLAS trainers could individually share and discuss their ideas, uncertainties, fears and ask questions in a private setting. Coaching provided tailored individual sessions that contributed to enhancing personal competences and confidence of NLAS trainers, as well as reinforced the group learning.

Afterwards, the group was divided into small teams, and each team was assigned a topic for cascade training. 70 librarians within NLAS network have benefitted from the follow up in person training sessions by local (NLAS) trainers. After each training, trainers had a debrief session with EIFL-PLIP staff to analyze and reflect on the just completed training and discuss what worked and what could be improved.

For both ToT and cascade trainings, feedback has been captured immediately after each training session to evaluate how well the training was received by the participants as well as their learnings. Several months after the training, we did another round of online surveys to capture how trainers and participants of cascade trainings have changed their behavior, based on the training they received and what are the changes they have started to implement in their libraries (see the summary of the process of CPD/ToT programme in a diagram below).
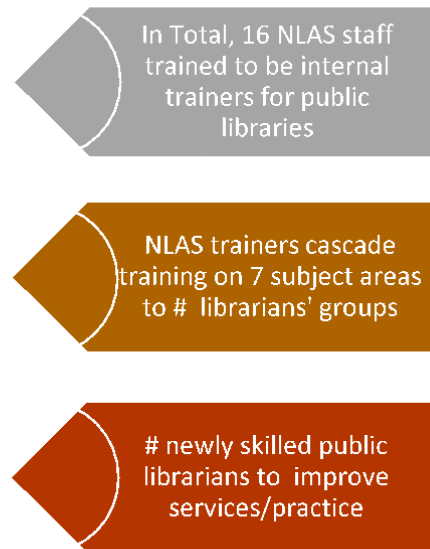
---

[2] *Note: One participant could not complete the programme. So, in the following text we use 16 participants including 15 public librarians and NLAS coordinator of this programme, who has attended all trainings.*

Step 1: Training of Trainers (ToT)

Selecting # public librarians to become NLAS internal trainers

ToT on Training & Facilitation skills and 7 subject areas: Designing ICT training for users; Internet searching and eResources; Introducing new services, Design thinking for libraries; Rethinking of library spaces; Performance, Outcomes and Evaluation of Services; Advocacy and Communication

Individual coaching & debrief on training experience (in person and remote)

Step 2: Application in practice

In Total, 16 NLAS staff trained to be internal trainers for public libraries

NLAS trainers cascade training on 7 subject areas to # librarians' groups

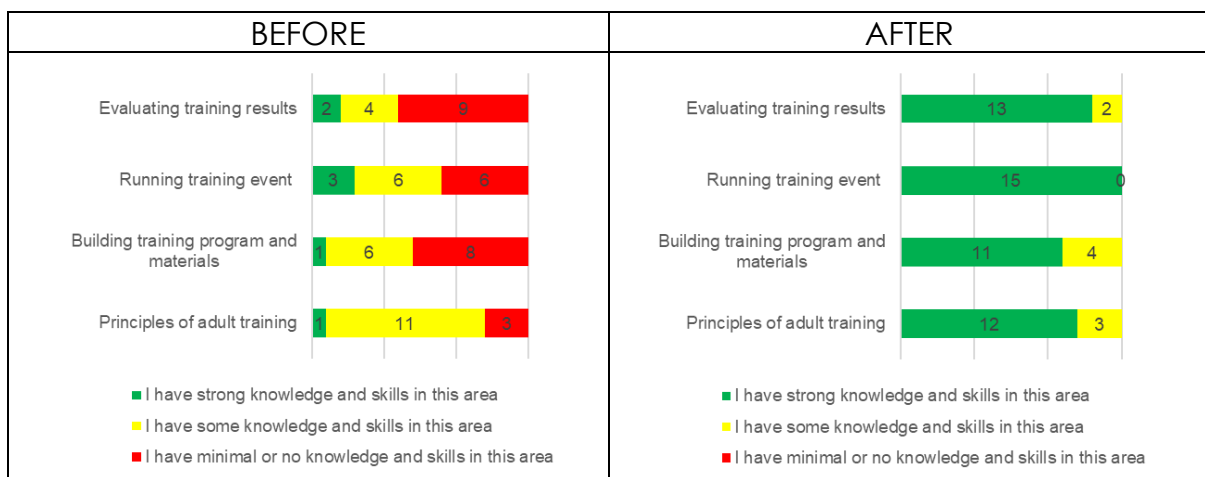# newly skilled public librarians to improve services/practice

Step 3. Impact assessment of ToT and Cascade trainings

The data below reflect the results of trainers' skills post-training audit, gathered approximately 3 months after the last training module. 15 participants of the programme filled in the questionnaire and the results were compared with baseline competences data, collected before the programme started.

Training abilities

One of the main goals of the programme was to improve training abilities of selected NLAS librarians. As you can see in the diagram below, all trainers strongly improved their training abilities, especially competence to run training event. Further improvement of their skills could be done around building training materials and programs.

BEFORE	AFTER

BEFORE chart:
- Evaluating training results: 2 (green), 4 (yellow), 9 (red)
- Running training event: 3 (green), 6 (yellow), 6 (red)
- Building training program and materials: 1 (green), 6 (yellow), 8 (red)
- Principles of adult training: 1 (green), 11 (yellow), 3 (red)

AFTER chart:
- Evaluating training results: 13 (green), 2 (yellow)
- Running training event: 15 (green), 0
- Building training program and materials: 11 (green), 4 (yellow)
- Principles of adult training: 12 (green), 3 (yellow)

Legend:
■ I have strong knowledge and skills in this area
■ I have some knowledge and skills in this area
■ I have minimal or no knowledge and skills in this area

3

ICT and digital skills training for community

Baseline of trainers' basic ICT skills was quite good, especially in the areas of internet searching, Word and PowerPoint. At the same time, trainers had very low skills in topics such as copyright and legal issues related to e-resources, training community members on basic information literacy and open access and licensed e-resources. All trainers improved their ICT skills, especially in the area of training communities on ICT, and now have enough competences to run basic ICT training. Further development of skills would be beneficial in Excel, as well as area of electronic resources, including copyright and legal issues, which is a very new topic in Namibia with related legal acts still in developing stage.
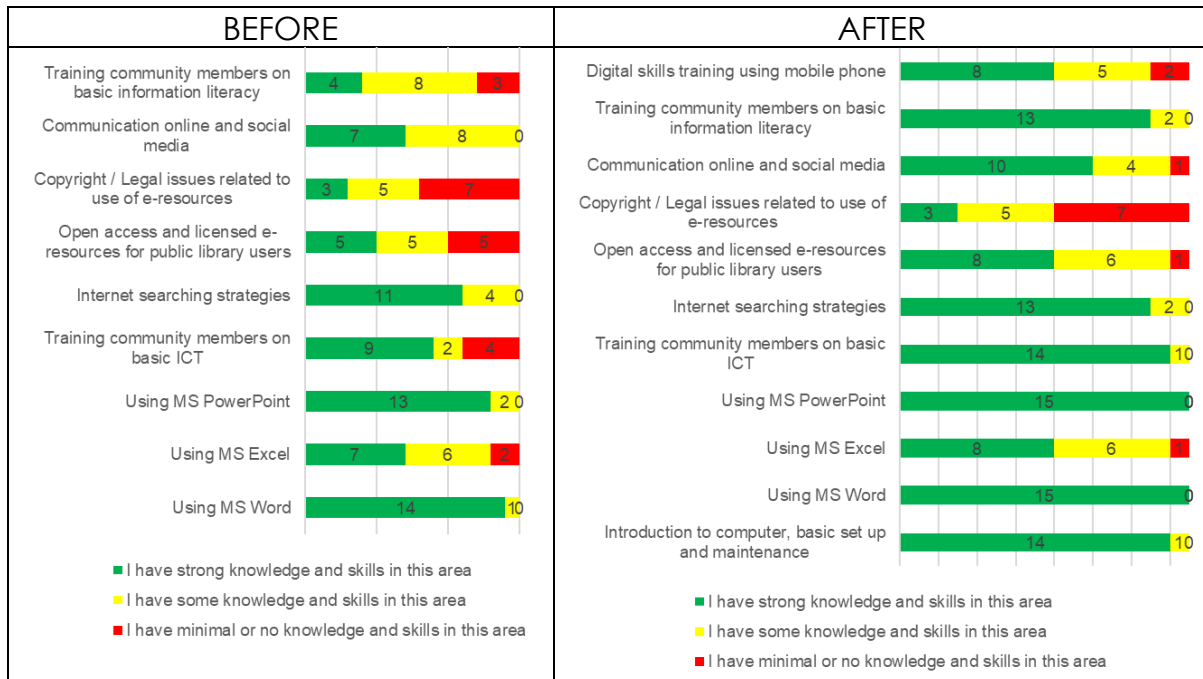
Note: Digital skills training using mobile phone was not part of the baseline skills audit.
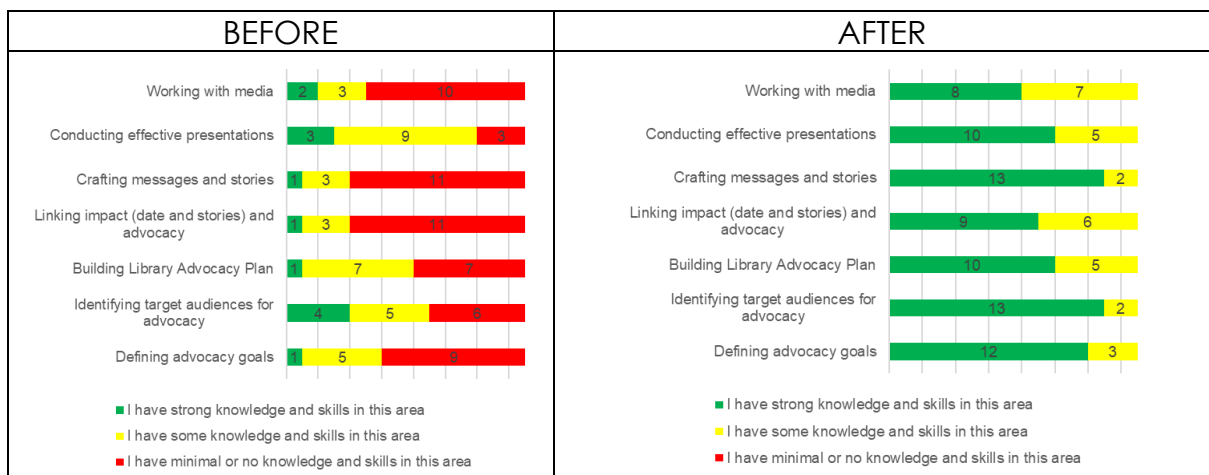
New library services

The has been major improvement in trainers' competences in development and evaluation of new library services. Baseline skills for these areas were especially low, with practically no or minimal skills in project management and outcome evaluation. After the training, most trainers feel very confident in the areas of library spaces, design thinking, leadership and community needs assessment. About half of trainers feel fully confident and another half feels that they have some knowledge in the areas, related to project management, which, we assume, could be linked with lack of experience in project development and implementation. It would be beneficial to give trainers possibility to strengthen these skills through some hands-on practice in project management.

BEFORE				AFTER			
Performance and Impact Evaluation	2	8	5	Library Spaces	10	4	1
Proposal Writing	1	9	5	Design thinking	11	3	1
Fundraising	1	6	8	Performance and Impact Evaluation	8	7	0
Partnerships and Stakeholder Management	0	7	8	Proposal Writing	7	6	2
Building Project Budget	1	5	9	Fundraising	7	6	2
Building Project Activity Plan	1	6	8	Partnerships and Stakeholder Management	9	6	0
Project Goals and Objectives	3	5	7	Building Project Budget	8	6	1
Community needs assessment	3	8	4	Building Project Activity Plan	8	7	0
				Project Goals and Objectives	8	7	0
				Community needs assessment	15		0
				Leadership	12	3	0

- I have strong knowledge and skills in this area
- I have some knowledge and skills in this area
- I have minimal or no knowledge and skills in this area

Note: Library Spaces and Design Thinking were not included into baseline skills audit.

Communications and Advocacy

Communication skills before the training were also very low and trainers managed to benefit highly from the training to improve them and currently most have enough skills to run the training for other librarians. Practical experience in working with media and developing advocacy plan would be beneficial.

BEFORE				AFTER			
Working with media	2	3	10	Working with media	8	7	
Conducting effective presentations	3	9	3	Conducting effective presentations	10	5	
Crafting messages and stories	1	3	11	Crafting messages and stories	13	2	
Linking impact (date and stories) and advocacy	1	3	11	Linking impact (date and stories) and advocacy	9	6	
Building Library Advocacy Plan	1	7	7	Building Library Advocacy Plan	10	5	
Identifying target audiences for advocacy	4	5	6	Identifying target audiences for advocacy	13	2	
Defining advocacy goals	1	5	8	Defining advocacy goals	12	3	

- I have strong knowledge and skills in this area
- I have some knowledge and skills in this area
- I have minimal or no knowledge and skills in this area

In the survey, NLAS trainers were also asked about what has changed in their daily work in the library as a result of this training programme. Among changes in their job trainers mentioned the following:

- **Improved the way they do their daily work, integrated new methods and tools, started to apply computer skills, improved their self-confidence, presentation, leadership and management skills**. For example, "improved on the way I look at

things, as a librarian, we have a culture of complaining, that which I used to do, but now the topics that were covered have changed me on how to do things and how to bring change within my institutions (region) and my community at large."

- **Got mandate to train fellow librarians**. For example, "putting the CPD program on the Library Regional activity plan where I am tasked to train all librarians in the region", "tasked to be the head facilitator of training all section heads on performance agreements and performance appraisal".
- **Got more trust & responsibilities from the senior management**. For example, "I have experienced changes especially my leadership skills and communication skills elevated, and I was promoted from being a Librarian to a Senior Librarian", "I have some added responsibilities now, such as acting in absence of senior officials or staff members".
- **Started to develop new services and fundraising initiatives**. For example, "I am tasked to introduce programs within my library which will give other librarians. Currently, I am working on a library presentation plan that is aimed to reach out to different stakeholders to do fundraising."

Challenges and suggestions

In the survey we also asked NLAS trainers about the challenges that they faced during the delivery of cascade training. The following are the most often mentioned challenges and suggestions for improvement:

- **More time is needed to deliver the current content**. For example, "Some participants needed more time as the duration of the cascade training were to short and the elderly participants had difficulty in understanding", "materials seemed to be more than two days allocated".
- **Due to geographic distance and different views** [within the NLAS trainers' team], **it was hard to prepare for the training**. For example, "the trainers have different views and find it difficult to work together as a team", "we stay in far different regions with other trainers and it was not easy working on the presentation".
- **3 trainers missed some modules and did not have a chance to do cascade training at all**. For example, "I missed some of the CPD programmes organized by NLAS and EIFL, therefore I could not be part of any cascade training organized by NLAS".
- **Some trainers had difficulties to guarantee support from the regional management**. For example, "The management did not want to approve the training, after some while the approval was granted", "After their return I inquired only to be told there is no money, therefore there will be no training. I don't believe there is no money because it was there before. My senior are Education officers and they don't see the need for libraries that is why my region will remain behind."

Conclusions and Lessons Learned

The CPD/ToT programme in Namibia introduced new approach to continuing professional development and capacity building of public librarians, one based on competent and experienced local trainers. The model is based on adult learning theory and includes direct instruction, practice, reinforcement, affirmation, and feedback. In practice this meant that the librarians, selected for their potential and willingness to become expert trainers, received over 100-hour face-to-face instruction, coaching and practice at cascade training, as well as evaluation throughout the whole programme.

Our observations as well as survey results show that as a result of this programme there has been great improvement of trainers' competences. All trainers significantly improved their training abilities and are fully confident to run training workshops. For further improvement, it would be beneficial to provide trainers with opportunity to practice more in training delivery, eventually getting to the transforming of the training materials. These observations have been seconded by NLAS leadership during the online meeting in June 2020 aimed to discuss the NLAS trainers' survey results.

In terms of subject knowledge, especially significant improvements are registered in the area of ICT training for community, project management and outcome evaluation, communication and advocacy. For further improvement of subject skills, it would be beneficial to expose them and give a chance to practically try out project development and implementation (proposal writing, budgeting, fundraising), working with media and developing and implementing advocacy plans. Also new topics, that are of trainer's interest, such as marketing, web design and running webinars could be considered.

For better acceptance of training materials, it would be useful if NLAS leadership or delegated staff, who has more experience in training, continue working with trainers, by reviewing modules and selecting only the essential content, which can be delivered during the time planed for each particular training, and which is the most relevant for the trainees. Or, alternatively, more time should be dedicated to certain more complex modules, such as project management and performance and outcome evaluation, i.e. consider splitting the training into two sequential workshops with a beak in between, allowing participants to try skills in practice. In response to evaluation findings, EIFL might also consider offering an opportunity for competitive matching grants to introduce new services in Namibia. The follow up measure that has been applied in after EIFL-PLIP capacity building programmes in other countries to encourage participants practicing the newly obtained project management and new service development skills.

It would be beneficial if NLAS leadership could find a way to work regularly with regional authorities and supervisors (e.g. introductory and update letters, presentations on trainings delivered and results at the annual meetings, etc.) to ensure their awareness and continuous support to the NLAS trainers to further cascade training on subjects they have specialized through this programme and the new ones, as the need comes. Some of the subject training could also be cascaded to staff of regional authorities, and other groups.

The programme is still ongoing. The next steps are as follow: analyzing and discussing assessment results of cascade training by NLAS trainers; and developing and delivering the last ToT workshop on Public Libraries as Creative Spaces for users that will complete the programme[3].

---

[3] Note: *The workshop has been on stand since March due to activated restrictions in fight with Covid-19 pandemic.*