eifl

KNOWLEDGE WITHOUT BOUNDARIES

EVALUATION REPORT:

CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT / TRAINING OF TRAINERS PROGRAMME IN NAMIBIA

EIFL PUBLIC LIBRARY INNOVATION PROGRAMME (EIFL-PLIP)
NAMIBIA LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES SERVICE (NLAS)

Compiled by:

Aletta Dunn, Chief Librarian for Public Libraries under the NLAS
Ugne Lipeikaite, Impact Manager, EIFL-PLIP
September 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This report gives an overview of results of the Continuous Professional Development / Training of Trainers (CPD/ToT) programme, its results and impact in public libraries in Namibia. The programme was developed and implemented by EIFL (Electronic Information for Libraries (EIFL) and the Namibia Library and Archives Service (NLAS) from 2018 to 2020.

NLAS manages a network of 66 public libraries, with over 260 staff members. Currently, 60 public libraries are offering free access to computers and 57 are also providing free access to the internet in their communities. However, many NLAS public librarians lacked the knowledge and skills needed to implement new and innovative services using the technology available in their libraries. NLAS had attempted to remedy this situation by relying on Namibian and international training providers, but this approach had proved to be costly and unsustainable.

The CPD/ToT programme aimed to develop training capacity within NLAS. It used a training of trainers (ToT) approach to build subject knowledge and training skills of a corps of NLAS librarians who could then be deployed to provide training to other librarians in the network in future.

The CPD /ToT programme was completed in 2020 and later that year, we conducted the final evaluation.

NLAS AND EIFL CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT / TRAINING OF TRAINERS PROGRAMME

"*Most of the time when we want to train our librarians, we have to get somebody from outside - external trainers - to capacitate our librarians. But with this programme we will have experts locally.*" - Namutenya Hamwaalwa, Deputy Director, NLAS.

The goal of NLAS CPD/ToT programme was to stimulate service innovation in public libraries and to enable better use of computers and the internet (ICT) in public library services.

Objectives of the programme:

- To equip selected NLAS librarians with knowledge and skills to deliver various subject courses to their peers.

- To test their new competences in a number of cascade trainings sessions for other public librarians employed in NLAS public libraries across the country.

- To develop guidelines for stakeholders in professional development of public librarians (NLAS decision-makers, regional managers of public libraries and other supervisors, librarians and trainers) outlining how subject training started by the CPD/ToT programme could become institutionalized and continued by NLAS.

THE TRAINING OF TRAINERS PROGRAMME

OVERVIEW OF THE TRAINING

As shown in the diagramme below, the CPD/ToT programme comprised three elements:

1. Training of trainers (ToT) building knowledge and training skills of the NLAS trainers.

2. Application in practice (cascade training), during which the NLAS trainers cascaded their subject knowledge and skills to other public librarians in the NLAS network.

3. Impact assessment.

Step 1: Training of Trainers (ToT)   **Step 2: Application in practice**

Selecting # public librarians to become NLAS internal trainers

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

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

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

newly skilled public librarians to improve services/practice

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

Step 3. Impact assessment of ToT and Cascade trainings

SELECTION OF NLAS TRAINERS

EIFL-PLIP and NLAS selected 17 public librarians to participate in an intensive 19-month train-the-trainer programme. Selection criteria included qualifications and training experience, subject skills, personal traits and motivation to become trainers.

TRAINING OF TRAINERS

The curriculum covered training and facilitation skills and seven subject areas critical for development of modern public library services. In all, there were 17 days of intensive in-person training conducted by trainers from EIFL-PLIP and international partners:

- Training abilities, 24-25 September 2018, facilitator Susan Schnuer, EIFL-PLIP.

- 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-PLIP.

- 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 and 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 reinforcing what was learnt in group training sessions.

APPLICATION IN PRACTICE (CASCADE TRAINING)

When they had completed the training course, the newly-skilled trainers were grouped into training teams (3-4 trainers). Each team was assigned a subject from the seven included in the ToT programme, for cascade training, to practice their training and facilitation skills and test their subject knowledge by training other public librarians in the NLAS network. At the end of each cascade training session, the trainers were debriefed by EIFL-PLIP staff, analysing their training experience and identifying what worked and what could be improved.

Seventy librarians from 43 NLAS public libraries participated in training conducted by the NLAS trainers.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

To assess the results, NLAS and EIFL jointly developed an impact evaluation framework and shared responsibilities for implementation of the evaluation. The evaluation framework was designed to cover two main areas of interest:

- EIFL's primary focus was on the ToT and the main goal was to understand:
  - What were the strengths and weaknesses of the ToT and subject training provided to NLAS trainers?
  - To what extent did the ToT and subject training prepare the NLAS trainers to deliver various subject courses to their peers?
  - What were the issues (challenges) NLAS trainers faced in cascade training delivery?
- NLAS's main interest was the cascade training and the main goal was to understand:
  - To what extent NLAS trainers could pass on their knowledge and skills to public librarians.
  - How the competences of public librarians were improving.
  - How improved competences of public librarians would lead to improvements in library services.

To capture baseline (pre-training) skills of the NLAS trainers, we performed a skills audit. We used the same questionnaire for a post-training skills audit, administered three months after the completion of the last CPD/ToT training session. Immediately after each CPD/ToT training session, we administered a post-training feedback form to capture information about their learning and how well the CPD/ToT training was received.

Public librarians who participated in the cascade training also filled in post-training feedback forms immediately after each training session, reflecting on their learning and how well the training was received. Three months after the last cascade training, we conducted an impact survey of cascade training participants, to find out about how they were applying their learnings and what changes they were implementing in their libraries.

The Evaluation Plan

What is to be assessed	Method / tool	Timing	Responsible person
Effectiveness of ToT and subject training of NLAS trainers	1. Skills audit questionnaire of NLAS trainers 2. Training feedback form 3. Reflection meeting with key NLAS staff with CPD responsibilities	1. Before first ToT training and 3 months after the last subject training 2. After every training session 3. Reflection meeting after the implementation of the whole training programme (due to COVID-19 pandemic, was done online via Zoom).	EIFL-PLIP Impact Manager
Effectiveness of cascade training provided to NLAS librarians	1. Training feedback form for feedback about the cascade training 2. Impact survey for capturing how librarians put new skills into action 3. Reflection meeting with key NLAS staff with CPD responsibilities	1. After each cascade training session 2. 3 months after the last cascade training 3. Reflection meeting after the implementation of the whole training programme (due to Covid pandemic, was done online via Zoom).	NLAS coordinator of the programme

RESULTS OF THE CPD/TOT PROGRAMME

NLAS TRAINERS

We include data from 15 of the 17 public librarians originally selected to be trainers. One trainer was unfortunately unable to complete the CPD/ToT programme, and 15 of the remaining 16 trainers responded to questionnaires.

The data below reflect the results of the post-training skills audit conducted three months after the last CPD/ToT training session. Responses were compared with baseline competences data (collected before the training began).

TRAINING ABILITIES

One of the main objectives of the programme was to improve training abilities of selected NLAS librarians. All trainers strongly improved their training abilities, especially competence to run training events. Responses suggest they need further improvement of skills in developing training materials and programmes.

BEFORE

Evaluating training results: 2 | 4 | 9

Running training event: 3 | 6 | 6

Building training program and materials: 1 | 6 | 8

Principles of adult training: 1 | 11 | 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

AFTER

Evaluating training results: 13 | 2

Running training event: 15 | 0

Building training program and materials: 11 | 4

Principles of adult training: 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

ICT AND DIGITAL SKILLS TRAINING FOR COMMUNITY

According to the baseline skills audit, trainers had fairly good basic ICT skills, especially in the areas of internet searching, Word and PowerPoint. However, trainers had very low knowledge and skills in topics such as copyright and the legal issues related to e-resources; how to train community member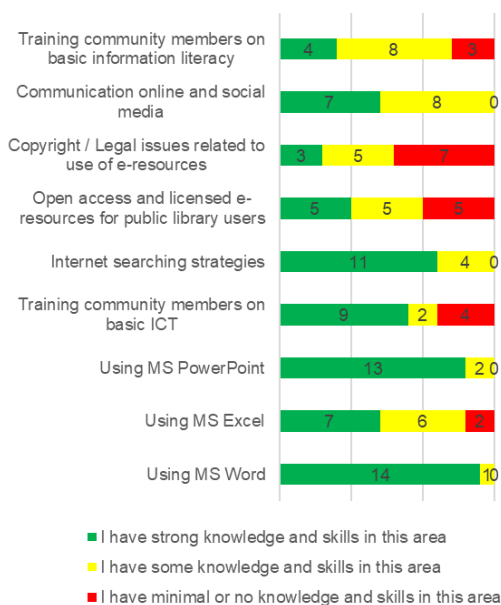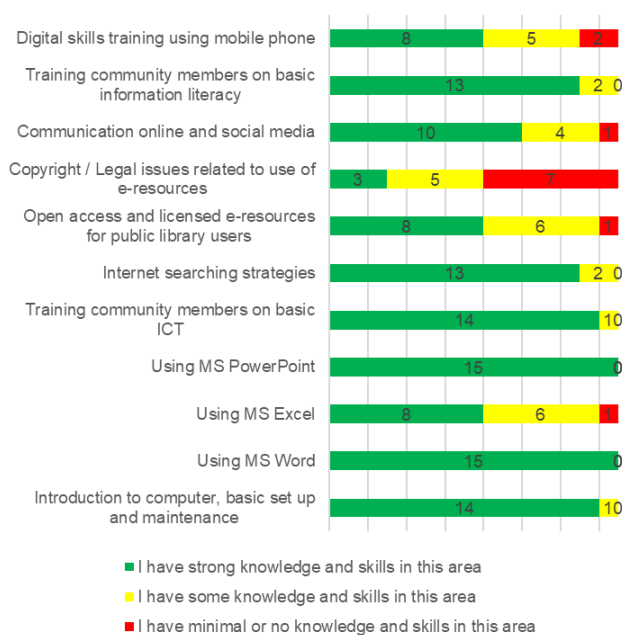s on basic information literacy, and open access and licensed e-resources. All trainers improved their ICT skills, especially in the area of training communities on ICT, and are now able to provide basic ICT training. Further development of skills in Excel would be beneficial. The trainers would also benefit from further training in copyright laws and legal issues related to use of e-resources.

BEFORE

Training community members on basic information literacy: 4 | 8 | 3

Communication online and social media: 7 | 8 | 0

Copyright / Legal issues related to use of e-resources: 3 | 5 | 7

Open access and licensed e-resources for public library users: 5 | 5 | 5

Internet searching strategies: 11 | 4 | 0

Training community members on basic ICT: 9 | 2 | 4

Using MS PowerPoint: 13 | 2 | 0

Using MS Excel: 7 | 6 | 2

Using MS Word: 14 | 1 | 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

AFTER

Digital skills training using mobile phone: 8 | 5 | 2

Training community members on basic information literacy: 13 | 2 | 0

Communication online and social media: 10 | 4 | 1

Copyright / Legal issues related to use of e-resources: 3 | 5 | 7

Open access and licensed e-resources for public library users: 8 | 6 | 1

Internet searching strategies: 13 | 2 | 0

Training community members on basic ICT: 14 | 1 | 0

Using MS PowerPoint: 15 | 0

Using MS Excel: 8 | 6 | 1

Using MS Word: 15 | 0

Introduction to computer, basic set up and maintenance: 14 | 1 | 0

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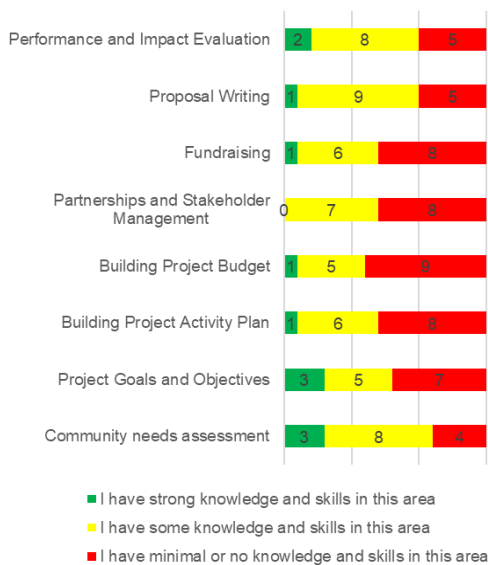- I have minimal or no knowledge and skills in this area

Note: Digital skills training using mobile phones and Introduction to computers, basic set up and computer maintenance were not part of the baseline skills audit.
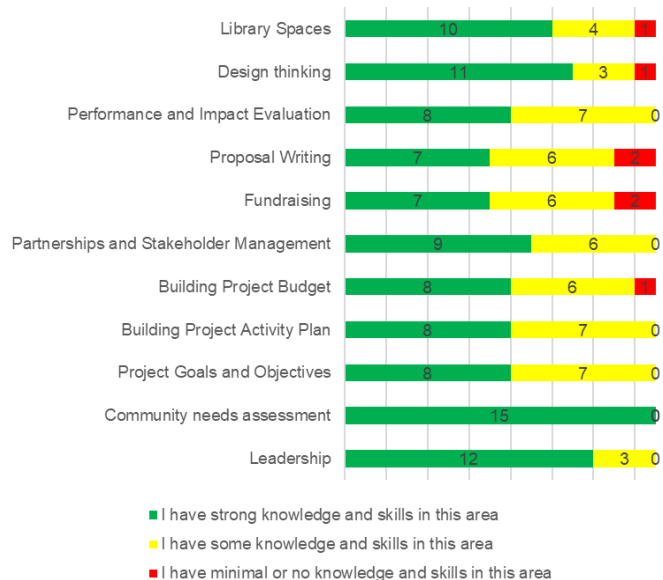
NEW LIBRARY SERVICES

There has been major improvement in trainers' competences in developing, managing and evaluating 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 felt very confident in the areas of library spaces, design thinking, leadership and community needs assessment. About half of the trainers felt fully confident and another half felt that they had some knowledge in areas related to project management. This could be linked to lack of practical experience, and it would be beneficial to give trainers opportunities to strengthen these skills through hands-on practice in project management.

BEFORE

Performance and Impact Evaluation: 2, 8, 5
Proposal Writing: 1, 9, 5
Fundraising: 1, 6, 8
Partnerships and Stakeholder Management: 0, 7, 8
Building Project Budget: 1, 5, 9
Building Project Activity Plan: 1, 6, 8
Project Goals and Objectives: 3, 5, 7
Community needs assessment: 3, 8, 4

- 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

AFTER

Library Spaces: 10, 4, 1
Design thinking: 11, 3, 1
Performance and Impact Evaluation: 8, 7, 0
Proposal Writing: 7, 6, 2
Fundraising: 7, 6, 2
Partnerships and Stakeholder Management: 9, 6, 0
Building Project Budget: 8, 6, 1
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
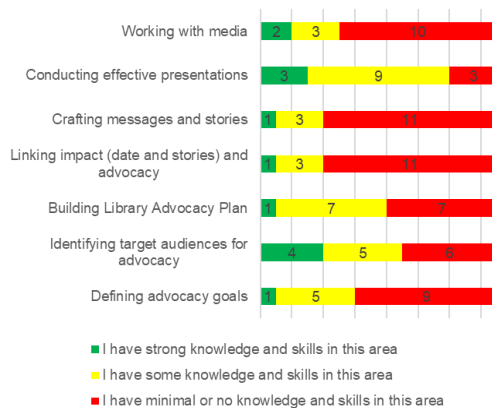- I have minimal or no knowledge and skills in this area

Note: Library Spaces, Leadership and Design Thinking were not included in the baseline skills audit.

COMMUNICATIONS AND ADVOCACY

Communications and advocacy skills before the training were also very low and trainers benefited from the training. After the training, most believed they were sufficiently skilled to run the communications and advocacy training for other librarians. Practical experience in working with media and developing an advocacy plan would be beneficial.

BEFORE

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

- 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

AFTER

Working with media: 8, 7
Conducting effective presentations: 10, 5
Crafting messages and stories: 13, 2
Linking impact (date and stories) and advocacy: 9, 6
Building Library Advocacy Plan: 10, 5
Identifying target audiences for advocacy: 13, 2
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

CHANGES IN THE DAILY WORK OF NLAS TRAINERS

In addition to evaluating the trainers' subject knowledge and training skills, in the post-training skills audit we asked questions related to the trainers' daily work as librarians. The NLAS trainers reported the following changes:

- Improvements in the way they do their daily work, including integration of new methods and tools, application of computer skills, greater self-confidence, 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 libraries in my region and my community at large."*

- Increased trust & responsibilities from 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 the absence of senior officials or staff members."*

- Development of new services and fundraising initiatives, for example, *"Currently, I am working on a library presentation plan that is aimed to reach out to different stakeholders to do fundraising."*

CHALLENGES OF CASCADE TRAINING

In the post-training skills audit we asked NLAS trainers what challenges they faced during the delivery of cascade training. The following were the most often mentioned challenges:

- The trainers struggled to adapt curriculum content to fit the amount of time allocated for training. For example, *"Some participants needed more time as the duration of the cascade training was too short and the elderly participants had difficulty in understanding," "Materials seemed to be more than the two days allocated."*

- Geographic distance and different views within the NLAS trainers' team made it 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."*

- Some trainers had difficulty obtaining support from their regional managers to conduct cascade training. For example, *"The management did not want to approve the training, but after some while the approval was granted."*

RESULTS OF THE CASCADE TRAINING

After the NLAS trainers completed their training, NLAS organized cascade training for the trainers to test their subject knowledge and training skills in practice by training other public librarians. Cascade training covered all subject areas, in four workshops, as follows:

- Internet Searching and E-Resources

- Advocacy & communications and Performance and Outcome Evaluation

- Design Thinking and Project Management

- Advanced ICT and Library Spaces

Participants in cascade training were asked to give feedback on the training after each training session and the overall feedback was very positive. A great majority of participants found the training content useful, and the training itself very interactive and engaging. Librarians enjoyed the training and they felt motivated to get back to their libraries to use their new skills and knowledge. NLAS trainers were complimented for being able to simplify concepts and incorporate practical examples and local information in training materials, which made them easier to understand and relate to for the participants. The only challenge expressed by trainees

was the need for more time - for most subjects, participants wanted longer training sessions, especially for practical exercises, which would help them to fully grasp the content. Some of trainees also expressed an interest in receiving more extensive handouts.

IMPACT ON SERVICE DELIVERY

Three months after the cascade training, NLAS and EIFL administered an impact survey to all the librarians who attended the cascade training. This survey captured how the librarians were applying learnings in delivery of library services. The survey was performed online, and a total 51 librarians responded.

39% said there has been a big difference in service delivery and 53% felt it made a moderate difference. Only a minority - less than 10% - felt there had been no difference to service delivery. Among the examples of what specifically has changed, librarians mentioned:

- Increased number of ICT users and more training offered (for example, on poster design, on writing CV's, on internet searching, accessing e-resources via google scholar and EBSCO host).

- Improved library marketing and visibility (librarians design online posters and flyers, they are more active on social media).

- Improved connection with communities; greater attention paid to assessing community needs in relation to services, and improved outreach services.

- Stronger focus on quality of customer services, time management of service delivery.

Despite the fact that library work was seriously disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, some libraries succeeded in introducing new services for specific target groups, for example:

- Weekly Teenage games club (Luderitz Public Library).

- Cooking club (Okahandja Library).

- Assisting grade 10-12 learners with reading and group discussion on their school subjects (Rehoboth Public Library).

- Creation of WhatsApp group for interaction with library users (Otjomuise Public library)

- Many libraries have introduced the Namibia Reads App, created by Smart Kidz Club to supplement what children are taught in school, and help children to improve their English reading.

- Establishing a women's group consisting 40 women which meets once a week to discuss social issues affecting women and children. (Koes Public Library).

- Organizing sports training and activities for street children (Omaheke Regional Library)

- 'TIP-TOP' game sessions for kids (Rundu Public Library).

- Feeding scheme for community members and schoolchildren (Luderitz Public Library).

IMPACT ON INTERNAL LIBRARY MANAGEMENT

In addition to improvements in service delivery, the cascade trainees reported positive changes in the internal management of their libraries. Most frequent improvements were recorded in the following areas:

- Better leadership and supervisory skills.

- Improved relationships with staff, users and stakeholders.

- Improved project management, delegation and decision-making skills.

- Better management of teamwork and team building.

- Librarians feel more persuasive and forceful at negotiating with users, staff and donors.

- Improved problem solving and conflict management skills.

- Enhanced communications and advocacy skills.

- Better time Management skills.

CONCLUSIONS

The CPD/ToT programme in Namibia has achieved all three objectives and brought positive changes to the NLAS public library network.

The skills audit showed that there has been a great improvement in trainers' competences. All trainers significantly improved their training abilities and are fully confident to run training workshops.

In terms of subject knowledge, especially significant improvements are registered in the areas of ICT training for community, project management and outcome evaluation, and communications and advocacy. The evaluation identified areas where there was room for improvement; however, the COVID-19 pandemic prevented further training.

Evaluation of cascade training showed that the NLAS trainers were able to deliver high quality training to other librarians in the NLAS network, which led to significant improvements in library service delivery, community engagement, advocacy and library management.

Guidelines developed by NLAS institutionalize training as a function of the trainers trained through the CPD/ToT programme. They also suggest that every librarian in the network should attend from one to three training sessions a year. The guidelines will serve as a future tool to ensure ongoing Continuous Professional Development for librarians across the public library network, in line with Namibia's Human Resource Development Policy Framework (2012) and National Human Resources Plan 2010 – 2025 (2012).