Libraries

- Since 2005, Lubuto Library Partners has created 3 open-access libraries (Garden, Lusaka; Nabukuyu Village, Southern Province; Lusaka West, Lusaka) serving Zambia’s most vulnerable children and youth, with construction underway on a 4th library (Choma, Southern Province) and funding already secured for construction of the 5th (Kanyama, Lusaka).

- These libraries have served more than 146,331 children and youth in over 1,364,610 visits. The Lubuto Model Library in Garden Compound receives an average of 2,000 visits/week. According to a 2017 Library and Information Association of Zambia survey, it is Zambia’s busiest public library.

- Lubuto Libraries boast award-winning architecture that reflect indigenous culture. Each Zambian library consists of three to five separate structures that accommodate 150,000 visits annually, with associated outdoor spaces that support activities such as drama performances and social gatherings. Structures including a Reading Room, a Tech Hub, an insaka, and, based on community need and priorities, a Teen Space and Early Literacy Stations for early childhood programming.

Collections and Learning Resources

- Each Lubuto library contains a professionally-developed collection of 4,000+ high-quality children’s books, fiction and non-fiction, acquired from local, regional and international library vendors, booksellers, and publishers. Since 2011, LLP has acquired over 5,806 volumes written in Zambian languages. LLP has also worked with the Zambia Educational Publishing House to digitally preserve 81 out-of-print Zambian classics in 13 languages in the Zambia Heritage Collection.

- Technology: Over 13,753 children and youth have used computers in Lubuto Libraries. Computer-based resources include an online catalog, a child-friendly internet portal, Lubuto Literacy lessons, the Zambia Heritage Collection, the Department of Open and Distance Education’s Secondary School Curriculum DVD series, and Zambian Sign Language DVD dictionaries.

- Lubuto Literacy. More than 6,800 children have used LLP’s computer-based early grade reading lessons to develop literacy in a local language. 7 languages are available: Lozi, Lunda, Luvalale, Tonga, Nyanja, Bemba, and Kaonde.

Who We Serve

- Lubuto promotes inclusion by proactively reaching out to highly-vulnerable children and youth, including out-of-school children, street children, adolescent mothers, children with disabilities, and other stigmatized or marginalized groups.

- At rural and peri-urban libraries, children regularly walk 10+ kilometers to access library resources, services and programs. In urban areas, many users say they visit the library every single day.

Model Programs

- A holistic programming model offers education, psychosocial support, economic empowerment, creative self-expression, and health information and services to children and youth. Since 2007, more than 25,000 children and youth have participated in a Lubuto Library program.

Programming areas and outcomes include:

  o Drama: Over 1,400 children and youth have participated in LLP’s drama program, which adapts popular books from the library collections into plays. Community performances occur every 8 weeks, and regularly attract hundreds of viewers. Children from LLP’s drama program have gone on to act in paid commercials and in films, including Rungano Nyoni’s internationally award-winning I Am Not a Witch.
Arts: 557 children and youth have participated in LLP’s visual arts program. Participants have held gallery shows in Lusaka (at the Henry Tayali Gallery) and in New Orleans, Louisiana, USA (at the Stella Jones Gallery). Former participants have gone on to earn a living as artists.

High-level computer coding camps have served 75 children and youth, who developed advanced skills in programming, computer logic, circuitry, electronics, robotics and physical programming, and computer systems and architecture.

Zambian Sign Language Storytime: A twice-weekly Zambian Sign Language program has reached over 800 children and youth, both deaf and hearing, promoting inclusivity for children with disabilities. Targeted resources for deaf children include Zambian Sign Language dictionaries, both print and electronic, and hundreds of titles in Lubuto collections that promote awareness of and positive attitudes towards people with disabilities.

Scholarships: LLP has provided 66 comprehensive, need-based scholarships to keep highly-vulnerable children and youth in school. Scholarships are guaranteed from the point of enrollment through graduation, and include tuition, uniforms, shoes, bags, school supplies, exam fees, and feminine hygiene products.

Mentoring: Over 2,150 children and youth have participated in LLP’s mentoring programs, including a role-model mentoring program that took 888 youth on 26 field trips to educational, cultural, and technology institutions in and around Lusaka to meet with women in leadership positions. 61% of participants in the role model mentoring program expressed attitudes of reduced tolerance for gender-based violence after program participation.

Family Literacy: Over 350 adolescent and young mothers have participated in a parent-and-child program focused on English-language adult literacy (for mothers) and early childhood education (for children). Mothers gained an average of 153 Lexile points through their participation, and 41% of graduates went on to re-enroll in school, start businesses, or find employment.

HIV Testing and Counseling: 826 children and youth were tested for HIV on-site at Lubuto Libraries during a 2016-2018 PEPFAR DREAMS grant, representing a 100% referral completion rate for HIV testing and counseling.

Economic Empowerment: Makerspaces offer community-led training in income-generating skills such as sewing, agricultural production and gardening, arts, and technology and use of equipment such as sewing machines, oil presses, and computers, empowering rural families to keep their daughters in school and to prevent early marriages.

Referrals: Lubuto Libraries are community hubs that offer referrals for education, psychosocial support, child protection, post-gender-based-violence care, and health services.

Outreach: Twice-weekly outreach conducted at each library reaches the most vulnerable members of surrounding communities with information about the programs and services of Lubuto Libraries. More than 40,000 children have been reached through outreach conducted in locations as varied as on the streets, at schools and community-based organizations, at clinics, and on rural floodplains where children graze cattle.

Capacity Building
LLP has trained over 500 teachers, LIS students, and community volunteers to provide quality library services to children. A 2017 training conducted in partnership with the Library and Information Association of Zambia reached 30 public librarians from Council and Provincial libraries across Zambia with a week-long residential training on library programs, services and collections for children and youth. LLP is in the process of establishing a cataloging and classification training unit at the University of Zambia that will offer hands-on education in children’s literature to hundreds of LIS students.