

# Kitabu Kenya Training Workshop

Nairobi: March 16 and 17, 2011  
Report and Evaluation by Jennifer Glassco



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## **1. Kitabu Kenya Librarian Training Nairobi March 16-17: Itinerary**

(Text in red describes elements or timing of the itinerary that changed from the plan due to circumstances or time crunches)

### Day One – March 16th

- 8:45-9:15                      Tour of new KNLS library
- 9:15 - 10:30                    Introductions – ice-breaker activity
- Presentation from each group on development of their library, place where they're from, current services offered by library, current challenges and future plans.
- 10:30                              Mandazi and Chai break
- 10:45 – 11:45                    Introduction of the Kitabu Kenya network in light of the CAP and this meeting; overview of Archivist outputs and experience from each site
- Show photos and videos; successes and challenges; suggestions for future, discussion of what each site would like from a network.
- 11:45                              Travel to the US Embassy
- 12:15                              Working lunch at Gigiri road restaurant: continue CAP and Kitabu Kenya discussion
- 1:00 – 5:00                      Afternoon training session at US Embassy
- What is a librarian? Roles and responsibilities
  - Presentation on resources available at US Embassy Library
  - Libraries and civil society
  - Programming workshop – giving an example of a topic on which Librarians might want to have an exhibit/series of programs on and then they have to work in teams to figure out they would get resources and present their ideas.
- Dinnertime                      Discussion on one of optional module topics (see list at end of itinerary)

### Day Two – March 17<sup>th</sup>

- 8:30 – 10:30                    Introduction of Mama Mtoto Story Time Program: What it is, who will be responsible, communication plans, archiving/bookkeeping activities, timeline, foreseen challenges.
- 10:30                              Mandazi and Chai
- 10:45 – 12:30                    Continuation of Mama Mtoto logistics discussion.
- Discussion on impacts of libraries in our communities, and the role of libraries in development.
- Biggest challenges discussion. Idea sharing and brainstorming.
- 12:30-1:15                      Lunch
- 1:15-2:30                      KNLS resources and history + organization and display of books – different systems

2:30- 5:00	Africa Soma training module: Information Technology Computer skills for librarians: discussion on skills most sought by library visitors;
5:00-5:30	Explanation of group email account. Exchange of contacts. Presentation of certificates of participation.

#### Additional Training module options:

- Marketing your library to the public and attracting users. Discussion of different strategies.
- A culture of reading: discussion on how to encourage understanding of the library, respect for books, and enjoyment of reading.
- Discussion of the relationship between libraries and cultural preservation – how can libraries be a space for culture?

## **2. Training Overview**

This training event took place over the days of March 16<sup>th</sup> and March 17<sup>th</sup> and brought together 11 participants from five different libraries. The participants were:

- a) William Lepapa, Joyce Meikan and Catherine Ntuluyia from the Elangata Wuas Resource Centre in Elangata Wuas
- b) Maria Wafula and Esther Ajambo from the FASSCO CBO Library in Busia
- c) Habiba Osman and Abdullahi Osman from the Kenya National Library Service Library in Garissa
- d) David Mita Aluku and Raymond Kamau Gathee from the SIDAREC Library in Majengo Pumwani, Nairobi
- e) Fatma Ali Busaidy and Adam Bakari from the Lamu Museum Library
- f) Milicent Mlanga – Head Librarian KNLS Buruburu (sat in for both morning sessions)

### **Objectives of the training were to:**

- a) Introduce these librarians from such different parts of the country to each other and give an opportunity for knowledge exchange and partnership building;
- b) Introduce librarians to new state-of-the-art library facilities in Nairobi, and at the American Embassy and give them a chance to learn about the roles and responsibilities of librarians there;
- c) Discuss common challenges and goals across sites, and provide useful information to librarians that will help them improve their libraries after the event;
- d) Introduce the concept of the Kitabu Kenya libraries network. For now this network would involve the participating five libraries joining forces to apply for funding, share resources and information and work together on similar programming (i.e. Mama Mtoto). However the goal of this network is that it will begin to grow from each of the five sites to include other library-type institutions in each area, until we are able to map all of the community and informal libraries in Kenya. Create a communication network by which all participants can stay in touch after the training event;

- e) Discuss the upcoming Mama Mtoto story time project, and how each site sees it being organized at their library; work out preliminary logistics;

The training took place for the morning of March 16<sup>th</sup> and all of March 17<sup>th</sup> in the Audio/Visual room in the newly opened Buruburu Public Library (part of the Kenya National Library Service network) in Nairobi. The space was very well suited to our needs, as it was soundproof, bright, and equipped with chairs and tables, projector and many outlets for powering laptops. The only problems were that the rooms didn't yet have curtains so viewing photos on the projector was made difficult because it was so bright, and that inadequate communication prevented us from having tea and snacks brought to us in the training room: we had to go out to a nearby restaurant to have lunch and snacks.

On the afternoon of March 16<sup>th</sup> we were hosted by the American Embassy Resource Center, and also had a chance to visit the Library of Congress offices. We ate lunch at the Embassy cafeteria and participants were very pleased with the rich and varied program of afternoon activities. Briefly, the afternoon consisted of a visit to the Acquisitions Department of the Library of Congress, a talk on “new librarianship” by the Director of the American Reference Center Library Mr. George Kamau, and a lecture on “Extending our reach: Outreach, programming and marketing for libraries” given by Sheila Weir. At the end of the afternoon the libraries were each given one box of books and the librarians were given very nice US Embassy Resource Center tote bags and coffee mugs. Librarians also had a little bit of free time during which they practiced computer skills.

On the second day we were at KNLS Buruburu the whole day and really focused on our discussions of the Citizen Archivist Program, the Kitabu Kenya network and the Mama Mtoto Story time Project. I was very fortunate in that Liz Nthenya, the new coordinator for Africa SOMA was able to volunteer her time to help me with logistics on the second day. This made the day run much more smoothly, as she took care of things like getting certificates printed and supervising discussion groups. The majority of this day was occupied by discussion of the Citizen Archivist project, the Kitabu Kenya Network and the Mama Mtoto Story time project. The content of these discussions is summarized in section 4. After these discussions, due to the lack of internet in the building we did the “Matatu Speeches” exercises. Related to library marketing, this activity puts participants in pairs (with someone from a different library), and has them practice how they would describe their library/NGO’s activities and their work if they were asked by a stranger on a matatu what they do. The idea is to develop an exciting, catchy and most importantly **succinct** description of the most important goals activities and tasks of them and their organization. The larger idea behind the activity is that library marketing is an active pursuit that should take the librarians out of their library and happen in their day to day lives.

The day ended with a recap of the most important points of the training, the tasks ahead and an exchange of contacts. Certificates of participation were given out later that evening over dinner. Most participants returned home the following morning.

## **Profiles of each participating library:**

### Elangata Wuas

History: newly opened (Summer 2010) community resource centre run by Elangata Wuas Resource Centre CBO. The CBO has been registered since 2007 and working on getting the Resource Centre open.

Staff: 3 librarians and 2 askaris. Librarians have secondary education and some computer college. No formal librarian training as of now.

Programing/Services: Primary, secondary and community wings.

Collection:

Challenges: water and the lack of a reading culture

Future plans: organizing at least one competition per term in different subjects where members of all schools in the zone can compete.



### Garissa

History: KNLS library started in 1980s

Staff: 16 staff total, all with post secondary training in library and information studies

Programing/Services: camel mobile library service, children's library, G-Youth ICT centre founded in cooperation with USAID (check out their website at <http://www.g-youth.org/main/>)

Collection:

Challenges: understaffing, budget for mobile library is small compared to work it takes, population is very dispersed

Future plans: getting a van to help in mobile library efforts, getting computers in the main library (for now are only in youth centre).



### Busia

History: Library is ten years old. Started just as a CBO but are now trying to coordinate with the

KNLS on the building of a new Library.

Staff: only one volunteer librarian, Esther Ajambo, helped by community volunteers. She has no post-secondary librarian training.

Programing/Services: creative writing workshops and competitions, story times, Collection:

Challenges: land acquisition, and clearing the land where they want to build the new library; finding volunteers to help out and work in the library; maintaining equipment (i.e. buying printer ink) and paying bills (i.e. electricity); poor culture of reading; getting syllabus books, building political goodwill

Future plans: construction of Busia Community Library Services



### Nairobi

History: SIDAREC is Slums Information Development and Resource Centre. It was originally formed as a youth group in 1997 and has grown to encompass operations at three different sites in Nairobi.

Unfortunately the resource centre recently burned down, destroying much of their collection. However a new building is being built.

Staff: trained in computers and information technology.  
Only one paid librarian.

Programming/Services: Youth development and reproductive health information, radio station Ghetto FM, youth advocacy and entrepreneurship courses, computer classes.

Collection: catalogue is online at <http://koha.hio.no/cgi-bin/koha/opac-main.pl>

Challenges: Theft and fire, rebuilding the book collection

Future plans: development of a mobile library, and a mobile puppet show outreach program



### Lamu

History: The museum library was opened in 1972, in 1985 it was opened to the community, in 1996 to researchers. It aims to disseminate information, build a reading culture and an appreciation of Swahili culture.



Staff: all have formal training in librarian and information technology studies.

Programming/Services: mobile services and outreach programs, American corner, children's corner, storytelling, reading lessons, games and computer classes. They also have a space for meetings and other community activities.

Collection: also have audio-visual archives

Challenges: humidity damages books, they are understaffed, challenge of conservation of historic materials

Future plans: improve the number of people they reach with their outreach activities

Overall the training was a big success. However significant follow up is now needed in order to keep track of how far participants have gone in the tasks we laid out such as building a local network of organizations with similar purposes, and concreting the implementation plans for the Mama Mtoto story time project.

There were also serious financial difficulties which limited the time I had to prepare lessons and finalize logistical plans. Namely the grant from the US Embassy was delayed and so alternate sources of funding for the event had to be found at the last minute. This led to inefficient use of time in some cases, as I rushed around to sort out financial problems and pick up money when I should have been together with participants. Finally, the participants from Lamu left the training unhappy that they had had to cover some of their own costs related to transport and accommodation on the way coming and going. Participants from Garissa were reimbursed directly from KNLS in the amount of 1500 and 1200 each for transportation and lunch allowance, however they also accepted reimbursement from me, as the KNLS representative had not informed me of their reimbursement. To date, this money has not been recovered from them despite numerous phone calls and emails from Jennie. Once Ariel arrives in Kenya we should urge them to MPESA the money to her directly.



### **3. Partners: Kenya National Library Service and the American Embassy Resource Centre**

#### **KNLS**

The Kenya National Library Service was very helpful in helping organize this event. In the planning stages I had the chance to meet with the Director, Richard Atuti who gave me very useful suggestions on accommodation for the librarians and also volunteered the space for us to use at the new library in Buruburu. He was also very enthusiastic about having a KNLS librarian from the Buruburu library attending the training to contribute to discussions and generally to learn about what is happening in these community libraries.

After this initial meeting I worked mostly with Ms. Dawn Makena who has run many trainings on different topics for KNLS. She helped me find a hotel in the area of Buruburu, and was my go-to person on issues such as organizing food, a librarian to sit in with us, etc. Our request for KNLS to contribute to funding was successful because of Dawn's arm twisting in the accounting department. Once the training had started however she became too busy to attend sessions and it left me in some difficult positions, for example trying to figure out food logistics. There were many things where I wasn't sure what Dawn had communicated to whom. The only case where this caused serious problems was in the reimbursement of the Librarians from Garissa for transport and food on their journey (please see section 6 for more details and the current situation). Dawn requested very clearly that the next time we want to plan an event with the KNLS we need to have a very clear budget far in advance so that if we need to request funds from KNLS we can do it farther in advance. Overall, she was extremely helpful and brought a lot of very useful planning experience to the table. I would highly recommend that we keep in touch with both her and the director as we think about planning future events.

#### **US Embassy Resource Center**

The US Embassy Resource Center was the host for the afternoon of the first day of our training, and provided funding support as well as logistical support and a very interesting set of talks and activities on March 16<sup>th</sup>. The contact person for organizing and funding this was Ms. Sheila Weir, Information Resource Officer for East Africa. Ms. Weir helped us organize a funding proposal to cover any expenses of the training related to coming to the US embassy. The total amount of funding ended up being about 700.00USD, however unfortunately it was delayed in reaching the designated bank account. The delay was caused by a miscommunication somewhere involving someone who went on holiday with our application on their desk, so it wasn't a situation that necessarily could have been avoided.

We also worked with Pamela Howard-Reguindin who gave us a tour of the Library of Congress acquisitions department in the US Embassy and gave the librarians information on how to use the Library of Congress catalogue. Both Sheila and Pamela had a chance to visit the Elangata Wuas Resource Centre, where they both did an excellent story reading with class 2 and 3 pupils from Elangata Wuas Primary School. They were very positive about continuing the relationship with Maria's libraries and Africa SOMA, especially in working to increase the skill sets of our librarians and collaborating with us on possible funding sources. The afternoon at the US embassy was motivational and enjoyable for all participants as well as myself.

## **4. Citizen Archivist, Mama Mtoto and Kitabu Kenya network discussions**

### **4.1 Citizen Archivist**

The discussion on Citizen Archivist was organized into the following sections:

1. We went around to each site that had participated and had them
  - a) Share and explain a selection of photos from their citizen archivists work
  - b) Share two major successes and two areas that were problematic in your experience with citizen archivist, as well as any general feedback you have about the program.
2. We divided into mixed groups of 3-4 and had each group discuss on one of the following questions:
  - How can we overcome some of the common challenges that were just raised?
  - Coordinating future Citizen Archivist projects – what kinds of topics are we interested in pursuing?
  - How can we put the materials we were given by the CAP team to use now and in future?
  - How can we keep citizen archivists involved now and in future?

Summary of general sharing and feedback on CAP

The sharing of photos was very interesting and there were a lot of questions going back and forth between participants about the different events in the photos. I felt that this part of the training contributed quite a bit to the participants' knowledge of the other sites.

The successes and challenges mentioned were:

#### **Busia**

Successes – program gave a higher profile to their library within the community and helped smooth their interactions with local administration and community members. Also they had very access to people in terms of interviews – people were eager to talk. They also mentioned that they have been able to capitalize on income generation through the gadgets they were given by small bean. For example they have been taking pictures at some public events and charging for the prints.

Challenges – they had some confusion over what exactly to choose to document at times. They also mentioned that the recorders produce .voc files which are very tricky to convert into Mp3s or other file formats. This apparently caused difficulties when trying to translate interviews. Transportation was also a challenge for them; people didn't want to come to the library, but since Esther was the citizen archivist and also the librarian she had limited availability to go to respondents at their homes. Finally they wanted to request CDs to enable them to make additional income by burning pictures from CAP onto CDs and selling them to community members.

#### **Elangata Wuas**

Successes – people were very interested in the project and happy to participate. They collected a lot of material and community members were really happy to see some of the pictures. Citizen archivists really appreciated computer and photography training.

Challenges – long distances to walk to homes and natural conditions such as extreme heat and dryness.

*Note: laptop is still being used in this library, however they could still capitalize much more on using cameras at public events.*

## **Nairobi**

Successes – On one day they did ten interviews! Citizen archivists are still involved with SIDAREC as outreach volunteers.

Challenges – This site had more challenges than any other. The main ones they mentioned were that people were generally not willing to be photographed or do an interview without compensation, and they aroused a lot of suspicion. Also they had problems in areas with ethnic conflict as their recording was seen as taking sides. To address this challenge they always consulted with local chiefs and elders to get permission and advice before starting in a new area. Security of the citizen archivists was another challenge for them. They felt that in each neighborhood they went to they would have needed to get a new team of youth citizen archivists from that neighborhood, as people were very suspicious of people who didn't fit in, even if they were just from a different area of the same slum.

*Note – during the workshop David and Raymond told us that they Citizen Archivist laptop had been stolen. After the training I was confronted by a number of the other participants who swore that they had overheard David and Raymond joking about having actually sold the laptop. I brought this issue to Sean and we both agreed that the citizen archivist project will be very difficult to continue with SIDAREC, for the reasons listed above, but also because Sean never felt that the relationship with them was good. Rumours of them selling program materials does not help the situation. However Sean has said he will discuss with the Small bean board members and inform us of their next steps.*

## **Lamu**

Successes – they still use cameras for income by taking pictures at local events. There was a lot of enthusiasm for documenting festivals specific to Lamu and they were very happy to preserve some of their traditions. They would like to see this continue with future citizen archivist projects where they can cover other religious and cultural festivals.

Challenges – no taking pictures of women for religious reasons; money: they commented that it was challenging to explain to both the citizen archivists and the participants that there was no payment. Their comment was that people are used to being paid, and if the project goes forward they could see people starting to demand to be paid for interviews. The reason they cited for this is that there are a lot of researchers working in Lamu, and a precedent has been set for some form of payment.

Garissa – didn't participate in this project

## **The way forward**

### **Overcoming challenges discussion**

The main ideas presented by this group were:

- That in future the project should find funds to cover communication and transport expenses of archivists. They also suggested that there should be salaries budgeted for archivists, to motivate them, but I explained that it was very unlikely that that would happen, and reemphasized all of the other ways in which archivists benefitted from their involvement in this program.
- Airtime for the modems – it was also agreed upon by all that finding a way to sustainably pay for airtime on their new modems was a big problem and had led to them being used less than librarians would have liked.
- They also suggested that displaying materials in the library (public awareness programmes) would be a great next step, as it might make the community more receptive to the program, and less demanding of payment, when they see the benefits being brought to the libraries and citizen archivists that take part. This was agreed in all but the Nairobi site, where there were worries that displaying photos of individuals might lead to conflict.
- There wasn't too much suggested on how to overcome problems of suspicion of local people.

### **Future topics of interest for citizen archivist research**

- The idea of this group was that should there be a similar citizen archivist round two, they would like to see all sites take a focus on culture, specifically marriage ceremonies, so that the resulting materials could be made into travelling exhibits to be seen at all libraries. They proposed perhaps in Kibera marriage would be more difficult to document as it is so mixed culturally, but we eventually came to the consensus that in the slum areas a focus on local marriage customs and the role of ethnicity in marriage would still be very interesting.
- Another topic the group thought all sites could do research on is land. In Lamu this would involve footage of farming festivals, in Busia coverage of the history of agriculture and current techniques. In Garissa and Elangata Wuas this set of research could be focused on the challenges of livestock production, or emergent forms of crop agriculture ( I think doing a research on the politics and ownership of land and land subdivision would be another topic all together). In Kibera a land questionnaire could focus on the history and ownership of the slum neighborhoods, how did these areas come to be?
- The last idea raised by Fatma from Lamu was to have a common project on great people in history and historic sites in each location. This was met with luke warm response, but could still be interesting.

### **Keeping technology used**

- A big point here was that most of the sites would be very interested in editing the video footage they shot and burning CDs of photos, but they needed additional software on their laptops, or laptops with CD drives to accomplish this. CD selling as potential income generating activity.
- A request was made for usb sticks with greater data capacity to allow them to back up their materials. That or external hard drives.
- Much of this discussion was around the question of whether or not we could legally sell video footage and music on CD. There was also quite a bit of discussion around the possibility of getting video cameras.
- Trainings on photography were a big point of interest here. People suggested that this would help them to better capitalize on the cameras as income generating devices.

### **Keeping citizen archivists involved**

- Citizen archivists could be in charge of leading tours of public awareness displays in libraries to help warm community to the idea of a second round and inform them on the results of our research.
- There was a general consensus that it is hard to keep the citizen archivists involved in any meaningful way on a volunteer basis. I tried to suggest other alternatives, but in general the feeling was that at this point they should be free to go and use their acquired skills elsewhere if they want to.

The Garissa team expressed a lot of interest in being included in any subsequent Citizen Archivist activities. As of now they have no computers in their main library, and were very excited about the idea of getting a laptop.

## **4.2 Kitabu Kenya Network**

On the Kitabu Kenya network, I started by explaining in depth the idea behind the network, how it might work, and the potential benefits it could bring to the groups present but also to all community and informal libraries in Kenya. In the discussion that followed we brainstormed as a group on ways to develop this network after the training, and I got feedback from participants on how they see this network potentially benefitting them, and how they would use it. Below is a summary of the points raised in that discussion:

- There was a lot of enthusiasm for the idea on both a local and national level. Participants were especially positive about the ideas of being able to join together on funding applications and being able to ask each other questions and get advice more easily. As Sheila said at the US Embassy – “We don’t need to re-invent the wheel! Chances are if there’s something you want to do, there’s someone out there’s who’s already done it that you can ask for advice”.
- We discussed how to practically start building such a network, and gave the initial task to each group that upon returning home they should try to get the contacts of five organization in their region that also have a library or directly support library operations. Methods for making our network work and establishing the ties between these five libraries included – creation of a joint email account, creating a facebook and twitter page, making a website, making flyers and making newsletters. The latter two option are ideas suggested for how to keep in contact across a larger network once we have grown a bit. We assigned making a group email address to me (which is now done), and so I have passed the ball to Raymond in Nairobi to make the group a facebook page.
- We also identified some potential organizations that would be interested in joining this network. We made clear the distinction between organizations that would be interested in funding or helping small community libraries and those that are actively running community or school libraries. In general the linkages present now were mostly between the participating libraries and organizations that are helping them. There were not many instances of resource or idea sharing in any of the sites.
- We then discussed what types of programs the participants would like to work on jointly in this network. In addition to the join Citizen Archivist projects listed above and the Mama Mtoto Story time project, participants also mentioned collaborating on different types of competitions for students and doing a program focused on promotion of creative writing as projects they would be very interested in. Many participants are currently looking for support for mobile library programs, and so something centred around that would be of great value. There is a lot of interest in computer and photography trainings.
- Responses to other discussion questions: Participants were very positive that the CAP had contributed to cultural exchange, but only really through their experience of seeing the other sites’ photos at the training. They were very excited about the idea of preparing powerpoints of some of the citizen archivist photos with explanations to send around to each site to further the cultural exchange. They also really wanted to continue with future CAP research activities that could also be turned into mini-travelling powerpoint exhibits. Mama motto contributing to this network will be discussed in the next section.
- When I asked about technological solutions for increasing each library’s ability to keep in touch with the others and also contact new organizations in their region, the Garissa people immediately said that they needed a laptop while the others said that they should have their airtime subsidized. Not exactly what we were aiming at I don’t think, but there were no other major ideas on how technology could make this process easier. Internet is the main solution, however the level of computer access in Garissa and Elangata Wuas (although this will be changing in the coming months) is still very low.

### **4.3 Mama Mtoto**

The Mama Mtoto section of the training started with me explaining at length the idea behind the project and how we imagined it might work. I handed out copies of our funding proposal for participants to keep and review at their leisure. After a lengthy question and answer period where we discussed questions such as the criteria for selecting mamas, how the logistics of the travelling to the different sites would work, and how many expenses they could expect to be covered, we broke into discussion groups for the second time. Below please find a summary of this initial feedback/QandA session:

- We discussed for some time the question of the number of languages the stories should be written in and which languages were appropriate for each site. We decided that for sites with a predominant mother tongue such as Elangata Wuas and Busia, the books should be written in mother tongue and Kiswahili, and where there were too many different language to write in a mother tongue (Nairobi, Garissa), or where the mother tongue is Swahili (Lamu) the books should be in Kiswahili and English;
- We discussed the need for an introductory meeting or two of selected mamas just explain the aims of the program and to do some training on what is a story book and how do we tell stories before they bring in the children and the first book;
- We decided it would be necessary to create curriculum for these initial mamas only meetings and then also a more general curriculum for each of the meetings with a different book;
- We discussed some of the things the librarians would include in the lesson on how to read a story book. The points brought up were: how to approach a child and make them comfortable when reading to them, how to locate the title of the book and its importance, how to dramatize the story to make it more entertaining and fun for the child (character voices, varying tone and pitch of voice, etc.), and a big section on how to take care of books at home and while reading them.
- We also had a long discussion about the best way to select mamas for the program. The conclusion of this discussion was that it will be best if each site uses their own recruitment technique. For example in Lamu, they are thinking they will have to actively market this program to women to find enough participants, so they want to hold some big meetings to find interested women and also use local women's groups to help them with marketing. In Elangata Wuas the concern is that there will be too many women interested in participating and we will have to make sure we have transparent rules on how they are selected. Also in elangata wuas geographic distribution of the mamas is important in keeping with the Elangata Wuas Resource Centre's mandate to serve all residents in Elangata Wuas zone, not just mile 46. In Busia the plan is to select ladies from existing women's groups, or even to have the women's groups each nominate the members they think would benefit most from this program. Garissa and Nairobi participants also liked the idea of going through existing women's groups in their area.
- We had another long discussion on which types of women to target: older or younger, what level of education, etc. This was another area where there were widely varying opinions site to site. The only common ground that we were able to come up with as a group was that we should be aiming to target women with basic literacy who have had the least educational opportunities. The Elangata Wuas site suggested targeting young women (16-22) with children who had dropped out of school, as a way for them to have an educational opportunity together with their child. In Lamu the suggestion was to select from older women with children who didn't do much schooling (they felt that many young women were able to pursue secondary education). In Busia the preference is towards active

members of women's groups no matter what the age. The Nairobi librarians wanted to let the local chiefs and elders make the selection of participants based on the guiding criteria that they must be literate, have a small child, and not have had a lot of educational opportunities.

- Another key topic will be what restrictions we put on the age of the child that is going to be read to in these classes. Are we limiting each mama to bringing one child (the participants were in favour of this to reduce chaos)? Presumably the ages of the children at each site should be within a given range. We concluded that we should ask Maria's libraries what the reading level of the books we are going to get is, and then use that to give guidelines on the age of the child necessary to participate.

I wanted to implement one of the activities Sheila had suggested on day one but hadn't had time to get all the way through. In the activity, you take a programming idea (in our case the Mama Mtoto Storytime project) and work through in groups exactly what the aims and goals of the program are, what are the expected outputs, what is the plan for operationalizing the program and how will we ensure that the program is adequately evaluated. With this task in mind we split into three groups and each group was given the task to brainstorm on the following topics: project aims and goals, target audience and selection of participants, project outcomes and logistical plans, and project evaluation. I won't report what each group said for project aims and goals, as they were all very much in line with the aims and goals of Maria's Libraries for this project.

On **target audience and selection**, when we discussed what are the wants and needs of our target group we had very interesting discussions. Many participants reminded me that in scheduling classes we would need to be very aware that many ladies have a lot of obligations at home. The timing and nature of these obligations differed greatly across sites, but we were reminded, for example, in Elangata Wuas, that classes on Saturdays would be impossible as all women need to do shopping on that day. We also pointed out that during the mama motto class times it will be important to have a very quiet and uncrowded environment. The point was brought up than onlookers might make the mamas uncomfortable about their reading abilities.

#### **Project outcomes and logistical plans:**

*Communication:* It was decided that in the preparation phases and as the project is in progress each library should send bi-weekly email updates to the other libraries to ask any questions and generally give an update on how the project is going at their site. We also discussed the necessity of clearly communicating the intention to hold this program with library management bodies and other relevant local authorities who may end up fielding questions about it (i.e. the chief in Elangata Wuas). Communication with participants will be done through posters in libraries and town centres as well as by telephone once mamas have been selected.

*Staffing:* This was an area where we felt we could keep the citizen archivists included. The eventual consensus was that the librarians themselves should run the actual classes, but that the citizen archivists should be involved in helping write down and edit and discuss the story for publication. All of the librarians were ok to fit this project into their regular schedules for no additional pay. They expressed again a wish that the citizen archivists could be paid for their involvement.

*Putting together the storybook:* There was lots of good discussion on what types of stories should be possible for the local books to be published. One question was whether we insist that the story book should contain only one story, or whether it can contain many short fables. I said that the group of mamas could decide that at each site. We also discussed illustrations for the storybooks, and everyone

agreed the books should have nice illustrations, whether they come from local artists, or any other source. One great idea was to use the story publication as an opportunity for an art contest, and choose one or more winning student illustrations to be featured in the eventual published book. We all agreed that local artistic talent should be on display in these books.

*On the editing process:* participants agreed that once the mamas and citizen archivists have produced a draft of the story at each site it would be extremely useful to come together again and all sit together to edit and discuss the stories. This meeting could also be used to initially evaluate the program and to get a start on putting together the Mama Mtoto training manual.

*General logistics:* many of the groups brought up issues of when to hold classes, where and for how many hours. We came to the consensus that classes should be bi-weekly and should be at least three hours, or ideally a full morning or afternoon in duration. Some groups brought up that if we want to have classes for a full morning or afternoon we will need to be prepared to serve tea. In all cases participants thought that they could find a suitable space for the classes in their library, as long as they made sure the schedule was clear at that time.

*Project outcomes:* many positive outcomes of this project were mentioned, however the ones that came up the most were increased confidence in reading among women, the long term impact participating children, introducing women to different cultures and promoting tolerance and respect, and preserving local oral history through the publishing of these books.

### **Project evaluation:**

After the initial 1-2 meetings with just the selected mamas where we introduce the project and give some basic lessons on story book reading, it was suggested that we have an initial evaluation from the selected mamas that also includes and feedback or concerns they have going into the project. They could evaluate the advertising for the project, the selection process and answer some questions about how they think this project will impact them positively in future. These evaluations could be conducted informally with the librarians.

As mentioned above after the classes are finished, there should be another meeting where the librarians give an evaluation on the project so far.

At the end of the project the suggestion was made to have another feedback and evaluation session with the mamas who participated. This would hopefully yield a lot of information that would be relevant to the design of the training manual.

### **Current tasks and next steps**

- Send email including evaluation questionnaire and questions on what everyone has been doing re: networking and mama motto since the program – this email is being sent by me today from the newly created group email account on gmail – kitabukenya@gmail.com.
- Based on response, start Kitabu Kenya facebook group – this task can be given to a participant.
- Evaluate updates on preparation for mama motto and work into our planning for Ariel's trip
- On CAP – have each site prepare a powerpoint of some of their photos with explanatory notes to be sent around to all of the other sites for presentation to the community.

## **5. Lessons learned and ideas for organization of subsequent trainings**

- Personnel – I think in future we need at least two people in charge of training events such as this one. Especially if one or both of them will be running/teaching sessions. I found the combined duties of managing finance, logistics, recording notes and also teaching some sessions to be too much.
- Logistics – It is necessary to have at least one person full time on logistics while the event is running. This will allow the training sessions to continue running smoothly despite any logistical glitches or plans that need to be changed at the last minute. Things like hotel booking, meal and transport organizing, take a lot of time both ahead of and during the event, and keeping track of people, organizing the meeting space (projectors, chairs, taking down and putting up posters etc.), and coordinating with different presenters take a lot of time during the event.
- Certificates of participation – they are very important to participants and need to be made in advance. They should also be signed by representatives from as many of the host organizations as possible.
- Finance – the first thing we need to know when planning future events is how much money we have available for the event exactly. If we can start from exact figures on what money is available for the event from all sources then we can shop around and find the accommodation/food/space combinations that fit our budget well in advance. This also allows people like Dawn who are helping us with preparations to make good recommendations. After an initial period of research, which should take place even before participants are invited, we will be able to know if the money we have allocated is enough to make everything go smoothly or if we need to make major changes to the event in order for our budget to be adequate. Money should be made available in cash form to the coordinators no less than a week before the event to ensure we can book hotel rooms etc. In this case the US embassy money delay was a big problem. Starting the process further ahead might have helped, however not necessarily. Having some reserve funds in case of this type of glitch would be ideal.
- Informing participants on finance in advance - If we start with a figure of money that we are able to contribute to the event, after we assess the prices of accommodation, food, transport, etc. the next step to be taken immediately is working out and informing participants what expenses we would need them to cover themselves, so they can start the process of applying for money (in the case of libraries backed by National Museums and National Library Service they can apply for significant amounts of travel money, however the process needs to be started at least a month in advance of the event). This was brought up by participants from Lamu; however it would be very helpful also in bringing KNLS librarians to our events. Further clear communication on this issue (exactly what is covered for you and what is not) will help avoid different expectations leading to disappointment for some. The different length of journeys to Nairobi should also be considered when determining what if anything we can reimburse on the side of travel.
- During the event – direct feedback I received was that in future events we should assign certain participants jobs at the beginning of the event. These jobs could include someone to be time keeper (making sure people come back from breaks on time), and someone to be in charge or running small refresher activities (stretches, songs, etc.) to break up long discussions or presentations.
- Prayer – I forgot about this entirely and was sternly reprimanded! We should think about either starting and ending subsequent training events with a prayer, or assigning one participant to research whether this is a good idea and what kind of prayer we want and who is the best person to do it.

- In future, we should remember to work in lots of activities and different types of exercises into a long day of talking. I think I was so focused on covering the material at hand I tended to let the sessions go on too long, leading to some fatigue in participants.

## **6. Financing situation**

KNLS Garissa reimbursement situation:

I had been informed by Dawn that KNLS had agreed to our budget request of 5250ksh for accommodation and 5000 for transport; however I didn't have details on how these amounts were to be disbursed. The 5250 for accommodation was reimbursed to me directly upon presenting my receipts to the accounting department. This was no problem. However on the transport and meal reimbursement, as I hadn't heard back from Dawn at the time the two Garissa librarians were leaving (Abdullahi had to leave in the middle of the morning of the second day as his wife had an urgent health problem) I reimbursed them the amounts that were in our budget request to KNLS. After the fact, Dawn informed me both that the amounts to be disbursed by KNLS were lower than those in the budget request, and that the two librarians had already had their transport and meal reimbursement paid to them by KNLS, and that it was impossible to give me the money. So both dawn and I were requesting Abdullahi and Habiba to send me back the money I had given them via MPESA. This was unsuccessful up to the point where I left the country. After than I continued calling them from the Netherlands asking them to please MPESA the money to a friend who would be returning to Canada via the Netherlands shortly. Still no luck. Currently I am thinking of asking them to send the money to an Africa SOMA intern, however requires some discussion with the Africa SOMA board. The total amount outstanding is 2700ksh.

## **Appendix A: Budget breakdown – please see 'Expense Report' file**

## **Appendix B: Participants' evaluation form**

Date:

### **Section 1: Evaluation**

1. How enjoyable was this training?
2. Do you feel that this training will be useful to you in your career?
3. How effective was the coordinator of this training (leading discussion, ensuring things ran smoothly, organizing participants)
4. How satisfied were you with the accommodation and food?
5. Do you have any suggestions that you think would make a future training event like this one better?
6. Do you have any other comments or concerns related to the training?
7. How useful was it for you to be engaging with other participants from different parts of the country?
8. What was your favourite part of the training?
9. Were there any parts of the training that were not useful or relevant to you? If yes, which part(s)?

10. Would you be interested in attending future training meetings of this type?

## **Section 2: Follow up**

### Kitabu Kenya Network

a) How do you feel now about the Kitabu Kenya network idea we discussed at the training?

b) Have you started to find and communicate with other local organizations in your area with similar goals? If yes, please list their names and locations.

c) Do you think the network will grow to the point where we have the contacts of all community libraries in Kenya?

### Mama Mtoto Story Time Program planning

a) Have you told any women about the Mama Mtoto story time project?

b) If yes, what was the response like (positive? negative?)?

c) What do you think your best strategy is for selecting mamas in your area? Has it changed at all since the training?

d) How long do you guess it will take you from today to select and organize a group of 15 women ready to come to the first meeting about the Mama Mtoto Storytime Project?

e) Do you need any additional information about the project in order to select your participants?

f) Do you have any other questions about Mama Mtoto? If yes, please ask them here!