The Role of the Library in Promoting Research at the University of Nairobi

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Maanzoni Lodge, 28 November 2014
Outline

- Introduction
- Functions
- Role
- Challenges
- Opportunities and how tapping into them
Aim:

to identify the key characteristics of University of Nairobi library provision to support research.
Key entity in any university cutting across all departments

Libraries keep on evolving; new roles and services

Concern over:

1. value of the services that the library provides to researchers and other users
2. the contributions that the library makes to institutional research performance
Vision:
To be a World class Information Centre of Excellence in the provision, dissemination and preservation of knowledge

Mission:
To provide quality information services that will empower the University in carrying out its core activities of teaching, learning, research, community service and consultancy.

University of Nairobi
ISO 9001:2008 Certified
http://www.uonbi.ac.ke
Mandate for:

- 30 Faculties, Schools, Institutes, Centres
- Over 300 Programmes
- Over 70,000 Students
- 2,052 Academic Staff
- 3,380 Administrative & Technical Staff
- 156,000 Alumni
- Others including Research Associates
Recognized as the largest academic library in the country - 13 libraries serving Colleges, Faculties Institutes and Schools
More than 750,000 volumes print books, 163,000 e-books and 76,000 e-journals
Lead library in Open Access Environment
Fully automated (Vsmart)
Establishment of 246 staff
National coordinating institution for the Kenya Library and Information Services Consortium (KLISC)
• Help the university to recruit and retain top researchers
• Help researchers win research grants and contracts
• Promote and exploit new technologies and new models of scholarly communication
• Increase visibility of the university and raise its research profile
• Staff work in partnership with academic depts.
- Connecting with researchers to fill the gaps in their knowledge and understanding of the researchers needs
- Provide a better work environment for researchers through dedicated spaces (carrels, research commons)
- Mechanisms for easy access to high quality content
Circulation /Access Services:

- Register Library users
- Perform variety of automated circulation functions (charge/discharge, renewals, holds, blocks, reserve loans, overdue fines, clearances)
- Communicate with faculty regarding placement of materials on reserve
- Process ILL/Document Delivery requests
Functions and Activities

- Organize shelving and supervise stack maintenance
- Identify and send materials for binder repair

Bindery:
- Repair and conserve information resources.
Circulation/ Research & Information Services:

- Perform comprehensive reference, research assistance & referral services
- Perform in-person, telephone, e-mail, and other reference services.
- Identify, locate, and interpret sources of information, irrespective of format.
- Provide database search assistance
• Provide technical support for effective use of information technology.
• Develop, implement, and evaluate library resources and services
• Respond to Help desk queries
• Perform variety of outreach functions (student orientation sessions, graduation)
Technical Services: Acquisitions and Cataloguing

- Handle materials procurement
- Transmit order lists
- Perform in-house online cataloging operations (original & adaptive cataloguing, authority control, and bibliographic maintenance functions)
- Design appropriate metadata schema to facilitate access to electronic resources and other collections
Systems Unit:

* Plan, develop, implement, and maintain all mission critical library systems
* Ensure effective integration of information transfers, processing, storage, and access across a platform and database environment.
* Collaborate with ICT staff to develop and maintain quality web site
Systems Unit:

- Supervise all aspects of library desktop computing operations for the library.
- Monitor systems growth and requirements and recommend systems enhancements.
- Serve as Library’s principal liaison with ICT with respect to network administration issues.
Collections

- Graduate Research
- Periodicals
- Electronic Resources
- Institutional Repository
- Archives and Audiovisual
- Reserve
- Africana
- United Nations
- Rare Materials
Challenges

- Keeping up with new technologies (scholarly tools, social networks, mobile environments)
- Staffing to meet new challenges (such as digital scholarship, assessment and instructional technology)
- Lengthy procurement process resulting in delays
- Introduction of Value Added Tax (VAT) on books
- Mechanisms for follow up on Research Associates
The increasing population of students has led to:

1. Shortage of space in all campus libraries. This is more acute during the examination periods.
2. Overstretched facilities, furniture and equipment
3. Constant maintenance and repairs is required for buildings, furniture and computers
4. Strain on the available staff
Prospects

- Software (JAWS for visually impaired)
- Enhance the Helpdesk
- Enhance Remote Access System
- Implement library services through mobile services
- Enhance visibility (website, IR)
- Training for staff to enhance skills
- Training all categories of users through IL
- Create spaces for research commons
Prospects

- Explore IL integration into academic programs
- Enhance electronic updates (current awareness)
- Implement a plagiarism software (Turnitin)
- Enhance security of information resources (RFID, biometric technology)
- Embrace corporate social responsibility by participating in community outreach activities.
- Enhance income generating activities
Thank you