

Supporting Societies' Needs: a Model Framework for Developing National Library Policy

Version 2.00 of 31 July 2011

Supporting Societies' Needs: a Framework for Renewing or Developing National Policy for Libraries

Preface

The attached framework has been developed following a six-month period of research of which the following key activities were included:

- desk research leading to preparation of a background paper on the history and current best practice in preparation of library policy¹;
- development of case studies to illustrate forward-thinking/innovative national or sub sector library policy²;
- development of a draft model library policy framework;
- facilitation of consultative meetings and workshops to discuss and finalize documents.

Preparation or revision of a library policy

Preparation or revision of a library policy, be it a fully integrated national policy or a sub sector delimited policy (e.g. public libraries, university and academic libraries etc) cannot begin until the current performance, infrastructure and financing capability of the sector is fully understood.

Development or revision of a library policy must therefore be seen within a process that includes:

- a) assessment of the present performance and infrastructure of the library sector or subsector based on the stated requirements for development of the country and the needs of its citizens. The assessment of libraries will therefore be based in the context of the government's development policies, usually articulated through 'Vision' documents, national development plans, economic plans, employment plans etc.;
- b) understanding and analysis of the realistic and achievable financial capability of government and complementary sources towards libraries (or the library sub sector);
- c) analysis and understanding of the potential future impact that libraries could and should contribute to the countries' development;
- d) preparation of the library policy document;
- e) preparation of comprehensive and implementable short, medium and long term Action Plans for the library sector (or subsector). This should include annual plans developed in line with 3 – or 5-year rolling plans. The action plans should include both work plans and budget plans;
- f) development of strategies and instruments for ongoing monitoring, evaluation and feedback of results into the planning and policy implementation processes.

¹ NIDA Supporting knowledge-based societies: developing national policy for libraries: Part 1: Background , 10pp, 2011

² NIDA, *Case Studies of best practice in library policy: Colombia, Finland, Namibia, New Zealand*, 2011

Framework for Renewing or Developing National Policy for Libraries

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The need for a renewal or development of policy in the library sector
- 1.2 National strategic areas
- 1.3 Resource availability
- 1.4 Major objectives of a national strategy for libraries

Where relevant

- 1.5 Major objectives for the library sub sector

2 KEY LIBRARY STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

- 2.1 Leadership and coordination in the library sector

To include:

- 2.1.1 Ministries/Departments
- 2.1.2 Councils or Committees
- 2.1.3 Any other relevant body
- 2.1.4 Coordination and cooperation within the sector

For each of the above, text to be provided on:

VISION

MANDATE

- 2.2 Legislation

[Legislation lays down statutory obligations e.g. central government responsibilities, local government responsibilities, legal deposit etc). Legislation is best developed or updated after development of library policy. Library legislation may be part of or complementary to other legislation e.g. for IT, for education etc.].

- 2.3 Human resources
 - 2.3.1 The needs of users
 - 2.3.2 Professional capacity
 - 2.3.3 Staff structures (incl. jobs, careers, remuneration)
 - 2.3.4 Education and training
 - 2.3.5 Role of professional bodies

- 2.4 Financial resources

[NB Maybe integrated library sector and/or sub sector]

- 2.4.1 Government
- 2.4.2 Private
- 2.4.3 Financial control

3 INFRASTRUCTURE

3.1 Buildings

3.2 ICT

4 SERVICES

In line with specified vision and user needs:

4.1 Information resources for library and information services

4.2 Internet and technology activities

4.3 Services promoting utilisation of resources e.g. reference, loans, information literacy etc).

[N.B. The form of services should be developed In line with the vision and priorities being considered, for example may focus on or include specific areas such as

- local content
- information for development (including specific rural development, health, small business, education services developed to needs of each local community)
- additional and specific services for disadvantaged or marginalised communities e.g. visually impaired, minority languages.

5 ADVOCACY

5.1 Strategy

5.2 Implementation and review

6 PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT & IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7 POLICIES FOR INDIVIDUAL LIBRARY SUB SECTORS

As relevant to each national context, could be developed within an integrated document or individually for each individual sub sector within an overall vision. For example:

7.1 National Library

7.2 National Archives

7.3 Special and research libraries

7.4 Public, Community and Multipurpose libraries

7.5 School libraries

7.6 Higher education libraries

7.7 Other service models

[N.B. For each sub sector VISION and MANDATE should be described, and if presented individually a subsector Action Plan developed.]

8 ACTION PLAN

[N.B. An Action Plan must be developed in line with national library or library sub sector policy and vision. Action planning is best accomplished through 3- or 5- year rolling plans, with annual 1-year current plan, reviewed and updated quarterly..

Action Plans should include both narrative Work Plan and Budget Plan.]

9 NEXT STEPS

[To include the modus operandi for implementation and updating the policy.]