Open Doors Children’s Corners

Where the reading journey begins

Books change lives
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Acknowledgements

**Book Aid International staff (past and present)**
Jill Haynes, Judith Henderson, James Kimani, Malin Rosenquist, Heather Rutledge, Stevie Russell, Jacqui Scott, Samantha Thomas-Chuula, Alison Tweed, Hannah Watson

**Consultants**
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**Acronyms**

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<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td><em>Children's Corners</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>DDC</td>
<td>Dewey Decimal Classification Scheme</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECD</td>
<td>Early Childhood Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EISERVI</td>
<td>Education Information Services International</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENML</td>
<td>Edward Ndlovu Memorial Trust</td>
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<td>ENMT</td>
<td>Edward Ndlovu Memorial Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>knls</td>
<td>Kenya National Library Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>MNLS</td>
<td>Malawi National Library Service</td>
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<td>NLU</td>
<td>National Library of Uganda</td>
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<td>OD</td>
<td><em>Open Doors</em></td>
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<td>ODCC</td>
<td><em>Open Doors Children's Corners</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>TLSB</td>
<td>Tanzania Library Service Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>ToET</td>
<td>Training of Expert Trainers</td>
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<td>ToT</td>
<td>Training of Trainers</td>
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<tr>
<td>UgCLA</td>
<td>Uganda Community Library Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>WR</td>
<td>Worldreader</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZLS</td>
<td>Zambia Library Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZNZLS</td>
<td>Zanzibar Library Service</td>
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1. Introduction

This report celebrates the success of Book Aid International’s *Open Doors Children’s Corners* programme as an effective intervention to help children enjoy books and reading.

Detailing the design, activities, findings and impact on key stakeholders to date, this report outlines Book Aid International’s first multi-year programme to effectively engage children in reading, through the creation of welcoming, child-friendly and resource-rich reading spaces in their public and community libraries.

The report focuses on the findings and related impact of the programme between 2014 and 2017, and the impact different components of the programme made on children, librarians, parents, teachers and others involved in the library services. Using feedback gathered through a ‘multi-stakeholder reflective reporting’ process, the report shares details of the impact generated by the programme, through their eyes and perspectives.

Following a description of the programme and its core components, the report is ordered around programme findings and five major impacts:

1. Welcoming and child-friendly spaces spark curiosity in books
2. Large and varied collections inspire children to read
3. Confident and knowledgeable staff add magic to the mix
4. More children, reading more
5. *Children’s Corners* improve the perceived value of the library.

It goes on to highlight the major lessons learnt by the participating libraries, organisations and Book Aid International itself, and highlights how the *Children’s Corners* design has become a springboard for Book Aid International’s future work with children of all ages.

The report illustrates the ways the programme has succeeded and suggests that more *Children’s Corners* are needed beyond the public library space.

![Image](image_url)

*The very first *Open Doors Children’s Corner* in Blantyre, Malawi*
2. Executive summary

The aim of the *Open Doors Children’s Corners* programme was to enable children to reach their potential through access to quality books and activities in well-resourced and well-managed libraries.

The programme began in 2014 with the intention of creating 60 *Children’s Corners* in six countries\(^1\) by the end of 2016. The programme responded to a desire from public library partners to provide a service tailored to the needs of children, helping them to enjoy books and reading. Fundraising for the programme became the focus of Book Aid International’s 60th anniversary year in 2014 and, by the end of 2016, the fundraising target of £600,000 had been surpassed. All 60 *Children’s Corners* were completed in 2017.

Book Aid International selected seven\(^2\) African partners that had functioning libraries in need of support around engaging children – and that had capacity to undertake the work involved with the programme. The chosen library partners were in Cameroon, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The *Children’s Corners* design consisted of transforming three key elements:

**The space** – Each participating library received funds to carry out the refurbishment of the children’s section and create a child-friendly space.

**The books** – A collection of 2,500 UK-donated books was provided to each library. Book Aid International also provided a grant to purchase locally published books.

**Librarian training** – In each library, librarians were invited to attend a three-day librarian course in how to transform attitudes and practice in supporting children as they begin to read.

Each partner was also provided with financial, training and monitoring and evaluation support.

Over the life of the four-year programme, 197,174 UK-donated books were distributed to the 60 *Children’s Corners* that were established, and a total of £41,735 was disbursed in grants for local-purchase books, with at least 21,857 locally published books purchased, in English and 22 local African languages.

Data collected during this programme came from Book Aid International staff who carried out baseline surveys and final evaluations. Partners carried out mid-line monitoring trips and reported on daily visits and activities. Challenges with collecting statistics on child visits and child activities were experienced because, in all but a few cases, the library service was not routinely collecting this information. Achieving consistency in recording statistics was also difficult across all countries because different methods were used.

Despite these challenges, it is clear that children loved the books, the experience of being in a corner devoted to them and having a librarian to support their reading.

Findings pointed towards clear usage of the books by children, who found the space welcoming and exciting. All libraries reported an increase in the number of children

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\(^1\) Cameroon, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

\(^2\) Kenya was added in late 2014 as specific funding became available.
visiting and spending time with books in the *Children’s Corners*, with 870,000 child visits recorded in total. This equates to approximately 320 visits per library per month for the duration of the programme, across all countries.

Where libraries permitted children to borrow books and where they kept records of books borrowed, an increase in number of loans to children was seen. Librarians also provided anecdotal reporting of children staying longer in the library space, engrossed in reading.

At the start of the programme, few if any librarians reported running reading activities. Following the programme, the activities increased in quantity and range. Inconsistent recording for the majority of libraries means that quantitative data on the number of activities run per week was not captured – but evidence of timetabling, observations of activities being delivered, arts and crafts being displayed, photos taken of activities in full swing and children’s own reports through focus groups in final evaluations all point to an increase in activities.

With all *Children’s Corners* launched and the overall level of activity raised in the libraries, parents and teachers from surrounding schools responded in support of the new services to children. Parents took greater interest and supported their children’s attendance and other local education officials showed their support in creating a new perception of the service.

A multi-stakeholder reflection reporting exercise was undertaken in 2017, inviting a range of stakeholders to reflect and report on the changes that had taken place and that they attributed to the *Children’s Corners*. Quotes from stakeholders who were involved in the programme highlight the breadth of impact on the way the services are now delivered to children, on librarians’ confidence, behaviour and practice, on the children’s engagement with the books and on the perceived value of the library by community members.

Evaluation also found that the programme did create challenges, particularly around the increased number of children visiting their *Children’s Corners*. This increase put pressure on limited infrastructure and on overstretched staff. These lessons will be built into future programme design.

As Book Aid International’s first large-scale programme, *Open Doors Children’s Corners* has provided key lessons that have gone on to strengthen the organisation’s capacity to meet the needs of children, while building the capacity of local librarians to meet the expectations of parents and the local community. It was a successful programme, which has given rise to a range of new initiatives to support children as they begin a lifetime of reading.
3. Programme overview

Book Aid International believes that everyone should have the opportunity to read. Through reading, people can change their own lives for the better and therefore shape their futures.

Developing children’s reading is a vital step in their educational journey, but literacy rates among primary-school-aged children in many African countries remain stubbornly low, despite advances in getting children into school. Research conducted in the UK and elsewhere suggests that reading for pleasure can improve educational outcomes and lead to better emotional and social wellbeing.

Results from the 2009 Programme for International Student Assessment survey\(^3\) indicate that within the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development countries, students – aged approximately 15 – who enjoy reading the most perform significantly better than those who enjoy reading the least.

Libraries are among the best places for reading to happen. They provide much needed access to books and other information and educational resources – but, in many African libraries, services for children are inadequate. Collections are old and worn out, spaces are unsuitable for younger readers and staff lack time and know-how to provide appropriate, engaging support for children.

3.1 Background

3.1.1 Genesis and evolution

The *Open Doors Children’s Corners* programme began in 2014 with the intention to create 60 *Children’s Corners* in six countries\(^4\) by the end of 2017. The programme became the focus of Book Aid International’s 60th anniversary year in 2014 and, by the end of 2016, the fundraising target of £600,000 had been surpassed and 44 corners in seven\(^5\) countries had been established. Implementation continued up to the end of 2017, by which time 60 libraries were completed.

3.1.2 Adding value to donated books

Book Aid International’s specific programme work with children and libraries began in 2009 with a programme to create 12 *Children’s Corners* in libraries in Kenya and Tanzania.

Children’s books have always formed a large percentage of Book Aid International’s donated book provision. By 2013, 43% of books sent overseas were books for children and included picture books, early readers, junior fiction, primary textbooks and non-

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\(^3\) PISA etc.

\(^4\) Cameroon, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

\(^5\) Kenya was added in late 2014 as specific funding became available.
fiction. Even with the knowledge that thousands of children’s books were finding their way to the continent’s libraries and schools, there was observable evidence from visits and discussions with partner organisations that suitable spaces and active and engaging library services for children were few and far between.

By inspiring willing library staff through short, practical and highly participative capacity-building workshops, Book Aid International hoped to equip them to deliver an improved service to children.

The first Children’s Corners were established with the Kenya National Library Service and Tanzania Library Services Board. These initial Children’s Corners showed that providing additional support in the form of grants for refurbishment and training workshops improved the quality of service offered to children by libraries. The physical transformation of library corners or specific rooms created excitement among regular users and began to draw in new constituents directly from the community and via local schools.

Library staff enjoyed the specific training, which blended theory and practical activity. Training workshops, especially in Kenya and Tanzania, brought together colleagues from far-flung branch libraries who would not normally have an opportunity to meet. In countries with a decentralised system, such as Uganda, the training enabled often isolated librarians from disparate local government libraries to connect and create new professional networks. By the end of 2013, 47 Children’s Corners had been established in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Namibia.

3.2 Children’s Corners aims and objectives

The aim of the Open Doors Children’s Corners programme was to enable children to reach their potential through access to quality reading materials and activities in well-resourced and well-managed libraries. Book Aid International hoped to:

- create 60 refurbished Children’s Corners in public or community libraries in six countries
- train at least 120 library staff in working with children in libraries and providing reading-promotion activities in the library and to schools through outreach programmes
- increase the numbers of children visiting their local Children’s Corner and participating in reading-related activities.

3.3 Programme design

The components of the Open Doors Children’s Corners programme worked together to support children’s reading journeys.
3.3.1 New books in English

New books have a huge impact on young readers. The range of donated English books draw readers into the library and play a significant role in engaging children in visiting the library and exploring their contents, even if not reading. A typical donation would include chapter books, picture books, board books, pop-up books, sensory books, large-sized books, phonics books and non-fiction subject books. The reading levels in the books range from pre-reading age and emerging-reader age, to lower- and upper-primary-school ages.

The donated English books were only supplied where English is the official language or where it is the medium of instruction in school. Book Aid International was careful to ensure that the books were culturally appropriate by working with partners.

3.3.2 Locally published books

Over the life of the four-year programme, a total of £41,735 was disbursed in grants for some 21,857 locally published books, not only in English but also in 22 local languages.

For each Children's Corner, a grant was provided to the partner to purchase non-textbook children’s local-language or local-content reading books. Local-content books offer culturally relevant experiences, attracting children to engage with books when they recognise an environment, landscape or community that reflects their lives.

In some countries – Zambia, Malawi, Uganda, Tanzania – children learn to read in the local language in the first instance. Finding children’s local-language books helped them to practise reading and writing. Other countries – Kenya, Cameroon, Zimbabwe – teach children to read in the English language first, so finding local-content books in English helped children in these countries acquire reading
skills.

In all the countries, children are required to understand and use English at secondary school and, with the exception of Tanzania, English is the official medium of instruction, so the opportunity to practice English is valued in preparation for secondary school and beyond.

3.3.3 The space

In each Children’s Corner, freshly painted walls, cartoon characters, landscapes or traditional murals and new child-friendly furniture transformed a dull, uninspiring space into a place of fun and excitement. The refurbishment impacted not only the children, but also all who work in the library as well as general visitors.

A grant was issued to each partner for the refurbishment of the space. In some places local carpenters created unique child-sized furniture and local artists painted a range of beautiful murals for the walls. In other places, brightly coloured chairs, tables and mats were purchased locally with the alphabet or numbers adorning the walls. Each space was slightly different and reflected the creativity of the library staff and the resources locally available.

Children were curious and, in the Children’s Corners, were attracted to the new bright walls, murals and pictures. They felt comfortable with seating designed specifically for them – or mats on which they could lounge with friends. Newly labelled shelves made finding books easy and low-level kinder-boxes made books reachable for small readers. Children soon associated reading in their local Children’s Corners with leisure and pleasure, enabling them to share, discuss and explore freely in the space, transforming their perception of the library and reading.

3.3.4 Librarians’ training

The aims of the training workshops held as part of the programme were to increase knowledge and transform attitudes and practice in supporting children read.

The vast majority of the 197 librarians trained during the life of the programme had not undertaken any specialised training for children as part of their initial librarianship qualification or onboarding. They were trained that the library is a space for the adult reader and meeting their needs were paramount in a space of silence and tranquillity. Our specialised children’s training has created a paradigm shift for libraries. The child-centred approach to reading, where the needs of the child drive the activities and practice of the librarian, has been new to the librarians. Transformation in these two key areas assists the library service achieve its mandate of engaging young readers.

In 2015, the Tanzania Ministry of Education and Vocational Training announced that the Kiswahili language would be the medium of instruction in secondary schools.
4. Programme inputs

Six countries were initially chosen as potential sites for Open Doors Children’s Corners: Cameroon, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Kenya was added in 2015, taking the total to seven. All seven had long-established book provision partners receiving books for their library networks and four – Cameroon, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe – were new programme countries. The choice of country was influenced by:

- functioning libraries available
- capacity of partner to undertake programme work
- financial and administrative integrity of partner.

See Appendix 4 for full partner and country information.

4.1 Support given

Each country received:

- a collection of 2,500 carefully selected UK-donated English-language children’s books
- a grant of £725 per library to purchase locally published books
- a grant of £1,000 per library for refurbishment (painting, purchase of shelving, furniture)
- a grant to launch the Children’s Corners and facilitate outreach to schools
- a grant for two librarian training workshops, each lasting three days
- monitoring and evaluation support to record library service attendance and book usage, and to provide ongoing guidance to librarians.

4.2 Programme objectives

Book Aid International hoped to see:

- increased child visits to the participating libraries
- increased book usage and book borrowing
- increases in the number and quality of reading activities offered by the library
- increased awareness of the library and services by schools in the local community.

Key findings demonstrate the programme succeeding in achieving these objectives.
5. Key findings

5.1 The number of children visiting each library increased

Although data collection was inconsistent at times in both recording and reporting, almost 870,000 child visits to the libraries across the programme period were recorded.

This equates to approximately 320 visits per library per month for the duration of the programme. Many libraries in the programme indicated that they had very few, if any, children visiting prior to the start of the programme, and all have since reported increased numbers. See Appendix 2.

5.2 The number of children borrowing books in each library increased

Few of the libraries kept consistent data on levels of book usage, represented either as book loans or in-library book usage. Policies on lending books vary widely, even within countries. Some libraries insist that children are paid-up members before they can borrow books, some will only lend books to parents who are members and many do not allow lending to children at all for fear of losing too much of their collection. Anecdotal evidence from all libraries, however, does show that the number of children borrowing books increased across the board.

5.3 The number of reading activities offered and led by the library staff has changed

Quantitative data regarding the number of activities run across the libraries is not available, but librarians report anecdotally that they are running more reading-based activities. Some libraries reported at baseline that they were carrying out ‘story time’ as their only children’s activity, but then, after the training, reported undertaking a wider range of other children’s activities. At the final evaluations, librarians reported on proactively organising reading- or word-related activities, including reading aloud sessions, quizzes, debates, paired reading, arts and crafts, drama, word games and spelling bees. Timetables, reports from children and observations of activities confirmed these reports.

These activities feature in regular timetables for children, so they knew when they were occurring at the library, scheduled around end of the school day, holidays and weekends.
5.4 Awareness of the library by the schools and community increased following the launch of the *Children’s Corners*

In each community, the public launch of all *Children’s Corners* highlighted the library service and its provision for young readers. At baseline some libraries had been a long recognised and respected community institution providing a service for adults with an ailing service for children, while in others the library was virtually invisible - deemed ‘unfit for purpose’ from patrons who no longer visited due to old books, poor infrastructure and no demonstrable interest in younger readers.

Following the launch of the programme, many stakeholders reported how the introduction of the *Children’s Corners* and the programme as whole had totally changed the library’s relationship and standing within their community. In addition, for many librarians, this enhanced community recognition has been both surprising and personally uplifting.

Increased engagement with wider family members was also mentioned frequently. Parents often followed their children as library users, become members and finding books for their own reading. Parents have been reported as becoming champions of the library, encouraging friends and family to use the new resources.

Community activities at the launch of the Dzitsoni Library’s *Open Doors Children’s Corner* to welcome the community and highlight the library’s services
6. Programme impacts

Over time, and as reports of a wider range of beneficial changes came through, a deeper understanding of the impact generated by the Children’s Corners and experienced by stakeholders grew.

Feedback on what has changed, for whom it has changed, the significance of the change and any other factors that could have led to the change (besides or in tandem with the Children’s Corners programme) was asked for during final evaluations from 2016 and collected through a multi-stakeholder reflective reporting process. Below, in the unedited words and phrases of the different stakeholders, is the impact of the programme.

6.1 Welcoming and child-friendly spaces spark curiosity in books

The transformation of often dull and uninspiring places with fresh paint, murals and child-friendly furniture is the most dramatic aspect of the Open Doors Children’s Corners programme. A re-designed and refurbished space affected all stakeholders, from the children, the library staff and the wider library community.

A 2011 report on library usage by Electronic Information for Libraries showed that the average library user is a “young, single male from a middle class background, aged between 16 and 30, currently in school or having just completed school and has started working.” The average library user was not a child.

Taking cues from children’s library design in the UK and the US, members of library staff were taken through the elements that make a library space suitable for children, such as the murals and use of colour, low-level shelving, lower desks and smaller chairs. They were encouraged to think about how books are displayed and to focus on creating an environment for reading and exploration.

Grants totalling £60,000 were disbursed for refurbishment. The main elements included appropriately sized tables and chairs, low-level shelving and colourful and inspirational murals, mats and cushions. Additional minor works were carried out where necessary and included replacing windowpanes, locks and fans. In some libraries, especially in Cameroon, the host municipal councils undertook larger-scale building work in tandem with the refurbishment.

There was great diversity in the interpretation of the brief, resulting in some spectacular refurbishments. In countries such as Cameroon, the same group of craftsmen and artists was used for all libraries, resulting in an instantly recognisable Cameroonian Children’s Corner. In Zambia, the six provincial libraries involved were all of the same basic architectural design, but each Children’s Corner now has a distinct identity. Other countries let each library work with local artisans, resulting in a more diverse array of corners. As the programme progressed, photos of new corners were added to the training presentations, so that each group of participants was benefiting from the experience across the programme. This had a very noticeable effect on the standard and quality of refurbishments in later corners in Kenya and Uganda, where the standard of work and creativity were markedly improved compared to earlier corners.

Stakeholders remarked:

“We were inspired by the pictures we saw of other African libraries and we used them in our refurbishment plans.” Librarian, Mbabzi Library, Malawi

“The murals have drawn much attention and interest in the library. Secondary school pupils use the area as a background for their photos. Children enjoy sitting on the carpet to read and play with the toys and engage with educational games. Children now want to beautify their rooms and houses in the same manner. The chairman of Lagan Library development committee mentioned that he found his daughter drawing similar murals in her room at home!” Librarian, Kenya

“We lowered all the shelves so that books can be displayed within children’s reach. We have allowed and encouraged children to be free in the library – selecting their own books. Before we used to choose books for them.” Librarian, Uganda

“When the children come into the libraries, they run to the cushions and most prefer to sit on the rubber tiles as they are comfortable for them to lie down on.” Librarian, Zimbabwe

“In Thika library, children aged 8-15 are very happy with the chairs and reading tables. The library had very old small chairs which were very uncomfortable. Librarians had improvised with a large door to be a reading table due to the shortage of reading tables for children. The four new reading tables were therefore a great relief to the librarians and children.” Librarian, Kenya

Reactions to the refurbishments were overwhelmingly positive, with the children especially effusive about their new spaces. With their limited expressions and language for their age, children, when asked about the space, would often use the word “nice” in unison, or even “nice and clean”, “better than before” and “colourful”. In addition “I like the murals” and “I like the colours” were the phrases most recorded during evaluations and focus groups with the children.

The observable behaviour of children was also important to note. Boys were witnessed running from the road straight to the library, flipping off shoes, heading to the Children’s Corner and diving headlong on to the floor mats before recovering and finding a book to sit with on the mat to read.

Girls with friends in tow worked together to select books before sitting together – reading and chatting and laughing. Kindergarten children circled the kinder-boxes, finding sensory books and holding talking books to their ear, listening to the sounds and laughing. All such behaviours indicate an excitement and enjoyment of the physical book being appreciated and loved in a comfortable and stimulating space.

Refurbishment has also benefited library staff and other library users.

“In Karonga and Nkhotakota where the temperatures are mostly high, refurbishment helped in bringing fans. Refurbishment helped us to construct
ramps for people who are physically challenged to use the library and not just the children corners.”

Librarian, Malawi

“The library surpasses my expectations, traditionally you think about shelves, when I saw this work it was so wonderful.”

Teacher, Cameroon

6.2 Large and varied collections inspire children to read

6.2.1 UK-donated books

The selection provided depended on stock available at the time of shipping, but, for all countries, the collections comprised board books, picture books, books for beginner readers, junior fiction, junior non-fiction and primary maths and English texts.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of libraries</th>
<th>Number of books donated by UK publishers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>34,821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21,191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malawi</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>36,821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>30,685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>27,313</td>
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<td>Zambia</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15,293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>30,921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>197,045</td>
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<tr>
<td>Target</td>
<td></td>
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These very large numbers, over target in some countries, are the result of some selections being in ‘sets’, which are multiple titles bundled together under one ISBN. In addition, the small size of many of the books also meant that more could be packed per box, increasing the numbers shipped.

“The new UK donated books have boosted the children section collections...the children had stopped visiting the library due to the lack of new storybooks. The children saw no need to visit the library because they had read all the available storybooks. The new collection has attracted them back into the library. We had started losing trust with the teachers because of the old and used book stock. They had read all the books in the library and they were worn out. The new books stock from the programme made all the difference and the teachers have started using the new books.” **Head librarian, Kenya**

“Librarians are happy with the books, because they are exciting and easy to read. [Children] who are not yet able to read are able to tell stories from the picture books making it easier for the librarians to cater for all children according to their needs.” **Librarian, Zambia**

“The UK donated books are of good quality, in terms of quality of paper used. They are more durable than the local books and have more colourful pictures that children love. The English used is also appropriate.” **Librarian, Kenya**

“The donated books depict what our children learn in school as English language. Standards and curriculum directorate of the Ministry of Education has recommended the books to be used as supplementary reading materials due to the richness in language and content. In addition the cultural aspect is met by the locally purchased books.” **Head of library services, Zambia**

“The selection of storybooks including foreign and local content gave the children a wide choice such that all kinds of children are accommodated. The children loved the colourful books, some of which could sing and talk and even pop out.” **Librarian, Uganda**

Reading together in Kumbo Librar’s Open Doors Children’s Corner, Cameroon
In some localities, however, certain categories of books, especially those dealing with the supernatural, witchcraft and horror were deemed unsuitable and withdrawn from the library.

When the children in corners of the seven programme countries were asked about the books, their responses were uniform across the countries. They liked the stories, loved the pictures and were very clear on the benefits of the library and reading.

“Being a good reader will build my education.”

“I will be a good reader so I can be brilliant.”

“I want to discover new things.”

“You cannot pass an exam if you cannot read.”

“They will give you an important document, it is a problem if you cannot read it.”

Librarians were happy with the size and composition of the collections.

“Books are very expensive. The programme has made it possible for disadvantaged children who would never have had the opportunity to read a wide variety of books under the currently prevailing hard economic situation in the country to have access to desired reading materials. The book collection included toy books which make sounds which are great because children never tire to amuse themselves while they learn.” Senior librarian, Zimbabwe

“The donated books are liked by the children because they have good illustrations. The books donated at various levels are easy to read and are of high quality though does not so much match with the country’s culture.” Librarian, Uganda

“Before we received the items, toddlers (ages 3-5), were not visiting the library. However, now they come to the library in droves because there are appropriate phonics books, toys and games that are suitable for them.” Librarian-in-charge, Kenya

“The Books are very useful to the children because they are poor in English. We don’t have reference books like dictionaries in the school. Most of the children have improved in spoken English and became more creative because of constant use of the library. This being a rural area, the library is really helping in building of vocabulary. The children are not exposed and don’t travel much, thus their English vocab is very limited.” Teacher, Kenya

6.2.2 Locally purchased books

Providing access to locally published materials, both in English and local languages, was an essential element of the programme. It is well established that learning to read in the language of home provides a solid start for young children’s learning. Children respond positively to stories set in familiar environments and that feature situations they are more likely to encounter in their daily lives.

Including a grant for buying locally published books not only provided the reader with appropriate books, but also supported the local publishing industry. In all the partner countries, book buying at household level is rare and books are relatively expensive. Schools and libraries have little or no budget for book purchase, so the grants provided gave a much-needed boost to the local book chain.
Teachers, parents and librarians welcomed the local books because they support their teaching of local traditions and values, aligning and incorporating local culture.

“The grants to purchase local books gave the children the opportunity to read some of the books which were written by Cameroonians and published in Cameroon. The children identified themselves in these books. Some of the books have a cultural lineage that gave the children the opportunity to link to their roots. A book like the Mongolo has a historical insight and the children who read it have a perspective on the circumstances that brought the two Cameroons together and how the struggle for identity looms in the air today. An aspect which most of the children would have not known if this collection was not put together.” NGO director, Cameroon

“The children are now able to learn and appreciate their traditions and cultures. Children are teaching themselves to read their vernacular languages.” Librarian, Mbale Uganda

“The local language content is enhancing the Ministry of General Education Language policy that is in place in the lower primary grades. The local content is helping enhance the acquisition of literacy skills by the little ones because of the easy understanding of the local settings. Local content is also helping those children who have problems with learning English as a second language.” Senior librarian, Zambia

6.2.3 Digital resources

With the desire to modernise and the growing popularity of e-readers and stories on tablets, many libraries in the programme expressed a wish to enhance their digital services to their young readers. Provision of computers and associated IT infrastructure was beyond the scope of the programme and Book Aid International’s own digital offer, so more suitable alternatives were sought.

Book Aid International partnered with two different digital-content providers to supply e-readers, tablets and digital content, as well as e-books and school curriculum content.

Specific funding became available for digital programmes in two programme tranches in Malawi and Tanzania. The level of funding allowed the purchase of Kenya-produced tablet-based Kio Kits for Tanzania, and customised Kindles and e-books from US-based not-for-profit organisation Worldreader for Malawi.

6.2.4 Worldreader Kindles

Funding allowed the purchase of 100 e-readers loaded with 200 titles in Malawi. Half the titles were African titles and, of those, 30 were in Chichewa, the main language of Malawi.

Worldreader also facilitated a three-day digital-training workshop in Lilongwe for the programme, which covered technical aspects of e-reader use, delivery of e-reading activities and programme management.
For a number of the participants it was their first exposure to e-readers and the possibilities of digital reading resources.

“To begin with this was my first time to touch and manage a gadget. I like this one. Frankly speaking it has been a quite good experience to read this gadget. I have learnt a lot starting from looking up the making and taking care of it. …initially it did not come to me that there are simple gadgets that can be used to download free books.” Child, Malawi

“Introduction of the e-readers definitely increased user visits to the library.” Librarian, Area 36, Lilongwe, Malawi

“I have changed how I work. The training has helped me work with kids, I feel more confident. I now have additional responsibility. I feel more confident demonstrating how an e-reader works. There are not enough e-readers, it is a challenge.” Librarian, Mzuzu

Children have responded with enthusiasm to the introduction of the Kindles into the libraries. They find them easy to use and navigate.

6.2.5 The BRCK Kio Kit® in Tanzania

In 2015, the opportunity arose to incorporate Kio Kit devices into the programme. Kio Kits are tablets loaded with an e-learning interface that provides East Africa curriculum content, games and activities, in English and Kiswahili, all designed for East African primary school children.

Kenyan tech start-up BRCK produced the Kio Kits, which comprise of 40 tablets and 40 sets of headphones, stored within a toughened plastic box that acts as a secure storage box, battery charger and micro-server.

Kio Kits had been purchased for Kenya National Library Service libraries in 2015 and were deemed suitable for use in Tanzania. In 2017, five Kio Kits were purchased for earlier-established (2014) Open Doors Children’s Corners in Bukoba, Mtwara, Tanga and Kibaha, as well as in Dar es Salaam (2010).

Digital books from Kenyan e-book supplier e-Kitabu were loaded on to the tablets to supplement the pre-loaded resources. BRCK staff conducted technical training and Tanzania Library Service Board and Book Aid International staff supplemented the training with sessions on using the Kio Kits.

Children’s responses to the Kio Kits were mainly around the engagement with curriculum content, as opposed to reading books from the devices.

“The content was interesting and very user friendly, learning has just been made simple.” 8-year-old reader

“[They] are very interesting and educative, learnt subjects and stories and algebra.” 12-year-old reader

Children in Standard 1, 2 and 3 classes said they enjoyed the app provided on the Kio Kit of the video, singing and dancing in their stories. Standard 4 and 5 classes said they enjoyed reading stories and watching videos with their teachers, as well as playing games.

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8 See [www.brck.com](http://www.brck.com)
6.3 Confident and knowledgeable staff add the magic to the mix

Building the capacity of staff working in the proposed libraries – so they are comfortable and confident working with children, can organise their new collection of books for easy access and can design and deliver improved services to children in their communities – was perhaps the most important element of the programme. Without skilled and engaged staff, the most beautiful, well-stocked library can remain empty and unused.

6.3.1 Training workshops

Each country programme had provision for two workshops, ostensibly for two staff from each library, but with the flexibility to include additional staff from other libraries within a network, local teachers and other important stakeholders, if appropriate. In Zambia, for example, planning officers from the local provincial education office attended one workshop; in other countries, senior council officials would pass by for official ceremonies and stay on to join in workshop activities.

The content of the training programme evolved from the earlier Children’s Corners programmes and coalesced during the first two years of the programme around five main themes:

- **Space**: Creating a vibrant library
- **Self**: Being a great children’s librarian
- **Service**: Creating a reading culture through understanding reading, running reading-promotion activities and diversifying outreach services
- **Service users**: Putting children at the centre of all activities and services
- **Sustainability**: Basic monitoring and evaluation, and mobilising financial and other resources from local and national sources

Each country programme phase featured an initial foundational workshop (or basic workshop) with a second lessons-learned-type meeting held in the final quarter (advanced workshop).

Book Aid International staff and expert trainers delivered the training for the first phases in Tanzania, Cameroon, Uganda, Malawi and Zambia. Following a training-of-trainers workshop in 2015, local trainers took on workshop responsibilities for additional phases in Cameroon, Zimbabwe, Uganda and Kenya.

6.3.2 Training of Expert Trainers

In 2015, a Training of Expert Trainers workshop was held in Kisumu, Kenya. Thirteen participants from each of the main programme partners were brought together for a
week. The workshop was a blend of knowledge sharing, practical activities, site visits and team building.

The participants varied widely in both librarianship and training experience, with some quite junior staff and some seasoned primary teachers. The Training of Expert Trainers workshop was structured along the same lines as a standard *Children’s Corners* workshop and participants were encouraged to share their own in-country activities and training experiences. Tips and advice on how to organise, manage and deliver training were offered alongside new and diverse modules such as ‘changing mindsets’ and ‘working with children with special needs’.

A trainer’s manual and a librarian’s manual were developed from the workshop. This approach of cascading and embedding training expertise within partner organisations has been very successful and members of library staff in six of the seven programme countries have been able to deliver *Children’s Corners* workshops, with minimal support from Book Aid International.

The trainer from Zimbabwe, for example, ran three successful workshops involving more than 50 participants from libraries run by Bulawayo City Council and the City of Harare Council.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Total numbers of training participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malawi</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanzania (incl. Zanzibar)</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>197</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The training workshops delivered as part of the programme have been warmly received in all programme countries, and many participants have reported significant personal and professional change as a result of attending the workshops.

“The staff is friendlier towards children, they are no longer harsh like before. D.S. in adult section stated that he had noticed a great change in the children librarians. Their countenance towards the children had changed dramatically. It seems that they can no longer get annoyed over anything to do with children.”

**Librarian, Kenya**

“The training has turned my life around 180 degrees and made me an incredible, dependable and transformed librarian filled with inexpressible steam.”

**Librarian, Cameroon**

“(One librarian] wanted to be removed from junior section but after the training he came back and has never complained about wanting to leave children section. The two trained librarians have become very busy with the children daily. I see them interacting freely with the children, I have not received any complaint from children.”

**Librarian-in-charge, Kenya**
“I have learnt a lot, especially from the workshops. It has given me confidence dealing with children, I love being with them. I have come to realise things have really improved, we have a standard we never had, I am very proud.” Librarian, Cameroon

“I love working with children and the training has freely inspired me. I didn’t know what to do in the library before. We have classes on a Saturday about 40 children come. They love to come and remain in the library.” Librarian, Zambia

“There is life in the library. More readers are attracted to the library. People are talking about the library and more people are interested in the library and librarians are better recognised. I was thinking of early retirement but I have now changed my mind to continue working with the introduction of the programme.” Head of adult section, Kenya

Some librarians have even changed their own reading behaviour.

“I have now started to read the children’s books in the library, so that I can know the stories and know what books to recommend to the children when they come to the library.” Librarian, Malawi

“I also feel satisfied and have confidence of what I am doing more than before. There are no dull moments for us. Librarianship is now fun.” Librarian, Kenya

Staff have also come to see that libraries have multiple functions.

“...The library is not only for reading. Before, I was always trying to keep the children quiet with shhhhh! But I have learnt that reading is just one activity that can happen here.” Librarian, Zimbabwe

Participants have reported that they have learnt new skills outside of the purview of the standard training, such as programme management, resource mobilisation, event organisation and photography.

A junior member of staff in Malawi also reported that she has much more confidence in dealing with senior stakeholders, such as her district education manager. During the preparations for the community launch, she learnt how to network successfully, having confidence to write a letter of invitation. She says the library has raised its profile in the community. Beforehand, parents were seemingly reluctant to send children to the library; however, one parent has become a library champion and has been telling her friends about the library.

Another participant from Malawi reported that she felt more confident speaking in public and her colleagues noticed this during the second training workshop and mentioned it specifically.

6.4 More children, reading more

Qualitative evidence collected through interviews with library staff also indicates that all libraries have experienced an increase in the number of children visiting the new
Children’s Corners – alone after school, in the holidays or as part of a school trip – and that they are staying longer.

“I bet you that in June there would be no free space in this library. With a beautiful Children’s Corner like this we recorded two hundred children for story time.” Librarian, Cameroon

“The Open Door library has stimulated interest in reading especially among the young ones in the community of Kasama. Initially, very few children visited the library but now they come in such numbers that the children’s library becomes small to contain them.” Librarian, Zambia

“The children want to spend full days at the library. In Nakaseke, they even fall asleep there and the librarian has to force them to go home when it gets dark!!” Librarian, Uganda

“Children from Kithasyu primary get so engaged in Kithasyu library, thus the teacher on duty usually has a great responsibility of getting the children back to school after break!” Librarian, Kenya

“Children who do not go to school also sit in the library and look at books.” Librarian, Kenya

6.5 Children’s Corners improve the perceived value of the library

Librarians report that change happened at the arrival of the Children’s Corners and this change was significant for them and for the library service. Their community has responded with noticeable support for them and the library offering.

“We are making news in the valley. The programme has added value in terms of education and readership. The storybooks are stimulants. Children no longer play along the road. They now come to the library.” Head of outreach services, Kenya

“We have come out of the cave and are showing what we are offering. Kids now call us ‘Uncle, uncle’.” Librarian, Malawi

“The changes on librarians, children, parents and teachers could be attributed to the success of the workshop which prepared the librarians for the ODCC programme. Prior to the workshop teachers and librarians did not have a platform to discuss meaningful activities that could boost the children’s determination to read.” Librarian, Zimbabwe

“In the process of implementing the programme in most areas, it’s the service providers that we used that marketed the children's library in the community. The carpenters in different areas direct people to the library and even take their own children to the library.” Librarian, Uganda

“The community is very excited about the development and parents started coming to enquire on behalf of their children and some bring their children to read. The community of Dzivarasekwa have pledged to support the library to make sure the environment is clean for their children.” Librarian, Zimbabwe
“Initially adult library users were having difficulty sharing space with children, but now they are appreciating the library service more, with room for their children. A university lecturer and parent, now goes with her son to the library and does her work while he is busy in the children’s section.” Librarian, Malawi

“Many of the parents in the community have acquired membership and borrow books for their children to read from home. They encourage their children and send them to the library to read. They often request the library staff to go for outreach services to schools within the community.” Librarian, Kenya

“The members of the community fully understand the importance of the Children’s Corner and are grateful for the services provided.” Librarian, Uganda

“Local School teachers are now regularly bringing classes for library reading lessons. Previously parents would send children to the library without bothering to accompany them. Nowadays parents to accompany the young ones and together they participate in library activities.” Librarian, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

As well as changing relationships with community users, many participants have noted ‘improved’ and ‘changed’ relationships with local officials and politicians.

“There has been a big change in my relationship with the councillors. Now they pass by and make comments. I urge them to talk about the library in their communities and use them as a means of communication.” Librarian, Cameroon

“In Mubende, Uganda, the Town Council was forced to connect electricity to the block where the Children’s Corner was located, a move welcomed by everyone.” Librarian, Uganda

“At Kasama Library the community has responded very positively to support the library. Political and civil leaders (Provincial Minister, Permanent Secretary, District Commissioner, Provincial Education Officer, District Education Board Secretary and Area Councillor) have come on board to help the library improve further. They are now encouraging other community members to continue visiting the library with their children as a way to uplift the literacy levels in the province and nation as a whole.” Provincial librarian, Zambia

Reading together in an Open Doors Children’s Corner, Kasama, Zambia
7. Unintended consequences and challenges

7.1 Too many children

For many libraries, especially the much smaller ones, the success of the programme has overwhelmed them. The available spaces and toilet facilities become overcrowded and problematic to manage, especially in school holidays, and staff struggle to maintain discipline.

This story of Children’s Corners as de facto day care has been repeated across many of the countries. In Cameroon, Uganda and Zambia, there are only two members of staff at the library, so the additional workload is often overwhelming, especially when staff are absent.

“Sometimes parents drop children at the library and go out of town. In Choma, a child fell sick and the parent upon contact was away in Livingstone town, 200km away.” Provincial librarian, Zambia

“Many children are now visiting the libraries and there will soon be shortage of spaces for the children in the libraries. This also calls for more children’s librarians and the Council Authorities have noticed it and they have promised to address the challenges.” Senior librarian, Zimbabwe

For some it has led to proposals to their managing bodies for the allocation or construction of larger spaces, while others have implemented strict timetabling.

7.2 Disengaged staff

Disengagement in Children’s Corners activities by staff members who did not attend the training workshops was occasionally reported. It was reported that these staff felt excluded and envious of the training opportunities their colleagues had been given, especially where the training workshops were held in different parts of the country. These staff appeared to be unwilling to help out or support the programme or ongoing activities.

7.3 Digital devices need extra effort

The attractiveness of digital devices meant that librarians had to take extra effort to ensure their availability to children. Within the first few weeks of the introduction of the e-readers in Malawi, staff were having to draw up strict timetables and rules for use, and were already reporting that 20 e-readers per library was not enough for the demand.

All the digital libraries experienced challenges with keeping the devices charged because of nationwide electrical power supply problems during 2016.
8. **Key lessons**

Roll-out and implementation of the programme across seven countries in the four years naturally presented some challenges; however, a number of key lessons have been learnt along the way, resulting in a solid programme model and an organisational skill set ready for Book Aid International to roll out *Children’s Corners* and similar programmes in the future.

**Key lesson 1: Pilot libraries set the example**

In countries new to the programme, setting up a pilot library proved to be invaluable to securing buy-in from participating libraries and local officials – and even funding from potential donors. They allowed the partner organisation to test out programme logistics and develop the programme management relationship with Book Aid International. In Cameroon and Zambia, the pilot libraries of Limbe and Choma were used as training venues for the programme and for library staff new to the idea. This worked well and helped staff to actualise the programme in their own locality.

**Key lesson 2: Passionate staff make all the difference**

Skilled and knowledgeable staff, with a passion for their work, are catalysts for turning the dusty library rooms into dynamic and vibrant spaces for reading and learning.

The training opportunities, with their focus on service, skills and personal development, have rekindled professional activity and pride for many librarians.

**Key lesson 3: Librarians are not necessarily programme managers**

Library staff in all countries have a range of qualifications and skills. Providing support as they undertook programme management tasks in different ways and at different levels was necessary in all countries. Drafting progress and financial reports and the rigorous and regular collection of data are skills not typically used or developed by this group. Providing additional guidance on areas like reporting, monitoring and evaluation, especially at the early stages, was necessary.

**Key lesson 4: Cascade training is not inevitable – train as many as possible**

Teamwork in libraries is essential – and vital – to avoid disengaged library staff members. While this is an issue for partner organisations to tackle, future programmes should consider involving as many staff as practicable in training workshops to ensure success of the programme – and to ensure that activities continue and are not left...
to stagnate by disengaged colleagues.

Key lesson 5: Digital resources bring changes to the work of the librarian

The integration of digital resources into at least one programme tranche in Malawi demonstrated the lure and excitement that digital gadgets hold for children, especially in resource-poor areas. Librarians in all five digital programme sites in Malawi reported increasing numbers of children coming to the library, at first to try out the e-readers, but also to read print books.

Including digital-only local-language books and curriculum material in the electronic collection has ensured the popularity of a branch library and enhanced child engagement in reading. Having e-readers has also required librarians to be more organised in their service planning, making sure gadgets are charged and shared without too much conflict. Adult readers have also been reported requesting e-readers and e-books.

Key lesson 6: Local books are loved and the mix with donated books works

The overwhelming popularity of the local books shows how important context and culture can be for the new and emergent reader. Purchase of the books has not been without its challenges, which included fluctuating exchange rates, limited title ranges and low stock availability. Engaging the local book publishing and selling industries has also resulted in new relationships between the industry and the library.

Reading a mixture of books in Masindi Library’s Open Doors Children’s Corner in Uganda
9. **Next steps**

The success of the *Open Doors Children’s Corners* programme has led to significant improvements in programme management within Book Aid International. This includes improved monitoring and evaluation practice, the evolution of training modules in response to participants’ and service needs and sharper reporting.

The programme has also provided Book Aid International with a foundation for building on these findings and for addressing the specific needs of younger readers, allowing the programmes team to design new programmes with new partners based on *Open Doors Children’s Corners* learning.

The *Inspiring Readers* programmes aims to create 310 mini school libraries linked to 52 *Children’s Corners*. Each *Children’s Corner* acts as a hub for training, mentoring and support for five under-resourced primary schools in their locality.

Schools are provided with book cupboards and boxes, plus 1,150 donated and locally purchased books. The ‘hub’ librarians undergo a short ‘training the trainers’ workshop facilitated by Book Aid International trainers and, in turn, these librarians run mini-workshops for their local teachers. Teachers are then tasked with managing their libraries, using books in their lessons and incorporating regular reading into their school timetable.

The programme provides school children with new opportunities to read at school during term time and also use their local *Children’s Corner* at weekends and school holidays. In 2016, *Inspiring Readers* won the Educational Initiatives Award at the London Book Fair.

The *Study Hub* programme aims to support secondary school students who use the public library for revision. Building on the content of the *Children’s Corners* training modules, Book Aid International has designed a training programme for public librarians and schoolteacher librarians to revive ailing school libraries, engaging teachers and providing expertise on exam preparation.

Community schools and libraries that are run by NGOs or volunteers provide support to children’s learning in rural areas and densely populated slums.

The *Book Havens* pilot aims to provide volunteer library staff with librarianship training, equipping them to support children’s engagement with reading. Effective libraries are hugely significant to prevent communities being marginalised, especially where there is no or insufficient government provision.

With the foundation of *Children’s Corners* training approach, its print resources and its help from its supporters, Book Aid International is positioned to scale up these and similar high-impact programmes. Together with old and new partners, these programmes will reach many more young readers with books, while strengthening local libraries.
10. Conclusions

The *Open Doors Children’s Corners* programme has contributed to dramatic changes for hundreds of thousands of young readers across sub-Saharan and West Africa.

The original target of establishing 60 libraries within the time period 2014–17 has been exceeded, with the objectives of providing conducive spaces, resources and trained staff to encourage children to use libraries and develop a love of reading have been reached. From feedback from children, librarians, teachers and parents, we can see how this intervention has creatively and repeatedly facilitated a greater interest in reading and exploring books through the public library service.

Each component of the programme has successfully increased curiosity in reading and provided a positive perception and experience of the library space for children.

Children have shown their delight with the books and new reading spaces and visits to the libraries have increased. Children are staying in the library, among the books, for longer periods of time. This has brought challenges to the service and each service has reviewed alternative arrangements to manage and address these – from scheduling the use of e-readers to extending opening hours.

Digital stories have been received well, with children experiencing a digital device for the first time. The mix of print and e-reading, as well as UK and local books, has enriched the reading of hundreds of thousands of children, with 870,000 visits in total recorded.

Librarians – the traditional gatekeepers of the resources – are now facilitators of learning. They have been equipped with relevant, child-focused skills that have transformed their practice and enabled them to understand and arrange a wide range of activities that encourage learning and exploration. They are more confident in managing, in some cases, large numbers of children, effectively, yielding high levels of engagement and satisfaction from them.

Parents, teachers and education and council officials have supported the development of the libraries. They encourage children to visit the libraries, even accompanying them to the library, and so supporting their reading journeys. Appreciative of the librarian, they are showing increased respect to the librarian in some countries, because of the new resources and their demonstrable capacity to welcome and manage children.

As Book Aid International’s first large-scale programme, *Open Doors Children’s Corners* has been integral to developing the organisation’s capacity. Book Aid International now boasts stronger relationships with its partners and has been able to co-create with partners more innovative services for a range of library customers, with the award-winning *Inspiring Readers* schools programme, the *STEM Study Hub* and *Book Havens* all deriving from or building on the success of *Children’s Corners*.

For the many children in the world without ready access to books, the *Children’s Corners* concept is a simple solution. With its proven high-impact design of high-quality books coupled with local capacity building, a *Children’s Corner* can be established in a variety of settings from a public library, community library, NGO complex to refugee camp. Book Aid International continues to seek out new partners and new countries that wish to help all children discover the joy and magic of books and reading.
Appendix 1 Programme framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Input</th>
<th>Output</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Books</td>
<td>Core collection of children’s books organised and displayed to encourage children and teens to borrow books for reading and learning</td>
<td>Increased use of the library by local children in their own time</td>
<td>Books received by all libraries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,500 English language children’s books per library</td>
<td></td>
<td>Increased use of the library by local schools during term time</td>
<td>Books on shelves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12,500 Books in total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase in children coming to the library either with parents/carers or independently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£3,625 worth of locally published books in local language and contextually relevant</td>
<td>Core collection of children’s books organised and displayed to encourage children and teens to borrow books for reading and learning</td>
<td>Increased use of the library by local children in their own time</td>
<td>Increase in membership of the library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£725 per library</td>
<td></td>
<td>Increased use of the library by local schools during term time</td>
<td>Increase in number of books being borrowed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| Refurbishment                                                         |                                                                        |                                                                         |                                                                           |
| £5,000 grant for library refurbishment                                | Five libraries renovated and furnished to create child-friendly environments with new shelving, Welcoming and inviting environment for children to use | Renovations completed within budget                                      | Furniture, shelving and seating                                           |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Input</th>
<th>Output</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£1,000 per library</td>
<td>furniture and seating appropriate for children and teens</td>
<td></td>
<td>purchased and installed Games, toys and other learning resources purchased and available for use Games, toys and other learning resources being used in the library by children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Two three-day training courses on library services for children</td>
<td>10–12 librarians receive basic training on child development, literacy development, reading and learning activities with children and school groups and advanced training on other children's activities; child protection issues and lessons learned</td>
<td>Librarians have understanding of and are able to offer a range of services and activities for children in their libraries and understand issues around child protection Network of librarians specialised in working with children within COUNTRY is established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library services</td>
<td>Library services for children developed and/or enhanced</td>
<td>Libraries start offering services</td>
<td>Libraries have regular programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>Indicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarians begin to offer a range of literacy and learning-based activities in their libraries suitable for children of all ages, from babies to teens</td>
<td></td>
<td>Number of children attending</td>
<td>Ages of children attending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outreach</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Local schools have access to books and information to improve teaching and learning</strong></td>
<td>Number of schools targeted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarians begin to offer a range of literacy and learning-based activities to schools in their communities</td>
<td>Libraries develop/enhance outreach services with local schools</td>
<td><strong>Local schools have access to books and information to improve teaching and learning</strong></td>
<td>Number of schools targeted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge sharing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Stronger networks of library staff working with children throughout the country</strong></td>
<td>Reports, social media reports, publications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarians share their knowledge and experience of children’s services with colleagues and other library professionals, through talks, training of colleagues, workshops, newsletters and social media</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Stronger networks of library staff working with children throughout the country</strong></td>
<td>Reports, social media reports, publications</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2 Data on child visits to libraries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>No. reported in each programme period</th>
<th>No. of libs in programme to date</th>
<th>No. of libs in sample</th>
<th>No. of months covered by data</th>
<th>Av. per country/month</th>
<th>Av. per library per month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>62,931</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4,495.07</td>
<td>642.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>486,522</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>48,652.20</td>
<td>6,950.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malawi</td>
<td>26,155</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2,179.58</td>
<td>311.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>27,317</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1,951.21</td>
<td>278.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanzania 2</td>
<td>8,765</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>796.82</td>
<td>113.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>208,270</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>5,206.75</td>
<td>743.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda 2</td>
<td>2,342</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>585.50</td>
<td>83.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>5,334</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>444.50</td>
<td>63.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zanzibar</td>
<td>4,714</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>392.83</td>
<td>56.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>36,605</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3,050.42</td>
<td>435.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe H</td>
<td>912</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>152.00</td>
<td>21.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total     | 869,867                               | 57                              | 50                    |                               |                       |                           |
Appendix 3 Programme participants

**Cameroon**
Education Information Services International (EISERVI)
Director Andrew Nyenty
Staff Emmanuel Sanyi, Njock Ayukakpa, Christiana Asongnwi, Solange Ozughen

Programme participants

**Kenya**
Kenya National Library Services (knls)
Director Richard Atuti
Staff Caroline Kayoro

Programme participants
Peter Boit, Elizabeth Kerubo, Anthony Kosgei, Eunice Kyuli, Francis Leiyan, Grace Locheria, Margaret Mbithuka, Abigail Morogo, Mercy Murage, Miriam Mureithi, Wilson Mutai, Robert Mutsya, Nelly Tanketi, Wesley Chepchieng

**Malawi**
Malawi National Library Service (MNLS)
National Librarian Gray Nyali,
Staff Khumbo N’gong’ola, Laura Malala

Programme participants

**Tanzania**
Tanzania Library Services Board (TLSB)

Dr Alli Mcharazo, Lusekelo Mwalughelo, Jackline Mshana
Programme participants
Jospina Angelo, Hidayat I. Goga, Prisca M. Kimaro, Comfort Komba, Esther J. Lumambo, Tumaini Mhadu, Immaculata W. Mrema, Doris Mubezi, Mwajuma Nampindikula, Joyce Shaba, Flora A. Thawe, Ismail Wemba

Zanzibar Library Services
Sichana Foum, Makame Choum, Mwache Bakari

Programme participants
Saumu Shaibu Ali, Makame Haji Makame, Mussa Juma Mussa, Awatif Suleiman Zubeir

Uganda
National Library of Uganda and Uganda Community Library Association
Gertrude Kayaga Mulindwa, Stella Nekuusa, Raymond Amanyaboona, Jennifer Nalwanga

Programme participants
Grace Acen, Stella Alemu, Justus Atuyambe, Rebecca Awayo, Fred Businge, Amy Dia, Outa Erinyo, Lydia Katushabe, Robert Kinyanya, Florian Wochuge, Mariam Nagawa, Patricia Namala, Shakira Nanyonjo, Proscovia Nasiwa, Agnes Ninsiima, Ronald Ogundi, John Peter Opio, Abdu Ssegane, Monica Tumusiime, Cissy Twebaza

Zambia
Zambia Library Services
Robinson Bwato, Elizabeth Chama, Chipelelo Smith

Programme participants
Gift Bambala, Clara Banda, Gevas Bwalya, Robinson Bwato, Kaluba Chembe, Darius Chibbalo, Constance Chipula, Charles Chisanga, Allan Hagwerere, Bridget Kajoba, Mark Kasongo, Deborah Libini, Masuzyo Longwe, Mary Mamba, Margaret Miti, Otitia Mufumbila, Charles Mupeta, Constantine Mupinde, Mary Muyatwa, Debrah Mwango, Alice Mwape, Kalaba Mweni, Matthews Sachombele, Hendrix Sikwibebe

Zimbabwe
Bulawayo: Edward Ndlovu Memorial Trust and Bulawayo City Council
Jackson Ndlovu, Vivienne Moyo

Bulawayo programme participants
Harare: City of Harare
Yeukai Chimuka

**Harare programme participants**
Fares Gurende, George Jani, Lesley Kamhara, Farai Madondo, Primrose Mutape
Appendix 4 Partner and country information

Cameroon

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner</th>
<th>Educational and Information Services International (EISERVI)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pilot</td>
<td>Limbe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>Bamenda, Kumba, Kumbo, Mamfe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 2</td>
<td>Bafut, Belo, Ekondo Titi, Mbengwi, Tiko</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cameroon forms the boundary between West and Central Africa. It is the only bilingual English–French nation on the African continent. Two regions in the south of the country – North West (NW) region and South West (SW) region, bordering Nigeria – are Anglophone

Library ecosystem

There is no national library service in Cameroon, although there is a national library in Yaoundé, which is run under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture. In the NW and SW regions, individual town and city councils operate small libraries. They are typically one or two rooms attached to main council buildings. Collections are small and patronage among primary-school age children is generally low.

Professional training for librarians is conducted at degree level at universities in Yaoundé and Buea in both English and French. Only one participant in the Open Doors Cameroon programme had a qualification in librarianship; a number were graduates and the majority had completed basic secondary school and had at least the Cameroonian school leaving certificates (equivalent to O levels).

Cameroon libraries

Two tranches/phases of Open Doors Cameroon were planned, with participating libraries spread throughout the Anglophone NW and SW regions.

Refurbishment was carried out by the same group of craftsmen throughout the country. In three libraries – Ekondo Titi and Tiko in the South West and Mbengwi in the North West – councils committed to larger-scale construction works; however, delays and ongoing political tensions in the regions led to implementation being postponed to October 2017.
Kenya

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner</th>
<th>Kenya National Library Service (knls)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library locations</td>
<td>Kabarnet, Kithaysu, Lagam, Narok, Thika</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The public and community library ecosystem

Kenya has been a programme country since 2009, and the five libraries supported through the Open Doors programme are all part of the Kenya National Library Service (knls) branch network. There are currently 60 libraries in the network and Book Aid International supported the development of Children’s Corners in 22 libraries prior to this programme. In addition to the libraries within the knls network there are a many community libraries, run by NGOs. Some have been subsumed into the knls network, but others exist independently and are run by volunteers.
Malawi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner</th>
<th>Malawi National Library Service (MNLS)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pilot</td>
<td>Blantyre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>Balaka, Kasungu, Lilongwe HQ, Mbabzi, Monkey Bay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 2 and Digital sites</td>
<td>Area 36, Karonga, Mulanje, Mzuzu, Nkhotakota</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Malawi is one of the smallest and poorest nations in Africa. Literacy levels remain low and population growth is high.

The Malawi National Library Service (MNLS) manages a network of 16 branch libraries. Some are housed in MNLS-owned buildings, while others are housed in rented premises. In addition to these branches, there are about 20 other district libraries housed in district council buildings and supported by respective councils.

Library training is offered from diploma to masters level at Mzuzu University and the Malawi Library Association (MALA) offers certificate courses. Many MNLS staff have studied up to diploma level and a small number have master’s degrees, mostly obtained outside Malawi. Children’s-services training is part of the lower-level qualifications. There is at least one librarian in Malawi with training in children’s librarianship from the US, who runs the children’s library at Mzuzu University.
The Tanzania Library Services Board (TLSB) runs a network of 17 regional libraries, three divisional and 13 district libraries. Book Aid International has supported the establishment of 17 Children’s Corners in TLSB libraries since 2009.

TLSB is affiliated with the School for Library, Archives and Documentation Studies in Bagamoyo, which offers a two-year diploma programme. A certificate course is run at the National Library in Dar es Salaam. The Open University of Tanzania offers an undergraduate programme.
Zambia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zambia Library Service (ZLS)</th>
<th>Pilot</th>
<th>Programme libraries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sep 2015</td>
<td>Choma Provincial Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jan–Dec 2016</td>
<td>Chipata, Kasama, Mansa/Luapula, Mongu, Solwezi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Zambia Library Services (ZLS) lies within the Directorate of Teacher Education and Specialised Services (TESS) of the Ministry of General Education. There is no national library or network of public libraries as there is in Kenya or Malawi. There are, instead, provincial libraries in six of the 10 provinces that, along with a number of smaller outlying district libraries, are overseen by the Provincial Education Offices, which ZLS supports. There are also council-run public libraries in Lusaka and in a number of towns in the Copperbelt area. ZLS also has responsibility for school, college and teacher resource centres throughout the country. It runs the Knowledge Centre, based in the buildings of the TESS Directorate.
Zimbabwe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edward Ndlovu Memorial Trust</td>
<td>City of Harare</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dzivarasekwa Kambuzuma</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Zimbabwe has a more diverse public library landscape compared with Zambia and Malawi. The two main cities of Bulawayo and Harare run city-council-funded libraries that have a number of libraries in residential areas. Also, in both cities, are larger central public libraries, governed by trustees, which have main buildings and branches around the city.

Zimbabwe also has an active Library Association (ZIMLA), with branches in five provinces.