Medical Books for Ugandan Hospitals project

Final evaluation report

Partner: Uganda Protestant Medical Bureau

January, 2019
Executive summary

This report presents the findings and recommendations from the final evaluation of the Medical Books for Uganda Hospitals project undertaken in February 2019. The final evaluation was conducted between the 18th and 21st February 2019 by James Kimani, Book Aid International Africa Representative and David Kiyimba, Uganda Protestant Medical Bureau (UPMB) Institutional Development Officer. The aim of this evaluation was to assess the extent to which this short intervention had brought changes to the beneficiaries in the training colleges and hospitals and examine the extent to which the project has met its objectives, identify key lessons and provide recommendations.

The majority of the college tutors, hospital administrators and library staff indicated that it was too early to report on the full impact of the project. However, they highlighted some changes that had already occurred in the colleges and hospitals. They noted that the number of students using the medical college libraries had increased since the arrival of the new books. This made the library staff very happy and improved their motivation as they felt useful to the institutions they work for. Also, medical student exams pass rate improved significantly after the books arrived at the medical schools. Additionally, tutors reported that they were able to teach and complete curricula on time due to the availability of teaching resources.

Considering how rare and expensive up-to-date medical books are, colleges feel very lucky to have the book donation. This has eased the burden of expenditure for the training schools, hospitals and parents in terms of buying medical books, allowing them to fundraise for other key components of running the colleges including provision of key amenities and scholarships for poor students. Further, some UPMB member training institutions are making efforts to upgrade to university status and other higher training levels. The book donations have helped these colleges as they will facilitate an easier accreditation process for them. Up-to-date libraries are a prerequisite to the colleges’ accreditation process.

They indicated that Book Aid International has contributed to this change by providing medical books, training for library staff, leading to increased knowledge and confidence and acquisition of new skills.

The training colleges reported facing a number of challenges during the implementation period. First, they felt the one-day library training could have been extended to enable them gain enough confidence in running the medical libraries. Second, owing to changes in who was doing the book stamping there were too few Book Aid International stamps. This led to delays in processing and use of the medical books, as the stamps had to be passed from one college to another. Third, though the hospitals and colleges appreciate the books donated, they are still in need of more books in some key disciplines including midwifery, oncology, HIV, Paediatrics, among others. In addition, UPMB is under pressure from its member institutions that did not benefit from the project to include them in a similar project.

Further, UPMB was unable to undertake a mid-term evaluation due to a lack of funds. There were some key lessons that were learned during project implementation. First, faith-based medical colleges offer a good channel for accessing the needy with our donations as they are
admitting students from underprivileged families and are also producing a significant number of healthcare workers in Uganda while maintaining high standards of training. However, it is important to select project beneficiaries carefully in order to get beneficiaries who are ready and committed to implement projects activities.

Second, medical books are relevant and in high demand in Uganda as they are not only expensive, but also unavailable locally even to those who can afford to buy. As much as there is a growing shift towards e-learning and teaching, hardcopy books remain popular in the medical field as some medical staff and students prefer the printed books to the e-books. There is also need for fiction books in medical libraries for students to enjoy during their leisure time to help them manage stress.

It was noted that a longer period of time to utilise the books would have been beneficial in gauging the impact of the intervention. Students and tutors would have preferred more time before the evaluation of impact. Additionally, there was lack of follow-up support by UMPB at mid-term due to a lack of funding which affected quality of support provided to the colleges during the implementation process.

Key recommendations include:

An extension of the library management training from one day to two to three days would afford participants more time to understand the subject contents better, practice skills and increase confidence.

A long term partnership with Book Aid International would enable additional donations to UPMB colleges not involved in this project. A larger number of stamps supplied by Book Aid International is recommended to facilitate speedy processing. The small number issued hampered the stamping and distribution of the books in this project and caused delays. At least one stamp per college is recommended.

A longer period of use by the beneficiaries of the books would have provided deeper outcome feedback.

Funds for UPMB to monitor project implementation midway through implementation are recommended to allow the partner to ensure that implementation is on track.
1.0 Introduction

The Medical Books for Ugandan Hospitals’ project is being implemented in seven Uganda Protestant Medical Bureau (UPMB) supported hospitals and medical schools. The project is a collaboration between Book Aid International and UPMB and is funded by GILEAD Sciences Inc.

The project aims to contribute to the improvement of quality medical care in Uganda, by enabling health professionals to make better informed decisions on treatment and care through access to medical books and resources with particular focus on HIV/AIDS.

The project supported seven medical libraries in UPMB facilities at:
1. Kisiizi School of Nursing and Midwifery
2. Ishaka Adventist Hospital
3. Ngora Freda Carr Church of Uganda Hospital
4. Mukono Diocese School of Nursing and Midwifery
5. Bishop Stuart Ruharo Mission Hospital
6. Bwindi Community Hospital
7. Kuluva Hospital Medical School

The project’s objectives are:
- Provide an updated print collection of a range of medical and healthcare books, including HIV/AIDS, for professional hospital staff in seven hospitals in Uganda.
- Equip hospital librarians with the confidence and key librarianship skills to manage their library and promote their collections.
- Provide support to medical and healthcare students during their education and training.

The final evaluation covered five medical schools (although we covered four regions, Ishaka Adventist Hospital had two medical schools). The evaluation utilised key informant interviews with UPMB Executive Director, medical schools principals, hospital administrators and medical library staff. An observation checklist was also used.

**Project beneficiaries:** In total the project has benefitted 2,031 medical students and 142 tutors and 14 medical library staff who had received training on library management and use of electronic health information.
Table 1: Number of beneficiaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Medical school</th>
<th>No. of medical students</th>
<th>No. of teaching staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Mukono School of Nursing and Midwifery</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Ishaka Adventist Hospital</td>
<td>541</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Bishop Stuart University/Ruharo Mission Hospital</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Bwindi Community Hospital</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Kuluva Hospital Medical School</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Ngora Fred Carr Church of Uganda Hospital</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Kisiizi School of Nursing and Midwifery</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,031</strong></td>
<td><strong>142</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The teaching staff were comprised of principal tutors, tutors, registrars, clinical instructors and clinical mentors.

2.0 Key findings

**Objective 1:** Provide an updated printed collection of a range of medical and healthcare books, including HIV/AIDS, for professional hospital staff in seven hospitals in Uganda.

2.1 Provision of medical and healthcare books

UPMB received a total of 7,049 medical books. They consisted of core textbooks in various health topics, e-books cards (with codes for access to e-books) and flash cards for pharmacology books. The books were distributed as follows:

Table 2: Distribution of the books in the medical libraries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Medical school</th>
<th>No. of UK donated books</th>
<th>No. of HIV books</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Mukono School of Nursing and Midwifery</td>
<td>749</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Ishaka Adventist Hospital</td>
<td>947</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Bishop Stuart University/Ruharo Mission Hospital</td>
<td>1,240</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Kuluva Hospital Medical School</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Ngora Fred Carr Church of Uganda Hospital</td>
<td>947</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Bwindi Community Hospital</td>
<td>1,246</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Kisiizi School of Nursing and Midwifery</td>
<td>1,020</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>7,049</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the time of evaluation, HIV books had not arrived at UPMB yet as they were held at Uganda customs department in Kampala awaiting clearance. The HIV books will be distributed to the medical school libraries once they are received by UPMB.
The students and their tutors loved the books. Students, tutors and lecturers noted that the books were simple to understand and that they were more up-to-date than the ones in the library before the donation. They also noted that most of the donated printed books had clear illustrations and diagrams and there were similar versions to the updated e-books that they were accessing from e-libraries.

Some of the specific feedback on how students and tutors are benefiting from the books is as follows:

“Sometimes, some tutors may not have time to go through some topics. They give us the course outline. But we are able to study the topics independently by borrowing from the medical library and reading on the topics. It is now easy to understand the topics as we have good books.” – Brian Ojok - a student in Theatre Techniques, Ishaka Adventist Hospital, Ishaka, Uganda.

“Teachers introduce the topics in class and I in turn use the books to read ahead of the topics. When we are taught in class I am able to understand more.” – Brian Ojok - a student in Theatre Techniques, Ishaka Adventist Hospital, Ishaka, Uganda.
“I think this is the library that any medical student would need. This year the library is so advanced with variety of books for referring to drawings and content. For complex words in the medical world, one can refer to the book on building a medical vocabulary. Actually the books are so good. Sometimes I come to the library when I am so confused and we get help here. Some of us came to the college when we were unsure about the profession. However, the library has helped many of us to understand that one can do it. When you get reference books on different topics, you get to learn that the medical world is not too difficult after all.” – Catherine Mirembe, student, Mukono Diocese School of Nursing and Midwifery.

“A library is a key area in the school. You cannot live without a library. Nurses must read as things keep changing, nursing skills keep changing. Students understand better when they research and then discuss. They have to make presentations in class too. They need the library and can’t dodge it. As for me, when I was setting exams last semester – I found the questions bank for the Medical Surgical Nursing book very useful - especially the multiple choice questions (MCQ) as they are very hard to set. The tutors and students will benefit from this particular book a lot.” – Rachel Luwaga, Acting Head of Department, Bishop Stuart Ruharo University Depar

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“I have never liked to read the way I do nowadays. I was not very sure about the content in the books we used to have in the library. So I opted to rely on the internet for more updated information. Now however, what I get from the books donated to us is as good as I got from internet and even better.” – Nursing student at Kisiizi Hospital School of Nursing and Midwifery.

“Tutoring has never been this easy for sure, not to mention setting of examinations and tests. All I need is the question bank from the Medical Surgical Nursing version of the donated books, compare with my notes, extract the questions and I am done. It is even better with the narratives that accompany the answers provided thereafter. I am in love with the books; thanks to UPMB and Book Aid International.” – A tutor from Ngora Fred Carr Hospital School of Enrolled Comprehensive Nursing.

“In the medical profession what was good yesterday, is dangerous today. One must update themselves.” David Kiyimba, Institutional Capacity Development officer, UPMB.

Some of the students and staff recalled memorable moments when they found the books very useful for them. See below some of their comments:

“Once, I borrowed the book on Instrumentation for the Operating Room to read. As the exams came, I found it easy to answer the questions and I passed the exam very well. Also, I had read the book on Medical Surgical Nursing and in the exam, I found most of the questions were addressed well by the book. I do not just read for examination. As I read, I discover some new things in the books that expand my knowledge.” – Brian Ojok – a student in Theatre Techniques, Ishaka Adventist Hospital, Ishaka, Uganda.

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“The day I brought these books and I started opening the boxes, people were very happy and it felt like a wedding was taking place here. They kept on opening one book to another. It is memorable as I suddenly realised life had changed for the college community. I felt confident and authoritative as a librarian as I had good books for my users. I started encouraging people to visit the library.” – Amos Aine, Library manager and medical instructor, Bwindi School of Nursing and Midwifery.

“It gave me a job description. I used to have nothing to do. I felt my job became complete.” – Emmanuel Arineitwe, Librarian, Bwindi School of Nursing and Midwifery.

“While learning on endocrine system on thyroid glands, I did not understand well when taught in class. I had taken it to be very difficult concept. I later visited the library and researched on the topic from the book - Structures and Functions of the Body and I felt that I understood the concept very well. Now, I see the topic as easy as I go on to continue reading as there are more glands.” – Josephine Mabel Nalubuye, Student, Mukono Diocese School of Nursing and Midwifery.

“I found it very difficult to understand skeletal muscular system while the tutor was teaching. It was bad news for me. The tutor could point to various bones but I would soon forget their names. However, I have a lot of interest in the bones system and I thought of coming to the library to look at the books where I could find them. I took a whole day studying the bones from various books. I checked the names of the bones, explored and compared with my own bones until I got the formula. I now understand the skeletal bones very well.” – Catherine Mirembe, Student, Mukono Diocese School of Nursing and Midwifery.

“We have discussion groups in our class. One day, our group leader told me that I would lead a discussion on the brain. I did not understand the brain well. I read my class notes on the topic of brain and I could not understand. I came to the library and read the topic on brains from the Building a Medical Vocabulary book and I got the topic right. When I led a discussion with my group members, they were very happy as I was able to present well. I really understand the brain topic now.” – Maria Gorret Nakamya, Student, Mukono Diocese School of Nursing and Midwifery.

On suitability of the books, both students and staff of the medical training colleges found the books very relevant. They had the following comments.

“They are ideal for the course unit I am teaching. They are easy to understand. e.g. Medical Surgical Nursing has good pictures, illustrations and a good question bank. The books can be used from diploma and masters level. Some books have a soft copy – CD, or access number. It is easier for me to carry an online book and not the bulky one. It reduces pressure on me. I can cross-check books, get update for drugs, look at adverse effects.” – Rachel Luwaga, Acting Head of Department, Bishop Stuart Ruharo University Department of Nursing.

2.2 Benefit to the community

Beyond the students, tutors and health workers in hospitals, the donated books are said to benefit the community also:

“The donations have benefitted us as teachers as we are getting updated information which we are passing on to our students. In turn the patients in our hospitals are benefitting from latest practices and good quality of care from us.” – Amos Aine, library manager and medical instructor, Bwindi School of Nursing and Midwifery.
Despite wider availability of e-books in the medical field, printed books are still very popular with students and tutors of medical schools:

“I rarely use the smart phone to access online information. I like printed books. Sometimes when I cannot take the book away from the library, I simply take photos of the pages I want to read from the book and go to read from my phone in the hostel.” – Elynah Mussiimenta, a student in medical laboratory techniques, Ishaka Adventist Hospital, Ishaka, Uganda.

“The difference between hard copy and e-resources is that hard copy materials registers a different experience. There is a lot of junk materials online. You waste a lot of time sifting through. Print materials give us confidence and they are good for quick reference.” – Dr Birungi Mutahunga, Director, Bwindi Community Hospital, Bwindi, Uganda.

David Kiyimba, UPMB’s Institutional Capacity Development Officer noted that the books were timely as some of the training institutions were in the process of being accredited by the Government for new medical courses. One key requirement for them is to have a good library with updated books. Hence, the books will go a long way to help them and the colleges are feeling prepared.

“We know how expensive the medical books are and how useful they are for teachers and students. For us to graduate as quality nurses we need quality teachers and quality teaching facilities. Actually we were wondering whether it is true that these books will belong to us until we received them here. We have a vision to be a university by 2025- starting with nursing to award degree. Other courses coming up will progress to degree courses. Future plans are for us to be a post-graduate training school. We are currently a mini-referral hospital in this region. At the hospital, we are poised to be a training centre for interns as we have all the disciplines in our hospital. The books were a pleasant surprise. Not only are they not available for us locally, but they are also very expensive and beyond our reach as we are private non-profit institution. We see this as a very big complement to our agenda in medical education and quality health care by getting best practices and modern literature. The influence goes regional as we collaborate with other universities here. We are hoping to be accredited this year to host interns. These books are very handy. To be frank, we have not seen new books being donated before. Dr Birungi Mutahunga, Director, Bwindi Community Hospital, Bwindi, Uganda.
Objective 2: Equipping hospital librarians with the confidence and key librarianship skills to manage their libraries and promote their collections.

14 hospital staff took part in a one-day training on library management, access and use of electronic health information on 29th September 2018. They were from Ishaka, Bishop Stuart, Kagando, Bwindi, Mukono, Kuluva, Ngora and Kisiizi Hospitals. The workshop was facilitated by Book Aid International’s Africa Representative James Kimani. The workshop aimed to equip hospital librarians with the confidence and key librarianship skills to manage their libraries and promote their collections. They were trained on:

- Library management - planning and running the hospital library
- Introduction to electronic information resources on health
- Identification of useful online information on health
- Participatory demonstration of searching of electronic health information resources
- Practical searching of electronic health information resources
- Tracking the progress of the library services

The library staff who had participated in the library management workshop noted that it was useful and that they had taken away some key lessons from the training. These included:

- Library management skills including classification of books and accessioning
- Storage of books
- Making books accessible to users
- How to get reliable health information online

The knowledge helped them to process the books, organise the collection and create a lending system for the books. The books have been stamped, accessioned and classified. The library staff are also able to guide students and tutors on how to get reliable information online using computers as well as individual devices. The database of key resources on health has enabled library staff to advise library users on reliable sites for online health information.
“My key learning from the training was access to reliable electronic resources – e.g. Free medical for doctors. This is something I discovered from the training. However much you may have in print, you can never satisfy clients, we always refer.” – Emmanuel Twinamasiko, Librarian, Bishop Stuart Ruharo University Depart of Nursing.

Some of the sentiments from the trained library staff are as follows:

“I feel confident because, now I have the basics of managing the library. I am comfortable with classification, how to serve users and how to make references to online resources for the users. We have made the instructions on how to search for reliable information online part of library user education for new students and staff.” – Amos Aine, Library in charge and medical instructor, Bwindi School of Nursing and Midwifery.

“Now I have an idea about how the library books are arranged. We are able to guide students.” – Rogers Luyima, Academic Registrar, Mukono Diocese School of Nursing and Midwifery.

However, they noted that more time for the training would have been helpful as this was a new field for them. They recommended at least two days of training to allow for better absorption and internalisation of workshop contents for effective practicing at their work places.
**Objective 3:** Providing support to medical and healthcare students during their education and training.

2.3 Courses taught in the colleges

The training colleges under the project offer different types of courses as indicated in the table below. However, most of them are offering nursing and midwifery courses:

Table 3: Courses offered by the colleges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Medical school</th>
<th>Course offered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Mukono School of Nursing and Midwifery</td>
<td>• Certificate in Nursing&lt;br&gt;• Certificate in Midwifery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Ishaka Adventist Hospital</td>
<td><strong>School of Nursing and Midwifery</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Certificate in Nursing&lt;br&gt;• Certificate in Midwifery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Schools Allied Health Sciences</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Certificate in Medical Laboratory&lt;br&gt;• Diploma in Medical Laboratory&lt;br&gt;• Certificate in Theatre Techniques&lt;br&gt;• Diploma in Pharmacy&lt;br&gt;• Advanced Diploma in Anaesthesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Bishop Stuart University/Ruharo Mission Hospital</td>
<td>• Bachelors in Nursing Science&lt;br&gt;• Diploma in Nursing (direct entry) – 3 years&lt;br&gt;• Diploma in nursing extension (Certificate) – 1.5 years&lt;br&gt;• Diploma Midwifery – extension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Bwindi Community Hospital</td>
<td>• Certificate in Nursing and Midwifery&lt;br&gt;• Diploma in Nursing and Midwifery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Kuluva Hospital Medical School</td>
<td>• Certificate in Nursing&lt;br&gt;• Certificate in Midwifery&lt;br&gt;• Diploma in Nursing (direct entry)&lt;br&gt;• Diploma in Nursing (extension)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Ngora Fred Carr Church of Uganda Hospital</td>
<td>• Certificate in Nursing&lt;br&gt;• Certificate in Midwifery&lt;br&gt;• Diploma in Nursing (direct entry)&lt;br&gt;• Diploma in Nursing (extension)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Kisiizi School of Nursing and Midwifery</td>
<td>• Certificate in Nursing&lt;br&gt;• Certificate in Midwifery&lt;br&gt;• Diploma in Nursing (direct entry)&lt;br&gt;• Diploma in Nursing (extension)&lt;br&gt;• Diploma in Midwifery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.4 Subject areas covered by the donated books

The donated books cover a variety of subjects that the colleges are in need of including medical surgical, anatomy and physiology, internal medicine, social psychology, microbiology, pharmacology, medical insurance.

However, the colleges are still in great need of books in the following areas:

- Paediatrics
- First Aid
- Disaster management/ business continuity management
- Leadership and management
- HIV and AIDS
- Midwifery/ obstetrics and gynaecology
- Microbiology

They also noted that they needed novels for leisure reading that helps to relax their minds.

2.5 Most popular books

Some of the most popular books among students include:

- Structure and functions of the body
- Medical surgical nursing
- Foundation of nursing
- Pharmacology = both printed versions and flash cards
- Medical vocabulary
- Internal medicine
- Treatment of skin conditions
- Plastic surgery
- Surgical pathology

2.6 Sources of information

The most common alternative source of health information is online sources. The medical colleges use online sites such as Pubmed, Free Books for Doctors, Intrahealth Online Library, Google Scholar, Medscape, Healthline, Wikipedia, Nurse Labs, Paediatric Journals, Healthline and Mioclinic.

However, other sources of information are limited for many of the medical colleges.

“Don’t know of any place. We only get information during seminars in Mbarara University (180kms away). Sometimes, government also organizes workshops in Kanungu. Hence, the donation is very vital to us.” – Dr Birungi Mutahunga, Director, Bwindi Community Hospital.
2.7 Challenges faced by medical library in providing health information online to medical staff and students

The tutors and students cited several challenges that they face. These include access to unreliable information online, too simplified information for professional level.

3.0 Beneficiary impact

The donated medical books are high quality and up-to-date

The majority of the college tutors, hospital administrators and library staff indicated that it was too early to tell the impact or changes brought about by the project. However, some of them highlighted the following changes in various medical schools.

UPMB noted that the Medical Books for Ugandan Hospitals project was timely to UPMB and Uganda in general. UPMB member training schools and hospitals make a direct contribution to Uganda’s health sector and citizens and therefore the up-to-date books have a multiplier effect in terms of improving quality of service delivery in Uganda. Secondly, books have been a major burden in expenditure for both the training schools, parents and hospitals. Up-to-date books are not only rare to find in Uganda but they are also very expensive to purchase in the open market. Therefore, with such a donation, institutions are able to re-allocate budgets meant for books to cater for other pressing institutional needs. Thirdly, some UPMB member training institutions are making efforts to upgrade to university status and other levels of training and are now introducing new courses. The book donations facilitate an easier accreditation process as up-to-date libraries are a prerequisite.

“We are grateful. When the nursing council team come to inspect our school library, we are now happy we have something to show. It is a measure of growth for us to have these books. The place we are is not bad at all. It has helped us build our confidence as a school as we are more credible. Though we are sad about lack of space of the library, we are grateful for the book resource.” – Rachel Luwaga, Acting Head of Department, Bishop Stuart Ruharo University Department of Nursing.

“When I am here in the library and I don’t have book stock, it is as if I am not doing anything as you can’t help students. Now I can boast that I am employed and I am doing something. I like working and sometimes I extend my working hours from 5.00 to 8.00 pm. I was also happy, when I got many copies of Medical Surgical Nursing book as this is the course that is taught here. I am able to help students more as I have a book that can help students. Some students now wish that they got these books when they were doing the course. Others wish they are lecturers to use these books to teach as they saw how their lecturers were struggling to get teaching materials before.” – Emmanuell Twinamasiko, Librarian, Bishop Stuart Ruharo University Depart of Nursing.
“New courses have been accredited to commence in July 2019 at the Bwindi School of Nursing and Midwifery due to the new library credentials and partners have been acquired to support the construction of a building to partly accommodate more space for the expanded library at the school. Construction estimated to be completed in June 2019.” – David Kiyimba, Institutional Capacity Development Officer, UPMB.

Change created by the books was real and felt by both the institutions and individual users. Of significance was the reprieve by hospitals to get very relevant books that they would have to fundraise and buy for the college. This left the schools to fundraise for other key components of running the college including key amenities and scholarships for poor students. According to UPMB, beneficiary institutions and individuals using the books have experienced and reported some changes. For instance, medical student pass rate has improved since the books arrived at the medical school, e.g. Bwindi School of Nursing and Midwifery reported that since the new books arrived the pass rate for students in national exams in November 2018 improved from 95% to about 98%.

“We are able to teach and complete curricula on time due to availability of resources. Further, our performance as school has improved. The first year results are out and the pass rate had jumped from 95-98% - a sharp increase in national exams results.” – Jane Anyango, College Administrator, Bwindi School of Nursing and Midwifery.

The number of students using the medical college libraries has increased since arrival of the books in the libraries. For instance, the usage of students’ library at Ngora Fred Carr Church of Uganda Hospital had risen from about 24 to 50 users a day.

On the impact of the project, UPMB feels that the change may be perceived as significant for a six month intervention. The period my not be lengthy enough to measure transformational impact, but results experienced so far at both output and outcome level point clearly to a positive impact in future. UPMB commits to continue following up and measuring impact in the longer term. A report from Bishop Stuart University indicated that the Book Aid International book donations contribute more than 50% of the medical books in the nursing department.
4.0 Challenges

Some challenges experienced included:

Training was too short: Though trained staff acquired some knowledge and skills in management of libraries and how to access reliable health information online, it was reported that the one-day training did not provide all they needed to be confident enough in all aspects. They recommended that in future the training should be at least two days long to be meaningful as most of the library staff have no library management background.

Project monitoring by UPMB: UPMB had planned to integrate onsite monitoring visits to the project sites into their usual supervision schedule of December annually. However due to a strategic programs transition period between October 2018 to March 2019, the visits were not possible due to resource constraints. However, other means (social media and email platforms) were used to collect possible feedback on the use of the books from some of the project sites. These unfortunately did not allow UPMB to provide much needed onsite support to the medical libraries. Some of them e.g. in Ishaka Hospital Medical Schools were found struggling during end term evaluation.

Limited number of stamps: Initially, it was envisaged that the books would have been stamped at UPMB before distribution to the medical schools. However, it was very difficult due to shortage of staff at UMPB HQ. Hence, the books were picked by the colleges before they were stamped. The agreement was that they would stamp them with combined Book Aid International and UPMB stamp at the same time as they put their stamp. However, there were only two Book Aid International stamps included. The stamp has been going to different schools on rotational basis. This takes a lot of time and coordination as the schools are disbursed in different parts of the country and some of the locations are very remote. Due to this, some of the schools e.g. Bwindi School of Nursing and Midwifery are yet to put the Book Aid International stamp on the books although the books are already in use. However, they ensured they had put their own stamps before they allowed for borrowing of the books. This has caused some delays in shelving the books due to late arrival of the stamp.

Short project period to evaluate impact at transformational level: The project implementation period was six months and a longer period of 12 months, would have provided detail on longer term changes and transformational impact.

Absence of books in key disciplines: The hospitals and colleges appreciate the books donated and are still in need of books in some key disciplines including midwifery, oncology, HIV and paediatrics, among others.

Perceived ‘favouritism’ among other institutions that were not part of the pilot project: Some of UPMB’s member institutions that did not benefit from the donations feel left out and would like the opportunity to benefit from a similar project.
5.0 Lessons learned

Some of the key lessons learnt during project implementation include:

**Faith-based medical colleges offer an effective channel to get books to those who need them most**: I visited four regions to evaluate the project – Mukono, Mbarara, Bwindi and Ishaka which was a journey of more than 1000kms from Kampala. The faith based training institutions are producing a significant number of healthcare workers in Uganda. The colleges are not profit driven and charge low fees in order to enable students from underprivileged families to join. Students come from other countries such as Kenya to access the training. All the UPMB medical training colleges are attached to UPMB supported hospitals which are often with the same compound or just nearby. They, therefore, are teaching facilities for the colleges. Some of the colleges, e.g. Bwindi College of Nursing and Midwifery are some of the best medical training institutions in the Uganda through support from various partners.

**Medical books are relevant and in high demand**: This project is very much appreciated by the beneficiaries. The medical book donations are highly valued as these books are not only expensive but also unavailable locally even to those who can afford to purchase them. The beneficiary institutions that received the books were therefore delighted to get brand new and up-to-date medical books that were relevant to their training curriculum – and in large quantities – that made teaching and learning easy. The students and their tutors could hardly express their joy at using the latest printed editions of books which they sometimes accessed online. Every college and hospital we visited requested more donations especially in midwifery, oncology, First Aid, paediatrics, HIV and AIDS, obstetrics and gynaecology, microbiology, disaster management, business continuity management and leadership and management.

**Short project implementation**: The nature of the short invention meant that long term impact could not be captured. A longer duration would have yielded deeper results and outcomes.

**Support for M&E**: Budgetary support would have facilitated a mid-term monitoring visit to each project college, providing assistance to the colleges around distribution and set up of the libraries.

**Need for fiction books**: “Every book its reader and every reader his/her book,” are cardinal rules in library management that have manifested during the six months of project implementation. As some students appreciated the medical books, others felt left out on fiction literature. The students and tutors want both medical and fiction books. They made recommendation that Book Aid International considers sending them some novels to help them manage stress.

**Demand for printed medical books is high**: As much as there is a growing shift towards e-learning and teaching, printed books remain popular in the medical field. Hence, printed books and e-books will complement each other for a long time. Some medical staff and students prefer the printed books to e-books as they find them easier to use and do not depend on technology or the availability of electricity.
6.0 Recommendations

Training: In future, Book Aid International should consider a longer training to give participants more time to get to grips with the subject contents and gain confidence. A two to three day workshop would be ideal.

Further book support to all UPMB colleges: UPMB training institutions have cited several subjects that they are still in need of books for and welcome an ongoing relationship with Book Aid International to continue to receive books into the long term, through its Book Provision programme.

A stamp for every hospital: Stamping of the books was a big challenge during the project as the two stamps had to be shared among the teaching hospitals some of which are hundreds of kilometres apart. UPMB therefore recommends that the number of stamps be increased to avoid a delay in book distribution and use.

A longer project implementation period: This would afford a more detailed analysis of impact to the provision of health care, beyond the initial responses of the beneficiaries.

Need for mid-term evaluation support: In order to ensure that a project achieves its desired outcome, follow up support by implementing partners is very critical. We need to provide support for mid-term evaluation to enable the partners provided follow up support at mid-point in the project. Sometimes partners are unable to raise funds for project support visits to beneficiaries due to competing interests.