BAI Impact Assessment
FOR THE BOOK PROVISION PROGRAMME IN KENYA

September 2018
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Book Aid International (BAI) is piloting an approach to measuring and evaluating organisational impact across for their Book Provision Programme. This impact assessment of the Book Provision Programme in Kenya is the result. It provides both an assessment in itself and a model that can be used, adapted and/or scaled up in BAI's overall M&E systems.
- The assessment is informed by a dedicated Theory of Change for the Book Provision Programme, and explicit domains of change that BAI sought to interrogate.
- The assessment focused on three priority beneficiary groups: Leisure Readers, readers who are excluded and/or marginalised from their communities, and health care providers and educators. Interviews were conducted in geographical areas that best represented a cross section of these groups in both rural and urban settings.
- Due to a very small sample size of respondents, plus the nature of the changes we were assessing, findings should be seen as indicative rather than proven. Conclusions and recommendations are informed by this level of evidence.
- Findings provide detailed descriptions of how different beneficiary groups use their libraries as well as why they like them and what they would recommend for the future. Answers overall indicate that local libraries are highly valued. Respondents recommend improved infrastructure and services, more (specific) resources and greater access to computers, software and the internet.
- Members of all beneficiary groups report positive changes to their knowledge and understanding. This translates differently (for different groups) into changes in attitudes, ways of seeing and understanding their and other “worlds”, gaining more self confidence and a sense of self belief, increased motivation to study/persevere, improved performance in formal education and new skills sets.
- Changes to each beneficiary group are clearly significant to them in different ways:
  - For children it is about learning life lessons, hope and improved educational performance;
  - For adult Leisure Readers (including students), books have helped them to improve their lives in terms of their relationships and opportunities. Some are more able to support their own community and/or families.
  - For prisoners access to books can be transformational: reading and improving their education are often their (only) route to hope for improved life within the prison and/or for parole.
  - Health education providers rely on quality books (for the most part donated by BAI) to teach, study, pass exams, practice higher standards of medicine and, in the final analysis, save lives.
- Both knls and BAI can take credit for significant contributions in making these changes happen:
  - Knls has set up and supported 62 libraries and many other institutions across the country. It sources and distributes books, and trains its librarians. Locally, librarians and other staff bring their libraries to life by promoting and providing services. Levels of librarian skills and commitment are very varied and affect the use and usefulness of their libraries accordingly.
  - In addition to BAI’s core business of sourcing and supplying books, and supporting/ collaborating with partners such as knls, the organisation has played an important role in reaching out to more marginalised groups, for inspiring knls nationally and locally to be more proactive and responsive, and for complementing its Book Provision Programme with highly valued and effective projects.
- The 60-year partnership between BAI and knls has for the most part been highly successful. There are questions to be asked about ways in which the partnership should continue in order to ensure that knls becomes more independent and sustainable in the future.
- Specific recommendations for both knls and BAI focus on strengthening what they are already doing well.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our grateful thanks go to all those whom we interviewed for sharing their time and their experiences with us. Their contributions form the most important part of this impact assessment report.

We thank the knls team in Nairobi for their huge support in planning and facilitating the field trip; and we thank all librarians and others working in all the libraries that we visited for making us welcome and organising meetings and interviews.

Although they are part of this impact assessment team, extra special thanks go to James Kimani and Caroline Kayoro for ensuring that the field trip and logistics went as smoothly as possible.

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section one
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Book Aid International (BAI) is piloting an approach to measuring and evaluating organisational impact across their book provision and project interventions.

We want to explore the changes that occur as a result of our work and specifically how reading books (ideally those donated by BAI) has changed the lives of target beneficiaries.

We want to develop useful and user-friendly ways to capture evidence of significant and relevant changes experienced by beneficiaries. We plan to use this evidence both to demonstrate how access to books and information and the act of reading, can create positive changes for people, in its broadest sense, and also to reflect on and improve on their ways of working.

We decided to pilot a methodology in our country programme in Kenya. Once this methodology has been tried, tested and adapted accordingly, we plan to build it into existing M&E systems and processes, and to replicate the exercise in other countries of operation.

To that end, we have hired the services of a consultant, Maureen O’Flynn. Her task is to support and train the BAI team in developing and piloting an approach that they could then apply to their own on-going M&E systems.

1.2 Approach

The primary focus of the pilot was the Book Provision Programme. We agreed to apply a Theory of Change approach to the impact assessment.

1.3 How the results of this impact assessment will be used

Results of this impact assessment will be shared with the Senior Management team and Trustees, BAI programme staff, and knls staff in Kenya. They will also be used by the Fundraising and Communications Department with a view to increase BAI’s supporter base.

1.4 The Impact Assessment Framework

1.4.1 Theory of Change for the Book Provision programme

The agreed first stage of the impact assessment was to construct a Theory of Change for the Book Provision programme.

Initially, the BAI team identified long term changes that the organisation hopes to see for its priority beneficiary groups:

- Excluded and disadvantaged: women, PWD, minority groups, prisoners
  - Increases opportunities to become independent
- Users of Higher education: students, teachers, and lecturers:
  - Access to up to date information and higher quality education
  - Improved job opportunities
  - Better professional performance
- Health care providers and educators:
  - Better skilled workforce achieving improved results
  - Improved practices and better patient care
- Learners in the community people who live in slums, rural areas and locations that lack access to gvt provision
  - Enhancing and promoting community cohesion
  - Increased opportunities to improve quality of life
  - Reduced isolation/depression
  - Ability to visualise/hope
Library users: children/adults in or out of education of all ages and all backgrounds
- Support for learning
- Improved skills

Displaced /people living in fragile states, refugees, IDPs, people in long term displacement situations
- Improved living conditions and camp activities
- More access to activities
- Increased ability to move on / out resettle, integrate when possible
- Ability to visualise/hope for positive future life

We then developed the change pathway (see below):

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### Diagram 1: Change Pathway and assumptions - Book Provision Programme BAI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What BAI does</th>
<th>What BAI primary partner do</th>
<th>What BAI secondary partners and what they do</th>
<th>BAI vision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We assume that they will</td>
<td>Create access/promote materials</td>
<td><strong>We assume that they will</strong>&lt;br&gt;Use books for intended purposes&lt;br&gt;Provide appropriate marketing, access and training in a timely way&lt;br&gt;Provide accurate and timely reports&lt;br&gt;Protect books &amp; promote reading&lt;br&gt;Share BAI vision for beneficiaries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consignees and Distribution partners:</td>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td><strong>All target beneficiaries will have:</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Access to books&lt;br&gt;- Increased knowledge and skills&lt;br&gt;- Improved self esteem and motivation&lt;br&gt;- The ability to make more informed decisions&lt;br&gt;- Greater opportunities to learn&lt;br&gt;- Better connections to the wider world&lt;br&gt;And be able to apply these benefits to improving their own quality of life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recover costs</td>
<td>Universities</td>
<td><strong>We assume that they will</strong>&lt;br&gt;Provide training to improves use&lt;br&gt;Use for teaching students, reference and on-going professional development. Distribute to other centres&lt;br&gt;Distribute to schools &amp; other centres of learning for access, use, teaching&lt;br&gt;Promote reading, Provide access for schools (outreach) Community engagement&lt;br&gt;Support rehabilitation skills and vocational training</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Select costs</td>
<td>Training hospitals</td>
<td>Meet own agendas /mandates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promote and train their own networks</td>
<td>Public &amp; Community libraries</td>
<td>Sphere of control</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Circulate within their institution(s)</td>
<td>Prison services</td>
<td>Sphere of influence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct partners:</td>
<td>Referred partners</td>
<td>Sphere of interest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Receive books</td>
<td><strong>We assume that they will</strong>&lt;br&gt;Distribute a fair proportion of books outside networks&lt;br&gt;Proactively deliver on their mandate&lt;br&gt;Distribute to agreed priority target groups regardless of distance&lt;br&gt;Select and distribute effectively to BAI plans and standards&lt;br&gt;Provide accurate and timely reports</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor oversee, report</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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We assume that we have selected partners who have:
- Ability and confidence to deliver at scale
- Good governance practices

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1.4.2 Domains of Change to explore

Having agreed the overall change pathway, we developed a “Domain of change” framework that would inform the impact assessment. This exercise enabled staff to clarify the scope of control and influence that BAI could realistically expect as a result of its interventions. These 4 domains are:

- Changes in access to useful and relevant reading materials for different stakeholder groups (BAI’s sphere of control)
- Changes in learning knowledge and/or skills as a result of accessing reading materials (BAI’s sphere of influence)
- (As a result of their newly acquired learning, knowledge and/or skills), changes in the stakeholders:
  - Attitudes and/or personal development
  - Performance and or practices
  - Access to new opportunities and/or choices
- Changes in beneficiaries’ quality of life (BAI’s sphere of interest)

1.4.3 Methodology for the field trip

We considered and made decisions on:
- The specific groups of beneficiaries to prioritise for this assessment
- Locations that would best reflect a broad set of contexts in which they live
- Key informants, questions to ask and data gathering methodologies
- Potential limitations to this methodology and challenges that we might have to address

Selection of beneficiaries to focus on:
Groups of beneficiaries were selected on the basis that they reflect BAI’s overall priorities. They are:

- Library users in public and community libraries, particularly in poorer urban and rural settings where there is a lack of access to gvt provision and access to books presents a real challenge. This includes:
  - HE students
  - Leisure readers
  - Primary school students and their teachers
- Learners who are excluded or marginalised by their communities and/or by society. This includes people with disabilities, prisoners and those who are excluded because of their gender or ethnicity
- Health care providers and professionals. This include practicing healthcare and medical professionals, tutors and teachers in medical schools, and students

Locations
Geographical areas that best represented a cross section of these beneficiary groups in both rural and urban settings were then identified (see section 1.5.2 and Annex 1)

Methodology
We identified key informants, developed sets of questions to explore with them and agreed a working methodology (see Annex 2). Questions for all key informants were collated under 3 key areas:
- Getting to know who uses the library
- Understanding how/when/why they use the library
- Understanding what difference accessing and reading books has made to the lives of different beneficiary

We also solicited information and ideas for how libraries could improve on their offer for the communities that they serve; and how respondents would feel if there were no books to read and no libraries to visit.

A team of 7 people carried out the interviews and contributed to the analysis of findings. This team was led by the consultant and included two BAI staff members based in London, the two BAI staff members based in Kenya and two staff members of knls in Kenya.

Bearing in mind the time available for the field trip, and the fact that there were two teams working concurrently in different areas, we restricted ourselves to using semi structured interviews and focus group discussions only. See Annex 3 for the field trip programme.
Diagram 2: The Body Map diagram
One of our key tools used to support discussions about changes beneficiaries experience as a result of reading books.

Results of these interviews were then collated and analysed with reference to desk research and dedicated interviews with BAI staff and one trustee in the UK as well as a small email questionnaire that we sent out to three of BAI's direct partners in Kenya.¹

1.4.4 Limitations and challenges to methodology and data collected

- Lack of robust numbers: our findings and analysis are more illustrative than robust especially for the group we call Leisure readers. There are a total of 24,688 adult and 26,944 members of the 8 libraries we visited. In total we interviewed 66 adults and 50 pupils. We have made an assumption that, of the adults at least, those who we interviewed were people who are already self-motivated and looking to learn or improve their status in life.
- Balancing a learning exercise for BAI staff with a full impact assessment: This exercise was designed to be both a capacity building exercise for BAI staff (and one that they could adapt and replicate going forward) as well as an impact assessment.
- Prioritising a focus on the nature of the changes that readers experienced: An expressed need for this exercise was to be able to articulate how reading books has affected knowledge, attitudes, performance and quality of life. These changes are highly subjective. Although we built triangulation into our methodology, reported results are for the most-part the views of those whom we interviewed
- Not know who was going to be available for interviews: As people come to libraries on a voluntary basis, it was not possible for knls to predict how many people would turn up for interviews (especially in relation to Leisure Readers). We had made draft plans for our interviews and then adapted them according to the numbers and types of beneficiaries who were available. We hadn’t originally intended to interview school children, but we made the most of the opportunities. In Thika, we interviewed a very random sample of people who were asked on the spot if they would talk to us.

1.5. Setting the scene:

1.5.1 Kenya Country context – highlights:

Kenya is a country of many contrasts, from its landscape to demographics, and more so its social and economic inequalities:²

- 42% of its population of 44 million live below the poverty line.
- Access to basic quality services such, as health care, education, clean water and sanitation, is often a luxury for many people.
- Large segments of the population, including the burgeoning urban poor, are highly vulnerable to climatic, economic and social shocks.
- Poverty incidence in Kenya is below the average in sub-Saharan Africa and a decade of strong economic growth has fuelled a relatively fast pace of poverty reduction. But considering Kenya’s lower middle-income class status, current poverty incidence is relatively high compared to its middle-income peers.

¹ GENCAD (Generation for Change and Development), MYSA (Mathare Youth Sport association), Windle International (Kakuma Refugee camp only)
² https://www.unicef.org/kenya/overview
• Growth in the agriculture sector accounted for the largest share of poverty reduction, but also revealed progress is vulnerability to climatic shocks.
• Although there is a decline in poverty levels, most Kenyans can still not afford the basic needs. This has a direct impact on affordability of information resources. Individuals and institutions are unable to access or acquire information resources to improve their lives.
• In 2018, the Government of Kenya outlined four key priority areas for the next five years. These are agricultural and food security, affordable housing, increased share of manufacturing, and universal health coverage. The attainment of these goals should help advance the Vision 2030 agenda – helping Kenya to move forward towards a middle-income economy with a high standard of living.

1.5.2 Local contexts and their libraries

In order to explore changes for Leisure Readers, 8 sites were selected on the basis of their target users and their manageable proximity to Nairobi. They included an industrial urban setting (Thika), semi urban libraries (Olkalao and Timau), slum areas (Gilgil), rural/remote areas (Chinga and Munyu) where there is also tribal violence and ethnic conflicts (Rumuruti). See Annex 1 for more detailed information on each of the selected locations.

In order to explore changes for marginalised and excluded readers, we visited Naivasha Maximum Security Prison. See section 2.2.2.

In order to explore changes for Health Professionals and practitioners, we visited libraries at Kenya Medical Training College (KMTC) and AMREF. See section 2.3.2

1.5.3 The Book Provision Programme in Kenya

Through its Book Provision Programme, BAI donates books to Kenya National Library Service (knls), community libraries, different university libraries, primary and secondary schools, the Kenya prison service, medical institutions and others. All of these institutions struggle to buy books due to limited funding and competing needs. Knls has been BAI’s main distributing partner in Kenya since 1965. This library service is responsible for clearing the books with customs and distributing to libraries and other institutions within the country. All of the 62 knls libraries have benefitted from book donations from BAI. We estimate that since 2015, BAI has supplied on average 79% of the books supplied to these libraries. Knls also distributes books to 79 other institutions around the country. Fifteen of these support BAI’s priority beneficiary groups. We estimate that around 20% of BAI book donations were sent to these institutions in the last financial year.

BAI also works with and distributes books through 13 other direct NGOs and partners and 4 referred partners. There are also 6 other projects being implemented in Kenya.

The following pie chart illustrates average BAI contributions to the 8 public and community libraries that we visited.
In this section, we explore changes for each of the selected beneficiary groups.

Our lines of enquiry follow this sequence:
- Who we interviewed
- The local contexts
- How and why these groups use the library
- What they say about the library
- Changes that they report as a result of reading

For two of these groups, the sequence varies slightly: for primary school children we focus more on the books they have read and liked (and less on what has changed for them; and for visually impaired people (VIPs) we adapted the questions to suit the very small group of people that we were able to interview.

We then interrogated the roles that Knls and BAI have played in contributing to these identified changes. In presenting the findings, we have collated a mixture of quotes and explanations (as transcribed by note takers).

**LIBRARY USERS**

2.1 Library users in public and community libraries

This group includes Leisure Readers (local community members, older and retired people, youth, out of school students), HE students and primary school students and their teachers.

2.1.1 Who we interviewed:

- **LEISURE READERS:**
  We interviewed 39 Leisure Readers (20 female and 19 male) in 7 locations. Of those who described their work, 10 were active or retired teachers or trainers, 4 police officers, 4 farmers, 2 working as faith leaders, others were in business, an ex civil servants, an engineers and an activist.

- **HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS:**
  We interviewed 27 students (20 male and 7 female) and 3 teachers (2 male and 1 female) in 4 locations. This represents a very small sample of the whole. Their answers provide illustrations only of the changes that High School students might experience as a result of accessing books.

- **PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS:**
  We conducted interviews and discussions with 50 children overall in four different locations. They were study all levels between Grades 2-7.

This represents a small 0.22% of total membership of these 8 libraries.

2.1.2 The local contexts

As stated earlier, sites were selected on the basis of their target users and their manageable proximity to Nairobi. They included an industrial urban setting (Thika), semi urban libraries (Oikaloa and Timau) and slum areas (Gilgil), rural/remote areas (Chinga and Munyu) where there is also tribal violence and ethnic conflicts (Rumuruti).

In all of the contexts, issues of poverty and lack of access to government services and provision were identified as key challenges. See Annex 1 for more detailed information on each of the selected locations.

2.1.3 How and why these groups use the library:

Both higher education and Leisure Readers state that they come to the library to find
- Sources of inspiration/motivation for themselves, for children, and grandchildren for counselling, or for preaching.
- New novels and texts
- Information or building skills (livestock, computers, business management, administration school texts)
- Information to enable them to write research projects, papers or sermons
They read the newspapers, socialise with others. They use computers for information, to study, to find jobs, to send emails.

The school pupils generally use the library as part of class activities once a week or once every two weeks. Many come after school, at weekends and in holiday time.

They use the books to do homework, revision, improve English and composition; and they borrow books for themselves or others. The library also provides a safe structured space for children to come and spend time productively.

2.1.4 What they say about their libraries:

They like:

- **Books:** Both groups of adult Leisure Readers cite different types of books that they value. The most often cited were motivational books and books that help build skills, such as agriculture, dairy farming. Additionally, Higher education students valued books that teach skills such as IT and economic; and books that support revision, and class studies. They state that they would like more novels, more motivational books and books on a variety of specific subjects. In some libraries, users would like more copies of class books. Higher Education students also recognise that for some of the subjects they are studying, books provide more in-depths and more reliable information than can be found on the Internet.

Primary school pupils love reading storybooks, and books that help them to improve their composition writing. One of their teachers stated that donated books provide more in-depths knowledge and ideas than are available locally.

Primary school teachers and students would like to see more African readers, more story books, more books on composition writing, copies of new syllabus books (to conform to changes curriculum), more copies of books that the children need to do their homework.

- **Being able to access and use the computers and the Internet:** This facility is highly valued by many, especially the Higher Education students. In libraries where there are E Readers and Kio Kit tablets, they are very popular with the primary school children.

They appreciate the way that they can choose to play games, read, and/or relax with these kits.

- **The atmosphere in the library and the support provided by librarians:** Both adult readers and school students enjoy the quiet and conducive atmosphere that encourages study. Students who are out of school and trying to revise or pass class exams really value the combination of the books to support their learning together with this library atmosphere. The fact that the library is open to pupils in the holidays is especially valued by teachers and other as they believe that this prevents at least some children from getting caught up in risky or negative activities.

- **The opportunity to access books through Institutional Lending:** Librarians at the County Assembly receive novels through institutional lending and promote reading for pleasure amongst their patrons. They too enjoy reading the books and access the library through this means rather than visiting.

They find challenging:

- **The distance from the library:** This poses a problem for many users in library catchment areas. People often walk between 3 and 10km to access their nearest library. Apart from this being challenging in itself, in some areas walking this distance can present a threat to security.

- **Entry costs to the library:** Adult users are charged Ks20 every time they visit the library. Children have free access to the library but are charged Ks5 if they borrow a book. This can prove to be too expensive for some and therefore limits their ability to use the library.

- **Out-dated, unsuitable or unavailable books and materials:** This comment specifically refers to textbooks and class books that are no longer in use in schools. Books on IT and computer software are also often out of date. Numerous books that users are looking for are not available. Some of the children’s books have English contexts that the children do not understand. There are not enough books available for children who are slow learners or who have learning challenges.

- **Insufficient or un-useable computers:** In a number of libraries, our informants state that there are not enough computers, that they have outdates software and/or that some are in need of repair. In some
libraries the Internet speed in very slow. All libraries are keen to increase numbers of and access to computers.

- **Buildings, furniture, and/or decoration needs updating:** While some of the libraries are very organised and attractive (with wonderful painting on the walls) others are compromised by cracked walls and termite infestation (Olkala) and unsafe furniture.

- **Overcrowding especially during exam times and during the school holidays:** Almost all respondents reported that their libraries experience overcrowding at specific times. Although this in itself speaks to the value that people place on their local library, it also represents a challenge in being able to make best use of the facility.

2.1.5 Changes that **LEISURE READERS** have experienced as a result of accessing books and the libraries

In summary, all those interviewed confirm (either explicitly or implicitly) that they have greater access to books and that they have gained new knowledge/understanding.

**Changes to their knowledge and understanding, or for pleasure:**

- "I love reading. I never get tired of reading. It gives you any information that you want. It provides information about things around you. You can compare to your own experience" Jane
- "I continually read so that I can do things differently. And when I have new knowledge, I have to give it to others" Stephen

The graph below provides an overall summary of changes reported by Leisure Readers.
Changes to their attitudes:
51% respondents reported changes in attitudes and/or self esteem. Changes in the way people understand better their circumstances, environment and community or their communities, and lessons that they learned as a result of reading proved to be one of the most compelling elements of our assessment.

- “I learnt that the 2 most important days in your life are the day you were born and the day you discover why you were born. Motivational books help you reflect on your purpose in the world, not allowing others to put you down” Stacey
- “The book – ‘From Worst to Worst’ tells the story of a guy who faces challenges to survive. Similar life circumstances or adversity of others inspires and gives you strength – gives hope…the books provide guidance, encouragement to work hard”. Paul
- “I am inspired by the stories of others that I read in novels. When you are down, you may be able to lift your spirit by reading other’s experiences, and you can be inspired to do better” Perpetua

Changes to their performance:
46% of respondents also reported examples of improved performance (some connected with changes in attitude and self esteem above). We noted that changes in performance included ways in which people could support others spiritually or emotionally; ways in which they could earn or save money, and ways in which they could pursue interests more successfully .

- “Reading and learning from communication books means that I can minister to everyone -young and old and the middle classes” Bishop Kavu,
- Michael researched methods for producing silage for cows. He was able to produce his own silage and have saved himself money
- Francis has been inspired to write a book by reading other books... he is also pursuing an on-line course

Changes to their quality of life:
7.6% of respondents specifically cited improved quality of life as a result of reading one or more books either at key moment in their lives, or as a way to improve their mental state.

- Doreen had been fighting very low self-esteem for many years and since childhood, and did not believe in herself enough to go to school. She did however go, and was struggling very much during her second year, as there was a lot of mathematics and statistics in the curriculum. The librarian at Timau suggested she read “Statistics for people who think they hate statistics”, and this book completely changed her life. She learned statistics, performed well in school, giving her confidence, knowledge and the ability to move forward and become a social worker. The people she works now benefit too from her work. The book that changed Doreen’s life was donated by BAI
- Josephat has found that novels help him relax. He uses the stories to escape. “At night you can be thinking, thinking, thinking and get stressed. The stories tell of bad situations and I think, they are in a worse situation than me – I’m doing ok… and I’m happy”
2.1.6 Changes that users of **Higher Education** have experienced as a result of reading

In keeping with their ages and stages, we found that overall, this group of beneficiaries were mostly focussed on improving their performance in order to get (better) grades at school/college, or to be able to earn a living. They were also keen to see more working computers, updated software and faster Internet speeds.

**Changes to knowledge and understanding, or for pleasure:**

All respondents (100%) acknowledge that their knowledge increased as a result of reading. This has had a knock on effect in terms of their attitudes, performance and/or quality of life.

11% of respondents explicitly talked about the pleasure they experience from reading novels:

- Daniel borrowed books on ICT and taught himself the software applications, like Excel and Word. “I no longer fear computers”
- Wilson read, “When the sun goes down. He said, “It took my mind to another area. It made me relax”

**Changes to attitudes:**

37% of respondents cited that their attitudes had changed as a result of one or more key books that they had read. For the most part, this change in attitude affected the ways that they saw themselves and/or others; and encouraged them to behave differently as a result.

- Livingstone read a book in primary school about how to live with and take care of people living with HIV. It helped him change his perceptions and attitudes about them.
- Lawrence read “Time Changes” about a gang in which most of them die. One survives. He said he felt he was reading about his brother. It changed the way he thought and his attitudes. “It helped me find the right life”
- Esther read “Woman thou art Loosed”, T.D Jakes: “It was an inspiration. It was encouraging. It helped me make decisions in my relationships”

**Changes to performance:**

25% of respondents reported that, as a result of increased knowledge/understanding they were able to develop new skills sets or achieve better grades.

- Zipporah read a book on entrepreneurship that helped her understand what to consider when starting up a business. She has now set up and started a dress making and clothes selling business.
- Tabitha taught herself how to maintain a computer and can maintain her own computer and that of others. Reading of the subject gave her a technical know-how and grew her confidence to use the skill and advise others.
- John has not been able to complete Form 4. He uses the books to study independently.

**Changes to quality of life:**

We noted that the fact of the existence of the library within communities can be life enhancing in its own right: it becomes a focal point for girls empowerment (through book clubs) networking, socialising, learning, motivation and inspiration. It some cases (Rumuruti), the library can become a catalyst for promoting peace (through the peace circles that librarians and others facilitate.

Additionally, 7.4% of respondents were specifically able to connect improved performance to improving their own quality of life (in material terms)

- Martin read “Rich Dad Poor Dad,” Robert Kiyosaki. It has helped him understand how to invest. He is now doing it successfully.
- One teacher told us that as a child she couldn’t afford school fees so she got herself through primary school by reading in the library. She is now a registered teacher and in her second year of her degree course.
And what if there was no library and no books to read? Leisure readers and higher education students refer to:

- **Additional/impossible personal costs**: For students especially, if the books were not available, they would have to purchase them. This would involve added costs which may well put self study out of reach for many.

- **Lack of motivation** to read and learn: In the words of some respondents, “Just by being there the Library makes people want to read. Especially with the youth as lifestyle changes have been spotted (often they now visit the library rather than going to watch the football match in the video store)”

- **Fewer opportunities** to develop knowledge, skills and/or quality of life: Some respondents also talked about the fact that “wisdom” would no longer be accessible to them. One reported that, in previous times, it was the role of grandparents to provide example and wisdom, but that this is no longer the case. People need to know where to look. Books give us direction – you can’t gain wisdom without them”

- **Fewer opportunities** for pleasure and enjoyment: this is a key finding, and one well expressed as follows: “First of all reading is fun. You will always get something out of a book. Reading enriches you and gives you a lot, even if the book is not a deep one. For an older person, reading helps keeping your brain active because you either use it or lose it”

2.1.7 How reading books benefits PRIMARY SCHOOL students

Note, this sub section is presented a little differently: we had not planned to interview school pupils (they have been the focus of other more in depth evaluations in connection with BAI project reports). However, when presented with the opportunity, we agreed to focus our enquiry on understanding which books they read and enjoyed reading and how this has affected them; and ways in which they used and appreciated the library. We did not explore illustrations or evidence of changes for this beneficiary group.

The context:
The school library situation in Kenya is on the whole unimpressive: 95% of public schools in rural areas and 80% in urban areas are deemed to be poorly resourced.

Only very few schools can be able to employ professional librarians of both certificate and diploma. The School libraries at the majority of primary and secondary level lack relevant supplementary reading materials.

The Kenyan Primary school curriculum has recently changed – it follows a more competency-based approach (following the British system). Textbooks to accompany this change are not yet available.

**Pupils’ favourite storybooks and why they liked them:**
Pupils answered this question clearly, mostly in English. Their responses reinforced both the enjoyment that they get out of reading, and also that they learn lessons as a result (about behaviours, others’ lives, opportunities etc.)

**Some of their favourite books include:**

- “Golden Tips” helped improve writing and test results
- “The goat had kids” teaches you to listen to your parents
- “The Golden egg” increased faith in things happening
- “Why the Hyena got spots” – The hyena got spots because she would not wash, so this book teaches you that you have to bathe.
- Felicity wishes” made me understand that wishes can come true, and then when you wish and pray to God your own wishes will come true
- “The Eagle and the Hen taught me that it is good to forgive other people
- “Infinity” – I really enjoyed it. … its good for the mind
- “Think Big” has given me hope for the future
Changes that they and their teachers report as a result of reading books from the library:
The most often reported change was in the improvement of English and composition writing and improved grades.

There were numerous examples of children feeling more ambitious and hopeful about their futures

And what if there was no library and no books to read? Students and their teachers say:
- Standards in English would drop: the lack of well-written reading materials in English would result in poorer grammar, composition and writing skills.
- They would not be able to catch up with schoolwork in the weekends and holidays. Additionally, the library offers a structured space for children to use in the holidays (which may contribute to their avoiding other more risky activities)
- They would not have access to the knowledge and support that the library and librarians offer: “I would be miserable having to calculate maths (grades increased from 50 to 80), and could not pass exams”
- They would have fewer opportunities to understand the wider world: Books are their entry point and window on other cultures and world. Respondents talked about only being able to speak in their mother tongue; that they wouldn’t know about other parts of the world and, “Life would be miserable – no dreams, because books inspire”

EXCLUDED LEARNERS

2.2 Learners who are excluded or marginalised

For this group of beneficiaries, we selected prisoners from Naivasha Maximum Security Prison, and people who are visually impaired. We had originally hoped that we would be able to visit this latter group in situ but this was not possible. The findings for visually impaired people reflect this lack of depths.

2.2.1 Who we interviewed:

- Prisoners: We interviewed 11 male inmates and the Director of Education (and teacher) at Naivasha Prison. This represents 11 out of 800.
- Visually impaired people: Having failed to secure an interview at a Special School for Visually Impaired People (supported by BAI) we interviewed three visually impaired people in the knls library Nairobi, as well as two knls staff members responsible for distributing relevant materials for visually impaired people through knls systems.

Prisoners

2.2.2 The context:

The Government of Kenya Naivasha Maximum Security prison currently holds a total of 2000 inmates. Runs a range of learning and vocational courses for inmates who are placed into activity groups on entry. The Learning centre is one such activity group that runs education programmes and courses from Pre-Unit (Primary) to Class 8, Form 1-4 Secondary and tertiary courses including ACCA, CPA, BA Law, Mindful Leadership, Professional development, Anti-Drug Abuse training, Poultry & Rabbit rearing, Gardening & Veg. Mechanics, furniture making and upholstery are other vocational training activities that inmates take part in.

Naivasha Prison is known among prisons in Kenya as a centre for academic excellence.
2.2.3 Why/how prison inmates and their teachers use the library:

“Overall, the library is seen as a “Centre of Hope”. It offers opportunities for further education and, through this channel, to get parole” Director of learning

Inmates move freely around the prison grounds. They take scheduled classes, borrow books from the library, daily, taking books to their cells to study. The classes are in the main hall that is divided by corrugated iron into smaller class areas. The library is accessed during break time. Classes run for half day only so access book lending allows the inmate to study outside of the block, where they have stationery and access to tutors-(also inmates), outside class time. The majority (90%) of the teaching staff are inmates, serving time. They were teachers before prison or gained qualifications whilst in prison and turned to teaching.

2.2.4 What the prisoners say about their libraries:

They like:

• Books: Reading and learning and educational achievement is seen as a ‘way out of prison’ and a better life and future. They appreciate books that are good for developing positive and hopeful attitudes; books that help with and/or supplement their education; novels. They would like to receive more literature set books and writing materials.

They find challenging:

• It appears that a large number of books that were assigned to the prison have not (yet) been delivered. They would like to receive more support from Naivasha knls, especially in relation to capacity building.

2.2.5 Changes that inmates have experienced as a result of accessing books and the library:

The significance to the prisoners of having an opportunity to be able to better themselves through education and - perhaps – earn privileges and even possibly parole – cannot be underestimated:

“New books. New concepts. New Life” Inmate who is about to graduate with a law degree

Changes to their knowledge and understanding

Many of the responses evidence both teachers’ and inmates’ thirst for knowledge, either for its own benefit or so that they can improve their understanding, gain qualifications, and – possibly most significantly - hope that they will improve their chances of parole and or freedom.

“The skill of reading and a reading culture has developed with the availability of books” Director of Learning

Changes to their attitudes:

This is the most significant area of change for the inmates: The access to a range of books and the centre to learn through the courses offer hope for a better future.

• Dan was sentenced to death in 2005. His sentence was commuted to life in 2009. He is currently studying in Form 4… He says, “Knowledge, inspiration, motivation came from the books. …The experience “…opened up my heart. I accepted myself and my life….saw others overcoming life and facing challenges”

• Respondents report that inmates interested in Theology, change from being negative in thinking to becoming advocates of good conduct in prison. Some “even become pastors”.

Changes to performance

• Inmates are achieving exceptional grades at primary and secondary levels. Some are gaining entrance to Universities through special programmes like African Prison Project and London University.

Changes to quality of life:

• Inmates who gain qualifications can gain early release. They are deemed prepared to care for themselves through productive means and have demonstrated commitment to better themselves through a commitment to learning. Inmates who have been released often receive sponsorship for further studies.
And what if there was no library and no books to read?
Prisoners and their teacher believe that if this were the case they would miss vital opportunities for learning and knowledge, and for dreaming of a better future. “Learning can change things” Inmate

Visually impaired people

2.2.6 The context
Seven special schools served by knls, Nairobi branch. Theses include both primary and secondary integrated schools, and a school for the blind (Thika), as well as a department at Kenyatta University. During the financial years 2016-2018 Knls donated a total of 400 books two of these institutions.

Knls use its mobile library to take books out to visually impaired people in their communities. They deliver books to schools in Thika, Kajiado, Kilimani and Moi Girls, as well as hospitals and homes. They respond to specific requests. They re-write some books in braille.

BAI does not directly support schools for the blind. The organisation sends Braille books to knls who choose to either keep them for their mobile libraries or to donate them to special schools.

2.2.7 What they say about the libraries
Respondents told us that they and other visually impaired people particularly appreciate being able to access and read Talking Books, as well as the support provided to them by library staff.

They would like to see more periodicals, popular novels and curriculum related books in Braille. They request more computers that have specific software and mobile apps for audio books. They specifically referred to a new software called “Pearl scanner” which they use to scan and read books written in normal text.

They report that some braille books are out of date and/or very cumbersome.

2.2.8 Changes that visually impaired people have experienced as a result of accessing books and the library:

Answers to this question represent the views of the three visually impaired people we spoke to. They may reflect views of others but should be seen as illustrations only of types of changes that can be experienced by other visually impaired people.

A key point, made by two respondents is that the ability to read for oneself (rather than have it read to you) is very empowering: “Reading books brings me to the level of my sighted friends. It bridges the gap between us”. Samuel

- Understanding new and different perspectives:
  Respondents stated that they found that novels helped them to understand life from other perspectives.
  “They have opened my mind and encouraged me to know more….They have helped me to appreciate different cultures…”

- Gaining confidence and improving performance (ultimately a better quality of life): As with sighted people, reading the right book at the right time can be transformative:

  Sylvia told us that she used to struggle a lot with low self-esteem. She was inspired by a book written by Ben Carson, “He succeeded so I said to myself, Why not me? He set me on my way. I now really feel that I am exploiting my full potential”

  One respondent told a story of a young VIP who came into the library with his school group. He had never seen Braille before and was frightened to ask about it. Some time later, he came back on his own and talked to the librarian. She taught him Braille. As a result he was able to complete his studies. He now has a PhD and is a lecturer at Kenyatta University”

  James was inspired by the story of Helen Keller: “The book taught me that disability is not an inability; and that anyone can achieve in life. It really changed my attitude to myself”.

  James and Kefa report that as a result of accessing the mobile library, VIPs are likely to perform better in schools
And what if there was no library and no books to read?

Respondents state that they would have fewer opportunities “I would have missed out a lot. It would have been so expensive to find the books. The library has played a big role in my life.”.

They believe that they would have performed less well in school and higher education.

HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

2.3 Health care providers and professionals

2.3.1 Who we interviewed

We visited the libraries at AMREF and KMTC. We interviewed a total of 20 students (13 male and 7 female), 5 doctor/teachers (4 male and 1 female) and three librarians (1 male and 2 female).

2.3.2 Contexts

AMREF

AMREF Health Africa is a non-governmental organisation providing education and training to medical personnel in Kenya and throughout Africa. AMREF also provides short courses in management and leadership. The library at AMREF is used by the organisations’ own staff as well as researchers, tutors, MSc and undergraduate students both from AMREF, KMTC, and other external universities. It is also used by members of the public who are studying on AMREF’s short courses, Aviation Pilots & Prison Officers.

Having initially failed their inspection by the Commission of University level education, because the library was deemed lacking and without sufficient books, AMREF is now eligible for University status, because of the standard of its library. They are proud of their collection of books. Between 2015-18 BAI supplied 57% of AMREF book

KENYA MEDICAL TRAINING COLLEGE (KMTC)

KMTC is the only public mid-level health training institution in the Ministry of health, KMTC started in 1927 with four students. Today it has grown tremendously, curving a niche for itself as one of the largest medical training institution in East and Central Africa and even beyond- drawing students from Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi, Rwanda, Sudan and Nigeria. KMTC has 68 colleges across the country and has over 34,000 students attending more than 70 medical courses, KMTC makes the biggest single contribution to the health sector in Kenya and is currently producing more than 8000 graduates every year for both the Kenyan public and private health sectors, accounting for more than 80% of the hospitals’ workforce.

The central library at KMTC serves its 4000 students, plus tutors, doctors etc. It hosts an average of 100 students daily and up to 700 daily at peak periods. The librarians also ensure that libraries in the 68 KMTC campuses around the country are supplied with relevant. KMTC has received 7039 books since 2015. This makes up 62% of the current stock.

The libraries are used for research, study, following up references and information presented in lectures, revision, reading newspapers and accessing the Internet. Both libraries are considered to be more useful and better stocked than other university libraries in the country.
2.3.3 Why/how health professionals, students and teachers use the library

The libraries are used for research, study, following up references and information presented in lectures, revision, reading newspapers and accessing the Internet.

2.3.4 What they say about their libraries

They like:

- **Books**: Respondents note that the BAI donated books are highly valued as they are more up to date and relevant than the many of the other available books. They especially appreciate books that support the capacity of students to pass exams; the growing variety of books that complement students’ studies that are not available elsewhere in Kenya; books that support training in other short course such as management (AMREF). Respondents do also request more books on crosscutting disciplines, specific textbooks (see annex) and books on motivation and fiction to supplement medical books.

- **Being able to access and use computers and the internet**: This facility supports their studies and offers opportunities to further research specific topics (although there are caveats, see below). They request more E books in order to access free research papers; and more audio visual materials to further supplement their studies.

- **Long opening times**: The Library at KMTC opens at 7am and closes at 10pm. This provides opportunities for more students to access books for longer each day.

They find challenging:

- **The lack of sufficient copies of textbooks** was cited by a number of students.

- Related to this, and a worrying tendency, we understand that some students who cannot access up-to-date books watch YouTube videos and use Google for information: “These are not reliable peer-reviewed sources of information”. At times, they are using what they have learned in this way to treat people”. Dr. James Gatune (tutor and practising doctor)

- **Teachers are required to teach new and emerging topics** that they have never been trained in.” “They need books to support their own learning before they can teach these new topics” David Nthenge, tutor.

- **Out of date texts**: Tutors assert that many of the books in the libraries are out of date. If these are the only available sources of information, students and practitioners are at risk of misdiagnosing patients symptoms which could lead to further complications and, in some cases, unnecessary deaths.

2.3.5 Changes that health professionals, students and teachers have experienced as a result of accessing books and the library:

Possibly the single most striking statement of the impact assessment exercise came from one of the doctors we interviewend: “We appreciate BAI’s role in saving lives in Kenya”. BAI is clearly making a tangible impact in improving health sector performance in Kenya.

**Changes to knowledge and understanding**: All students (100%) interviewed reported that the library formed a crucial part of their studies. KMTC students suggested that they learned much more about their courses through reading books than by attending lectures.

- “The Library is very important for research and reference. I am grateful for the resources. 70% of our knowledge comes from what we get from the books in the Library while 30% comes from the lectures”. James, student

- Students acknowledge that, while accessing the Internet is very valuable, it does not replace the detail and the accuracy of the text and reference books. Both sources of information are essential to learning and studies.

- James stated that he has lost patients that have been misdiagnosed by doctors who have used YouTube as a resource. He gave the example of one of his patients who had been diagnosed with a tooth abscess, and treated by having the tooth removed. This patient actually had cancer; and by the time he got to treat her, the cancer had spread.
Changes to performance:
There is evidence to suggest that students who use the library get higher grades than those who don’t

- “Students that participate in group studies using the libraries generally perform better than those that do not use the books: the students that read score As (~75 and above) in assignments, while those that do not read score a Pass (50) or fail (below 50)” Dr Mika
- One of the surgeon’s interviewed takes a book with him to every operation. This book, ‘Atlas of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery’ by Deepak Katemani was donated by BAI
- Students and doctors agree that with more information, they are able to make better diagnoses and therefore provide better treatment to patients
- “The BNF (British National Formulary) is like a bible. During my attachment, I was treating a patient and I couldn’t place the right prescription. I referred to BNF and applied that knowledge in understanding the ailment and was able to make proper diagnosis and prescription. The patient got cured”. James
- James’ says that his favourite book is “Head and Neck Injury” He explained that because of the traffic people in Nairobi are particularly vulnerable to accident, with 8 out of 10 suffering the type of injuries covered in this book. He emphasises that, without proper training, patients could be mis-diagnosed and serious injuries may not be spotted immediately.

Changes to quality of life:
As implied above, greater access to relevant up to date materials enables students to become more professional and effective practitioners. The health of patients is better than it might otherwise be.

Additionally better qualified and equipped doctors provide better services and are more valued: “Increase in knowledge, through the availability of books creates new competencies amongst the students. This leads to new opportunities and scope of employment widens students can serve at a global level. This creates a larger income that affects the life chances of all the family.” Dr Francis Namisi

And what if there was no library and no books to read?
Students, teachers and medical practitioners state:
- It would make studying medicine very challenging: There would be no way to follow up lectures and research (“I wouldn’t know where to start since 70% of my knowledge comes from the library”); fewer students would pass their exams “(I would have failed my exams a long time ago”) and buying books would be prohibitively expensive
- Performance as practitioners would be compromised: respondents spoke about poorer medical practices; a rise in the number of “quacks” practise medicine and overall, “there would be more deaths in Kenya”
3.1 Assessment of knls role in contributing to identified changes

With reference to the Book Provision Theory of Change, knls is responsible for

- Receiving, selecting, distributing books in agreed locations and to selected target groups
- Promoting reading and training key stakeholders (librarians/tutors/teachers etc.) to do the same
- Enabling all of BAI’s priority target groups in both rural and urban areas to have access to useful and relevant reading materials

In this section we explore briefly the extent to which they have been able to carry these responsibilities. This has included testing relevant assumptions (see diagram under 1.4.1). We have conducted interviews with BAI senior management team and one trustee, knls staff both in Nairobi, librarians in public and community libraries, as well as the users of the libraries in order to do this.

**Receiving, selecting, distributing books in agreed locations and to selected target groups:**

- BAI staff considers the team at knls to be well resourced, experienced and efficient. They say that on the whole logistics run smoothly and that knls are competent and professional.
- Knls staff in Nairobi confirm that they do distribute the allocated 40% of BAI according to request. They have upgraded their systems for selection by subject, and feel that they are better able to supply “the right books to the right libraries”
- They point out however that they struggle to transport Book Provision books in a timely fashion (allocated vehicles are out of service). This is in contrast to the BAI project books that they are to move much more effectively (as there is a dedicated budget line for this).
- Knls staff that we interviewed acknowledged that they struggle to keep pace with BAI’s ways of working and that they need to improve. In the past they have seen themselves more as a “conduit” for BAI’s need to supply books to different libraries. This view is echoed by (some) BAI staff members. Knls staff state that they want to become more proactive in selection and distribution of books.

**Promoting reading and training key stakeholders (librarians/tutors/teachers etc.) to do the same**

- Knls in Nairobi collaborate with BAI to design and implement training opportunities for librarians. They acknowledge that they do not do as much training as they would like to. However, the libraries that also have projects such as Inspiring Readers, Children’s Corners and outreach to schools and communities have clearly benefitted all round as a consequence of implementing these projects.
- Knls staff in public and community libraries all report that they actively promote reading to stakeholders in their catchment areas. They provide training to new staff, they visit schools and colleges and take part in prize giving ceremonies. They speak at barazas and other public functions. Some libraries have developed active partnerships (and sponsorship arrangements) with donors, District Commissioners and NGOs. A number of libraries run book clubs and support clubs for their different stakeholder groups.
- In visiting the libraries, we noted that all librarians were working hard to encourage reading and use of the library. However it was very clear that some were more skilled and motivated than others; and that this affected both the look and the use of the library.
Enabling all of BAI’s priority target groups in both rural and urban areas to have access to useful and relevant reading materials

- BAI staff trust that knls distribute BAI donated books effectively to their own networks and schools (they distributed 40,417 in the period 2017-8). These institutions include representatives of BAI’s priority target groups. It is worth noting that the knls network is weighted towards urban communities at the possible expense of rural communities.
- Knls also distributed 20,709 books to 79 institutions. They have identified that around 20% of these institutions serve BAI priority target groups.
- There is some question around knls capacity/interest to source and distribute books that do not come from BAI donations.
- In terms of “useful and relevant reading materials”, although clearly knls does distribute large numbers of books effectively, there are some areas where they are not able to deliver:
  - Knls accept that they are not able to satisfy the demand for audio books for the visually impaired
  - There is a clear need for more relevant books for primary school children, and slow learners. This includes the need for more books in Swahili and more African readers
  - There were a few comments that some children’s books were culturally inappropriate (too many white children; topics with which rural African children are totally unfamiliar etc.)

3.2 Assessment of BAI’s role and contribution in this change process

For the purpose of this assessment (and with reference to The Theory of Change) we have focused on the following:

BAI’s Partnership with knls

- BAI and knls have been a working partnership for over 60 years. Both organisations see this as a very well established, trusted and effective working partnership. The two organisations share a similar vision: the combination of their respective offers means that this vision can be realised (at least in part).
- Systems and processes for shipping and receiving book donations are tried, tested and trusted.
- Feedback from those interviewed suggests that BAI may be the more proactive of the two organisations in terms of its ways of working and motivation to promote reading and ensure that books are increasingly available to the more marginalised communities.

Sourcing books

- BAI has an enviable record when it comes to numbers and types of books that they are able to source.
- Knls receives a very substantial number of books from BAI. Over the last three years the numbers and types of books that BAI has sourced and donated has remained more or less consistent. BAI intends to increase donations both in order to support knls requests and their own targets.
- BAI have been able to match many of the book requests submitted by KMTC and AMREF over the last three years: “BAI has gone “above board” in matching knls requirements” (David Cherop, KNLS Librarian). Again what BAI is able to donate is subject to what they can source, but on the whole, these donations are highly valued. Both institutions make the point that medical texts are very expensive and that they would not have the budget to buy the books that they need.
- Using available figures BAI has contributed on average 79% of total stock of books in the public and community libraries that we visited. The BAI contribution to KMTC and AMREF stands at over 50%. We have not been able to access figures for Naivasha Maximum Security Prison

Providing guidance and training to partners

- Two highly qualified BAI staff members are based in Kenya. This means that support, guidance and training are all readily available both for knls staff, and with knls staff when they are building the capacity of librarians in public and community libraries. They play a crucial role in country in ensuring that BAI projects are implemented to desired high standards. They also encourage and support partners to modernise and approaches and reach out to more marginalised groups and more rural areas.
4.1. Introduction

Informed by the impact assessment framework, we have explored three questions:

- To what extent do BAI beneficiaries appreciate access to libraries and the books and services that they offer?
- What has actually changed for them in terms of:
  - The extent that they have acquired new knowledge and/or skills as a result
  - Their attitudes, performance and/or access to new opportunities and choices?
  - Their quality of life?
- To what extent and how have knls and BAI been able to contribute to these changes?

These conclusions take into account the relatively small numbers of readers that we were able to interview and that, because of the types of changes we are exploring reported results are mostly subjective.

4.1.1 To what extent do BAI beneficiaries appreciate access to libraries, books and the services that they offer?

With the exception of medical students in Nairobi, BAI beneficiaries live in rural towns or remote areas of the country. Many are challenged by issues of poverty and lack of access to government services and provision. Some are excluded from or marginalised by their communities; others are living in communities that struggle with issues of tribal or ethnic conflict.

The fact that they are prepared to invest time in using their libraries in light of such hardship is remarkable in itself.

Local libraries provide a valued resource and a physical space that enables all users to read, learn, improve and change both their own lives and, very often, those of their families or communities.

In libraries where BAI has implemented projects such as Inspiring Readers, Children’s Corners and Digital Connections, primary school and other children clearly enjoy and benefit from the (much) improved look of the libraries and the improved services they provide Access to and use of the library holds a special and unique significance for prisoners who see it as a route to hope, improved status within the prison, and possible parole.

Reflecting on what life would be like without libraries and reading materials, respondents acknowledge that there would be many negative consequences.

These include additional/impossible personal costs in terms of study, a lack of motivation to read and learn, fewer opportunities to develop knowledge and/or skills, compromised performance and results in educational institutions at all levels, access to jobs, the ability to start small businesses. People would also have fewer opportunities to hope or dream. The simple pleasure of sitting somewhere quiet and enjoying the space to read would not be available.

For medical students and health professionals, standards and performance would be compromised. This is likely to lead to more illnesses and possibly a greater number of deaths.

4.1.2 What has actually changed for BAI beneficiaries as a result of accessing books:

New knowledge and/or skills:

In these settings, and as a result of accessing and reading books, we are confident that the vast majority of those we interviewed have gained new knowledge, insights and/or understandings.

We also note the pleasure that many respondents find in reading novels – sometimes for enjoyment and relaxation and/or to take minds “to another place”; sometimes to learn new ways of looking at life. This pleasure feeds into changes we cite below.
CHANGES TO ATTITUDES AND/OR PERFORMANCE

Attitudes:
The value of having (a constant supply of) novels available for all beneficiary groups, offers them a chance to see things from different perspectives, to imagine and to hope, to adapt the ways they see themselves and others, and “to enter other worlds”. This is particularly significant for children: we found that reading novels enables them to learn lessons about life and possibly to incorporate them into their own behaviours. It helps them to view different perspectives, to be more ambitious and to imagine different futures.

All beneficiary groups appreciate and benefit from reading motivational books: changes to their attitudes, self esteem and ability to support others form a constant thread though the findings.

This is particularly significant for those prisoners who have been able to change their attitudes to themselves and others, and, through reading and education, can hope for a better life.

For the few visually impaired people that we spoke to, books have given them an increased sense of empowerment and self-confidence. Being able to read independently serves to bridge the gap between themselves and their sighted friends is considered highly significant to them

Performance/opportunities
The opportunity for self study has enabled students in and out of school to pass or improve on school grades has enabled students, and thus to continue their formal education

For members of the community, the opportunity for self study has enabled them to learn new skills has enabled individuals to start businesses, save money by completing tasks themselves, and acts as supporters, guides, mentors pastors to members of their communities.

The availability of readers and novels means that primary school pupil have improved access to quality materials that enhance their ability to read and write in English. Many of the materials complement and enhance the curriculum. This means that, other things being equal, more children have improved opportunities to get better grades in their school exams. Passing primary school exams is the first and essential step to continuing through to secondary and tertiary education in the formal sector.

In some cases, children have learned important lessons about food and hygiene, which they have been able to take home to their (illiterate) parents. In this way they have contributed to improved understanding and behaviours within their families.

For medical students, their teachers and medical practitioners, the availability of up to date and relevant reading materials appears to be transformational. As a result, they become more competent and more professional. This means that more patients receive better treatment.

Access to high quality relevant information also leads to better qualifications which offer enables new health professionals enhanced employment opportunities

CHANGES TO QUALITY OF LIFE

Specific qualify of life changes as a result of accessing and reading (BAI donated) books are not easy to identify or prove. At best, the organisation can cite examples of how the lives of some individuals have been transformed as a result reading the right books at the right time. And it can take some credit for this. Bearing in mind the multiplicity of other actors and factors that could also have influenced these changes, these illustrations do reinforce the validity of BAI’s efforts

That said, in all of the accounts that we were given, respondents either state or imply that changes to their attitudes, performance and behaviours have enhanced their lives in one or more ways. For some, the very existence of the library within communities can be life enhancing: it becomes a focal point for girls empowerment (through book clubs) networking, socialising, learning, motivation and inspiration. In some cases (Rumuruti), the library has become a catalyst for promoting peace (through the peace circles that librarians and others facilitate)

Medical students and professionals indicate that, with the support of books donated by BAI to their libraries, they are more effective practitioners and, as a result, are contributing to better health and longer lives of their patients. While, this statement cannot be substantiated, there are reasons to believe that it has some validity.
4.1.3 To what extent and how have knls and BAI been able to contribute to these changes

**KNLS**

Knls has played a significant role in enabling identified changes to take place. In their own right, this library service is responsible for either setting up and running public libraries, or supporting the set up and running of community libraries. As stated above, the very presence of the library provides an enabling environment for members of the community to improve their own or their communal situations.

Knls has stocked libraries with books, and both at national and local levels they have solicited donations of books, reading materials and computers and access to the Internet. In terms of knls agreed responsibilities, in most respects the library service is delivering to or above agreed standards.

Librarians on the whole seemed to be professional and motivated. Clearly there is a wide spectrum of experience and ability, and this affects the quality of the service they are able to provide. Where librarians have received recent relevant training, they demonstrate their added value in both attracting more readers and more donations to their libraries.

All libraries are in need of more current and specific books.

**BAI**

BAI’s Book Provision Programme can take pride in the way that it has supported and promoted a culture of reading in Kenya. Through this, the organisation has contributed to positive changes for (literally) countless numbers of people in the country.

In addition to the obvious ways in which the organisation has supported these changes (sourcing and sending books over a period of 60 years, collaborating and supporting partners etc.), BAI has also contributed by:

- Setting up and implementing projects in specific libraries has a very noticeable benefit for all users
- Clearly identifying and targeting poorer and more marginalised groups, and encouraging knls to reach out more purposefully to these groups
- Constantly encouraging knls to become more proactive and responsive to local community needs

In comparison with knls and other donors, BAI has donated the lion’s share of books to the libraries we visited. BAI donated books tend to be newer and more relevant than the existing stock. We extrapolate from this that BAI’s contribution to identified changes is considerable.

The longevity and success of the partnership between BAI and knls may have had some less positive consequences in terms of knls’ book buying strategies: BAI has its own targets to meet in terms of numbers of books it wants to distribute. Knls has been a very willing recipient. This may have impacted on the numbers and types of books that the library service has purchased in recent years.

### 4.2 Recommendations

In collating and analysing both BAI and knls roles and contributions and in the spirit of enabling both organisations to improve on their offers we recommend the following:

**For knls:**

- Be more proactive in ensuring that more marginalised and remote communities have access to their services and existing libraries amongst those communities receive more books.
- Prioritise distribution of books for libraries that require a high level of weeding or archiving and implement weeding/archive strategies.
- Find more innovative and effective transport solutions, mechanisms, routes and partnerships to transport books throughout the country.
- Increase collaboration with the MOE to ensure that books that support teaching and learning of the current curricula are also sent to the national and local libraries.
- Increase knls monitoring of remote libraries by CDBD personnel to assess and review distribution and infrastructure needs.
- Provide on-going training for librarians in networking, resource mobilisation, leadership and team working skills.
- Give more focus to sourcing sought after books for specific beneficiary groups: e.g. more African readers for primary school children, more motivational books for all libraries. This could include more active partnerships with local publishers.
- Invest in software and technologies to enable more people to access reading materials appropriately (including visually impaired people)
- To ensure future sustainability and eventual end to the partnership with BAI, continue to seek other grants and partnerships both locally and internationally

For BAI:
- Continue to source and supply books in high demand (especially those connected to current curricula, as well as specific medical texts).
- Pursue a new strategy to identify new sources of books that are in high demand (motivational, vocational and English language readers etc)
- Consider the current agreed strategy for numbers of copies of books to allocate to different libraries (especially those where students are studying for exams), thus enabling a greater number of students to access much needed books at specific times.
- Prioritise projects sites in the most remote communities where book needs are greatest.
- Include Braille reading software equipment with Braille book donations, to enable visually impaired people to access more reading materials.
- In considering knls future and sustainability, discuss ways in which BAI can ensure that their own book donations are matched by knls and/or by other donors.
- Build in a more critically reflective approach to existing M&E systems so that the Book Provision Programme is more able to adapt and respond to changing needs and priorities.
Contextual overview of locations selected for the impact assessment of Leisure readers:

We selected geographical areas that best represented a cross section of the selected beneficiary groups in both rural and urban settings for this impact assessment. In each of these areas, BAI supplies books to public or community libraries through its primary partner in Kenya, knls. We conducted interviews and focus group discussions with key stakeholders in institutional, public and community libraries in the following areas:

The following short summaries provide a brief overview of the local contexts and the 8 libraries that we visited:

**Thika:**

Thika is a large town is home to heavy industries like tannery, textile cloth, footwear, food processing, motor vehicle assembly and cigarette manufacture. It also hosts over a hundred light industries and twenty-six major factories and has vibrant and fast growing commercial activities like commerce, banking, telecommunication and hospitality. Poverty levels in Thika District are very high. The District is metropolitan and has all tribes from all over the country who seek for employment in the industries.

Thika public library serves about 54 primary public and private schools, 7 secondary schools, 13 tertiary colleges and 5 under special category (physically challenged and socially disadvantaged). The special category includes the Thika Prison, Thika level 5 hospital, Joy town school for the physically challenged and Thika School for the blind. The library has registered 4548 members (2339 adults and 2209 children).

Thika library currently holds 42,306 books. BAI has donated 7354 of these books (since 2015, meaning that BAI contribution stands at 17.38% of the total

**Gilgil:**

Gilgil is a semi urban area. The slum in Gilgil has poor unplanned and low quality houses, built haphazardly and with no planned water and sewerage services. The community is poor and living in slum neighbourhoods. Poverty levels are high. Food scarcity is common.

The idea of establishing Gilgil library in a marginalised area was occasioned by the urgent need to have a facility where school going children, students, school leavers and the general public could rest and seek information in various academic, social and recreational disciplines.

The library is largely run with the input of the local community. This is through a standing committee that the community has fronted to represent its interest in the management of its affairs. The composition of the committee is made up of professional and prominent business people who are residents of Gilgil.

The library serves around 100,000 readers per annum. It serves 15 primary schools and 10 secondary schools.
Gilgil library currently holds 11,835 books, BAI has donated 2502 of these books (since 2015, meaning that BAI contribution stands at 17.33% of the total

**Rumuruti:**

This is a rural region in Kenya known for tribal violence and conflict. The main community livelihood activity is cattle and agriculture. The region is home to communities of every tribe in Kenya (42). Literacy levels are low and poverty levels are high. The area is remote and deeply entrenched cultural beliefs regarding girls and women render girls vulnerable to practices that clash with education and independence. Boys are also at risk of not being educated because of the importance of cattle and herding.

Library fees discourage poorer people. Rumuruti library currently holds 14,529 books, BAI has donated 1523 of these books (since 2015), meaning that BAI contribution stands at 10.48% of the total

**Ol kalao**

Olkalao is a quiet town whose main activities are farming of potatoes and dairy farming. Local challenges include a low reading culture; a small cramped and decaying library infrastructure. Poverty levels are high. Livelihoods include farming; remoteness can mean travelling to the library can be costly to the individual; People lack understanding of the benefit of the library – believe only for school purposes only. The benefit of reading for pleasure, researching information and leisure reading is hard for people to understand.

Olkalao library currently holds 18,116 books, BAI has donated 1368 of these books (since 2015), meaning that BAI contribution stands at 7.5% of the total

**Chinga**

Chinga is a rural town in Nyeri County. The library is situated in a police campus. It opened in 2007. It is owned by the community and continue to support the project in mobilization of the resources. Although working hard to support the local community it suffers from a lack of relevant materials, poor Internet access and lack of space. It is in need of repair and re-decoration. The library has a mandate to provide library services to all residents of Othaya region and Nyeri County at large. This is a very large catchment area

Chinga library currently holds 17,789 books, BAI has donated 2499 of these books (353 for adults and 2141 for children) since 2015, meaning that BAI contribution stands at 14.08% of the total
Munyu

Munyu is a rural location in Nyeri County, Kieni East District, Warazo location.

The community started in the year 1999. In addition to regular services, the library has started the school Book Box project. This project aims to enhance the library activities by taking the services closer to the readers and targets potential library users who are located in the expansive sub county and who seldom visit the library.

The library now has Internet and WI-FI connectivity (ten computers and a printer) and is in the

In addition to print books, the library has 50 E-readers each installed with 200 e-books for both junior and adult users totaling to 10,000 E-books and 10 computers connected to the Internet.

The library has a total of 5338 registered members (2762 children and 2576 adults) and approximately 24,000 clients visit the library monthly.

Munyu library currently holds 12,401 books. BAI has donated 2026 of these books) since 2015, meaning that BAI contribution stands at 16.33% of the total. Additionally BAI has supported Munyu Library with a Children's Corner

Timau

Timau community library is situated in Timau Town, Buuri District in Meru County. The community have been very active both in supporting the development of the library and sourcing substantial donations from private donors and companies to construct the building and to supply books.

The main economic activity of Timau is Agriculture i.e. Large Scale farming, small-scale farming and small and medium Enterprises. Challenges in the community include:

Large portion of the populations comes from the arid areas into Timau to seek work rather than education
There are no educational institutions past secondary level in the area, save for the Keru Technical College which opened 2 years ago. There is generally a poor reading culture.

Water is very scarce in this area. These are periods were there is a lot of conflict amongst the people due to competition for the resources. As this is a farming area and people rely on agriculture, the erratic weather can add strain (failed crops etc.)

The library currently holds 15,025 books. BAI has donated 4013 of these books) since 2015, meaning that BAI contribution stands at 26.7% of the total
Example question structure and process: Interview questions/ process for beneficiary groups

**Purpose:**
- To enable key informant beneficiaries to reflect on and share their perceptions on the benefits of accessing and reading books
- To capture number and types of changes that beneficiaries report
- To understand the role that the library service has played in making these changes happen

**Method:**
Depending on numbers: Semi-structured interview (see guidance notes) and/or Body Map exercise

**Notes:**
- This is a generic set of questions. Be sure to ask questions, give examples that are specific to this target group
- You will need body map notes for this exercise. Please be sure to have read the notes and prepared the materials that you will need for this exercise

**Time:**
1 to 1.5 hours depending on numbers and types of beneficiary groups

**Basic information**
- Organisation/library
- Location
- Names of participants + ages, gender, and any other relevant information (status, ethnicity, disability)

**Welcome, purpose and what we will be doing**
- Begin with a greeting and general chat to make people feel comfortable.
- Explain why we are here and how we hope that participants will be able to help us: we will be asking a few questions of a number of different groups and then we will be reflecting on the answers. This will help us to better understand the value of having books to read, and how we can improve our support to libraries and schools.
- Describe activity and how long it will take

**Seek permission and assure confidentiality**
- Assure confidentiality – assure the respondent that her/ his answers will not be shared with anyone else

**Provide guidance and reassurance re their answers**
- Explain the importance of honest answers – explain to the respondent why it is so important that the information s/he provides reflects her/his true feelings, knowledge and opinions. If relevant, tell the respondents that not everyone has reported benefits from accessing books in the library. Some have and some haven’t. Explain that it would really help us to improve the service if the respondents are as honest as other people were
- Clarify expectations – explain that the answer which the respondent provides will have no negative consequences for the library services

**Interview questions**

**Getting to know you**
1. Tell us a bit about yourselves and your families: how you spend your days
2. In your community what are the main challenges that you face in your lives? Tell us how/why that makes life difficult for you

**Understanding how/when/why/ you use the library**
3. How often do you visit the library (average)?
4. Why do you go there? What do you usually do when you are in the library?
5. Which types of books do you like best? Why?
6. What do you like best about your visits to the library? Why?
7. Is there anything that you find difficult/challenging about being there? What is it and why is it a problem?
Understanding what difference accessing and reading books has made to you in your lives
We are trying to understand how reading books might have helped you in your life or your studies. We know from other people: It could be that you get new knowledge /understanding (provide relevant examples); you develop new skills and qualifications (provide relevant examples), new opportunities, improved self confidence, ability to help others… (provide relevant examples) it might lead to people being able to improve both their own lives and the lives of their families and communities (provide relevant examples)

We have developed a diagram to capture this (share body map and explain why head, heart, hands feet)

We are hoping that you may be able to provide some examples.

Starter questions (ask for one or two volunteers to start with, so that you can demonstrate):
8. Tell us about one of the best/most useful books that you have read recently:
   a. What was it about (enable them to tell the stories ..)?
   b. Why did you like it so much (or find it so useful)?
   c. What has been the result for you?

Now ask others to contribute in the same way. Try to get examples from as many people as possible. Encourage them to think about both fiction and non-fiction.

Then completed, review results together, ask them to discuss/reflect together:
9. We can see that reading books has helped you in many different ways. When you look at the diagram, which would you say made the biggest difference to you? Why?
10. Reading books has helped you make changes in your life. Was it just the books that made the difference: Is there anything/anyone else who has helped you make these changes happen (e.g. parents/teachers/other pupils who have guided/supported you? Or you found exactly the right book at the right time for you.)
11. What would life be like for you now if you had not been able to access or read this (these) books?
### Field Visit Agenda

#### Schedule for Book provision Impact Assessment – 17th Sept to 21st Sept, 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>17TH MONDAY</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.30 - 11.00</td>
<td>Meeting in Nairobi</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.00 - 13.00</td>
<td>Meeting with CDB, knls</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.00</td>
<td>Both groups travel out of Nairobi</td>
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<tr>
<td>14:00 - 17:00</td>
<td>Group One: Travel to Nyeri</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evening</td>
<td>Group Two: Travel to Naivasha</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nyeri town</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Naivasha town</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>18TH TUESDAY</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00 - 12:00</td>
<td>Chinga library</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Naivasha library and Naivasha Prison</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00 - 13:00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>13:00 - 14:00</td>
<td>Travel to Munyu library</td>
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<tr>
<td>14:00 - 17:00</td>
<td>Munyu library</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evening</td>
<td>Travel to Nanyuki</td>
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<td>Travel to Nyahururu</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>19TH WEDNESDAY</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00 - 12:00</td>
<td>Timau library</td>
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<td>Olkalao library</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00 - 13:00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>13:00 - 15:00</td>
<td>Travel to Thika</td>
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<td>15:00 - 17:00</td>
<td>Thika library</td>
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<td>Evening</td>
<td>Thika town</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Nyahururu town</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>20TH THURSDAY</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00 - 11:00</td>
<td>Thika library</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Travel back to Nairobi</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00 - 12:00</td>
<td>Travel to Nairobi</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00 - 13:00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>14:00 - 17:00</td>
<td>Kenya Medical Training College</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evening</td>
<td>Nairobi</td>
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<td>AMREF</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>21ST FRIDAY</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00 - 13:00</td>
<td>Meeting in Nairobi</td>
</tr>
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Summary of books requested by different libraries

Chinga (Primary)
Students book requests
- Revision books
- books about sports and wellness
- High-flyers
- Math
- Science
- Intense CID
- English First Aid
- How to draw
- Picture books
- First Aid

Chinga Police book requests
- Adult Fiction
- Revision books

Chinga Librarian book requests
- School curriculum books
- Specialist books (i.e. Medical)
- Motivational Vocational
- Visual Aids (DVDs) that accompany books to reinforce the print

Munyu (Primary)
Students book requests
- Story books
- Dictionaries
- Encyclopaedias

Timau Librarian Book requests
- Higher Education (esp. Biology)
- African Writers
- Story books for children

Timau Leisure Readers Book Requests
- Bee keeping (including landscape gardening to grow plants for the bees0 and Farming
- Motivational Books
- Adult Fiction
- Books that are not outdated
- Higher Education

Thika Leisure Readers Book Requests
- Motivational books (particularly spiritual, inspirational and psychosocial)
- Adult Fiction
- Biographies & Autobiographies
- Books that are current, up to date
- Braille books
- Higher Education
- Grammar Books

KNLS PWD Book Requests
- Audio books for the mobile libraries (Braille books are too bulky)
- Motivational (i.e. Ben Carson)
- Assisted Technology (Pearl Scanners)
This impact assessment was carried out by Maureen O'Flynn (Independent Consultant) in collaboration with key members of staff from BAI and knls

The assessment was funded by players of People's Postcode Lottery. Book Aid International would like to thank players for their on-going support. The charity would also like to thank The Kenya National Library Service for their collaboration in assessing the impact of books and publishing this report.