Community Libraries Action Research in Ethiopia and Uganda

Review Report

Prof. Ken Harley

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With funding from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and as part of its work on the early literacy ecosystem and open licensing, Neil Butcher & Associates (NBA) is conducting research into the successful sharing of alternative content creation and distribution models that harness open licensing. One project contributing to this research is the role of community libraries in creating high quality children's stories written in local languages, and making these accessible with an open licence. NBA's goal is to contribute to enhancing the availability of children's books in mother-tongue languages in Africa, using open licensing. This report by Ken Harley is a review of two projects – one in Uganda and one in Ethiopia.

NBA has also created a website, the Early Literacy Resource Network (ELRN), to share information on toolkits and research about open licensing, teacher training, national language and book policies, access and distribution, and key players in early literacy. The resources on the ELRN website gather together work carried out by the major organizations and researchers in this field. Please visit at: http://www.earlyliteracynetwork.org/.

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Cover page photo: Ato Solomon and his grandson. Ato Solomon is a community member who wrote some stories for this project.
Fitche community library, Ethiopia, Lisbeth Levey

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Acronyms

AR	Action Research
ASb	African Storybook
CE	Code-Ethiopia
DWW	Damien Wadika Wamai (a community library in Uganda)
CL	Community Library
EIFL	Electronic Information for Libraries
IREX	International Research & Exchanges Board
MoE	Ministry of Education
MT	Mother tongue
NBA	Neil Butcher and Associates
PI	Principal Investigator
PTC	Primary Training College
SW	StoryWeaver
ToR	Terms of Reference
ToT	Training of Trainers
UCU	Uganda Christian University
UgCLA	Uganda Community Libraries Association
UIL	UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning
UIS	University ICT Services

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Executive Summary

Note: The Main Report on this project is structured around Terms of Reference (ToR) for project review. This Executive Summary takes its structure from the wish to provide a simpler and more direct overview of the project, from its conception to conclusion.

Background

Project aims and design

In a one-year project funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, two sets of six selected Community Libraries (CLs) in Ethiopia and Uganda were recruited to engage in an action research project to:

- create high quality children's stories written in local languages, and
- to make these accessible.

Overall project purpose was one of contributing to knowledge and understanding on how openly licensed book-content creation, as well as methods of distribution, can inform thinking about ways of providing young children access to high quality storybooks that they can read for pleasure.

Extensive networking made it possible for project management to identify experts working actively in the field of CLs and early literacy. Because of the action research component in the project, the two implementing agencies were contracted as 'Principal Investigators' (PI). PIs played a major role in conceptualizing and setting up the project in their respective countries. Each project was thus thoroughly grounded in the reality of its own country context.

Flexibility allowed for adjustments once the CL project commenced. It was rather like a person walking the road while making it. The best example of this was the addition of a new arm to the project in Uganda after contracts had been signed. That was an instance of innovation. There was pragmatism too. To make project objectives more feasible and attainable, the contractual number of six CLs originally selected on the basis of their proximity to headquarters in the two capital cities was reduced to five in Ethiopia, and four in Uganda.

Project setting

Both countries provided suitable settings for a project of this kind. First, both had national polices supporting mother-tongue instruction in the early years of schooling. Second, with their multiplicity of languages, there was a dire need for children's stories in those languages. However, in the matter of government support for community libraries, there was a crucial difference that in turn had implications for the way the project was implemented in each country. Table (i) below shows key differences across the two national contexts, each with its own distinctive PI mode of operation.

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Table (i) *National contexts and PI mode of operation*

Country	Government support for CLS	PI implementing the project
Ethiopia	Significant support in respect of CL structures, facilities, and staff salaries. Mandatory management structure brings together key role players, e.g. librarians, woredas, schools and the community.	CODE Ethiopia (CE)[1] brought to CLs its considerable organizational expertise, experience and capacity of working with libraries since 1994. It also brought its networks and its working relationship with government.
Uganda	No government support for CLs. UgCLA[2] (an NGO) provides such support as it can to CLs established by a wide range interest groups, e.g. church or parish, family trust.	A single individual.[3] With no bureaucratic or contractual accountability other than to the project, the PI was well placed to respond appropriately and quickly to particular needs in diverse CL settings.

Review methodology

The reviewer understood the aim of the review as being

> *To deepen knowledge and understanding about key issues in libraries as centres of literacy development in Uganda and Ethiopia.[4]*

Data were drawn from project documents, meetings, and discussions with PIs as well as with stakeholders in the libraries. PIs accompanied and guided the three-person visiting team (two from project management and the reviewer) on site visits to five CLs in Ethiopia, and four in Uganda. The review has the benefit of a very adequate pool of data.

How the project unfolded in and across the two countries

Action Research and Deliverables

Action Research
In a project premised on Action Research (AR) as a tool for guiding and monitoring project development, PIs certainly followed the AR cyclical precepts of: plan, act, observe, reflect. They did not, however, do the 'Research' part of AR. This is not a criticism of what they did. Stripped of its academic cladding, AR is a process that can be viewed not 'as a method for research but rather as a process of doing and inquiring.'[5] PIs indeed did the 'doing and inquiring' necessary for project purposes.

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[1] A non-profit NGO that contributes to the building and development of libraries and was working with 97 libraries at the time of the project.
[2] Uganda Community Libraries Association
[3] The PI is an academic at Uganda Christian University and an activist in community library development.
[4] 'Proposal for Action Research in Uganda and Ethiopia-Program 2017'
[5] Reason, P. and Bradbury, H. 2008. The SAGE Handbook of Action Research Participative Inquiry and Practice (2nd Ed.). Los Angeles: SAGE.

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The Baseline Study is the single element of research to emerge from within the project. It provided very useful insights into the state and condition of CLs at the time of project commencement. In Ethiopian CLs, there was a uniform picture of functionality in terms of adequate provisioning, staffing and procedures for the orderly housing of reading materials, and for community access. Records were kept. Across CLs in Uganda the picture was one of diversity and a measure of dysfunction. Basic infrastructure was lacking, and staffing inadequate. On the other hand, it appeared as if Ugandan CLs had a focus more clearly aligned with early literacy practices (but without an indication of how much was actually happening).

Project 'Deliverables'

Overall, PIs' actions resulted in storybook production that surpassed contractual expectations.

Table (ii)   *Storybook targets and storybooks completed*

Country	Storybook target	Storybooks completed by May 2018
Uganda	• 10 original storybooks per library uploaded to online platforms (i.e. total of 60 storybooks) • 50 copies of each title printed.	• 143 on African Storybook (ASb) and StoryWeaver (SW) (43 from CLs; 100 from the translation initiative)
Ethiopia	50 original stories	• 59 completed stories in PDF format uploaded to tablets, but not yet on online platforms. • A further 26, complete with illustrations, are in process.

Table (ii) shows that storybooks from Uganda came from two sources: 43 from the four CLs, 100 from the translation initiative. The latter was not part of the original CL project plan; nor was it located in a CL. Based in the PI's own Uganda Christian University (UCU), it came about as an innovative complementary arm to the CL project. The PI introduced storybook translation as an optional unit in the coursework component of his Creative Writing and Literary Theory course. After a shaky start, with SW having rejected several first round stories on the grounds that these were promoting religious 'agendas,' momentum picked up. In producing storybooks, the originally unplanned translation arm of the project soon became more prolific than the planned CL part of the project.

The following section limits its focus to the planned part of the project. We return to the translation initiative later.

How storybook targets were achieved in CLs

Challenges

By far the major challenge, in both countries, was that of providing illustrations resonant with the contextual settings of the storybooks and the environments of children most likely to read them. Without this obstacle, output would doubtless have been much higher. Another common problem lay in the technical difficulties experienced in the uploading of stories; and in the printing of downloaded stories. This difficulty, however, was experienced most acutely in the translation work at UCU. Although both ASb and SW provided prompt

assistance, problems remained unresolved. This is partly because some difficulties lie beyond the competence of the online platforms. Lack of adequate ICT infrastructure and bandwidth, for example, are local problems.

Each country also had to overcome its own particular major difficulty. From the Baseline Study it was clear that the project in Uganda faced a double challenge. Storybook writing would need to take place in tandem with the development of libraries so as to make them sufficiently functional homes for the project. Contention over what was correct orthography in debates about dialects delayed story writing at some sites.

Project launch in Ethiopia was delayed by the need to conclude a contract with CODE in Canada. It was then further delayed by the onset of civil unrest that ended only in April 2018. Road travel had to be curtailed, and this delayed the initial training on which the project was based. Communications between CE and the CLs were also hampered during this time.

Different paths to storybook production

Table 3 below is a slightly abbreviated version of a table in the Main Report.

Table (iii)   *Differences from starting points through to operations and outcomes*

Issue	Uganda	Ethiopia
The starting point: CL functionality and capacity	Volunteer librarians.	CE-trained librarians, paid by government.
	CLs at low levels of development and functionality.	CLs had infrastructure, functionality, procedures and systems.
	Diverse management structures at sites, e.g. church, family trust, private school, regal patronage.	CL management structure included representation of community, local schools and government officials.
The nature of project challenge	Dual challenge: develop library functionality concurrently with project story writing.	Infuse project practices into relatively well functioning libraries.
Organizational setting of the project	One-person project. Individual CLs have no common organizational home.	Project vested in CE with its considerable organizational experience of working with CLs in supporting government policy.
Different sets of networks	PI's network mainly linked with academic community, UgCLA and other projects working in early literacy.	CE's network includes government and international NGOs supporting early literacy in ways that also equipped CLs with tablets.

Issue	Uganda	Ethiopia
Implementation strategy	Budget plan and strategy for working with people were both 'responsive', and in accord with what people 'were ready for.'	CE infused project aims into an established model for promoting development across a relatively uniform set of CLs.
Core CL staff	Mainly volunteers from the community. Lack of Librarian continuity. Unpaid volunteers in key positions, e.g. the illustrator, reviewers and QA team.	Government pays salaries of some library staff. Volunteers are from the local community, e.g. parents and elders.
Training for story-writing	Individualized at sites (has to be so, as each site has its own uniqueness). PI had 35 workshops with writers.	One 2-day centralized ToT session (one librarian, school director, teacher from each of 6 sites). Training materials were used. CLs then cascaded training.
The CL relationship with schools	CLs must draw in schools through community bonds or PI persuasion. Schools can dictate terms.	Mandatory, structured, and from what could be seen on site visits, a very constructive relationship.
Story production	In line with PI's philosophy, children were free to write their own stories.	Story writing was very much a community effort. It was particularly inclusive and structured at one site.
Prospects for sustainability	Lack of organizational home and dependency on PI is an obstacle. Translation at UCU has better prospects of sustainability.	Endeavours supporting Early Literacy appear to be well embedded in CL community structures and culture.

These two very different paths to outcomes remind one of Robert Frost's poem 'Two roads diverged in a yellow wood ….' There were few intersections across these paths. The most notable commonality was that in each country the project developed its own system of quality assurance (QA). Almost predictably though, these systems were of different kinds. A robust two-step system was developed in Ethiopia. The first step was self-review. Two of the structured writing teams each included a school principal/language teacher to ensure language probity. The language aspect of quality, however, seemed to be overridden by the role of community elders in making sure that stories conveyed the 'true' cultural messages. First drafts of stories from each CL were then shared with other CLs. After getting feedback, CE used its organizational capacity – based on its history as an NGO publisher, with a dedicated person on staff for publishing – to commission illustrations, finalize and then print stories.

In Uganda, QA was co-ordinated by the PI in consultation with library staff at the CLs. As such, it seemed to be inter-personal rather than uniformly structured; and its purpose more for selecting stories for further development than for providing feedback to writers.

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First, it is clear that PIs made the most of the strengths and opportunities of their own situations in relation to circumstances they encountered in the CLs. They were *strategic*.

CE put its assets to good advantage, particularly with its centralized training-of-trainers. It had both the experience and the materials to provide effective training. Site visits confirmed that training had indeed been effective. There is an element of institutionalization here.

In Uganda, freed of bureaucratic constraint, and inspired by commitment and passion, the PI marshalled resources and recruited volunteers in very disparate and not very functional libraries. New opportunities were identified and fashioned into an enterprise that promoted the aims of the project. The UCU translation initiative is the best example, but there were others, such as story writing being infused into an already up and running ICT training programme at one CL.

Second, site visits provided evidence of a project that was welcomed and embraced by communities. Elders, in particular, wanted to tell their stories. The more tightly knit and cohesive the community, the stronger was the embrace. There were also indications that project rationale itself can help to forge new community bonds.

Third, there is project design and implementation. A sound project design was followed through with flexibility and openness by a well-networked project management team overseeing developments in the two countries. As suggested above, AR is an appropriate tool for implementing a project of this kind. However, it is a pity that project documents did not make clear the understanding that implementers should act in the mode of action researchers, and not in the mode of academic action researchers. The term AR is too loaded with academic connotations to be promoted without explanation. Also, the academic variant of AR is not feasible when action researchers are at some distance from the action. Visits are too infrequent for research purposes, and time demand would be excessive.

End of project reflections

The project in a nutshell

Community Libraries in Uganda

Thanks to the resourcefulness of the PI, CLs were undoubtedly better equipped for storytelling and story writing by the end of the project. Children at community libraries were writing stories in numbers, and seemingly with great enjoyment. However, apart from those stories selected for further development, story writing seemed to be stuck at the level of the many unselected stories languishing in what was called the 'story basket' in each CL. Only one CL was embarking on a plan to type, catalogue and print these stories so that they could be read by other local children. The difficulty here is that story writing in the CLs does not have an organizational home. Had the PI not played a major role in developing selected children's stories into book format, it is unlikely that these CLs would have produced any completed storybooks.

The UCU translation initiative in Uganda

The productive translation initiative has gained a foothold in the UCU curriculum and now has the support of a Community Service Grant. Through this and postgraduate student interns, the unplanned part of CL project has come to support the planned part of the project in CLs. In fact, 'deliverables' would not have been achieved without the translation initiative. This is Uganda's major contribution to the project.

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By the end of the project, the picture was one of story writing firmly embedded in organizationally inclusive CL structures, as well as in local community culture. CLs had taken 'ownership' of story-writing. Having completed the training, CE's role became one of supporting CL's storybook creation and managing distribution of the finished products. Prospects of sustainability are good. With the system of training-of-trainers being 'cascaded', the project has acquired some momentum of its own.

Supply chains (or value networks)

The overarching question behind this project was that of how to explore alternative (disruptive) value chains using community libraries as a source of openly-licensed stories, and to get stories written and published in ways that makes them accessible to young readers.

Two different kinds of publishing value chains emerged in the CL project. That in the Ugandan UCU translation initiative was the more embryonic and unstructured. Story creation In Ethiopia involves a structured supply chain beginning with the centralized training-of-trainers (to be cascaded), through all necessary processes until completed stories are uploaded onto tablets at fellow community libraries.

Looking ahead: Whose story is it? How do we understand 'quality'?

The need for clarity about how 'quality' is understood arises from early developments in the creation and translation of stories in Uganda. With their strong focus on religion, early stories had been rejected in SW's selection process, and reportedly advised against by ASb. In addressing these concerns, the PI successfully schooled writers in 'universalizing' cultural messages relayed through stories.

We do not have detail of the processes through which stories were rejected, or of the extent to which 'universalized' messages in stories deviate from the authors' original representations. Because education is secular in Ethiopia, it seems unlikely that the same issue will arise when CE submits its stories to online repositories. However, the mere fact that stories of a particular Ugandan cultural genre have been excluded, and that such exclusions have led to stories being written with a global audience in view, highlights the existence of two layers of QA: there is a local, inner layer of QA at community level; and there is the distant 'global' layer of story selection and rating on the part of online platforms.

Each of these layers of QA makes provision for a different constituency. It seems safe to assume that if CLs are supported in writing up their stories, those stories will predominantly be folk tales that carry the cultural messages and 'lessons' that are most valued in the local context. Having a global constituency, online platforms must cater for all communities, and offend none. Their selection and rating systems are existentially distant from the voice of the community whose story is in question, and quite possibly in tension with the very reason why communities want their stories to be written in the first place. What criteria and processes do online platforms follow when they receive a storybook in a language known only by the small, distant community that submitted it? At an even more basic level, we need to interrogate issues such as: If the story is a folk tale, is the authenticity of its relay in written form a necessary criterion of quality?

As long as each of the layers of QA are disconnected, we can have no meaningful grasp of how the quality of storybooks is assured in practice. Yet 'Quality' tends to be used as if it were a consensual taken-for-granted concept. Questions about quality go beyond the usual considerations of technical efficiency: a meaningful notion of quality in the context of communities' stories also encloses values, morals and trust.

Questions listed in the Main Report might hopefully contribute to debate informing ways in which lessons and questions from the current project could be taken forward in new developments. One such issue, for example, is equity. We now know that compared to original creations, already approved stories can be translated and published online more quickly and easily. This finding offers promise of providing stories for smaller, marginalized language communities. But how effective translated stories are compared to the own stories of a community, and how much pleasure they afford the reader, we do not yet know.

Finally

This project has been instrumental in deepening knowledge and understanding about key issues in libraries as centres for generating stories that children can read for enjoyment in their local language. It has also shown the potential of storybook translation rather than just the creation of original storybooks. Having been generated from contexts of great diversity, this knowledge and understanding could be used both to consolidate present gains and to extend these to other contexts. Very well-developed networks are in place to do this.

However, questions about how we understand quality raise doubts about the merits of simply replicating successful aspects of the present project across new contexts. On a broader front, open licensing has been central to the enormous strides that have been made in providing *access* to stories in local languages. ASb and SW have shown what can be done in making storybooks accessible to all children.

Perhaps it is time to move beyond creation of, and *access* to, storybooks in local languages. We need to know more about storybook *use*, and *impact*. One way of learning more about storybook use and impact in a way that follows up on the CL project would be to equip the most successful CLs with full sets of what one hopes all CLs will one day have: storybooks in the local language. Much could be learnt from the way in which community structures make the most these resources; and of use and impact of different kinds of storybooks on those intended to be beneficiaries – the children.

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SECTION A: PROJECT AND COUNTRY BACKGROUNDS AND REVIEW TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Project overview and background

Throughout this report, the 'Literacy Community Libraries Action Research in Ethiopian and Uganda' is referred to simply as the 'CL project'.

This section begins with a brief outline of the scope of this project, including its planned outcomes. It describes the way in which the project originated and took its final shape. This background is necessary because the way the project was conceptualized and enacted has implications for the way in which it unfolded; and, in turn, for review findings.

1.1 The project in contractual terms

The CL project is one of the initiatives undertaken under the auspices of the Hewlett Grant for Support of Open Licensing in Early Childhood Literacy efforts in the Developing World.

The task of the project was to develop the capacity of Community Libraries (CLs) in Ethiopia and Uganda to generate high-quality children's stories written in local languages, and to make these accessible in order that they be read for pleasure. Specifically, the project was to test models of alternative book-content creation and distribution in six selected CLs in each country. The aim was to generate understanding about how open licensing can be harnessed in ways that:

- demonstrate potential to reduce the cost of content creation;
- stimulate and enhance local early literacy eco-systems, and/or network local content creators in early literacy more effectively.

A Principal Investigator (PI) was contracted to carry out project implementation in each country, using action research.

- **Ethiopia**: CODE-Ethiopia
  - o Yalew Zeleke, Executive Director
  - o Alemu Abebe Woldie, Coordinator, Library Development and Management.
- **Uganda**: Dr Cornelius Wambi Gulere, Senior Lecturer, Department of Languages and Literature, Uganda Christian University.

In terms of outputs, the contractual 'deliverables' for each country were as follows:

- Ethiopia: 50 original storybooks uploaded to StoryWeaver (SW) and African Storybook (ASb)
- Uganda: 10 original storybooks per library uploaded to SW and ASb, and 50 copies of each title printed.

A significant distinction is that in the former case, the contracting body was CODE-Ethiopia (CE). In the latter, it was the PI in his personal capacity. Contracts covered the timespan 1 August 2017 to 31 March 2018 in the case of Ethiopia; and 1 July 2017 to 31 March 2018 in the case of Uganda.

The PI (Uganda) added a noteworthy arm to the CL project in that country. This took the form of a story translation and online digital publishing component being infused into the coursework of undergraduate students in his Creative Writing, Literature and Media, Creating Writing for Children, and Poetry and Drama'

courses. 'Feedback on translation work with Uganda Christian University'[6] was subsequently added to the project deliverables in this contract following the project management team's first visit to Uganda.

1.2 Project background: how the CL Project evolved

Three features of the background to this project merit noting as they provide a clear indication of the worth of the project, as well as of its potential to yield valid insights.

Learning to read

A substantial body of research supports the underlying premise on which the present project is based: Enliteration takes place most effectively in the mother tongue. So much so that the shift to mother tongue-based educational policy can be explained by research evidence 'supporting the view that learning is easier and faster in one's MT (e.g. Benson 2005; Cummins 1979, 2000, 2005; Klaus 2003; Walter & Chuo 2012; Woldemariam 2007)'.[7]

It is true that some research may appear to be discouraging to the cause of mother-tongue reading. For example, a major study in Ethiopia[8] reports that although the percentage of children learning in their mother tongue ranged from 71.5% to 97.8% in the regions covered by the research into early grade reading, reading scores remain lower than expected. A 'significant percentage of children in Grade 2 read zero words correctly' (p.3). However, the most likely explanation for poor reading scores is not that the policy is misguided. It is that the policy cannot be implemented because there are so few or even no books in the children's home languages – the very problem that the present project seeks to alleviate. Apart from poverty, lack of economies of scale for publishers means that such materials simply do not exist.

A research base

The project has a solid research base. In 2015, Neil Butcher and Associates (NBA) secured a grant from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation to explore the potential for open licensing to enhance the availability of mother-tongue early literacy reading resources in the global South.[9] This research notes how the traditional supply chain in publishing has ceased to be a neat, end-to-end, linear process. The '"disaggregation" of traditional chains is facilitated both by digital disruption and open licensing' (p.4). Herein lies the logic and inspiration behind the present project.

The CL project thus seeks to establish an alternative (disruptive) value chain using CLs as a source of openly licensed stories, and to get storybooks written and published in ways that makes them accessible to young readers.

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[6] Memorandum of Agreement between NBA and Dr Gulere, signed 30/8/2017, p.2.
[7] Medadi E. Ssentanda. 2014. The Challenges of Teaching Reading in Uganda: Curriculum guidelines and language policy viewed from the classroom. *Apples – Journal of Applied Language Studies*. Vol. 8 (2), pp. 1– 22, p. 4.
[8] USAID/ Ethiopia. 2010. Ethiopia Early Grade Reading Assessment Data Analytic Report: Language and Early Learning (EGRA)
[9] See: Butcher, N., Hoosen, S., Levey, L. and Moore, D. 2016. *The Impact of Open Licensing on the Early Reader Ecosystem* http://www.nba.co.za/impact-open-licensing-early-reader-ecosystem (retrieved 20 April 2018).

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A grounded project plan

CL project design was mindful of the effect of contexts on the way in which projects unfold.[10] In each country, project management networked with experts already engaged in early literacy initiatives in community libraries. In this way, project design was built into existing practices and opportunities. Conceptualizing and setting up the case studies were thus part of the project itself.

Even though project commencement was delayed in the case of CODE-Ethiopia – because of the need to negotiate with CODE in Canada – the two country case studies were appropriately developed from, and grounded in, contextual realities.

After the project commenced, contextual realities – in the form of travel distances, expense and demand on PIs' time – led to a subsequent narrowing down of the nature and scope of what had originally been planned (see Appendix A for details). This observation is not a criticism. Project conception began as a manifestation of what would be most appropriate and purposeful in light of overall aims. Specification of what most desirable was then pared down to what was practically possible – and what could be done well.[11]

The asset of a project thoroughly grounded in contextual realities brought with it two challenges to project review. First, an additional 'UCU translation' arm that was *not* located in a community library was added to the CL project after implementation had commenced in Uganda. Second, because the project was grafted onto existing initiatives – and for the viability of the case studies it could do no other than to do so – project review was confronted with the challenge of identifying project effects (or 'value add') to initiatives that were already under way.

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[10] It is widely recognized that context 'is not simply the scene of action. It has an effect on that action, an effect that is both determining and enabling.' Woods, P. 1983. *Sociology and the school: An interactionist perspective.* Routledge and Kegan Paul: London. p.6.

[11] Project changes were made in consultation with Project Management.

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2. Review methodology

2.1 Review questions and methodology

The reviewer's key understanding of the CL project was drawn from the document 'Proposal for Action Research in Uganda and Ethiopia-Program 2017'. The task of the project was

> *To deepen knowledge and understanding about key issues in libraries as centres of literacy development in Uganda and Ethiopia (p.2).*

The present exercise was accordingly carried out not as an evaluation, but as a review.

Within that understanding of the project, the review was guided and structured by the 'Terms of Reference for Review of Hewlett Literacy Community Libraries Action Research.' For ease of presentation, the thirteen proposed research questions in this document were restructured into three categories:

(i)   Inputs and Activities: Action research and data gathered *in each country*
(ii) Outcomes and Impact: CLs' progress, achievements and impact on early literacy *in each country*
(iii) Outcomes and Impact: CLs' progress, achievements and impact on early literacy *across both Ethiopia and Uganda.*

These three categories house findings presented below under sections 4, 5 and 6 respectively. Readers curious to know how ToR questions were re-ordered are referred to Appendices B(i) and (B(ii).

2.2 Carrying out the review

The ToR proposed that the external review should draw data from (a) a review of key documents and deliverables of activities; and (b) interviews with PIs and key stakeholders.

Document Review

Project documents and reports were reviewed prior to site visits to the two countries.

Interviews

Fruitful prior discussions between project management and PIs led to a purposeful programme of site visits for the review. A copy of the ToR for the review had also been sent to PIs in advance, as had the template for their final reports.

Tables 1 and 2 below have details of the programme of site visits and interviews.

Table 1 *Interviews in Uganda*

Date (2018)	Event	Site / Venue	Distance from Kampala
30 April	Site visit/ Interviews	St Mark Community Library (hereafter 'St Mark')	16 kms
1 May	Site visit/ Interviews	Kidiki Parents' School – Mpolyabigere Community Library (hereafter 'Kidiki')	96 kms
2 May	Site visit/ Interviews	DWW (Damien Wadika Wamai) Children's Library and Resource Centre (hereafter 'DWW')	260 kms
2 May	Site visit/ Interviews	Inhebantu Alice Muloki Memorial Library (hereafter 'Alice Muloki')	187 kms
3 May	• Symposium for staff and students UCU • Impromptu meeting with staff of the University Information System (UIS)	Uganda Christian University (UCU)	26 kms
4 May	Debriefing with the Uganda PI	Kampala	

Table 2 *Interviews in Ethiopia*

Date (2018)	Event	Site / Venue	Distance from Addis Ababa
5 May	Pre-site visit meeting with the PIs	Addis Ababa	
7 May	Site visit/ Interviews	Fitche CL	115 kms
8 May	Site visit/ Interviews	Chefe Donsa CL	67 kms
9 May	Site visit/ Interviews	Ejere CL (formerly Addis Alem)	49 kms
9 May	Site visit/ Interviews	Holeta CL	40 kms
10 May	Site visit/ Interviews	Sheno CL	80 kms
11 May	Debriefing with CE PIs	Addis Ababa	

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Features of site visits and interviews

- Distances as reflected in the above tables are not necessarily a useful indication of travelling times. Calculation of likely travel time cannot easily take account road conditions (some good; some unpaved); and there are seasonal variations.
- All road trips were undertaken by a team of three representing the project, together with the relevant country PI.[12] These trips provided good opportunities for discussion with the country PIs who were also willing to brief us on the sites we were about to visit. At the outset, the reviewer stressed that while project outputs were important in their own right, the real aim was to understand how outputs had been achieved.
- Because of the standardized CL Management Committee structures in place in Ethiopia, the composition of groups interviewed was relatively stable. Minimally, it included the librarian, at least one municipal representative or a representative of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and a local school principal. Parents and/or elders were particularly prominent at Fitche and Sheno.
- Ugandan CLs, with their differing management structures, presented more varied groups of people for interview. At St Mark, for example, the CL is managed by the Eastern Orthodox Church of Uganda; at Kidiki, the CL is managed by the board of the private school on whose premises it is located. We also met volunteers performing a variety of roles, as well as a number of UCU postgraduate interns.
- Interviews at Ethiopian sites were more formalized and structured than those in Uganda where the PI led discussions and activities, and where numbers of different individuals arrived and left as they went about their business during the time we were on site.
- All interviews and discussions in Uganda were conducted in English. Fitche was the only Ethiopian site where English was used consistently. At others, we were grateful to the CE official for acting as our interpreter. Nonetheless, as in any situation which involves an interpreter, both parties probably felt that communication was sometimes stilted.

2.3 Making sense of the data and reporting findings

The challenge of making sense of the data is that it covers two country case studies – set in different political and policy contexts – within each of which were nested a total of nine case studies in a variety of local settings.

Document study, interviews and site visits generated a prodigious quantity of data dispersed across the different CL sites. Because a fully detailed review report could easily lapse into a dissertation, the reviewer has attempted to generalize situations and issues. One casualty of this approach has been case study-type description of each of the nine CLs. Including these would have meant running the risk of insights and threads of arguments being lost in background narrative.

Where feasible, tables are used to draw data together so as to illustrate connections and inter-relationships. Supporting data and references appear in footnotes and appendices to the extent that it is possible. However, a report structure based on ToR specification inevitably results in a certain amount of overlap.

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[12] In the case of Ethiopia, our CODE Ethiopia travelling companion was Alemu Woldie (for Fitche and Chefe Donsa) and Nema Behutige (for Ejere, Holeta and Sheno).

3. Language issues and CLs in their country contexts

Before addressing the ToR it is helpful to take note of the situation of CLs within each of the two countries at the time the project commenced. While there were some commonalities, we shall see some dramatic differences that later had a considerable, almost determining, influence on the way the CL project played out in each country.

3.1 Commonalities across the two country settings

Table 3   Two basic commonalities across Ethiopia and Uganda

Commonality	Ethiopia	Uganda
Both countries have multiple languages and dialects	Ethiopia has about 80 languages and 200 dialects[13]; Ethnologue lists 89 languages for Ethiopia.[14]	Because of the blurred distinction between languages and dialects, estimates range between 40 and 56. One expert puts the number at 62.[15]
National policy on medium of instruction (MOT)	Amharic is the official (but not national) language. Regions have the constitutional right to choose the medium of instruction for the first 8 years of schooling[16]; thereafter medium of instruction is English. (English is taught as a *subject* in the lower grades.) A challenge for literacy: Amharic has its own script; and some Ethiopian languages use a Latin script.	The need to promote the development of literacy, numeracy and life skills in lower primary classes motivated the introduction of mother-tongue (MT) education in Uganda in 2006/2007.[17] In practice, however, Ugandan children are being taught to read in different circumstances: Rural government schools use MT from Primary (P1 to P3) while English and MT are each taught as a subject. Private schools tend to use English and teach MTs as a subject.[18]

3.2 Differences across the two country settings

Britain's extended colonial presence in Uganda was maintained by 'divide and rule' treaties with local kingdoms and chiefdoms. After gaining independence in 1962, Uganda was soon subjected to successive dictatorships. Such developments impacted on the official recognition and legitimacy of languages and dialects: some were winners, and some were losers. That these effects endure to the present day was evident at the DWW site visit

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[13] CE's Presentation at NBA's Literacy Workshop Johannesburg, January 2017.

[14] UNICEF. 2016. Ethiopia: The impact of language policy and practice on children's learning: Evidence from Eastern and Southern Africa. https://www.unicef.org/esaro/UNICEF(2016)LanguageandLearning-Ethiopia.pdf (retrieved 25 April 2018).

[15] Charles Batambuze (interview, 29 May 2017, cited in Kirsty von Gogh fieldnotes).

[16] See: Nekatibeb, 2007, p. 51, cited in UNICEF 2016, op. cit.

[17] Medadi E. Ssentanda. 2014. The Challenges of Teaching Reading in Uganda: Curriculum guidelines and language policy viewed from the classroom. *Apples – Journal of Applied Language Studies*. Vol. 8: 1– 22 (p.4)

[18] Ssentanda, Ibid. (p.1)

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where a particular linguistic community was using the discourse of 'mobilization' in its endeavours to reassert the status and legitimacy of its own dialect.[19]

By way of contrast, Ethiopia prides itself on never having been colonized. It was temporarily occupied by Italy during World War II, but organized resistance thwarted two attempts at colonization on the part of Italy. This was possible because of Ethiopia's strong sense of cultural identity and history of central command led by their Emperors.

These political and cultural differences could well underlie differences in the current status and role of CLs in the two countries.

Table 4   *Differences in the status and role of CLs across the two countries*

Difference	Ethiopia	Uganda
The status of libraries	*CLs form part of an integrated government plan.* The plan is implemented by a tripartite: Ministry of Education; Regional states; CODE-Ethiopia. CLs are strategically situated. Some are owned by the Municipality; some by the Department of Culture and Tourism.	*The government takes no responsibility for CLs.* An NGO, the Uganda Community Libraries Association (UgCLA) is the main actor in this regard. 'More than 20 of Uganda's 100-member libraries were established by UgCLA which holds conferences and workshops for librarians, solicits and distributes grants from donors, as well as places volunteers in libraries.'[20]
Government support for CLs	Government representatives serve on Management. Some CL staff are paid employees of the mother district office of each library. Further CL support includes, e.g. 'The library received 45,000 birr from the woreda to buy books and materials' (Ejere).[21]	There is no government support. By default, UgCLA has undertaken the task of establishing and supporting CLs. In addition to affiliation with UgCLA, CLs receive support from the Friends of African Village Libraries (FAVL).
CLs and schools	CL relationship with schools is mandatory, and structured. A local school principal serves on the CL Management Committees. Teachers	There is no structured relationship, although UgCLA's mission is to complement the education system by

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[19] There are sharp dialectical differences between the northern and southern forms of the Lumasaaba language.

[20] https://espensj.wordpress.com/about/ (retrieved 21 April 2018)

[21] '"Woreda" is an administrative division in Ethiopia (managed by a local government), equivalent to a district with an average population of 100,000. Woredas are composed of a number of Kebele, or neighborhood associations, which are the smallest unit of local government in Ethiopia. Woredas are typically collected together into zones, which form a Kilil (Regional government administration).' http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un-dpadm/unpan034887.pdf (Retrieved 13 July 2018).

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Difference	Ethiopia	Uganda
	have specified duties at some CLs, e.g. at Ejere.	promoting literacy practices through the growth of community libraries. [22]
Relationship between Government and the CL project	CE enjoys excellent cooperation and collaboration with the Ministry of Education (MoE).[23] It brings formally structured support to CLs, enhancing what is already in place.	Government has no role, not even through an intermediary. UgCLA is an NGO, not a statutory body. It relies on donations and volunteers. Support for individual CLs will inevitably be based on what is possible.

Essentially, the above tables highlight the fact that the national policies of both countries are *enabling* of mother-tongue instruction in the early grades of schooling, and thus of children learning to read in the mother tongue. However, the matter of government *support* for such policy is an entirely separate issue. Impact of this fundamental difference between the two countries is evident in the two Baseline Studies completed in each country at the commencement of the project.

3.3 Baseline differences across the two countries

The instrument used for the Baseline Study provided an overview of CLs that was doubtless useful to PIs when the CL project was launched. However, the Baseline was less useful for review purposes. Some of its 30 items – such as whether the CL offered political and health programmes, or whether it housed cultural artefacts – are rather removed from CL project purpose. Individual Baseline items were also not structured along clear lines of category. The Reviewer accordingly categorized and summarized items relevant to the CL project in two tables. These two tables reflect differences between each country in respect of (a) CL functionality, and (b) CL arrangements and activities to promote literacy. To spare the reader unnecessary burden of detail, these details appear as Tables 13 and 14 in Appendix C. However, inferences drawn from the two table are offered below to illustrate the situation of CLs at the time the CL project was launched.

3.3.1 Differences in provisioning and functionality

From the Baseline Study, across the Ethiopian CLs, there is a picture of adequate provisioning, staffing and procedures for the orderly housing of reading materials, and for community access. Records are meticulously kept, and some CLs like Fitche have newsletters for keeping in touch with the community It is a picture of *uniformity*.[24]

In contrast, the picture of Ugandan CLs is one of great *diversity*. While DWW was ahead of its Ugandan counterparts, all were struggling with volunteer staff and lack of basic equipment. An example of deprivation is that Alice Muloki was able to mitigate lack of shelving only when a member of the community was persuaded to donate a few trees. There were some problems with accessioning and cataloguing materials, as well as with certain conventional library procedures.

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[22] https://espensj.wordpress.com/about/ (retrieved 21 April 2018).

[23] CE's Presentation at NBA's Literacy Workshop, Johannesburg, January 2017.

[24] This not surprising given that CE has produced an online set of training materials for librarians. These materials 'emerged out of the CODE-Ethiopia workshops and the experiences of library personnel from 35 community libraries throughout rural Ethiopia' https://codelibraries.wordpress.com (retrieved 26 May 2018).

Descriptions on paper cannot fully capture the reality of differences between these two sets of CLs. That reality became all too obvious on the review site visits (as in Tables 1 and 2 above) almost a year later.

Nevertheless, even within the range of difference across Ugandan CLs, the respective situations of CLs in the two countries can well be understood within their national context: government support for CLs in Ethiopia, supplemented by support from CE;[25] and no government support for Ugandan CLs. In addition to the support of UgCLA, the latter owe their existence to a range of benefactors and interest groups.

3.3.2 Differences in arrangements and activities to promote literacy

The above picture is somewhat reversed when the promotion of literacy comes into view. Apart from symbolic or advocacy events like Reading Day celebrations, it appeared that early literacy had come to enjoy a particular focus in Ethiopian CLs only as a result of CE's work in the last three years. The Baseline Study found that community engagement was minimal. On the other hand, prior to the CL project, Uganda CLs seem to have been doing what they could to encourage early reading.

Viewed in the national context, this picture again has its own logic. Bureaucracy in general finds it easier to focus on provision and regularity rather than on mobilising communities and serving a social cause. By contrast, a value position or a cause lay behind the Ugandan CLs: the church or parish; community and linguistic activism; and in the case of Bugembe, a sense of regal responsibility enacted by the King in memory of his late wife. With reference to its annual conference, the UgCLA website reports that: '*Past* themes have been reading programmes for children, libraries for health and libraries as centres for education and development'[26] (writer's emphasis). However, it is almost certainly lack of resources that has frustrated individual CLs from translating into practice the wish to encourage early reading. An exception is DWW's own annual reading day.

The real difference here may thus be underpinned by an emphasis of focus on provision and function, together with a recent thrust to promote early literacy (in Ethiopia), compared with the deep-seated aspirations of CL founders to promote literacy practices in the interests of a particular local community (in Uganda).

Against the contextual background sketched in this section, one would expect the present project to unfold very differently in the two country case studies, and indeed it did.

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[25] In addition to training, CE support of all CLs included provision of material resources such as shelving, furniture etc.
[26] https://espensj.wordpress.com/about/whatdowedo/ (retrieved 25 May 2018).

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SECTION B: REVIEW FINDINGS AND REFLECTIONS

This section covers first, project inputs and activities; and second, outcomes and impact in each of the two countries: Uganda (section 4), and Ethiopia (section 5). Uganda is covered first only because of its greater complexity. The section concludes with overall comparison across the two country case studies (section 6).

At the outset, it is helpful to clarify the envisaged and actual role of Action Research (AR) in the project. AR was the chosen strategy for project implementation. It is prominent in the title of the project as well as in ToR for project review. The purpose of the outline below is to minimize, as far as possible, repetitive reference to the way AR was used in relation to each Input and Activity in each country.

A covering note on Action Research

In any situation in which someone wishes to improve or introduce a new practice, an AR cycle can be as simple as:

Steps in this cycle are repeated until the overall aim has been achieved through reiterations of incremental changes.

Given PIs contribution to project conceptualization and their role as project implementors, AR is an eminently suitable tool for deepening knowledge and understanding about libraries as centres of literacy development in the two countries.

AR, however, can mean different things to different people. In managing tasks that we deal with in everyday life and in work situations, many of us may routinely use elements of the AR cycle in a common sense, non-academic way. Here, the *action* component of AR is foregrounded. Because we act thoughtfully, we also learn something about how we achieve our goals. But in such contexts, there is no need to formalize and record what we learn. By way of contrast, those in academic settings use AR in a way that foregrounds the *research* component. Hence the necessity of regular, systematic, codified data collection and publication in the interests of the research being acceptable to an academic community.

As will be seen in sections 4 and 5 below, there was a great deal of thoughtful and purposeful *Action* on the part of PIs; but little Action *Research* in the accepted sense of the term. Good reasons for this emerge later. For the moment, it simply needs to be stated that although the review did not have access to formal research, site visits and ongoing interactions with PIs meant that it *did* have access to the kinds of insights that informed PI's actions in developing and implementing the CL project – but that had not been written up in formal research.

Findings are thus based on the ample data available from contexts in which PIs had acted in the mode of action researchers rather than as academically oriented action researchers.

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4. Uganda

4.1 The role of Principal Investigator (PI) in Uganda

In addition to the country context sketched in section 3, an essential part of the context is also the situation of the implementing agent. As already noted, the project in Uganda was managed and implemented by a single individual. In reflecting on work assignments in general, it can often be difficult to separate the professional from the personal. In the present case, the personal and the professional domains are entirely conflated. Nonetheless, in the coverage that follows, the focus is on the *professional* role carried out by the Uganda PI. In so doing, reporting brackets out the overwhelming personal imprint on the professional domain insofar as this is possible.

The PI has long been a promoter of the belief that libraries should record and document the oral literature and histories, riddles, folktales, languages, cultures, dances, songs, and architecture of communities.[27] Recording the knowledges of all sectors of society, and particularly of marginalized and disempowered communities, carries with it a corollary: respect for local knowledge. Accordingly, the PI's strategy in this project was to avoid making political decisions about the legitimacy of particular groupings and dialects. For the PI, it was a simple matter of: 'Let people write. … it's about what they want to say and how they want to say it.'[28] That is the framework within which project activities in Uganda have been embedded, and have unfolded.

Project activity in the four CLs is essentially that of children writing and illustrating their own stories. It is a story-writing enterprise. And it is aligned with the philosophy that children must exercise freedom of choice.

In implementing the project, the PI made the most of his status and presence as a long-standing activist working in tandem with the UgCLA. Added to this is status as a senior lecturer at UCU; and, significant in many communities, is his status of Reverend Deacon in the Eastern Orthodox Church.

4.2 Project 'deliverables': the overall picture

Project 'deliverables' in the PI's personal contract did not anticipate the 'add on' UCU translation arm of the project (to be discussed under 4.4 below). 'Deliverables' were framed within the context of CLs. However, any consideration of 'deliverables' in terms of numbers of storybooks obviously has to take both arms of the project into account.

The contractual expectation was 10 original storybooks per library uploaded to StoryWeaver (SW) and African Storybook (ASb), and 50 copies of each title printed.

According to the PI's final report, 35 workshops with content creators were held.[29] Some of the stories created were still in the production line at the time of writing, making it difficult to provide precise statistics. In his first draft project report, the PI was confident the contractual targets would be achieved by the end of May 2018:

> *As part of the NBA collaborative action research deliverables, each library has produced several books of which 60 have been edited and illustrated by the teams involved ready for uploading and printing at the end of May.*

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[27] E.g. see Keynote Address at XXIII SCECSAL Conference Imperial Resort Beach Hotel, Entebbe, Uganda 23 – 27 April 2018. Theme: Positioning Library and Information Services to Achieve Sustainable Development: Innovations and Partnerships
[28] Discussion with the PI, 2 May 2018.
[29] PI. May 2018: Action Research Report on Community Libraries in [Uganda] (first draft) P.7

… the ten original storybooks per library will be up running on Story Weaver and African Storybook and 50 copies of each title printed before the end of May 2018.[30]

The table below is taken from the final draft version of the Project Report (p.26).

Table 5   *Storybooks on ASb and SW, 1 June 2017 – 30 April 2018*

CL	English	Lusoga	Luganda	Lumasaaba	Total
Alice Muloki	1	8	0	0	8
DWW	0	2	2	3	7
Kidiki	1	13	0	0	14
St Mark	9	2	3	0	14
UCU	30	10	50	10	100
Total	**41**	**35**	**55**	**13**	**144***

* The correct Total, if rows and columns are added up, would be 143.

Appendix D presents a post-site visit update on the number of books printed as a result of CL activity: a neat 15 at each of the four CLS. The final draft Project Report reflects the intention to publish 3,000 copies of the 60 storybooks (p.14).

What stands out most clearly in Table 5 is that, in terms of raw numbers, the 'add on' UCU translation initiative has been a much more fruitful source of stories than the CLs. In a discussion at UCU on 3 May, the PI estimated that the project had contributed 340 stories to SW and over 200 to ASb. Of those on SW, 132 were original, and 208 were translations.[31] Factors underpinning the success of UCU translation are discussed under section 4.4 below.

In the context of changing statistics – because publishing and posting stories on repositories was still an ongoing project at the time of writing – it is clear that 'deliverables' have been surpassed.

At this juncture, our discussion separates the two arms of the project. section 4.3 covers the planned CL part of the project; and 4.4 covers the originally unplanned translation part of the project.

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[30] Ibid, pp. 23 & 6.

[31] The PI provided the numbers of original and translated stories in a subsequent email (14 July 2018).

4.3 The Community Libraries: the planned part of the project

Logistics and time demands on the PI led to the number of CLs receiving active support being reduced from six to four. The table below depicts their respective situations at the time of site visits.

Table 6 *A summary of the situation of the four CLs*

Name of Library	Town and Region	Language/s in which stories were being developed	Available technology	Other envisaged beneficiaries
Inhebantu Alice Muloki Memorial Library	Bugembe in Jinja District of Busoga	Lusoga	A screen projector & 22 desktop pcs;[32] rechargeable public speaker radio provided by the project; CL has LAN but no Internet.	Potentially, to all 11 chiefdoms in Kingdom of Busoga
Kidiki Parents' School – Mpolyabigere Community Library (a private school)	Kidiki in Namwendwa Kamuli District	Lusoga	Smart phone and laptop provided by the project together with rechargeable public speaker radio.	Two neighbouring schools
St Mark Community Library (developed from a revamped storeroom)	PI is frequently on campus of Eastern Orthodox Church, Namungoona in Kampala District	Luganda, Lusoga, English	Project provided rechargeable public speaker radio and one laptop, which is not online.	10 faith-based communities, local parents and schools
DWW (Damien Wadika Wamai) Children's Library and Resource Centre	Kalawa in Sironko District	Lumasaaba Ludadiri dialect (spoken in this district but Lumasaaba Lubuya is officially recognized)[33]	CL already had two computers.[34] However, supply of electricity is a problem.	24 schools and parts of Bugisu

Notable general features of the CLs

- Variances from CL to CL were considerable. At one end of the scale, DWW most closely approximated one's image of a library as a place housing reading materials for use or borrowing by the public. At the other end of the scale, the Kidiki CL more closely resembled a storeroom of books. However, amongst the disorder, there was a small collection of local language books.

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[32] Core 2 Duo 3.00 ghz, 80 GB Dell computers, running Windows 7, donated three years ago.
[33] There is contestation of dialects in this region. The library serves the interests of Ludadiri activists.
[34] PI provided two WiFi sets but these disappeared with the technician who came to assist with the connection.

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- DWW excepted, CLs were impaired by a lack of functionality: insufficient shelves; lack of procedures for accessioning and loaning books.
- Reliance on volunteers, even volunteer Librarians, was evident in three of the libraries. Lack of staff continuity was detrimental to the project.
- Notwithstanding the above constraints, children *were* writing stories in all libraries, often on small pieces of paper, and very much in line with the PI's freedom-of-expression philosophy. At the same time, there must be concern about follow through in terms of developing these stories, and of making them available for reading. This point is elaborated later.

4.4 Story translations at UCU: the unplanned, opportunistic arm of the project
4.4.1 Storybook production

When the PI joined the UCU staff in June 2017 he was assigned to teach Creative Writing and Literary Theory to a class of eleven BA Education and BA Languages Year III students. Except for two students from a Luo background, every student, including the PI, was from a different language background.

The nature of this course, together with its linguistically diverse student population, provided the inspiration and impetus for innovation in the coursework component of their course. Students were given the option of translating their own selection of children' stories.

As noted by the PI, published stories soon followed.

> *At the end of two and a half months, we had nearly 200 titles translated into Lumasaaba, Lusoga, Ateso, Acoli, Kinyarwanda, Rufumbira, Kumam, Luganda, Dhopadhola, Runyankore and Runyoro. Language speakers at the university, including the Vice Chancellor, Faculty and support staff, helped in peer reviewing the books in their respective languages. I coordinated the process of quality assurance and publishing the stories online and in book format.*[35]

> *In six months: 340 stories from UCU have been written and published in over 15 languages including Yoruba and read over 3000 times and downloaded 1300 times from www.storyweaver.org.in.*[36]

Outcomes (as depicted under section 4.2 above) would have been even more successful had it not been for a number of problems.
- Some students were uncertain if their translations were a credit-bearing component of their course. One former student had originally believed he was just doing the instructor 'a favour.' Others mistook the translation work for a commercial enterprise on the part of the instructor.
- SW rejected several first round stories on the grounds that these were promoting religious 'agendas.' Students reported being frustrated by rejections.[37]

In addition, the technicalities of downloading and uploading of stories had not been without its problems.[38] The relationship between the UCU translation initiative and the ASb and SW platforms merits special mention

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[35] Gulere, C.W. (Draft) Literacy Action Research Report Uganda, February 2018, p.7.
[36] Gulere, C.W. 'Positioning Library and Information Services to Achieve Sustainable Development: Innovations and Partnerships'. 26 April 2018. XXIII SCECSAL Conference. Imperial Resort Beach Hotel, Entebbe, Uganda.
[37] Perhaps with some justification. UCU Motto is: 'Alpha and Omega: God the Beginning and the End.' Mission is: 'To Equip students for productive, holistic lives of Christian faith and service.' http://ucu.ac.ug/abt-ucu/background/mv-corev (retrieved 21 April 2018).
[38] The PI has been in touch with both African Storybook and StoryWeaver in an attempt to resolve platform problems.

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because the entire UCU initiative pivoted around the downloading and uploading of stories. Appendix E carries a somewhat impressionistic analysis of relevant comments made by the PI together with students' detailed, informative accounts of their experiences in uploading and downloading materials on ASb and SW.[39] This may be of interest of readers specifically interested in this aspect of the project, but is too detailed to present here. In summary it can be noted that:

- Students' criticisms should be seen within the context of their appreciation of both the translation component of their Creative Writing course and of ASb and SW as vehicles for promoting the creation and accessibility of mother tongue stories for children.
- Student difficulties in downloading and uploading stories are not necessarily a reflection of problems within the ASb and SW platforms. The first and foremost problem was limited local IT capacity and bandwidth. Also, some students admitted to not reading instructions. ASb and SW both provided much appreciated support to assist students in resolving technical difficulties.

Nonetheless, the following themes emerged from the comments of those who had worked on the two platforms.

- The platforms do not provide contextually suitable images. As clip art pictures were even more inappropriate, it became necessary to source suitable pictures locally.
- Unsurprisingly, given the context, students felt a closer 'cultural' affinity with ASb.
- *In general*, in respect of speed and ease of uploading and downloading, SW was more highly rated than ASb, but ASb's option of creating stories offline was much appreciated.
- The printing of downloaded stories encountered a range of technical problems.
- Students experienced two kinds of language difficulties. First, the online platforms did not yet, at the time, accommodate their particular language. Second, and more surprisingly, students did not find it easy to write in their own language. For some, it was their first experience of doing so.

Despite setbacks, the translation project has been both successful and instructive. In terms of its Grant, the project is aimed at producing 'high-quality literacy materials in local languages.' Stories from the translation arm of the project had passed the muster of approximately 20 native speaker, faculty-based peer reviewers in UCU. SW has 'Recommended' 50 of the UCU translations and one original story on the UCU folder. 'About 30 out of about 300' stories on ASb carry the "Approved" rating.[40]

The interesting discrepancy between the number of translated rather than original stories recommended by SW can probably be explained by an earlier comment made by the PI.

> *When contacted, SW declined to include the original stories on the UCU folder saying that their quality cannot be guaranteed unlike the translations whose original texts had been fully vetted for quality. This is understandable since most of the poetry the students composed were skewed towards religion. According to the SW policy, such works are not allowed. It means that the next group must be properly instructed on the dos and don'ts.[41]*

Translating already approved stories into selected languages is clearly a quick way of increasing the number of stories available. An indication of just how much can be done by a single individual is evident in the words of the student who was proud to have produced

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[39] It is interesting that this originally unplanned arm of the project came to embody the tenets of AR in a more robust way than the CL project itself. Participatory accounts of this kind are the very stuff of AR.

[40] PI. Email communication, 14 July 2018.

[41] PI. May 2018. Action Research Report on Community Libraries in Uganda, p.85.

the highest number of translations in both site in the whole class with a total number of 36 books in both web sites that is ASB having 12 books and Story Weaver having 24 books.[42]

4.4.2 Other benefits of the UCU initiative

- In terms of a UCU Community Service Grant Project, the UCU Department of Languages and Literature secured a grant

    of 10,500,000/- [approximately $2,850] to produce 750 quality assured storybooks in 25 Ugandan languages on ASb and SW and to distribute print copies through Church of Uganda outlets and UCU up country campuses in Arua, Mbale, Kampala, Kabale and Masindi.'[43]
    Furthermore:

    The PI together with Kyambogo University introduced an Advanced Course in Lusoga Language and Literature tenable at Bishop Willis Core Primary Teacher Training College in Iganga district. The first intake of 35 students are serving teachers who teach Lusoga language and Literature in secondary schools.[44]

- Postgraduate students of Language and Literature have been attached to each of the community libraries as interns on the CL project as well as part of UCU's community service project. In this way, the originally unplanned arm of the CL project came to support the core CL component.
- The project has had a spin-off benefit to UCU itself in a way that may help to sustain the translation project. Universities in general have great difficulty in mounting and balancing the three elements in their mission statements: Teaching; Research; Community Service. The translation project has evolved in such a way that it unites this triad.

But it is from the Hewlett grant perspective – micro-projects aimed at exploring ways of disrupting traditional publishing supply chains in the interests of being able to put books written in the mother tongue into the hands of children – that the translation project is most interesting.

Some key UCU staff were unable to attend the symposium/ working group meeting on 4 May. Nonetheless, participants included:
- a member of UCU staff teaching French and Rufumbira; and with QA responsibility
- the member of UCU staff responsible for the Community Project
- a past student who had been one of the most successful translators and contributors to SW
- a past student providing support as a student volunteer at Alice Muloki
- the programme manager of Access Knowledge Africa (a non-profit organization whose purpose is to provide people in East Africa with access to books, computers and training)
- a UCU master's student serving as a student intern at Kidiki
- a local printer who has printed some of the stories
- a UCU student of library information services serving as a volunteer at St Mark.

Collectively, this group comprises an *embryonic* supply chain beginning with story creation, then moving through peer review QA into the printing and reading of stories. It is, however, a loosely knit supply chain assembled on the basis of common interests. It has as yet no formal structure or bonds to hold it together. Yet this embryonic

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[42] PI. May 2018. Ibid., p.149.
[43] PI, May 2018. Op.cit. p.25.
[44] PI, May 2018. Op.cit. p.31.

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supply chain could be further strengthened with the addition of the University ICT Services (UIS). In an impromptu meeting, three UIS staff confirmed what the PI reports.

> *The UIS department have started on migrating all the stories in Ugandan Local languages onto the UCU web portal. This will reduce the amount of frustration that the students experienced while they were required to translate stories online ASb and SW. This move will ensure that students, staff and parents within and outside Mukono main campus can access these books at very low bandwidth.*[45]

Migrating the stories would almost certainly ease *access* to stories. But migrating the stories in Ugandan languages would not necessarily ease students' translation activity because they are translating mainly English-language stories downloaded from ASb and SW. A way of translating stories offline benefits students most.

4.5 Inputs and Activities; Outcomes and Impact

4.5.1 Inputs and Activities: Action research and data gathered

(a) Selection of libraries for project implementation
The PI acknowledged that the four CLs were selected on logistical grounds of their accessibility and concentration in Central and East Uganda. Perhaps it was fortuitous that they were also 'in my view the best ones to conduct this research because they each offered something new to the research experience.'[46]

The reviewer agrees. Each of four CLs indeed had a distinctive uniqueness.
- St Mark is a new initiative; and it is immersed in a faith community.
- Kidiki is relatively long established, and is attached to a private school.
- DWW was founded as a community-spirited family initiative and is now supported by a community of language dialect activists.
- Alice Muloki represents a case of the CL project being innovatively piggy backed onto a computer training initiative.

(b) Action Research (AR) design and implementation
The general comment on AR prefacing section B is apposite here. However, AR in Uganda also had the following features:
- The PI is clearly familiar with the academic concept of AR. A conventional cyclical action research model is outlined in one presentation paper[47], as well as in the final project report.
- The 'action' component of action research is abundantly clear in his work in the CLS and in pioneering the UCU translation project. The achievement of 'deliverables' in diverse but not fully functional CLs would never have been possible had the PI *not* analysed needs and acted purposefully in ways that are consistent with AR precepts. Evidence to support this argument is found in the PI's comments about having kept a personal diary and note books, video and audio records (and site visits certainly testified to the creation of video records). Also: 'The research process was cyclical in the sense that every meeting with the library users and librarian started with a review of previous actions, decesions [sic] and observations.'[48]

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[45] PI, May 2018. Op.cit. p.26.
[46] PI, May 2018. Op.cit. p.27
[47] Gulere, C.W. 'Materials development: opportunities for creative writing and creative reading'. Aga Khan University - Institute of Education Development conference on 'Re-thinking teacher education: Improve, Innovate, Change'. 23-25 October, 2017.
[48] PI, May 2015. Action Research Report on Community Libraries in [Uganda] (final draft). p.12.

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The view that there was action without the research is not a criticism of the PI's work. Actors must be immersed in the action if there really is to be AR. In even only four CL sites, it would not have been possible for the PI to be there often enough to gather the kind of data needed for AR.

A variation on AR is that the PI introduced the idea of 'Control Libraries'. The Kawempe Youth Centre in Kampala (using Luganda and Sudanic languages) and the Community Libraries in Busia (using the Samia language) were introduced to the project without receiving training and support. Hardly surprisingly, neither produced a single book.

(c) Was there community involvement in AR? (Was the AR participatory?)
Large scale AR initiatives tend to co-opt those in the field as fellow action researchers in what is usually called Participatory Action Research. Without having a formal role in AR, librarians and others in the CLs played a role as sounding boards to confirm the PI's impressions, as above. They also made suggestions (such as need for murals on the walls at St Mark; or the need for a public-address system). Given that librarians were untrained volunteers, no more could have been expected of them.

(d) Reports and presentations on the project
The PI has delivered an impressive number of papers and presentations. These are listed under Appendix F, together with a brief analysis of their content. The only comment necessary here is that these are essentially advocacy presentations.

(e) Adequacy of data base for inferences and conclusions
There is sufficient and reliable data drawing inferences and extrapolations about the project. It comes from some documentation, but mainly from discussions about experiences at CLs, and from joint site visits undertaken by the PI and the project team, including the reviewer.

(f) The effectiveness of AR in providing insights into challenges, success stories and lessons learnt from interventions in community libraries
As argued under sub-section (b) above, actions were put into place to achieve 'deliverables' and these were indeed achieved. However, there is no solid research base on which to draw insights into challenges, success stories and lessons to be learnt.

(g) Were overall lessons learnt from using AR?
CL project progress can be attributed to the PI who developed each CL in line with needs in local situations and the wishes of its community. A good example of this is the PI's work on codifying orthographies of local dialects and the development of word lists at DWW. Freed from bureaucratic constraint, and inspired by commitment, the PI was innovative and enterprising.

4.5.2 Outcomes and Impact: Progress, achievements and impact on early literacy

We begin by reflecting on challenges, success stories and surprises in the CLs. Reflection on the UCU translations project follows.

4.5.2.1 Reflection on outcomes, challenges, success stories and surprises in CLs
Outcomes are reflected in the following table.

Table 7   *An overall view and assessment of outcomes in CLs*

Institution	Progress towards goal	Community setting	Project 'value add'	Prospects of sustainability
St Mark	PI started this CL from scratch. Has a long way to go, but has made a promising start.	Community is bound by the church and its concern for the wellbeing of humankind.	Considerable. The idea and promise of a library has been established. Children are writing their own stories.	Good. Parents reticent, but community is involved in the project. Successful in attracting volunteers to assist. Archbishop is a powerful patron of CL.
Kidiki	Despite its history as a library, progress has stalled. Has some basic dysfunctions.	Located in and is dominated by the school. The imperatives of schooling undermine project aims.	Minimal. There's almost a mimicry of genuine project practices here. CL agency is constrained.	Unpromising. Would need radical intervention just to get it on track. The real community is in the shadows. 'School has rules: community has interests' (PI).
DWW	By far most functional CL. Values of its founders are aligned with the AR project which has prospered here.	This is a community striving to assert its cultural/ linguistic heritage, and to have it recognized.	Project contribution clearly valued by 'elders' / CL managers. The Writing Club and Reading Gala are real 'value adds.'	Excellent. Seemingly tightly knit community has deeply committed leaders who 'mobilize' to promote their dialect. Early success: children's writing and illustrations had the charm of authenticity.
Alice Muloki	Strides being made in CL functionality. Learners (about 12 years and older) are writing stories as part of their pc training.	Common bond amongst young people from different backgrounds is the pc training – within Busoga community symbolized by the nearby King.	Considerable value. Piggy-backing story-writing onto pc training was a neat idea that has borne fruit.	Vulnerabilities: dated computers (on which everything depends) Highly dependent on 'volunteerism'; and almost everything has been donated.

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Challenges

(i) Establishing library functionality concurrently with project development

Libraries, as physical spaces and entities, were seriously deficient when the project commenced. The following quotes from the Baseline Survey[49] identify problems in the reading environment: 'not enough space, some furniture, and few books donated and bought'; 'no lighting'; no seats, no shelves'; 'mostly books are in boxes and on mats'; 'no storage facilities; books packed in boxes.'

At the end of the project, CLs were undoubtedly better equipped for storytelling and story writing. In terms of libraries performing the recognised functions of a library, though, in spite of relevant mother tongue stories being grouped together, site visits found that only DWW came close. Although librarians had been trained in other CLs, they did not have a permanent, qualified librarian. They did have volunteers, so turnover and continuity were major obstacles. The PI's resourcefulness had achieved much, but individual CLs remain highly dependent on it.

(ii) The status of local languages

With the note under section 3.2 regarding Uganda's linguistic/ political heritage as background, here is the predictable obstacle to children learning to read in the mother tongue. 'Kids are excited, but afraid of speaking their own language.'[50] Many parents and even teachers perceive the promotion of local languages as a political attempt to keep children in their marginalized spaces. In spite of national policy, resistance to promotion of the mother tongue seems to be particularly strong in Uganda because of a policy/ practice disjunction. 'Children have to fit in with the school regime. Policy says one thing and the practice is different. Policy is there, but the Government is not supportive.'[51] Practice out of line with policy is indeed sometimes overt: At Kidiki (the CL attached to and managed by a school), Rule 1 on a large notice of Rules Governing the Library reads: 'No vanacular [sic] speaking in the library.'

(iii) Sustainability?

The AR project has been well served by the PI's making the most of limited local resources in ways that are sensitive and responsive to local circumstances and needs. Each CL has a uniqueness, and a fragility. It's hard to see how the 'Successes' listed below could have happened without the PI blending diverse local circumstances and needs with the aims of the CL project. Except at DWW, writing activity takes place within loose structural and organizational arrangements. So far, this has been made possible by the PI's recruitment of volunteers and other innovative measures such as postgraduate student intern support for CLs.

Volunteerism is obviously a healthy asset in a community-based initiative. However, the most striking examples of the risks and vulnerabilities of volunteerism are evident in two key respects. First, volunteer librarians come and go. Second, project experience shows the difficulty and expense of creating suitable illustrations for stories. The PI plugged this gap when a recent Makerere University master's graduate in the School of Fine Arts 'offered his services to do the illustrations'.[52] This is surely not sustainable. At an even more fundamental level, there is the fact that if children and perhaps parents are to write their stories, they need a good deal of expert support. The PI has noted that: 'When asked to write down the stories they told so eloquently, both the parents and the children could not write more than a page even though the oral story in some cases lasted more than 20 minutes.'[53]

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[49] 'Baseline survey of selected CL in UGANDA: Preliminary Findings'.
[50] PI, 1 May 2018. Op.cit.
[51] PI, 1 May 2018. Op.cit.
[52] PI, May 2018. Action Research Report on Community Libraries in Uganda] (final draft), p.23.
[53] PI, May 2018. Ibid., p.14.

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It's also hard to see how these CLs, with the possible exception of DWW, could sustain their present work if the PI's oversight and inputs were to disappear.

Success
(i) Vindication of the community library as the focus for the project
The original Research Proposal for this project had as its first Objective: "Which of the two: School Libraries (SLs) and Community Libraries (CLs) is the most effective and why?" (see Appendix A).

In retrospect, narrowing project focus down to CLs only has provided a valuable insight on the question of the most optimal site for story creation. Although the sample in Table 7 is very small indeed, a notable feature is that the more successful CLs are those representing an identifiable constituency: a community with a recognisable common interest, moral or value-based binding force. The least impressive CL, Kidiki, was dominated by the school. The PI's remark 'School has rules: community has interests' captures this anomaly beautifully.

(ii) Story writing
Story writing has been the dominant activity in all CLs. Evidence of this was certainly on display on the review site visits. Children, sometimes with the help of others such as parents, have written their stories in the spirit of the PI's philosophy of the need for communities' stories to be told, and equally in line with his philosophy of freedom of choice. A small percentage of the great number of stories written were selected for further development, and these constitute the 'deliverables' outlined under section 4.2 above: the four CLs contributed 43 published storybooks. Given the challenges discussed above, achieving the 'deliverables' in respect of story writing was a considerable achievement. But again, however, this is an indication of the PI's achievements rather than CL structures driving story writing and the development of stories into completed storybooks.

Story writing, but …
Success in story publication raises a number of issues that lead back to challenges and questions.

(i) The basket case stories
The approximately 500 children's stories written on small pieces of paper, and not selected for further development, were placed in the 'reading basket' in the participating libraries. DWW has made progress in writing these stories in digital form and in cataloguing the collection, thus opening up the possibility of these stories being read locally. Beyond this, though, many writing efforts seem to be wasted (even though the writers of these stories may feel some acknowledgment and affirmation as authors). But there is also no clear indication of what is being done to provide feedback to authors so that they might improve their writing. It was also not clear if other children were being encouraged to read these stories.

(ii) Reading, and reading for pleasure?
CLs have instituted some reading activities. Reading clubs have been mooted, but are in need of development. DWW is rightfully proud of increased participation in its Reading Gala Day.[54] Such opportunity for children to demonstrate their reading ability in public is certainly an effective form of advocacy and inducement. However, it is also somewhat removed from the ultimate project aim of promoting *reading for pleasure*. Of course, that aim remains elusive until more published stories are available in CLs, and until library systems are in place to enable children to borrow these books. In the meantime, the 'basket stories' could help fill the gap – if CLs devised their own systems to encourage and enable this to happen.

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[54] Although instituted before the advent of the AR project, it has grown in popularity since then.

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(iv) The integrity of folk tales and children's/students' own writing based on free choice?

It was always intended that storybooks would be mounted on ASb and SW. Each of these platforms has its own set of standards of acceptability, with SW being more explicit in this regard.[55] A notable feature of early submissions, from both CLs and UCU, was the non-acceptability of storybooks. Quotes from PI reports tell the following story.

- *Some stories have been told and written by the children and parents at Budadiri. Alas, most of them have a strong religious message which disqualifies them on the ASb and SW.*[56]

- *The DWW club is quite successful as far as meeting and writing project is concerned. They have created over 30 new stories and most of these are publishable. This is different from the first time when nearly all the stories were rejected for lack of storyline and focus on the real issues allowed on either ASb or SW.*[57]

- *When contacted, SW declined to include the original stories on the UCU folder saying that their quality cannot be guaranteed unlike the translations whose original texts had been fully vetted for quality. This is understandable since most of the poetry the students composed were skewed towards religion. According to the SW policy, such works are not allowed. It means that the next group must be properly instructed on the dos and don'ts.*[58]

When asked about the 'dos and don'ts', the PI explained that in a community such as St Mark, where there is 'community desire for moralisation', he teaches them how to teach the moral without the religion: how to make the moral 'universally acceptable'. Techniques such as representing God as an animal are available.[59]

The potential tension that arises here between authentic community stories and what is 'universally acceptable' is discussed further under 6.2.2 below. For the moment, we suspend this discussion with the PI's view on this matter: 'Outright "religious" messages have been rejected on SW and cautioned on ASb. I think this is an important control. Good stories should be balanced.'

4.5.2.2 Reflection on outcomes, challenges, success stories and surprises in the UCU translation initiative

Challenges and successful outcomes covered under section 5 above need not be repeated here. What is worth emphasizing here is the translation initiative as a surprise.

- As an originally unplanned arm of the project, the UCU initiative arrived as an opportunistic[60] surprise.
- The PI's initiative has also led to storybook activity in sites other than those specified in the project plan. He has trained and supported students at Bishop Willis Core PTC (Primary Training College) in writing stories for uploading on ASb.
- By mounting about 100 stories on SW and ASb, UCU has far exceeded the number of productions from the CLs.
- This arm of the project has supported the originally planned CL project by providing the services of postgraduate student interns.

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[55] See: https://storyweaver.org.in/dos_and_donts
[56] PI. February 2018. (Draft) Literacy Action Research Report Uganda, p.3. Reiterated in very similar terms in PI. May 2018. Action Research Report on Community Libraries in Uganda, p.80.
[57] PI. May 2018. Ibid., p.26.
[58] PI. May 2018. Action Research Report on Community Libraries in Uganda, p.85.
[59] PI Interview, 1 May 2018.
[60] "Opportunistic" is not used pejoratively here.

- Most significantly, the translation initiative has demonstrated potential for developing a nascent ('disruptive') supply value chain.
- The peer review process is (arguably, perhaps) one that really does ensure quality; and it demonstrates some potential for reducing the cost of QA.
- By showing how a university might achieve the elusive goal of fulfilling all elements of its mission, it shows that universities in general – and perhaps teacher training colleges too – might be well predisposed to housing variations and enhancements of the story writing project.

Finally, with the benefit of hindsight, it seems as if:
a) The translation arm of the project is much more strongly positioned than CLs to produce quality mother tongue stories, and to become integral to emerging supply chains;
b) Community libraries in Uganda might be better positioned to concentrate their efforts on the more traditional library role of *making stories available* to those who wish to read for pleasure; and encouraging and supporting young readers in doing so. Reading materials could be supplemented by locally written stories, printed, catalogued and displayed rather than languishing in the reading basket.

4.5.2.3 Reflection on impact on targeted beneficiaries – the children

'The children have developed a love of reading for pleasure.'[61] Similar statements are found across many written and narrative accounts of the project. Experiences on site visits certainly created the impression that story writers had been affirmed by their writing exploits. While such views are encouraging, they do not constitute evidence. The present review had neither the data nor the tools with which to construct evidence of impact. A dedicated research project would be needed to do that.

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[61] Member of Board, DWW.

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5. Ethiopia

Uniformity across Ethiopian CLs (as described under section 3.2 above) lends itself to orderly review coverage. The final Project Report itself is purposeful and orderly.[62] Much of what follows here is owed to this report, supplemented by insights from documents, interviews and site visits.

5.1 Brief overview of CODE-Ethiopia and the Community Libraries

5.1.1 CODE-Ethiopia

Discussion under section 3 above introduced the work of CE in collaboration with the national government. The following excerpts from the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) website[63] reflect CE's very close synergy with the CL project rationale.

> CODE-Ethiopia (CE) is a registered, non-profit non-governmental organization, established in 1994, working in the area of library development in rural areas of Ethiopia. CE has so far established 97 community libraries and trained more than 200 community librarians in Ethiopia, all connected in a library network. They have been increasing literacy in rural Ethiopian communities by establishing community libraries that draw schools, teachers, librarians and citizens together to achieve results. …

> CODE-Ethiopia´s success lies in the strength of community involvement, use, and value of its community libraries. … CODE-Ethiopia´s strong relationship with the Ministry of Education ensures that its work strengthens and supports national education goals. The NGO supports the entire culture of reading and writing, from the author through the publisher through the community library and the teacher to the reader. It develops authentic reading materials that take local culture into consideration, and has published hundreds of thousands of books, more than 500 unique titles in six national languages.

5.1.2 The project CLs in Ethiopia

All of the five participating community libraries are located in the Oromia regional state with its population of 32 million speaking two languages: Amharic and Afaan Oromoo.

Little by way of background needs to be said about the five participating CLs. As seen under section 3.2.1 above, they are all well-established functional libraries, products of the national government/ CE 'mould.' All had had the prior benefit of CE training. Of course, being located in their particular local communities, each has its own distinctiveness that emerges in discussion that follows. At this stage, it is necessary to mention only that the Holeta CL is an outlier in the general picture of functionality. With most of the staff trained by CE having left, and with the staff complement having been reduced from five to two, management of the CL had become very difficult. A visibly upset librarian said she was untrained and alone in the library. Local authorities had not yet addressed this problem.[64] A symbol of the anomalies some CLs face lay in the rows of 34 unopened boxes of books donated by an Ethiopian expatriate community in the United States. Intended for schools, these boxes

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[62] CODE-E. May 2018. Action Research Report on Community Libraries in Ethiopia.

[63] http://uil.unesco.org/partner/library/code-ethiopia-ce (retrieved 26 May 2018).

[64] The group of individuals assembled at Holeta for the site visit was the smallest of all the groups we met at CLs. It comprised: Librarian; a representative of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and two others who introduced themselves as 'friends of the library'(one from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism; the other from the "Customs Office." No members of the community were present at the Holeta site visit. At other sites, community members were numerically conspicuous, vigorous participants.

housed some 22,000 books, none of them requested or screened beforehand. No wonder they had not been opened.

None of the CLs had an Internet connection. But each of the five had four tablets provided by IREX (International Research & Exchanges Board).[65] In addition, Holeta had ten desktop computers[66] (of which only two were in use) donated by the expatriate Ethiopian community referred to above; and Fitche had two desktop computers provided by the EIFL (Electronic Information for Libraries) Public Library Innovation Programme working in collaboration with CE.[67]

Three of CLs had separate reading rooms for children. These can be a significant asset as was particularly evident at Sheno where local language books, including big books, were arranged where children could most easily and comfortably access them – at floor level.

In response to the question of what CLs needed most, one is never surprised when ICT equipment tops the list. Otherwise, budgetary constraints were at the forefront of needs. Sheno, for example, pointed out that it had wonderful stories but needed big books for kindergarten. 'We have manpower and stories. It bounces down to the budget.' However, an indication of CLs with generally enough to enable them to function efficiently at the level of story creation can be gleaned from Ejere's somewhat idiosyncratic identification of the need for a better fence on the property surrounds.

Even though the CL furthest from CE Addis headquarters is only 115 kilometres away, the effects of civil 'unrest' (described by some as 'the uprising') included:
- delaying until 17-18 November 2017 the 'Trainers of Trainers' event as a key first step of the 'cascade' strategy
- curtailing PI visits to CLs
- delaying the transmission of completed stories from CLs to CE.

5.2 Project 'deliverables'
Apart from completion of the baseline and the final report,[68] the most tangible and significant contractual requirement was production of 50 original story books. Details of the 85 completed stories, 59 of which were illustrated, are shown in the following table.[69]

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[65] IREX is an NGO supporting 23 libraries as part of its Beyond Access programme in Ethiopia. See: http://beyondaccess.net/2016/09/30/ethiopian-local-language-literacy-app-launch/
[66] Dell computers (Core 2 Duo 3.00 ghz, 80 GB) running Windows 7. These could be reconditioned computers that 'Books for Africa' sells.
[67] See: http://www.eifl.net/resources/inspiring-library-family-literacy-project-supports-pre-school-children-ethiopia
[68] CE, May 2018. Op. cit.
[69] CE. 'List of Story Books Developed'.

Table 8 *Completed stories in Amharic and Afaan Oromoo*

CL	Language				
	AMHARIC		AFAAN OROMOO		
	Stories with illustrations	Stories without illustrations	Stories with illustrations	Stories without illustrations	TOTAL
Chefe Donsa	12	19			31
Ejeree	6		14	4	24
Holeta	8		2		10
Fitche	7		3		10
Sheno	6		1	3	10
Total	39	19	20	7	85

The achievement of deliverables in light of delays caused by civil unrest is testimony to the effectiveness of implementation. However, one shortcoming is acknowledged in the final report: 'We have been failed in one very important activity that we were expected to do – uploading stories on StoryWeaver and ASb platforms.'[70] This was due to more than time constraints and the delay in transmitting stories from CLs. Although stories in PDF format have been uploaded to tablets, there were technical difficulties when it came to transferring these to online repositories. Cited difficulties include: the need to have stories in MSWord; mounting stories on ASb calls for a method of cut-and-paste, and there is a problem with providing one's own pictures; in addition, SW doesn't have Amharic fonts. Attempts are being made to address these problems.

For CE, the matter of producing the contractual number of storybooks did not end there. CE had established its own procedures and targets for meeting its contractual obligation of least 50 storybooks in local languages:
• six reading and writing clubs to be established and/or strengthened
• six head librarians, six school directors and six teachers from the adjacent schools to be trained as ToTs [Trainer of Trainers]
• and in turn, the ToTs would train 10 story creators, 10 skilled (aural) readers and 10 parents in the 6 targeted libraries.[71]

CE met these self-imposed targets albeit with the number of libraries being reduced to five. Successes and learnings from the outcomes of training for story creation are discussed below.

5.3 Inputs and Activities: Action research and data gathered

In Uganda, as seen earlier, inputs for CL implementation were achieved in thoughtful ways without the formal trappings of AR. This is even more true of Ethiopia where a standardized model of implementation, based on historical experience, was being applied across a set of relatively uniform, functional CLS. There was simply less need for AR in Ethiopia.

(a) Selection of libraries for project implementation

The selection of CLs was pragmatic. '(W)e were forced to select some of the CLs that are near to Addis Ababa.'[72] There were budgetary as well as logistical reasons associated with civil unrest behind the necessity for proximity to Addis. Nevertheless, the sample is suitable for research purposes. All were subject to the same national

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[70] CE. May 2018. Op.cit. p.13.
[71] CE. May 2018. Op.cit. p.3.
[72] CE. May 2018. Op.cit. p.6.

regulation; all were following same model CE/ CL model of project intervention and strategies; all benefited from the same CE training and support.

(b) AR design and implementation

Project design and implementation was based on past experience and project aims. The pragmatic purposefulness of the project plan is reflected in the main activities at the CLs, described as:

- Training of participants drawn from parents, students and teachers
- Facilitating preparation of story books
- Establishment of literacy clubs (reading and writing clubs)
- Conducting literacy activities in and around the CLs.[73]

Developments were monitored. CE documented soft and hard copies of all documentation related to the project, including photographs and notes taken at CLs. Monitoring was facilitated by the impressive record keeping that was evident at each CL. Records including numbers of books, numbers of children and of library activities were on hand at site visits. Although PIs visit CLs at only six-monthly intervals, there was telephonic communication with librarians who also visited the CE office from time to time. In this way, adjustments were made to make project implementation more efficient on the basis of ongoing experience. The methods but not the formality of AR were in place.

(c) Was there community involvement in AR? (Was the AR participatory?)

Through their management structures, CL communities were in touch with CE. In this way, they had some say in how the project unfolded.

(d) Reports and presentations on the project

By way of background, it should be noted that CE's contribution to early literacy and to CLs already had a noteworthy profile on a number of websites. Likewise, there has been some scholarly publication (see Appendix G). However, no formal presentations have as yet been made on the CL project. Advocacy has taken place in the practical form of direct communication with key role players. During the baseline assessment, for example, PIs promoted and explained the project to district officials in the respective CLs. The same was done with officials in the Ministry of Education.

> We brought together and linked the nearby school officials, Heads of the Culture and Tourism Offices and Municipality and discussed about the project objective and requirements and roles each should play.[74]

(e) Adequacy of data base for inferences and conclusions

As in the case of Uganda, there is an adequate data base for insights into challenges, success stories and lessons to be learnt. In the case of Ethiopia, the data base is likewise drawn from documentation and discussions at joint site visits undertaken by the PI and the project team.

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[73] CE. May 2018. Op.cit. pp. 4-5.
[74] CE, May 2018. Op.cit., p.5.

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(f) The effectiveness of AR in providing insights into challenges, success stories and lessons learnt from interventions in community libraries

Again, as in Uganda, purposeful strategy and actions were implemented in thoughtful ways. Implementation experiences led to measures to make implementation more effective. For example, CE found a way of sourcing their own illustrations when it was found that those available were unsuitable.

(g) Were overall lessons learnt from using AR?

Project success is owed to effective training and support in already functional CLs. Implementation was further guided by local experiences and the wishes of communities as the project unfolded. Key AR precepts – plan, monitor, reflect, revise the plan – were used non-formally as one might do when acting purposefully in any goal-directed endeavour.

5.4 Outcomes and Impact: CLs' progress, achievements and impact on early literacy

5.4.1 Reflection on outcomes, challenges, success stories and surprises

Outcomes
Despite the deleterious effect of civil unrest on progress, all five sites contributed to the 59 stories completed with illustrations. This can be attributed to the model in which libraries work with schools and with their own communities within a broader partnership of government and CE. The staffing difficulty at Holeta was simply a reflection of how, in one particular aberrant situation, the model can stutter. However, because of the very fact that an overarching partnership is in place, the situation at Holeta is technically retrievable. It certainly should be when the new librarian has been trained – and this CE has undertaken to do.

Challenges
Finding or creating suitable illustrations was a serious obstacle. In meeting this challenge CE was able to draw on its database of professional translators, illustrators and book developers. It was accordingly able to recruit professional translators and illustrators. Payment was made 'as per the policy of CE,'[75] i.e. CE was able to negotiate discounted rates because it is an NGO, and it could also draw on its advantage of placing bulk orders. Even so, as Table 8 shows, 26 of the 85 completed stories remained without illustrations.

Technical difficulties with uploading completed stories were described under section 5.2 above.

Success stories
The whole story of the CL project in Ethiopia is itself a success story. Storybook production has exceeded expectations and even more importantly, is embedded in four CLs as part of early literacy endeavours in community structures and culture. Site visits provided encouraging examples of community investment in the ideals of the CL project. At four of the five sites there were indications of communities having 'taken ownership' of the project. Prospects for sustainability thus become similarly encouraging.

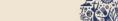At least three specific features of the project contributed to overall success.

(i) The training of trainers (ToT), and training materials
The November workshop in Addis trained one librarian, one school director, and one teacher from each of the participating CLs. Centralizing the training offers several advantages: it is cost and time effective, it enabled

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[75] CE, May 2018. Op.cit. p.12.

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participants to share experiences and work collaboratively at the two-day workshop; and it paved the way for the subsequent improvement of stories in the sharing arrangement that CE put in place. Some participants were further enthused by the experience of 'going to the city'. In terms of the plan, each CL was then to train ten story creators, ten skilled (aural) readers and ten parents.

Training was enhanced by purposeful training materials.

> *Apart from the materials prepared by CE, we have also used some materials that were prepared by READ-CO, USAID in local languages. Some of the materials prepared by CE are:*
> *1. Activity guide for librarians*
> *2. Training material on reading*
> *3. Different PowerPoint presentations …* [76]

(ii) Teams of story writers

The effectiveness of the plan is evident in the fact that stories were written by CL teams including some who had been trained by the trainers. Sheno provided the clearest example of a *structured team* of writers at work. Groups of ten (including teachers, local community members and woreda officials who had been trained by the trainers) would meet to discuss ideas for a story. This usually took a full morning. As explained by the School Principal who was part of the site-visit discussion: 'Local society generated ideas – then teachers wrote the ideas in clear language.' The visiting team was interested to know if there were disagreements about the content of the stories. 'No,' explained an elder. 'We were motivated to write and express our cultures according to our context. Amharic. From the oral stories that were not written before.'

(iii) Sharing digital versions of stories

CE introduced the innovation of sharing digital versions of stories across other participating CLs. In the first instance this served as quality enhancement through feedback to writing teams who could then build suggestions and criticisms into final versions. As a first step in distributing stories, final PDF versions of stories were then uploaded to the tablets that all sites had.

Impetus created by the ToT, team writing, and sharing of stories led to 'spin off' benefits.
- The project breathed life into existing formal relationships between CLs and Heads of the Culture and Tourism offices and Municipality.
- Closer cooperation and working relationships between schools and CLs came into being, particularly at Chefe Donsa, Fitche and Sheno.
- All CLs involved in the project established reading and writing clubs.
- The project provided the first opportunity for CLs to work with schools using the tablets provided under the auspices of IREX.

For CE, the project has brought greater awareness of the potential as well as cost saving of digitised stories. As one of the PIs observed: 'Printing costs are getting higher and higher; printing houses are getting fewer and fewer.'

Finally, there is the overall project aim of identifying alternative storybook content creation and distribution models. The value chain begins with the collaborative creation of stories of authentic cultural interest within local communities (in the broad sense of the term). Quality, as a retired teacher and volunteer at Chefe Donsa noted, 'is controlled here [i.e. at local level]'. A second round of quality assurance takes place when stories are

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[76] CE, May 2018. Op.cit., p.7.

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sent for review to other participating libraries. Digitisation makes the final editing process quick and cost-effective. CE has the organizational capacity and editorial expertise to finalize stories by improving or creating new images for illustrations.

Surprises

At various sites, the visiting team listened to a number of stories being read or summarized by children, elders, librarians or officials. Printed stories were also on display at some sites. An analysis of the nature of these stories would have been interesting, but beyond the scope of the present review. However, it certainly seemed as if these stories were mostly of the traditional folk tale genre, often involving animals. However, these animals are not depicted as zoological specimens. They are often wily little tricksters who outwit larger and more powerful beasts like lions. The plots and foibles of animals often seem to be a commentary on human situations.

Against that background, some stories at Sheno surprised with their focus on the local environment. One, for example, was a story about bees and flowers, pollination and propagation. It was a very readable, attractively illustrated story based on natural history. This change of theme is interesting as an example of how story-writing can broaden its reach. Through reading for pleasure, children can also learn some of the instrumental knowledge that schools try to convey but often do so in only the dullest of ways.[77]

Then there was a very different kind of surprise. Partnerships with government can often mean that the terms of the contract result in rigidity and even stultifying procedures that limit opportunities for adjustments and innovation. It is then perhaps a surprise that CE should have been as innovative as it has. We saw above, the benefits of innovation in the initial training-of-trainers; and then later in the sharing of 'first draft' digital versions of stories. Perhaps CE knows how to work productively within bureaucratic frameworks.

5.4.2 Reflection on impact on targeted beneficiaries – the children

A number of respondents made it clear that the greatest need was for stories suitable for children from the 'O' class through to grade 4. There were many accounts of how the CL project could benefit this age group, and of its promise. There were also indications of new developments: 'No children attended the library before' (Librarian at Ejere); and stories on tablets were proving an attraction (Holeta).

Narrative accounts of promise there certainly are. But the review had no access to research-based evidence of impact (and the project plan had not envisaged any).

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[77] It's also interesting that Bernstein, arguably the most leading curriculum theorist, maintains that in any learning situation there are two discourses: (a) Instructional Discourse (ID), which is about knowledge and skills. (b) Regulative Discourse (RD). which is concerned with the transmission of values and norms. Through the RD learners are intended to develop particular kinds of conduct and character. Both discourses are brought together in pedagogy. 'The instructional discourse is embedded in the regulative discourse, and … the regulative discourse is the dominant discourse,' Bernstein, B. 1996. *Pedagogy, symbolic control and identity: Theory, research, critique.* Taylor and Francis: London. (p. 46)
In these terms, most of the storybooks serve the RD. But there are some, like the bees and flowers story at Sheno, that serve the ID.

6. Issues in relation to both countries

6.1 Overall comparisons across the two countries

In locating CL project activity in the two respective country contexts, section 3 above noted two basic similarities. Both countries house a multiplicity of languages; both endorse the principle of mother-tongue instruction in the early grades of schooling. At the same time, it was noted that CLs received government support as part of an integrated partnership of key role players in Ethiopia. By way of contrast, CLs in Uganda were basically independent units reliant on such guidance and support as the UgCLA could provide.

These commonalities and differences lay behind the picture of CL developments in each of the two countries in sections 4 and 5. We now summarize commonalities and differences across the two countries in terms of how the CL project unfolded within the enabling and constraining effects of their own distinctive national contexts.

6.1.1 Commonalities across the two countries: a summary

(a) Action Research in project design and in reality

AR, as a development instrument, was pivotal to project design. PIs in both countries used the recognised AR precepts – plan, implement, monitor, reflect, revise the plan – in ways that suited their purpose. There was purposeful, thoughtful *action,* without the *research*. Neither country produced AR reports. Formal baselines studies were completed, but not built on in any systematic way.

(b) PIs involved in project design in their respective countries

PIs played the key role in the project design for their respective countries. This served the purpose of the project well. The CL project was to derive understandings about alternative value chains that could be constructed and tested in different settings. Also, project strategies could be fully aligned to the contexts in which these would play out.

(c) The selection of CLs and the final number of participating CLS

In both countries, PIs selected CLs within a manageable travelling distance of their home base. In both cases the number of CLs was subsequently narrowed down: from the original six to five in Ethiopia, and to four in Uganda. Neither the pragmatism of CL selection nor the discarding of a number of CLs because of logistical issues had any noticeable effect on the suitability and representativeness of the CL 'sample.' Project review had the benefit of access to a very adequate data base.

(d) Unexpected challenges and delays in writing and illustrating stories

PIs encountered unexpected challenges and delays in both countries. In Ethiopia, civil unrest delayed and curtailed project activities almost throughout the lifespan of the project. In Uganda, the question of 'correct' and acceptable orthography delayed story writing. Once stories had been completed, both countries experienced the difficulty of finding appropriate, ready-made illustrations. PIs had to find and commission professional illustrators (even if on a pro bono basis in Uganda).

(e) The power of community

Project 'deliverables' and the nature of community work and involvement in CLs in both countries, as observed and experienced on site visits, affirms project management's decision to locate case studies in libraries. The project in both countries was able to capitalize on tightly knit communities, where they already existed, or to help nurture new community bonds.

(f) Community pride in their stories

Closely linked to the above point is the fact that children and community members readily told or read their stories – with pride. The Ethiopian elder cited in 5.4.1(ii) above was proud to see traditional oral stories written up into storybooks; at DWW in Uganda, an elder referred to the need to write up 'our beautiful stories.'

(g) Innovations and value chains

Significant innovations in both countries contributed to project success. In Ethiopia, innovation lay in the training-of-trainers and in the sharing of first-draft stories with other CLs. The originally unplanned and innovative translation initiative at UCU in Uganda has been more effective in producing stories than the planned CL arm of the project. It also appears to be more sustainable. In sum, two different kinds of publishing value chains emerged: one built around the ToT model in Ethiopia; and the other, in more embryonic form, in the UCU translation initiative.

(h) Targets for storybook production surpassed

Unexpected challenges and delays notwithstanding, contractual expectations for the project were surpassed.

Table 9   *Storybook targets and storybooks completed*

Country	Storybook target	Storybooks completed
Uganda	• 10 original storybooks per library uploaded to ASb and SW (i.e. total of 60 storybooks). • 50 copies of each title printed.	• 143 on ASb and SW (43 from CLs; 100 from the translation initiative)
Ethiopia	• 50 original stories	• 59 completed stories in PDF format uploaded to tablets, but not yet on online platforms. • A further 26, complete with illustrations, are in process.

6.1.2 Differences across the two countries

An important difference is that CE had not yet interacted with either ASb or SW. Uploading stories was yet to commence at the time of the site visits. This was expected to be a challenge, as no one at CE had yet been trained to undertake this task.[78] Also, unlike the UCU translation initiative, the downloading of stories from online platforms was not a feature of the CL project in Ethiopia. A search for the word 'download' in the final project report does not yield a single case.

One obvious implication of this difference is that reported experiences of uploading and downloading storybooks are limited to Uganda. More tantalizingly, we simply do not know whether stories developed by Ethiopian community structures will meet the same fate of early rejection as in Uganda. In this regard, the nature of stories may well be very different across country contexts. Even though there is a common expectation that a story must express community values, stories from the Ugandan sites include those from sites with a strong religious ethos, such as St Mark and the Uganda Christian University. There is also a strong evangelical Christian movement in Uganda. CLs in Ethiopia, judged impressionistically from site visits, gave no hint of sectarian religious affiliation.

Differences in matters that can be compared are presented in Table 10 below.

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[78] CE, May 2018. Op.cit., p.14.

Table 10   *Differences from starting points through to operations and outcomes*

Issue	Uganda	Ethiopia
The starting point: CL functionality and capacity	Volunteer librarians.	CE-trained librarians, paid by government.
	CLs at low levels of development and functionality.	CLs had infrastructure, functionality, procedures and systems.
	Diverse management structures at sites, e.g. church, family trust, private school, regal patronage.	A common CL management structure included representation of community, local schools and government officials.
The nature of project challenge	Dual challenge: develop library functionality concurrently with project story writing.	Superimpose project practices onto relatively well functioning libraries, but in circumstances constrained by civil unrest.
Organizational setting of the project	One-person project. Individual CLs have no common organizational home.	Project vested in CE with its considerable organizational experience of working with CLs in supporting government policy.
Different sets of networks	PI's network mainly linked with academic community, UgCLA and other projects working in early literacy. Networks very good for story-writing advocacy.	CE's network includes government and international NGOs supporting early literacy (e.g. EIFL, IREX, Beyond Access, Ethiopia Reads, Read-Co) in ways that also equipped CLs with tablets.
Implementation strategy	Budget plan and strategy for working with people were both 'Responsive.' Project pace governed by people's acceptance of new ways of doing things.	CE developed a common strategy for infusing project aims into an already established model for promoting development across a relatively uniform set of CLs.
Core CL staff	Mainly volunteers from the community. Lack of librarian continuity. Some unpaid volunteers include present and past UCU students, including the Illustrator.	Government pays salaries of some library staff. Volunteers are from the local community, e.g. parents and elders.
Training for story-writing	Individualized at sites in UG (has to be so, as each site has a uniqueness). PI had 35 workshops with writers.	One centralised ToT session was held (one librarian, one school director, one teacher from each of 6 sites). Training materials were used. CLs then cascaded the training.
The CL relationship with schools	CLs must draw school in through community bonds or PI persuasion. Schools can dictate terms.	Mandatory, structured, and from what could be seen on site visits, a very constructive relationship.
Children's access to and use of library	Relatively limited. Holidays and Sundays at two CLs; no easy public access at Kidiki; literacy club from DWW's neighbouring school has an hour every Wednesday and can make appointment for weekend access.	Library records show good attendance and site visits found a good deal of activity that did not seem to have been staged. One CL had a daily double-shift system in place to make provision for school groups.
Story production	Children were free to write their own stories (drawing possibly on stories from parents). But they were the authors.	Story writing was much more of a community effort. Writing was particularly inclusive and structured at Sheno.

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Issue	Uganda	Ethiopia
Prospects for sustainability	CLs are now better equipped for story writing, but lack of organizational home and dependency on PI is an obstacle. Translation initiative at UCU has an organizational home – the university – that offers better prospects of sustainability.	Present arrangements are working well and are, in themselves, the model for sustainability. Endeavours supporting Early Literacy appear to be well embedded in the community structures and culture of four CLs.

6.2 Reflection on Peer Review and Quality Assurance

6.2.1 Peer review and QA arrangements

Uganda

Children were the story writers in all Ugandan CLs. Their story writing was the dominant feature of activity in the CLs visited in the course of this review. As the initiator and promoter of this story writing, the PI was similarly pivotal in discussions on which stories should be taken forward for publication. 'Selecting illustrations and story editing for quality assurance is the most difficult part.'[79]

Taking stories back to elders for QA appears to have been most difficult to manage at DWW where there was contention around regional dialects. A group of teachers had helped to compile a word list in the major dialects used in the area.

In the translation initiative, staff and sometimes fellow students at UCU provided their services as trustees of quality on a goodwill/voluntary basis. The language of a particular story would be matched with that of a native speaker of that language. Students' written reports suggest that this arrangement had worked well. For example:

I managed to locate one Faith Nyagoma an accounting student who did an exceptional job in peer editing and correcting the unnecessary errors. Another editor I got was Mr kasiaja Solomon, our French teacher. With vast experience in translating into local languages, everything looked easy and easy to comprehend. I truly credit my two editors for the great work done and efforts.[80]

On the other hand, this system is uneven because it is not regularized.

Peer review process is a hustle [sic] whereby you approach a person to help you in reviews and editing but some refuse saying they are very busy to do such in that they have a lot on their desk for example students who also have unfinished businesses such as course works, tests and assignments it's not been easy.[81]

Ethiopia

QA took place both inside and outside the CLs, with communities themselves being the first line of QA. At Fitche, for example, stories were reviewed by a volunteer and retired teacher; and at Chefe Donsa, by the trained librarian, head of school and language teacher. At Sheno, QA was built into story writing. As a member of the structured team writing the stories, the local school principal had editorial responsibility for language correctness.

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[79] Email communication, 4 April 2018.
[80] 'Essay on African Storybook, Story Weaver and translation experience by Jerome Atugonza'
[81] PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.156.

Peer review was the main purpose behind the second stage of QA. First drafts of stories from each CL were shared with other CLs. After getting feedback, CE used its organizational capacity to finalize stories and to commission illustrations (in cases where necessary), and then to print stories.

Comment

The seeming focus on orthography/language issues in both countries masks a deeper underlying facet of QA. When asked to explain what they understood by 'quality,' respondents used different ways of expressing the importance of what might be called the 'lesson' of the story. Examples include:

- 'Our kids must have good personality, become good citizens.' A good story must 'pass on our culture' (elder at Chefe Donsa, Ethiopia).
- There is a 'community desire for moralisation' (Uganda PI interview, 1 May 2018).
- Even at DWW, with its struggle for language recognition, the importance of recording the community's values in the stories of elders was made even more pressing by the fact that 'the elders are becoming few' (Member of Management Board, 2 May 2018).
- What makes a good story? '1. The mission of the story. 2. The 'handiness" of the book: level, language, culture, attractive size and fonts, illustrations' (CE official, interview, 8 May 2018).

The latter quote reflects an interesting prioritization of criteria for quality,[82] and it is one that is seemingly inverted in the further, external, layer of quality assurance.

6.2.2 The final layer of quality assurance

The final layer of QA lies with the ASb and SW repositories, first, in their decision-making about whether a story is publishable; and second, how it is rated.

With regard to the former, the SW website advises aspirant authors: "DON'T write stories as a medium to push to your religious or political agenda.[83] From the Uganda PI's statement (cited earlier under section 4.5.2.2) it appears as if ASb tacitly applies a similar principle: 'Outright "religious" messages have been rejected on SW and cautioned on ASb.'

With regard to the rating of stories, SW has a 'Recommended' category in its large pool of stories. ASb has an 'Approved'[84] category with stories so rated marked with a tick.[85] Stories without the 'Approved' tick are, well, they are just there.

This raises a question for the project – and perhaps for online platforms. There is evidence (as above) that elders see their stories as important because these carry the community's cultural/moral values. Such values may sometimes be imbued with religious belief. One comprehensive review of African folklore finds that, for

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[82] Studies in other settings confirm the primacy of the 'moral' of the story. In Kenya, for example, "The mid-term evaluation of the ASb identified the 'moral of the story' as a powerful factor in community approval and even involvement, as story-tellers ….." (ASb. October 2016. 'Extension of pilot site work into broader systemic implementation: the Lolupe hub'.

[83] https://storyweaver.org.in/dos_and_donts (retrieved 29 May 2018). At the same time, SW recognizes the value of traditional stories in its dedicated section for Folktales and Myths https://storyweaver.org.in/stories?category=Folktales%20%26%20Myths&isStoryCategory=true

[84] http://www.africanstorybook.org/# (retrieved 29 May 2018).

[85] https://www.africanstorybook.org, All languages section under 'African Storybook Read' (retrieved 29 May 2018).

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example: "Christian morals are specifically introduced, e.g. among the Luba."[86] One could find many other examples of stories promoting values that would probably not be approved by other communities. In the present project in Uganda, for example, the moral of some stories seemed to promote traditional gendered roles. In Kenya, in describing the nomadic values of a community in a hostile environment, the Site Coordinator of a storybook project noted that traditional stories celebrated victories in battles in which cattle were prised from neighbouring tribes. [87]

The question here is not whether we may or may not agree on the acceptability of particular values. Nor is there any evidence in this review to suggest that online platforms, who must cater for all communities, have no justification for rejecting or not commending stories that particular communities wish to tell. Given that online stories are intended to be used by diverse communities, screen stories they must. However, the fact is that in a situation in which the CL project encourages communities to tell their stories so that these can become storybooks, it is also the right of external agencies – the online platforms - to accept or reject (and to rate) these stories *independently* of any internal QA processes that might have been followed in their creation.

The big question around online platforms will be about criteria and procedures used in their selection and rating processes. These criteria and procedures do not appear to be made public. Even if they were, it does not seem possible that they could be mindful of the quality criteria and the means of applying these criteria used by the communities who contributed the stories. On the other hand, if the repositories use purely technical criteria when rating the quality of stories, then the very social essence of local storytelling could be lost. Apart from criteria, from the outside one cannot but help wonder who, in or on behalf of the online platforms, selects and rates stories written in the languages of small, distant communities.

However, what is important to note here is that, in the CL project, PIs and communities (and particularly the library community structures in Ethiopia) have indeed instituted their own measures for assuring quality. *They* take these seriously.

The broader issue of QA and what quality means is taken up under section 7.3 below.

6.3 Possible transferability of methods across countries
The country and organizational settings in which the two sets of CLs are located are so different that it is not easy to know which methods could successfully be transplanted. PIs in both countries have extensive networks, but their counterpart/s in the other project country are not part of those networks.

- The DWW initiative in typing children's stories along with typing up lists of such stories for display in the library opens up opportunity for their peers to read these stories. Emulation of this in other CLs (in both Uganda and Ethiopia) would certainly increase the amount of reading being done in the mother tongue. Writers would also be affirmed and encouraged.
- The creation of teams of writers (including a school teacher) as at Sheno brings promise of increasing the number of interesting stories produced, and possibly of enhancing quality at the same time.
- Sharing first draft stories with other CLs as in Ethiopia could well be used in Uganda, bringing with it peer review and, very likely, even greater enthusiasm for story writing.

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[86] Finnegan, R. 2012. Oral Literature in Africa. Open Book Publishers http://www.oapen.org/search?identifier=63375, p.337. (retrieved 19 April 2018).
[87] Saide. October 2016. Final Evaluation of African Storybook project: Extension of pilot site work into broader systemic implementation: the Lolupe hub, p.29.

- Given the problem of lack of librarian continuity in CLs in Uganda, CE's training materials could be very useful. These materials could also reduce the amount of on-site training required when new CLs are established.
- OER is meant to contribute to egalitarianism. Compared to Uganda, Ethiopia has a greater number of language groups, some of which are numerically small and less likely to be supported in story writing initiatives. The most realistic chance of their acquiring children's stories in their own language might be through a translation project such as that at UCU. This model could well be replicable in selected Ethiopian universities. However, the relevance and thus 'quality' of translated stories transported from their context is yet to be tested.

Readers will doubtless identify other practices that could be shared across sites.

6.4 Reflection on replicability and cost effectiveness

Interviews and site visits did not afford much opportunity for exploring the matter of costs. It is thus not possible to volunteer any confident view. An impressionistic view would suggest that storybook writing is relatively low cost; and that production is not.

Costs of writing storybooks

Any authoritative view on writing costs would need to factor in the 'invisible' costs such as those incurred in training, training materials, travel, time spent monitoring and supporting developments, and reviewing content.

In Uganda, there certainly is a cost saving at UCU because translating stories has been built into the curriculum as an optional coursework component for students. Costs there are also kept low by the system of QA peer review, but as this is voluntary, there must be questions about its stability and sustainability. With the exception of DWW and its three paid library staff, libraries and story writing in Uganda were also managed by volunteers amongst whom there is high turnover. Turnover, in turn, invokes the costs of additional training once new librarians have been found. While the PI is extraordinarily adept at recruiting volunteers, staff turnover thus masks real costs. The status of the illustrator who was recruited is somewhat ambiguous. He agreed to 'forego some rights'[88] (which could include either or both remuneration and copyright).

Under the auspices of CE in Ethiopia, key activities were carried out by paid officials and teachers already in post, in partnership with elders and other community volunteers. Cost saving here is achieved by partnerships and networking.

Cost of access

In terms of costs of giving children access to completed stories in Uganda, the system of making children's own unpublished stories available in the library of production would certainly be cost effective – if it were put in place. Quality of content and illustrations would, of course, be questionable.

Distribution of digitized copies of storybooks is obviously cost effective when there are mobile devices, computers, and electricity available. In Ethiopia this was made possible by CLs each having four tablets. More broadly though, digitization has limits when one remembers that not one project CL in either country had an Internet connection. Potential cost saving benefits brought about by ASb and SW are obviously deferred until CLs have Internet access.

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[88] PI, May 2018. Op cit., p.7.

The possibility of supply chains promoting access

In terms of children having easy access, hard copies of books would probably be regarded as first prize. If publishers have access to completed, high-quality, open-licensed storybooks, they would obviously be spared the costs of content creation. With their costs limited to those of printing, hard copies could at least be a lot more affordable.

Undoubtedly, however, the most effective means of reducing costs of both content creation and access would be through maintaining and extending existing partnerships. There is an economy of scale and 'critical mass' when individuals and NGOs share an interest in early literacy, and when these interests can be coalesced into partnerships. This can only be done through networking. Rewards of such coalitions can already be seen in the nascent value chain brought together in the UCU translation project. The value of partnerships is even more evident in the coalition of interests between CE and other NGOs who have, for example, supplied CLs with tablets.

Overall, however, the entire question of costs is embedded in the two kinds of supply chains that were beginning to emerge in each country. This matter is taken up in the Conclusion.

7. Conclusion

The purpose of the CL Project was

> *To deepen knowledge and understanding about key issues in libraries as centres of literacy development in Uganda and Ethiopia.* [89]

The present review has had the benefit of rich and varied data from CL project sites in Ethiopia and Uganda. This final section of the report attempts to consolidate and compress everything covered so far into three categories:
* The CL project in a nutshell.
* What made project achievements possible?
* What next?

7.1 The CL project in a nutshell
The single most formidable obstacle in the creation of storybooks was that of finding suitable illustrations that resonated with local conditions. Nonetheless, in respect of the key 'deliverable' – the creation of illustrated storybooks in book format – contractual targets were surpassed in both countries. They did so in different ways.

In Uganda

Story-writing activities in four CLs led to the development of 43 completed storybooks. As in Ethiopia, numbers of storybooks were fairly even across sites, the least productive yielding seven. Story-writing 'deliverables' were surpassed because the PI initiated an originally unplanned story translation venture at UCU. In fact, this 'deliverable' would not have been achieved without the translation initiative that contributed 100 of the storybooks mounted on ASb and SW platforms. In summary:

(i) The Ugandan Community Libraries
Children at community libraries were writing stories in numbers, and seemingly with great enjoyment. However, apart from those stories selected for further development, story writing seemed to be stuck at the level of the

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[89] 'Proposal for Action Research in Uganda and Ethiopia-Program 2017', p.2.

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many unselected stories languishing in the 'story basket' in each CL. Children, by and large, were writing stories for themselves rather than for the library. Although the CL project had provided the impetus for story writing, it seemed to be unable to structure a setting in which children could access and read the stories. The difficulty, with its origins in the marginalized situation of CLs in Uganda, is that story writing in the CLs does not have an organizational home. It can only be individualized. Had the PI not played a major role in developing selected children's stories into book format, it is unlikely that these CLs would have produced any completed storybooks.

(ii) The UCU translation initiative

The productive translation initiative has found an organizational home at UCU. It has a foothold in the curriculum and received support of a Community Service Grant.[90] Through this and postgraduate student interns, the unplanned part of CL project has come to support the planned part of the project in CLs. In fact, 'deliverables' would not have been achieved had the translation initiative not contributed 100 of the storybooks mounted on ASb and SW platforms. This is Uganda's major contribution to the project. At the same time, there must be a question about the contextual suitability of stories translated from English into local languages.

In Ethiopia

Storybook creation was relatively even across the five CL sites. The least productive CL site contributed six fully completed storybooks. By the end of the project, the picture was one of story writing firmly embedded in organizationally inclusive CL structures, as well as in local community culture. In short, CLs had taken 'ownership' of story-writing. Having completed the training, CE's role became one of supporting CLs' storybook creation and managing distribution of the finished products. Prospects of sustainability are good. With the system of training-of-trainers being 'cascaded', the project has acquired some momentum of its own.

Supply chains (or value networks)

The overarching question behind this project was that of how to explore alternative (disruptive) value chains using community libraries as a source of openly licensed stories, and to get them written and published in ways that makes them accessible to young readers. It is in this regard that valuable knowledge emerges from this project.

In the translation initiative in Uganda, an embryonic supply chain has begun emerging. Its most notable feature is that students translate stories as part of their coursework, and peer review is carried out mainly by academic staff. It has been strengthened by support from the university's Community Services Project. It is, however, a loosely knit value network. It has as yet no formal structural home or bonds to hold it together. Its vulnerability lies in its present reliance on volunteers (particularly in peer review and professional illustration work).

In Ethiopia, story creation involved a more structured supply chain involving
- centralized training-of-trainers (to be cascaded);
- inclusive, collaborative and structured storytelling in libraries;
- self-review quality assurance (e.g. elders take responsibility for, as we might infer, the authenticity of the story; and a teacher in the team manages language issues);
- peer review involving first draft stories being shared with other community libraries;
- CE data base used to identify and employ professional illustrators; and
- completed stories uploaded onto tablets (supplied under auspices of IREX) at fellow community libraries.

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[90] While the former offers some promise of continuity, there can be no certainty of the latter being renewed.

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7.2 What made these achievements possible?

Success in the achievement of project outcomes can be attributed to both project management and to the way in which PIs contributed to the project plan and its implementation.

Project management

Project management translated ideas from focused research into contextually suitable sites of practice. It did so through extensive networking and consultation. PIs were recruited into project planning and implementation in ways that capitalized on their expertise and experience in the host countries. The flexibility of a project of enquiry made it possible for PIs in both countries to enhance the project with their own innovations. Of these, the UCU translation initiative is the most striking example. In general, almost all projects experience an unintended consequence, sometimes beneficial. In the present case the translation initiative was more than an unintended consequence. It was a purposefully intended intervention that brought considerable benefit to the project.

Because project development was rather like a person walking along a road while making it, the project was not titled consistently across all documentation. But 'Action Research' is the common thread in all versions. It certainly came from the broader Hewlett grant background of "action-research micro-projects."[91]

In a project premised on Action Research (AR) as a tool for guiding and monitoring project development, PIs certainly followed the AR cyclical precepts of: plan, act, observe, reflect. They did not, however, do the 'Research' part of AR. This is not a criticism of what they did. AR in the 'academic' sense of the term implies that the researcher should be immersed in the site of the action. PIs had constraints of time and budget, and were too distant from their multiple sites of action to do the monitoring necessary for 'academic' AR. In any event, some of the AR literature reminds us that, stripped of its academic cladding, AR is a process that can be viewed not 'as a *method* for research but rather as a *process* of doing and inquiring.' *PIs indeed used the AR processes of 'doing and inquiring' necessary for project success.*

Along the way, however, lack of clarity regarding the kind of action research expected resulted in the one discordant element in the winning formula of project management. One instance of ambivalence about the model is evident in presentation of an 'academic' AR model and its virtues in a final project report and in one presentation[92] – but with no reference to how the model was used.

The project shows that while AR is certainly a useful tool for 'doing and inquiring', it is too much of an academically 'loaded' term to use without explanation and guidance.

Project implementation

So much happened at so many sites that it is difficult to capture it all in summary. However, one striking overall point stands out. Successful outcomes in story writing were achieved, relatively evenly, across multiple sites in very different contextual setting offering very different challenges.

The table below presents a generalized picture of country contextual settings and of how the respective PIs were able to function effectively within them.

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[91] Opening paragraph in 'Terms of Reference for Review of Hewlett Literacy Community Libraries Action Research'
[92] PI. May 2018, Op.cit. and Gulere, C.W. 23-25 October, 2017. 'Materials development: opportunities for creative writing and creative reading'. Aga Khan University - Institute of Education Development conference on 'Re-thinking teacher education: Improve, Innovate, Change'.

Table 11   *National contexts and PI mode of operation*

Country	Government support for CLS	PI implementing the project
Ethiopia	Significant support in respect of CL structures, facilities, and staff salaries. Mandatory management structure brings together key role players, e.g. librarians, woredas, schools and the community.	CE brought to CLs its considerable organizational expertise, experience and capacity of working with libraries since 1994. It also brought its networks and good relationship with government. Project had a national imprint.
Uganda	No government support for CLs. UgCLA (an NGO) provides such support as it can to CLs established by a wide range interest groups, e.g. church or parish, family trust.	A single individual. Freed of bureaucratic constraint, the PI could be innovative and responsive to particular needs and opportunities. He was. Project had a strong personal imprint.

Project resonance with communities

Site visits provided evidence of a project that was welcomed and embraced by communities. Elders, in particular, wanted to tell their stories. The more tightly knit and cohesive the community, the stronger was the embrace. There were also indications that project rationale itself can help to forge new community bonds.

7.3 Looking ahead

In addition to findings, this project review leads to further questions about the role of CLs in generating local language storybooks to promote reading for pleasure.

Whose story is it? A prior question about quality

Earlier discussion on quality in this report (sections 6.2.1 and 6.2.2) arose from early developments in the creation of stories in both arms of the project in Uganda. First, with their strong a focus on religion, early stories had been disqualified from publication in SW's selection process, and reportedly advised against by ASb. Second, in addressing these concerns, the PI successfully schooled writers in 'universalizing' cultural messages carried by stories.

In what seemed to be an underlying tension between the 'local' (where stories are valued because of their cultural messages) and the 'global' (where online platforms must screen stories for acceptability to all communities and creeds), the question was asked: Is the story writing process stripping from stories the very reason that makes communities want to tell their stories in the first place?

We do not have detail of precisely why and how stories from Uganda were rejected, or of the extent to which 'universalized' messages in stories deviate from the authors' original representations. Because education is secular in Ethiopia, it seems unlikely that the same issue will arise when CE submits its stories to online repositories.[93] But the mere fact that stories of a particular cultural genre have been excluded, and that such exclusions have led to stories being written with a global audience in view, highlights issues that are fundamental to the aims of the present project. In particular, there is a problem inherent in the disconnect of the two layers of QA, i.e. the local, inner layer at community level; and distant 'global' layer of online platforms.

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[93] Federal Democratic Republic Government of Ethiopia Education and Training Policy. Addis Ababa, April 1994. Specific objective 2.2.7: 'To provide secular education'.

Several questions about quality arise. These are not just about technical efficiency: a notion of quality also encloses values, morals and trust. Questions such as those below might hopefully contribute to debate informing ways in which lessons and questions from the current project could be taken forward in new developments.

(i) A fundamental assumption

It seems safe to assume that if CLs are supported in writing up their stories, those stories will predominantly be folk tales that carry the cultural messages and 'lessons' that are most valued in the local context. It also seems likely that the most efficient CLs having the most structured community involvement in story writing will be those most likely to focus strongly on the folk tale genre (or, at least, on matters of local or regional interest).

(ii) How do we understand quality?

For the present, though, it seems as if understandings of quality are simply taken for granted. We all tend glibly to invoke the need for quality without defining it. Communities reported in this review were generally clear about their understanding of quality. Online platforms are not. Apart from the obvious warning about racist, obscene, derogatory, sexist, or hateful *language*, SW does advise: 'DON'T write stories as a medium to push to your religious or political agenda'.[94] However, it is difficult to guess what criteria or procedures would be used in applying this regulation in a context in which the voice of the contributing community is not heard, and when the language of the story is understood only within that particular community. ASb appears to offer only technical advice to aspirant authors, e.g. 'A storybook will only be published when all errors have been corrected. You need to Unpublished [sic] your story if you wish to edit pages'.[95] A case could be made for quality criteria and processes to be spelt out.

A project of the present kind could benefit from articulating its own understanding of quality. The kind of questions that could arise include, e.g.: In light of CL project aims, is children's enjoyment of a story a useful measure of quality? If so, who makes that decision and how do they make it? If the story is a folk tale, is the authenticity of its relay in written form a necessary criterion of quality? Do we need to respect stories that communities wish to tell?

(iii) How do we use agreed understanding of quality to connect the internal and layers of QA?

One can't change the fact that folk tales and local stories are expressions of values that are sometimes in tension with the values of global human rights and the creeds of all religions and beliefs. Within the broad reach of global acceptability, the particular criteria used by online platforms for selection and rating of stories are not explicit. Discussion with online platforms might be helpful. For example, SW has a category for Folktales and Myths.[96] Could, or should, a case be made for such a category to have its own criteria for selection and rating?

(iv) How useful are online platforms to a project of the present kind?

Experience in both countries has shown that training is essential if stories are to be uploaded and shared. Without ASb and SW, the UCU translation initiative could not have realised its impressive achievements. However, as not a single community library in the CL project had WiFi access, it could be argued that, at present, housing stories on repositories with global reach does more to bestow recognition on their authors than to advance the cause of children reading for pleasure. Of course, it is nice to contribute to a collection rather than

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[94] https://storyweaver.org.in/dos_and_donts (retrieved 19 July 2018).

[95] 'Create' section in https://www.africanstorybook.org/ (retrieved 19 July 2018).

[96] https://storyweaver.org.in/stories?category=Folktales%20%26%20Myths&query=&sort=Relevance (retrieved 19 July 2018).

just to draw resources from it. But in the case of small language communities writing and publishing their own stories on online platforms, who else could even read them?

Most of what we know about the benefits of open licensing is derived from studies in higher education and formal schooling. Thus, we have Wiley's (2015) 5R activities: Retain, Reuse, Revise, Remix, Redistribute.[97] In CLs, the 5Rs have considerably less viability than in other settings.

(v) How important are communities' stories for early literacy?

Given that children learn to read best in their mother tongue, and that the present project has affirmed the promise of CLs as sites for promoting early literacy, it is not heretical to ask if mother tongue stories necessarily need to be the stories of that same language community. We know that parents and elders often favour the traditional community stories. But could libraries not just as effectively house mother tongue stories that have been translated from other languages? Or should CLs focus on local language stories, perhaps supplementing these with other genres such as adventure, history, mystery, fantasy?

This question has political implications too. In promoting mother tongues stories, a project is by default (to a degree) also affirming the value of traditional, marginalized languages and the rights of those who uphold them. Governments do not always like this.[98] However, this was not a problem in Ethiopia where CE works with government.

(vi) Equity

The question above begs a further question about the effectiveness of translated stories in promoting early literacy. It is a question that assumes even more significance in light of equity considerations. Together with sharing, egalitarianism is at the core of the concept of 'open'.[99] We have seen in the present CL project that translated stories can be produced relatively quickly. How effective translated stories are compared to the own stories of a community, and how much pleasure they afford the reader, we do not yet know. There are, however, some indications that readers derive less benefit from stories imported from other contexts. The PI in Uganda, for example, reports that when materials are centrally produced, they are not interesting, their context is irrelevant, and their culture insensitive.[100]

Finally

This well-managed and well-implemented project has been instrumental in deepening knowledge and understanding about key issues in libraries as centres for generating stories that children can read for enjoyment in their local language. In fact, it has done more than that. It has shown the potential of storybook translation rather than just the creation of original storybooks. As this knowledge and understanding was generated from contexts of great diversity, there is every reason to argue that it could be used both to consolidate present gains and to extend these to other contexts. Very well-developed networks are in place to do this.

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[97] As cited in Bliss, T J and Smith, M. 2017. A Brief History of Open Educational Resources. In: Jhangiani, R S and Biswas-Diener, R. (eds.) *Open: The Philosophy and Practices that are Revolutionizing Education and Science.* Pp. 9–27. London: Ubiquity Press. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5334/bbc.b. License: CC-BY 4.0

[98] Edward Said of postcolonial studies fame also argues that the imperialist project depended on the development of dictionaries of indigenous languages so as to define and calcify the 'identities' of groups as being 'other' to that of the dominant group.

[99] Butcher, N., Hoosen, S., Levey, L. and Moore, D. 2016. *The Impact of Open Licensing on the Early Reader Ecosystem* http://www.nba.co.za/impact-open-licensing-early-reader-ecosystem.

[100] Gulere, C.W. 23-25 October. Op.Cit.

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However, questions about how we understand quality raise doubts about the merits of simply replicating successful aspects of the present project across new contexts. On a broader front, open licensing has been central to the enormous strides that have been made in providing *access* to stories in local languages. ASb and SW have shown what can be done in making storybooks accessible to all children.

Perhaps it is time to move beyond creation of, and *access* to, storybooks in local languages. We need to know more about storybook *use*, and *impact*. One way of learning more about storybook use and impact in a way that follows up on the CL project would be to equip the most successful CLs with full sets of what one hopes all CLs will one day have: storybooks in the local language. Much could be learnt from the way in which community structures make the most these resources; and of use and impact of different kinds of storybooks on those intended to be beneficiaries – the children.

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Appendices

Appendix A: The original 'Proposal for Action Research'

The following excerpt from undated document 'Proposal for Action Research in Uganda and Ethiopia-Program 2017' reflects initial project expectations.

Scope
This action research will produce at least 200 storybooks written in local languages (they could be more), establish and strengthen 20 Reading and writing clubs, mentor 20 Head Librarians, train 400 story creators, 400 skilled (aural) readers and 400 parents in the 20 targeted libraries in the two countries, Uganda and Ethiopia, within a period of 12 months starting in April 2017.

Research Objectives
1. Which of the two: School Libraries (SLs) and Community Libraries (CLs) is the most effective and why?
2. What are the challenges and success stories of the SL and CL?
3. What are the lessons to be learned and the best practice to be adopted?

Main Activities in each Country
1. Documenting the stories of 10 selected SL / CL.
2. Analysing the challenges and opportunities in the target SLs / CLs.
3. Forming 10 reading, writing and translation clubs (Literacy Clubs).
4. Creating at least 100 story books (10 stories per library) and printing 50 copies of @ title.
5. Elaborating on the principles of effective libraries in Africa.
6. Modelling library reading camps for instilling a love of reading in children and their families.
7. Training 10 librarians, 20 readers, 20 writers and 20 parents in the literacy progression chain.
8. Promoting the sharing of resources between libraries in print and on creative Commons platforms like story weaver and ASb.

Even after these intentions had been limited to the contractual expectations outlined under 1.1.1 above, there was a further scaling back of the number of CLs:

This micro-project was at first intended to involve 10 community libraries operating in places where 25 % of the Ugandan languages are used. However the libraries were reduced to 6 and later 4 because of the long distances between the libraries, high costs involved in traveling, nature of the research that required personal researcher involvement and the desire to be thorough in our actions.[101]

CODE-Ethiopia removed one of its original six CLs because of its failure to meet the terms of their agreement.

In both cases, Project Management was consulted in the narrowing down of participating CLs.

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[101] PI, Uganda: 'Action Research Report July-Jan 2018'

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Appendix B (i): Terms of Reference

Proposed External Evaluation Questions

The proposed research questions for an external review are as follows:

1) How well has the action research in each country met the aims, scope, and objectives, as enumerated in the July 4, 2017 proposal, entitled 'Proposal for action research in Uganda and Ethiopia?
2) Were the activities designed and carried out in such a way as to meet the objectives? Were the primary investigators able to meet their schedules? If not, why not? (We know that nothing ever goes according to schedule. But it would help to know about glitches along the way.)
3) In retrospect, were the libraries the best ones in which to carry out the research? Why? What are the primary investigators' views on this?
4) What lessons were learned? Were there any outright failures? Were there mid-course changes in objectives, scope, or activities?
5) What processes for the creation of and access to storybooks can be replicated to reduce costs?
6) Was there sufficient and accurate data? Was there sufficient documentation?
7) Is it possible to ascertain, even anecdotally, whether the children, their families, the librarians, etc. actively engaged in the action research? Do you have any sense whether the children are more eager readers as a result of the project?
8) For all activities, what were the challenges, success stories, and surprises? How were challenges met (or not met)?
9) Gulere has been presenting on the project. Has CODE-Ethiopia done the same? Do they have any plans to write jointly?
10) Has there been interaction between the CODE-Ethiopia and Uganda primary investigators? If so, what kind of interaction? If not, could/should the research have been designed differently to promote collaboration?
11) In terms of the translation work done by Gulere, how effective has the process of peer review and quality assurance been? Can this work be replicated to ensure an efficient process for the creation of local language titles?
12) What were the differences and similarities between the two community library projects?
13) Were there methodologies employed in one country that might have been usefully employed in the other?

Appendix B (ii): Terms of Reference reordered along lines of Inputs and Activities, Outcomes and Impact

Table 12   *Terms of Reference reordered along lines of Inputs and Activities, Outcomes and Impact*

Inputs and Activities: Action research and data gathered *in each country*

Issue discussed under Section 6	Specific ToR question
1. Selection of libraries for project implementation	3. In retrospect, were the libraries the best ones in which to carry out the research? Why?
2. AR design and implementation	2. Were the activities designed and carried out in such a way as to meet the objectives? Were the primary investigators able to meet their schedules? If not, why not? (2)
3. Was there community involvement in AR? (Was the AR participatory?)	7.a Is it possible to ascertain, even anecdotally, whether the children, their families, the librarians, etc. actively engaged in the action research?
4. Reports and presentations on the project	14. Gulere has been presenting on the project. Has CODE-Ethiopia done the same? Do they have any plans to write jointly?
5. Adequacy of data base for inferences and conclusions	6. Was there sufficient and accurate data? Was there sufficient documentation? (6)
6. The effectiveness of AR in providing insights into challenges, success stories and lessons learnt from interventions in community libraries	1. How well has the action research in each country met the aims, scope, and objectives, as enumerated in the July 4, 2017 proposal?
7. Were overall lessons learnt from using AR?	4. What lessons were learned? Were there any outright failures? Were there mid-course changes in objectives, scope, or activities?

Outcomes and Impact: CLs' progress, achievements and impact on early literacy *in each country*

Issue discussed under Section 7	Specific ToR question
8. Reflection on challenges, success stories and surprises.	8. For all activities, what were the challenges, success stories, and surprises? How were challenges met (or not met)?
9. Reflection on impact on targeted beneficiaries – the children	7.b Do you have any sense whether the children are more eager readers as a result of the project?

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Outcomes and Impact: CLs' progress, achievements and impact on early literacy *across Ethiopia and Uganda*

Issue discussed under Section 8	Specific ToR question
10. Overall comparisons across the two countries	12. What were the differences and similarities between the two community library projects? (12)
11. Intra-project networking	10. Has there been interaction between the CODE-Ethiopia and Uganda primary investigators? If so, what kind of interaction? If not, could/should the research have been designed differently to promote collaboration?
12. Reflection on Peer Review and Quality Assurance	11. In terms of the translation work done by Gulere, how effective has the process of peer review and quality assurance been? Can this work be replicated to ensure an efficient process for the creation of local language titles?
13. Possible transferability of methods across countries	13. Were there methodologies employed in one country that might have been usefully employed in the other?
14. Reflection on replicability and cost effectiveness	5. What processes for the creation of and access to storybooks can be replicated to reduce costs?

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Appendix C: Baseline Study: CL differences across the two countries

Table 13   Summary of provisioning and functionality of CLs in the two countries

Issue	Ethiopia[102]	Uganda
Location of CLs	Strategically located relative to schools and suitable for community development	CLs happen to be in areas where there is are neighbouring schools
Reading environment	Generally reasonable; all have furniture.	Varies from DWW's reading rooms, office furniture, and bookshelves to St Mark which has adequate space but with no seats and shelves
Care and maintenance	Librarians do maintenance work in CLs owned by the local municipality; Sheno is owned and maintained by Woreda.	Responsibility varies from volunteer caretakers (St Mark) to school management, library master, classroom library prefects, costs borne by school (Kidiki).
Reading space	Generally good. Three have rather small separate reading rooms for children	Varies from Budadiri with capacity for 100, to St Mark where 'the room is big enough as it replaces an earlier practice of reading from a car boot'.
Book acquisition and shelving	All books are appropriately shelved according to subject matter category.	Varies from Alice Muloki with books still lying in piles to catalogued books on shelves at DWW.
Rules governing access	There are time schedules for users. Procedures in place for use of books.	Varies from access after school and holidays (Alice Muloki) to annual reading gala; reading camps; school visits and library hours and days for specific schools (DWW).
Record keeping	Good. Number and type of books and tablets used are properly tallied and recorded.	Varies. St Mark has no records but others have systems in place.
Planning	Plans in place are aligned with national, regional and district-level vision on Education	Planning took place through the PI and UgCLA.

There are also differences in respect of hardware equipment in the CLs.
- In Ethiopia, Addis Alem, Chefe Donsa and Sheno each 4 tablets. Holeta had 10 desktop computers but not yet in use, and 4 tablets. Fitche had 4 desktop pcs and 4 tablets

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[102] The AlemTena CL included in the Baseline is not included in this table because project support was subsequently withdrawn.

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- In Uganda, Kidiki and St Mark had no computers. Alice Muloki 25 desk top computers and 2 jet printers; and DWW had 2 desk tops using solar power, 2 colour printers, and a TV set.

Table 14   Summary of arrangements and activities to promote literacy across the two countries

Issue	Ethiopia[103]	Uganda
Books	Mostly donated or provided by CODE-E.	Mostly donated. Very few local language books.
Level of readers' interest	Mostly for academic and exam purposes.	Varies from mostly children; random reading; no register (St Mark) to reading linked to school work (Kamuli).
Activities to promote reading and writing	Reading day celebration in collaboration with nearby schools and communities.	All have some – extremely varied in nature and frequency.
Production of own reading materials	None.	There was some due to involvement in ASb.
Listening and speaking programmes	None.	All had programmes of sort.
Marketing	Promoted through school programmes.	Varies from no marketing (St Mark, Kidiki) to DWW (school visits to 11 neighbouring schools; Bugembe Cathedral supports CL. Alice Muloki gets publicity on local radio)
Community engagement	No such visible practical engagement from the community (Sheno was an exception).	Through the school (Kidiki); through the church and parish (St Mark); through community/ linguistic activists (DWW); through the auspices of the King (Alice Muloki)
Community programmes	Reading Day or Week celebrations are held	All had a history of community programmes
Digitization	No plans to digitize resources	There is awareness of advantages of digitisation, but a lack of capital.

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[103] The AlemTena CL included in the Baseline is not included in this table because project support was subsequently withdrawn.

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Appendix D: Story Writing in Uganda CLs

Table 15 *Story Writing in Uganda CLs*

Action Research-Community Library Activities Uganda AR-CLA-U June 2017 to May 2018												
	ST MARK'S			KIDIKI			DWW			MULOKI			
ORIGINAL	Lusoga	Luganda	English	Lusoga	Luganda	English	Lusoga	Lumasaaba	English	Lusoga	Lumasaaba	English	Amount
Oral	3	20	15	50	1	30	4	50	2	30	1	5	211
Transcribed	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	6	0	5	0	0	12
Written	2	25	11	200	2	20	2	46	7	50	0	10	375
Typed	2	10	5		0		3	52	7	55	0	15	149
Uploaded	2	5	10	12	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	2	41
translated	0	2	2	4	0	0	0	45	0	35	0	2	90
adapted	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	13
Illustrated	0	2	2	5	0	5	3	3	0	6	0	0	26
Edited	0	5	5	5	0	3	0	45	0	6	0	0	69
Quality assured	0	5	5	15	0	0	0	45	0	6	0	0	76
Illustrations - paint	0	17	0	20	0	0	0	0	0	23	0	0	60
Child illustrator	2	25	11	200	2	20	2	46	7	50	0	10	375
photos	1	85	25	50	0	0	0	30	0	50	0	12	253
Books Printed	0	10	5	15	0	0	0	15	0	15	0	0	60
TOTAL	12	212	97	577	5	78	15	383	23	351	1	56	1810
Teachers	3	6	2	6	0	20	0	20	0	4	0	0	58
Parents	6	20	3	15	0	15	0	15	0	3	0	0	68
Other BOT, NBA, SW, ASb	3	12	4	5	0	15	3	15	4	8	0	4	55
Total	12	38	9	26	0	50	3	50	4	15	0	4	181

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Appendix E: PI and student comments on the ASb and StoryWeaver platforms

Please note: Comments from emails and reports have been clustered into themes in order to provide an overview of views from those who have worked with the ASb and SW platforms. This is not a comprehensive, detailed analysis of views on the two platforms. *All illustrative quotes are cited verbatim.*

Where the views come from

The personal views organized thematically below are from Uganda only. They are those of the PI, who has worked extensively with both platforms in both the CL and UCU arms of the project; and they are those of UCU students who worked with both sites in their translation activities.

Many of the comments below reflect personal experiences and difficulties with uploading and downloading stories. Such critical statements should be seen within the context of the reviewer's general impression that students were by and large appreciative and supportive of
- the translation component of their Creative Writing course
- the function and services of ASb and SW as vehicles for promoting the creation and accessibility of mother tongue stories for children. For example:

I recommend that the two websites continue with that activity because it will enable children to have a variety of books and also improved on their vocabulary in their tongue of those involved in the creation, translation, adapting and reading of the books in their mother tongue.[104]

Background to difficulties in downloading and uploading stories

At the outset we need to note two reasons why student criticisms are not necessarily a reflection of shortcomings in the sites themselves.
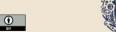
(i) Limited local IT capacity and bandwidth

Even in a higher education setting, it perhaps somewhat surprising that the PI joined almost all students in highlighting this problem.

- 'Although there are many computers at UCU, the students and I had to use our private phones and private internet connection to access the ASb and SW platforms.'[105]
- 'Slow Internet connection is really frustrating. I worked on one story for two hours. What can be done?'[106]
- 'The possibility of working offline offered by ASb is great. It is also commendable that downloading the offline files is quite fast. However, the files cannot be worked upon on some mobile phones.'[107]
- 'There was slow wireless network and it was hard to connect and begin to translate the books especially with African storybook it keeps loading for a very long time.'[108]

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[104] PI. May 2018. Action Research Report on Community Libraries in Uganda, p.151

[105] PI. February 2018. (Draft) Literacy Action Research Report Uganda, p.8.

[106] PI. Email communication 15/7/2017.

[107] PI. Email communication 15/7/2017.

[108] Student report in PI. May 2018. Action Research Report on Community Libraries in Uganda, p.154.

- 'The network was unreliable. In most cases it was down.'[109]
- 'Slow internet connections and being online was a very big inconvenience.'[110]
- 'I learnt the following lessons:- First and foremost, I learnt to be patient because the website are too heavy so when the wireless net work was slow, it would take too long to load and this would keep me waiting.'[111]

In response these difficulties, the PI initiated negotiations with the UIS (University ICT Services) on campus.

The UIS department have started on putting all the stories in Ugandan Local languages onto the UCU web portal. This will reduce the amount of frustration that the students experienced while they were required to translate stories online ASb and SW. This move will ensure that students, staff and parents within and outside Mukono main campus can access these books at very low bandwidth.[112]

Given lack of adequate bandwidth, there was appreciation of the option to work offline.
- 'On a technical side, SW though easier to work with, it has no offline work option which makes it expensive. Also, the word limits in some languages leaves the story incomplete. ASb allows for offline writing so the students were able to do more stories.'[113]
- 'The possibility of working offline offered by ASb is great. It is also commendable that downloading the offline files is quite fast'.[114]

(ii) Students didn't read instructions and one of them missed the training session.

- 'We need to print out the help notes and instructions instead of assuming that the students will read the instructions before working. The experience was that each student went into the site without reading all the instructions. Learning by mistake cause much anxiety and for some, frustrations leading to poor outputs.'[115]
- 'Printing: To me this was the hardest bit because I confess I did not follow instructions. Instead of me downloading to print I downloaded to read. The printed material turned out wrong and this got me depressed a lot because everyone had good work apart from me. And also in story weaver some of my words disappeared and I had pictures only. In the same the printed work came out upside down. This made me hate the whole thing but for some things it me to blame because I did not follow the instructions right.'[116]

ASb and SW provided much appreciated support, and were helpful

- 'We quickly got support from teams from Story Weaver, Neil Butcher and Associates and ASb.'[117]
- 'In general, the students preferred SW to ASb because it was faster, gave quicker feedback and was easier to work with. ASb had good illustrations appealing to the African stories but it was slower and harder to navigate. However, the solution of working offline proved to be a better opportunity over SW. the main challenge of slow internet connectiviry was perhaps more local than the platforms themselves. The opportunities offered by SW and ASb staff to come to the University to train the students and also to provide

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[109] Student report in PI. May 2018, Ibid., p.174.
[110] Student report in PI. May 2018, Ibid., p. 175.
[111] Student report in PI. May 2018, Ibid., p.176.
[112] PI. May 2018. Action Research Report on Community Libraries in Uganda, p.32.
[113] PI. Email communication 15/7/2017.
[114] PI. Email communication 15/7/2017.
[115] PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.85.
[116] Student report in PI. May 2018, Ibid., p.141.
[117] PI. February 2018. (Draft) Literacy Action Research Report Uganda, p.7.

online support on skye, email and hungout were highly commended and a source of encouragement to the creators.[118]

- 'Difficulty understading ASb icons (but ASb visit helped).[119]
- 'SW has agreed to place UCU logo on the books and include a page in the book stating that "This story has been written as part of the curriculum for the creative writing course of Uganda Christian university Course Instructor/ Chief Editor: Cornelius Wambi Gulere, PhD.'[120]
- 'Facilitators from ASb SAIDE South Africa and Kenya provided very good training and the process was amazing especially downloading and printing'[121]

Limitations of images for illustration available on the platforms

- 'The books that had been written in Lusoga and Lumasaaba were poorly illustrated using images from ASb and SW that could not portray the stories well.'[122]
- 'ASb allows the identity of the author and illustrator to be prominent. However, one has to covert the images into only PNG which is not common in all programmes.'[123]
- '"Using clip art and images on SW and ASb is not appropriate," says Joshua Ibanda. "It reduces the beautiful stories to a cultural conflict that arises from the different illustration history and culture of the clip art and most images on SW. For some ASb images, they are ok, especially for story adaptations but it is better to illustrate some and use some from the online platforms to reduce cost and time of content creation."'[124]

Students' sense of cultural resonance with the two platforms

- 'The story weaver should provide books with an African setting. Most of these books at story weaver were not having an African setting one would wonder if an African child is going to read them and understand them.'[125]
- [ASb] 'Didn't have hard names like SW "had hard Indian names and words".'[126]
- 'I translate according to the way the story unfolded ASb stories were interesting even to me the translator, mostly.. Stories, usually had a lesson to learn even those that were not animal stories had a thing or two to learn as you translated e.g. "the boy and the drum". SW I did not pick up any moral lessons there, and yet according to me the children should read to learn something from the book.'[127]
- 'Settings in ASb were more familiar, story was close to the African experience; SW had Euro-Asiatic settings and translating a book into an African language didn't make sense because everything looked modern and I could find myself disagreeing with my own self.'[128]

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[118] PI. May 2018, Op.cit., p 33.
[119] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.143.
[120] Email communication 15/7/2017.
[121] Student report in PI. May 2018, Op.cit., p.177.
[122] PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.7.
[123] PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.20.
[124] PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.29.
[125] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.141.
[126] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.176.
[127] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.176.
[128] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.177.

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Speed and ease of uploading and downloading

- 'Most of the stories have been uploaded on SW which is faster and more flexible that Asb.'[129]
- 'Difficulty understading ASb icons (but ASb visit helped) When I shifted to working with story weaver, I honestly found less predicaments compared to ASB. I love story weaver for the fact that it was fast and easy to understand how to maneuver.'[130]
- 'Signing up on ASb was easier compared to SW'[131]
- 'Story weaver is quite faster and quick Challenges include; I was not able to identify the meaning of some of the icons used until I had a better person to explain them to me.'[132]
- 'ASb been quite problematic in uploading stories. We've had problems uploading. Have to do it line by line. So you must be ready. SW: you can start by selecting pictures – it's more flexible. But images aren't African.'[133]

Issues with printing downloaded stories

- 'With Catherine Bukosela of Access Knowledge Mukono, I followed up on her orders ffor print copies of the stories we haave published on Asb and her offer to trnalsalte the 45 Lumasaaba stories from DWW from Lumaasaaba to English. Cathey observed that some stories did not have a uniform structure with text and illustrations; others had the text and illustration so small covering half the page and leaving the rest of the page blank.'[134]
- 'Printing process has also been hard in one way or the other in that some printers produce upside-down materials, also costs of colored material is hinted on by the owners of the printeries.'[135]
- 'ASb printouts didn't disturb during printing, looked nice too paged/duplex format looking like a real book.'[136]

Translation issues

- 'Translating: at times you would translate and when it comes to publishing story weaver or African story book refuses to publish your book. In most cases this would be discouraging because for example after translating a book for level four and then it is rejected, I would feel like giving up on the whole translation thing.'[137]
- [ASb] 'Structure and arrangement of the pages was good and made translation easy with simple words'.[138]
- 'ASb was easy to translate. Language was familiar and I could easily find a word to translate to SW had very hard words I had to think much longer to get a Rufumbira equivalent.'[139]
- 'ASb allows downloading the book and to translate offline, when I had no internet I continued to work. Also allowed me to download story on different devices that I could read anytime anywhere.'[140]

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[129] PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.20.
[130] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.it., p.143.
[131] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.177.
[132] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.180.
[133] PI, Interview 30 April 2018.
[134] PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.17.
[135] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.155.
[136] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.177.
[137] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.141.
[138] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.176.
[139] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.177.
[140] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.177.

- 'Translation offline, words were too small to read so I decided to do it online.'[141]

Two kinds of language difficulties

(i) Platform does not accommodate the language
- 'On addition to that after opening the accounts on story weaver it was a bit hard because I had to send an email to the people at story weaver so that they would *add my language.* This took them close to a week to respond and definitely I was doing nothing at this time since you cannot translate before your language has been added.'[142]
- 'Languages: Another issue I found, my Language 'Runyoro' was not available on the story weaver platform.'[143]
- 'On the other hand Story Weaver was much easier with the sign in process and creating an account but the languages were not there so we had to get to the website through email for our languages to be added because Lumasaaba was not there.'[144]
- 'ASb allows adding languages while SW you have to apply to have the language added. It took 5 days to have Kumam confirmed and this called for patience.'[145]
- '… on SW many languages are not on the list automatically, I had to write an email to SW to have the language added which is another process to have the language added sometimes they didn't respond for days making ASb much better.'[146]

(ii) Surprising mother tongue issues
- 'Starting out to translate in my local language Runyoro, I knew it was going to be a daunting task because I have been exposed to an all speaking English environment with less training in my own mother tongue, which made writing the local language a bit dreadful.'[147]
- 'Finally, I learnt new words especially in the books that I translated which had animals for example "Animals of Uganda" is a story about animals which I did not know some of their names in local language…'[148]
- 'I have learnt how to write my language better.'[149]
- 'I had a challenge with the spelling of some words in my local language (Lumasaaba).'[150]

Sundry technical issues

PI comments:

When in ASb read mode, why is it difficult to get to MySpace?

Why does SW open faster than ASb?

On SW the unapproved stories cannot be downloaded in bulk. Although the option allow for ten at a go, this is not so.

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[141] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.174.
[142] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.140.
[143] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.143.
[144] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.154.
[145] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.174.
[146] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.177.
[147] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.142.
[148] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.149.
[149] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.155.
[150] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.180.

SW books are on A4 landscape which is beautiful but takes more paper and expensive. ASb allows for A5 which is economical.[151]

Students' comments:

- 'Opening the accounts: In this I found a challenge because I could put passwords and then they would be refused. My passwords were only accepted later on. This made me to begine the translation later on after my other colleagues.'[152]
- 'But still: a friend of mine called Martin told me where to find my unpublished stories in the "My Draft" icon this discovery enabled me to learn more about the other icons and their uses.'[153]
- 'Word limits imposed (Asb) "A dog and A lizard" is still in my trash because I cannot go far with translation into Kumam due word limit.'[154]
- 'I also recommend that story weaver works on their site or on the way the storybooks or stories and translation pages are displayed because some of the books are too long and when I are translating, I am not able to see the letters or words I am typing during the translation because they are hidden down and I cannot scroll any more to translate or read the work I have translated for example, "Marching to Freedom" "The Market Place" and "We Love to Play".'[155]
- 'The registration in both story weaver and African storybook process was a little bit tricky especially after registration I couldn't login because of my password however on the other I reset the password and was able to sign in.'[156]
- 'While translating some stories ASB has fixed space where the translated text should be so when you translate past the space I was not able to see the words translated.'[157]
- 'ASB is really an interesting site as it gave an opportunity to create my own pictures ,stories, search for the book already created on the site choose and use the ones you like translate or adapt them in your own language, context or level that you may need.'[158]

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[151] PI. Email communication 15/7/2017.
[152] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.140.
[153] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.144.
[154] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.151.
[155] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.151.
[156] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.154.
[157] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.179.
[158] Student report in PI. May 2018. Op.cit., p.179.

Appendix F: Uganda PI publications

(excluding workshops and seminars)

Gulere, C.W. 'Riddles on Agriculture and Food Security'. The 4th International Inter-disciplinary Conference on Internationalisation of Higher Education for Sustainable Development. 1-4 August, 2017.

Panel discussion: 'Rethinking contemporary literature for children and young adults.' IBbY Africa regional conference in Africa. 22-24 August 2017. Hotel Africana, Kampala.

Gulere, C.W., Muliro, N., Ndhokero, T., Ngasike., J., Welch, T., Wepukhulu, D. 'The contribution of the African Storybook initiative to content development for multilingual literacy development in Africa.' 10th Pan African Literacy for all Conference. 27-31 August 2017. Abuja Nigeria.

Gulere, C.W. 'Development of Sustainable African Libraries as Centers of Literacy and Languages Development in Uganda and Ethiopia'. Jamafest Symposium: The 3rd East African Arts and Culture Festival. 7–15 September 2017. Kampala, Uganda.

Gulere, C.W. 'Materials development: opportunities for creative writing and creative reading'. Aga Khan University – Institute of Education Development conference on 'Re-thinking teacher education: Improve, Innovate, Change'. 23-25 October, 2017.

Gulere, C.W. 'Love of reading'. Uganda Reading Campaign. An address to primary and secondary schools' teachers of Wakiso district. 27-28 February 2018. Books and Instructions Materials Symposium, Wakissha Resource Centre, Wakiso.

Gulere, C.W. 'Positioning Library and Information Services to Achieve Sustainable Development: Innovations and Partnerships'. 26 April 2018. XXIII SCECSAL Conference. Imperial Resort Beach Hotel, Entebbe, Uganda.

Comment on Papers and Presentations

When a paper is presented to forums and to audiences under the auspices of particular interest/professional groups, it is logical that the focus of a presented paper will be in line with the theme of the conference rather than the AR project under review. For example, the most recent keynote address was on the theme "Positioning Library and Information Services to Achieve Sustainable Development: Innovations and Partnerships".[159] Thus, the paper argues that

> *The libraries should go out to record and document our oral literature and histories, the riddles, folktales, languages, cultures, dances, songs, architecture, … before they disappears [sic] under the clime of modernization.*
>
> *….. As library information services providers, you have the triple role of informers, educators and lobbyists or advocates in society.*

A paper such as this provides an opportunity for including insights from the AR project. However, such insights will most naturally be recruited for the purpose of bolstering the thrust of the paper rather than for providing

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[159] Gulere, C.W. 'Positioning Library and Information Services to Achieve Sustainable Development: Innovations and Partnerships'. 26 April 2018. XXIII SCECSAL Conference. Imperial Resort Beach Hotel, Entebbe, Uganda.

insights into the role and potential of AR in the AR project itself. Thus, in the keynote address, there is mention of the achievements of the UCU translation and of earlier 2013-2014 story-writing initiative.

This is not a criticism of the papers listed above. It is simply that the forums at which they were presented were not appropriate vehicles for reporting AR research processes and findings. They were suitable for advocacy of the importance of recording of communities' stories, and this is what the PI provided.

The presentation closest to the present project, and one that addresses the important issue of quality assurance of stories, is the Aga Khan paper.[160] Rethinking Teacher Education was the theme of the conference. Based on the argument that children are alienated by stories from unfamiliar contexts, and excited by stories from their own environments, there is an overview of story writing and translation activities in the AR project. Action research is explained, and some findings presented. A reader finds it very hard, though, to establish a link between AR and the findings.

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[160] Gulere, C.W. 'Materials development: opportunities for creative writing and creative reading'. Aga Khan University - Institute of Education Development conference on 'Re-thinking teacher education: Improve, Innovate, Change'. 23-25 October, 2017

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Appendix G: CE website reports, and scholarly publications

Website reports on activities with partners

1. http://uil.unesco.org/partner/library/code-ethiopia-ce
2. http://beyondaccess.net/2016/09/30/ethiopian-local-language-literacy-app-launch/
3. http://beyondaccess.net/projects/mobilizing-communities-to-promote-early-grade-reading-in-ethiopia/
4. https://codelibraries.wordpress.com
5. https://codeethiopiadigitalbooks.wordpress.com
6. http://www.eifl.net/eifl-in-action/rural-libraries-improving-early-literacy-levels-pre-school-children
7. http://www.eifl.net/resources/inspiring-library-family-literacy-project-supports-pre-school-children-ethiopia

Publications

1. Dobson, T., Asselin, M., & Abebe, A. (2018). Considerations for Design and Production of Digital Books for Early Literacy in Ethiopia. *Language and Literacy*, *20*(3), 134-158. https://doi.org/10.20360/langandlit29414

2. Asselin, M., Abebe, A., & Doiron, R. (2014). Applying an ecological model for library development to build literacy in rural Ethiopian communities. In IFLA WLIC, 2014. https://www.islandscholar.ca/islandora/object/ir%253A10742

3. Alemu Abebe (2016). An e-book literacy programme for children and families in rural Ethiopia: The Case of the CODE-Ethiopia's 'ebooks and Family Literacy Pilot Project. (This has been presented in several workshops both in Ethiopia and abroad.)

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www.earlyliteracyresourcenetwork.org