University Libraries services in Kenya during the covid19 pandemic: Challenges and Opportunities

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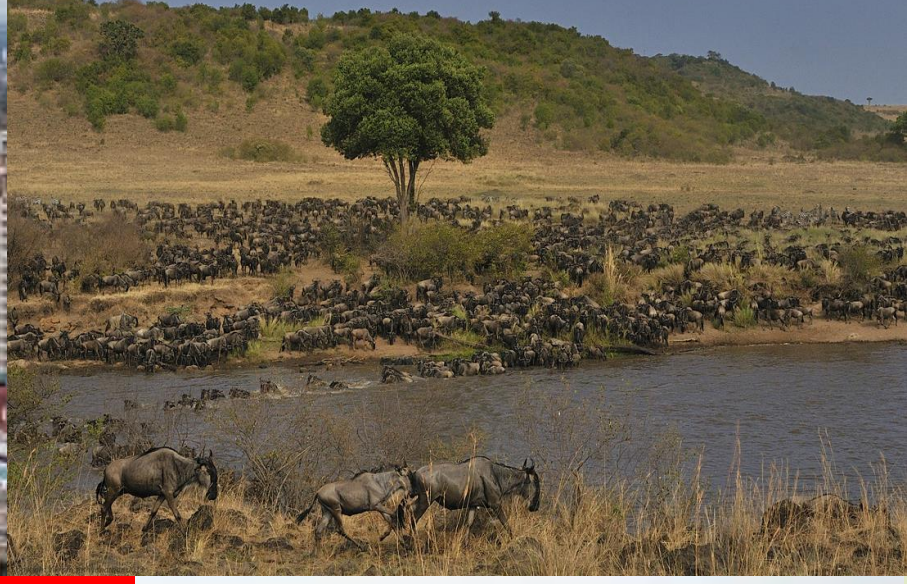
Presentation Outline

1. About Kenya
2. Overview of the Kenyan Libraries
3. The state of the university Libraries in Kenya
4. The Covid19 experience – What is happening
5. Challenges – The struggles
6. Opportunities – What can be done?
7. QA

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About Kenya

- **Named after**; Mt. Kenya
- **Kenya** is the Cradle of Mankind (Lake Turkana)
- **Attained independence**; on 20/10/1963
- **Population**; Estimated to be 47.6 Million
- **Official Language**; Swahili and English
- **Very religious society**; Christian, Muslims, Africa Religion, Hindu etc

Kenya in pictures

More About Kenya

- **Governance**; Unitary & 47 Devolved counties
- **Capital City:** Nairobi
- **Mobile phone penetration** –Leading in Africa at 91% compared to Africa's 80%.
- **Education system** - 2-6-3-3-3 (Competency based training) since 2017
- **Literacy levels –** for 15 years and older is 81.53% (UNESCO 2018)
- **Reading Culture** – Low/ Poor reading culture

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Libraries in Kenya

- **Academic libraries** (University, colleges & research institutes libraries)

- **National and public libraries** (There are 60 branches in 33 counties)

- **Community libraries** – Due to limited libraries in Kenya, we are now seeing more individuals/ NGO starting community libraries

- **School Libraries** (only 2% of the schools have libraries)

- Special Libraries- Very popular with research institutes

Examples of Kenyan Libraries initiatives

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- **Free Text book programs to all public schools**
- **Mobile Libraries by KNLS (Truck & Camel)**
- **Public libraries turning into digital hubs – Embracing E - readers**
- **The 2012 Constitution devolved provision of Libraries to country level**

The number of Universities in Kenya

- There are
  - 31 public chartered Universities (owned by the government),
  - 18 charted private universities (owned by individuals or other entities).
  - There are also 14 universities operating with interim letters (CUE 2020).

NB

- 63 university libraries in Kenya
- Two main categories: Public university libraries & Private university libraries

Highlights on the state of the University Libraries in Kenya

- Majority are partially automated – Hybrid collection
- Koha is the most common LMS (est 95%)
- For security systems 3M & RFID are common
- Dspace is most popular for digital repositories
- The libraries are established & Staffing/ Teaching staff equivalent
- The Kenyan University Libraries have a very active consortium (KLISC)

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Current Situation of covid 19 in Kenya

	Total population	Cases	Recovered	Death
Kenya	47.6 Million	737	281	40
India	1.353 B	78,194	26,400	2,551
Worldwide	7.8 B	4,430,806	1,662,329	298,201

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There is an African proverb that says

"It rains on those who cant see it coming"

Indeed all of us are being rain on and trying to catch up

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The new normal amidst Covid 19 pandemic

- ▶ Schools & universities are closed abruptly.
- ▶ Working, teaching & learning from home is the new normal
- ▶ Restricted movements in parts or whole countries
- ▶ Increased online meetings, forums, classroom e.t.c
- ▶ Increased reliance on e- resources

How Kenyan Education Sector has reacted

- Many sectors including education were got unaware. They are now trying to re-adjust e.g
  - Ministry of education is using Radio and TV programs to finish the syllabus in schools.???
  - Some schools & Universities are using online platform like zoom and Google virtual classroom
  - Two universities have held virtual graduation
  - Online examination.

Where is the library and the librarian in the new normal?

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Friday, May 8, 2020

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Universities and Colleges

Masinde Muliro University, MMUST, to resume lectures for all students in May, 2020; Via online platforms as CS Magoha hints on opening date for schools

By **Media Team @Educationnewshub.co.ke** - April 26, 2020

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www.the-star.co.ke › counties › central › 2020-05-08-d... ▾

Dedan Kimathi University holds virtual graduation - The Star

5 days ago - **Dedan Kimathi University** of Technology (DeKUT) vice chancellor Ndirangu Kioni in a past **graduation** event. Image: /EUTYCAS MUCHIRI.

Riara University holds its first virtual graduation ceremony ...

https://www.youtube.com › watch

NTVTonight #NTVKenya #NTVNews **Riara University** held it's first **virtual graduation** ceremony today and ...

5 days ago - Uploaded by NTV Kenya

▶ 1:20

What does these changes mean to the libraries and librarian?

How are the librarians and libraries responding to these changes?

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Notable Responses – Kenyan Experience

- Many publishers have developed and shared **covid19 packages** through KLISC and other partners.
  - Librarians should take the initiatives to share the information with users.
  - Don't forward everything to everyone.
  - Try to Know & profile your users in order to support them well
- Various online **Training** opportunities
  - Librarians and
  - Users eg academic writing, How to publish

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Notable Responses

- Continuous **communication & Information literacy programs**
  - Live support through social media & phone calls,
  - Frequently check & respond to all emails and other queries
  - Have a schedule to share various relevant tips / Information

- Providing **Off Campus/ Remote Access** to e-resources
  - Ez Proxy
  - Remotex
  - Some databases allow users to access & use them remotely

Library Services

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Student handbook

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For more information, kindly visit https://www.library.strathmore.edu/ or contact our Librarians via https://opac.library.strathmore.edu/support/chat.php?a=f11b4&intgroup=RUxFQVJOOSU5H&hg=P0ZpbmVzP1JFUw_&ofc=MQ__

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https://www.library.strathmore.edu

Examples of Challenges facing the Users

- Sudden change – Users are learning/ readjusting the hard way
- Some don't have smartphones & Laptops
- The power & internet connection in the country is still poor especially in rural arrears.
- Weak social economic systems
- The cost of internet is still high
- Techno phobia / Tech anxiety
- Lack of adequate support to navigate online sources
- Information/ passwords overload
- Poor reading culture

Examples of Challenges facing the libraries & Librarians Now & post covid19

- Majority of the libraries & librarians were not prepared for the new normal

- Serious budget cuts

- Need to reorganize library space & Services

- Serious Job losses and Skills redundancy

- Users apathy in visiting physical libraries & sharing print resources

- Inadequate capacity in the library

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In every challenge, there is an opportunity

In your opinion, are there opportunities that covid19 presents to the libraries& Librarians?

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Opportunities

Opportunities For the libraries

- Operationalize **new services** e.g. E- Support. There is limited resistance

- **Policy change** especially on ICT & e Resources

- Negotiate ICT **budget**, Training, Staff

- Consider subscription to unlimited subscribed e-books and e-journals on **perpetual access**.

- Rethink about **discovery systems & mobile apps (MYLOFT)** that are friendly

Opportunities

- Time to strongly push for adoption of ICT & new library skill especially by the staff who used to be **resistance to change**

- Establishment of a good **monitoring and evaluation system** for e resources & library usage

Opportunities For the librarians

- Time to **learn a new skill**, collaborate, publish

- **Reinvent** yourself and claim your rightful position in your institutions by being part of the solution.

- Watch out for **training** opportunities especially Online

Conclusion

- Post covidi19 our library will never be the same again.

- The user & other library stakeholders have changed/Moved – The library & Librarians must ensure they are with the users or else they will be replaced or forgotten

Thank You – Asante Sana

May we all be safe to live and witness the new face of our libraries post covid19

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