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Public libraries in Namibia are being equipped with computers and the internet for public use. The shift has presented challenges for the Namibia Library and Archive Service (NLAS), which oversees the work of 65 public libraries and over 260 public librarians.

“Our librarians needed new skills to include technology-based information and training services,” said Namutenya Hamwaalwa, Deputy Director of NLAS.

EIFL and NLAS entered into a partnership to strengthen continuous professional development of public librarians in Namibia. In 2018/19 EIFL trained 17 librarians from the NLAS public library network to become trainers in developing modern library services that meet community information needs.

“I observed our new trainers practising with their colleagues and I can see a huge difference in their abilities. Before the training, they were too shy even to stand up in front of a group and speak. The training has built their confidence – they are conducting workshops, preparing handouts, organizing and facilitating discussions. They are strong, interactive trainers – they are different people!” said Namutenya.

The trainers have already trained 63 librarians from 44 public libraries in four workshops, on design thinking, communications, advocacy, project management and searching the internet.

In 2019: EIFL trained 50 public library trainers in Kenya, Namibia, Uganda and Zambia who are now training other librarians in their countries.



“Most of the time when we want to train our librarians we have to get somebody from outside – external trainers to capacitate our librarians. But with this programme we will have experts locally.”

–**NAMUTENYA HAMWAALWA**