

INELI SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA PROGRAM

BACKGROUND

AfLIA, the continent wide association for the strategic growth of the library and information profession in Africa, has partnered with the Global Libraries (GL) Programme of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, to deliver leadership training for public librarians. This training referred to as the International Network of Emerging Library Innovators (INELI) is an initiative of the GL programme. It was established to support the transformation of public libraries into engines of development and does this by supporting upcoming public librarians to develop innovative services for the benefit of their communities. This is premised on their belief that

the most effective way to ensure that emerging library leaders don't act with yesterday's logic, is to provide them with opportunities to connect with each other to explore new ideas, experiment with new services, and to learn from one another.

INELI has become a network of library leaders around the world who have learnt from each other and worked online to acquire skills and share experiences in developing innovative services for their communities. As a matter of strategy, the BMGF GL initiatives work with governments and other public and private funders to expand technology access in public libraries, foster innovation in libraries, train library leaders, and advocate for policy changes that benefit public libraries. In recognition of the centrality of appropriate human capital development to the success of this programme, the BMGF uses the INELI as a platform to support the strengthening and the equipping of leadership of public libraries world-wide. This is to enable them to manage modern innovative public library systems.

INELI started as a Global network and it has now been taken up in different regions of the world. At present, INELI-Sub-Saharan Africa (INELI SSAf) is among the existing INELI initiatives, which include INELI-ASEAN, INELI-Balkans, INELI-India, INELI-Latin America, INELI-MENA, and INELI-Oceania.

INELI SUB SAHARAN AFRICA (INELI SSAf)

INELI Sub Saharan Africa is managed by AfLIA, and the following are its three primary goals:

- **Goal 1:** Create a pool of future library leaders to build and sustain public libraries throughout the continent.
- **Goal 2:** Explore or address national and regional library issues that have the potential to stimulate, expand, or improve public library service.
- **Goal 3:** Enhance the leadership skills of new professionals from a variety of countries to enable them to redefine public libraries for the future to meet the unique needs of the people in their respective countries.

INELI Sub-Saharan Africa, just like other regional INELIs, will accomplish these goals through a combination of online and face-to-face programs and activities.

INELI SSAf Governance Structure

The programme is managed by the INELI SSAf Management Committee made up of nine members that oversees the programme.

There are eight mentors who guide and support the Innovators. Five of them were on the Global INELI and the other three have also undergone some Leadership training at various times.

At the library level, Innovators are supported by their supervisors or line managers, who have signed agreements with AfLIA to support and nurture the Innovators in their work.

The Participants

From April 2016, with support from the GL, AfLIA has been running the INELI programme for the SSAf region.

A cohort of 32 public librarians, drawn from 14 African countries, started its online learning by introducing themselves to each other. They then met at a Convening in Entebbe, Uganda at the end of June/beginning of July 2016. This involved a presentation by each Innovator about themselves and their libraries, as well as site visits to two libraries, one in Kampala, an urban area and one in Nakaseke, a rural area. There were also in-depth group discussions on various topics.

The content

The content of the course is mainly on those topics that librarians have to contend with on a daily basis but which are not necessarily taught in library school.

The programme provides e-learning courses through an online Moodle platform. The topics taught include:

- Advocacy,
- Innovation,
- Change management/Leading change,
- Conflict resolution,
- Community engagement,
- Risk management/Taking smart risks,
- Project Planning and Implementation
- Team work and Team projects.
- Data: Using Data to Make Decisions
- Time management
- My Library makes a difference

The programme is offered in the English Language and applicants should have been librarians for not less than 5 years and actively involved in library professional practice.

The second Convening, due in the Seychelles from 19th to 24th February 2017, and the online learning afterwards will give the Innovators a further chance to network and share ideas. The emphasis will be on how public libraries relate to the development agenda

(National Development Plan, UN Agenda 2030 and AU Agenda 2063) and how they can best support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

After the convening, they will engage in more online learning and will hold their last convening in Ghana in June 2018.

A second Cohort of Library Innovators will start its learning in June 2018. Over the four years of the INELI-SSAf programme, Innovators are being provided with opportunities to develop their knowledge, attitude and skills for leadership through a variety of learning environments and networking.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The 9-member INELI SSAf Management Committee has the following objectives:

- a. Plan the content and oversee the programme and any fall-outs from the programme.
- b. Plan for the scaling down of the programme to National levels.
- c. Identify funding sources for the scaling down of the programme to National levels.
- d. Carry out all activities relevant to the programme.

The Committee meets face to face during convenings and also meets online in between convenings as necessary.

The composition of the Committee is as follows:

1. **Ms Gertrude Kayaga Mulindwa** - Chairperson
2. **Mr Mandla Ntombela** - Rep of Public Library Section of AfLIA - Member
3. **Dr Buhle Mbambo-Thata** - Business Development Director of AfLIA - Member
4. **Mrs Magdelene Mooketsi** - African Graduate of Global INELI - Member
5. **Mr Abibou Coly** - Innovator Sponsor of Global INELI - Member
6. **Dr Helena Asamoah-Hassan** - Executive Director of AfLIA - Member
7. **Mrs June Garcia** - Consultant - Member
8. **Dr Rachel Ojoo** - Learning Coordinator - Member
9. **AfLIA Staff** - Secretary

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