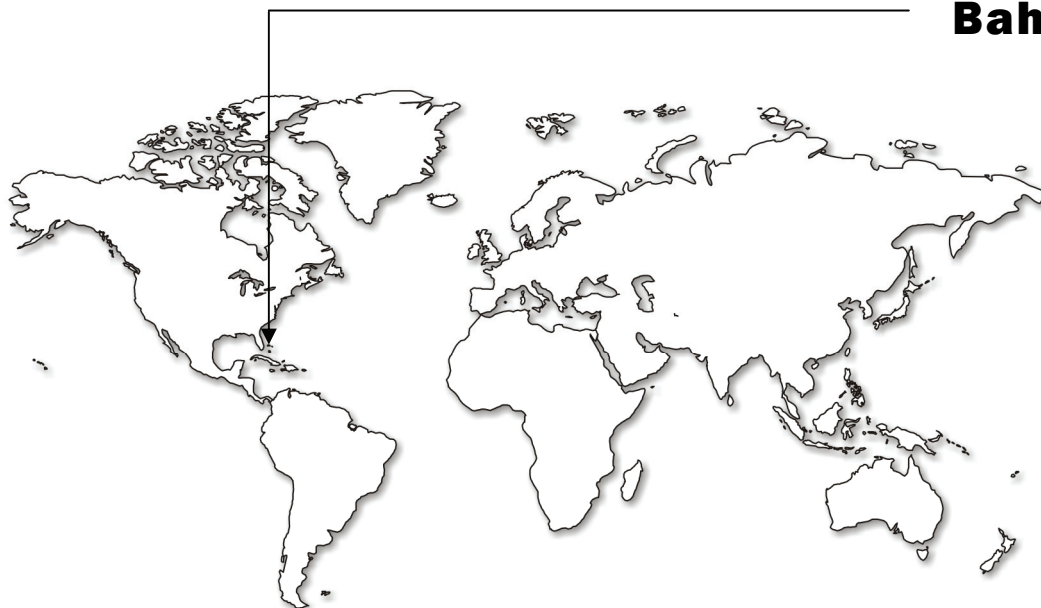


Bahamas



Responding institution:

The College of the Bahamas

The Bahamas contributed to the World Report series for the first time in 2005. This report refers to 30 public libraries, 2 university research libraries and 80 school libraries, but provides no information on government-funded research libraries.

According to Internet World Stats, Internet penetration increased from 26% in 2005 to 30.7% in March 2007. The respondent has indicated that an average amount of local content is available on the Internet, while very much of the content on the Internet is available in local languages.

In the Bahamas, 61-80% of public and university libraries offer Internet access, while 41-60% of school libraries offer access. Only school libraries offer their users free access to the Internet, while the rest offer a pay-for-use service. Users at the College of the Bahamas, for example, pay a technology fee to allow them access to computers. In some cases, extra funding has been made available by the state and/or library authorities for Internet access. Funding has been provided through budget allocation in order to acquire additional terminals to support the online research activities of library users.

A third-party source reported on a library cadet programme launched in March 2006. This project is supported by UNESCO's Information for all Programme (IFAP) in collaboration with the Bahamas Library

Services. It has as its goal the promotion of information literacy and equitable access to information and knowledge for primary and high school students. The programme also aims to interest young people in the field of Library and Information Science as a possible future career (http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=21697&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html).

The questions regarding filtering and blocking of information have not been completed. The respondent has indicated that no anti-terror legislation has been passed in the Bahamas, and that such legislation would not impact on user privacy if it were passed. Regarding the matter of keeping user records, the respondent has indicated that it does affect the freedom of expression of the individual Internet library user. No incidents of the violation of intellectual freedom have been reported.

Libraries in the Bahamas are involved in HIV/Aids awareness programmes, but do not have any special programmes that focus on the promotion of women's literacy.

The respondent has indicated that the library association has been inactive in the past three years and that a code of ethics was not adopted prior to that. The same applies to the IFLA Internet Manifesto and the Glasgow Declaration.

User privacy and anti-terror legislation

As reported in 2005, no anti-terror legislation that would adversely affect library users' intellectual

freedom has been passed in the Bahamas. The respondent also feels that such legislation would not impact on user privacy. In contrast to the 2005 report, the respondent is of the opinion that the keeping of user records affects the freedom of expression of the individual Internet library user, as such records enable another person to identify and verify the sites searched.

Reported incidents/violations of intellectual freedom in the past two years

Although no incidents that adversely affected freedom of access to information or freedom of expression in the last two years have been reported by the respondent, a case was reported in a consulted third-party source. In February 2006, a report was published on the IFEX website (<http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/72167/>) regarding an “attack against four journalists from Miami by guards at Carmichael Road refugee camp in the Bahamas”. According to the report, these journalists wanted to “investigate and interview Cuban families and detainees in this centre for illegal immigrants, because of allegations of mistreatment”.

HIV/Aids awareness

Libraries in the Bahamas are involved in programmes to raise awareness of HIV/Aids. Library displays draw attention to the topic and also inform the community of research that has been done and of relevant resources that are available in the library or elsewhere. The respondent is unaware of any projects in which libraries have been involved in providing information on HIV/Aids to members of the community who cannot read.

Women and freedom of access to information

As reported in 2005, libraries do not have special

programmes focusing on the promotion of women’s literacy. Boys and girls up to the age of 16 have access to free education from primary through to secondary level in government schools. From the 2007 response it appears that libraries do not specifically promote women’s access to information on matters such as health and family planning, as was previously reported in 2005.

IFLA Internet Manifesto

Although it was indicated in the 2005 report that the library association intended to adopt the IFLA Internet Manifesto in the following two years, this has not been done. The respondent has indicated that the library association has been inactive for the past three years and gives no indication as to whether the Manifesto will be adopted in the near future.

IFLA Glasgow Declaration on Libraries, Information Services and Intellectual Freedom

Although also indicated in the 2005 report that it was the library association’s intent to adopt the Glasgow Declaration in the following two years, this did not happen. The respondent has indicated that the library association has been inactive for the past three years and has given no indication as to the intent to adopt the Declaration in the near future.

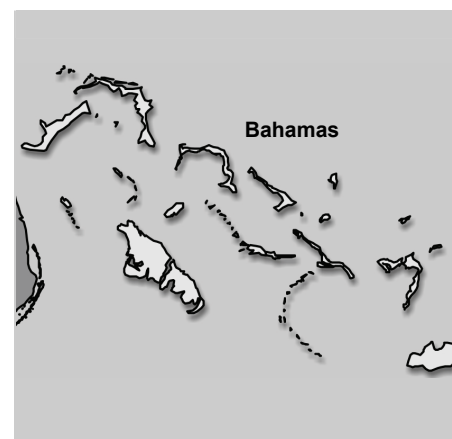
Ethics

It was stated in the 2005 report that the library association intended to adopt a code of ethics. The respondent has indicated, however, that the library association has been inactive for the past three years and that no code was adopted prior to that. No indication has been given as to whether a code of ethics will be adopted in the near future.

Main indicators

Country name:	Bahamas
Population:	305 655 (July 2007 est.)
Main language:	English (official), Creole (Haitian immigrants)
Literacy:	95.6%
Literacy reported by respondent:	The 2003 UN Human Development Index sets the rate at 95.5% for adults aged 15 and up and 97.3% for youth (15–24)

Population figures, language and literacy are from the
CIA World Factbook, 2007 edition
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>.



Libraries and Internet access

The Bahamas contributed to the World Report series in 2005. The following section compares data and answers from 2007 with the 2005 IFLA/FAIFE World Report and adds context from the respondent's estimates, where possible.

Library services

Estimated number of public libraries*:	30 (2005: 30)
Estimated number of school libraries:	80
Estimated number of university libraries:	2
Estimated number of government-funded research libraries:	No data provided
Source of these numbers:	Head of School Library Services; personal experience of the respondent (research libraries)

Internet access

Population online**:	103 000 Internet users as of March 2007 (30.7%) (2005: 26%)
Percentage of public libraries offering Internet access to users:	61-80% (2005: 61-80%)
Percentage of school libraries offering Internet access to users:	41-60%
Percentage of university libraries offering Internet access to users:	61-80%
Percentage of government-funded research libraries offering Internet access to users:	No data provided
In your estimate, how much local content*** is available on the Internet:	Average
To what degree is content on the Internet available in local languages:	Very much
Is the library association in favour of filtering information on library Internet terminals:	No data provided (2005: Yes, to a certain degree in order to protect children and to safeguard religious values, national culture and public morality)
Is the use of filtering software widespread in your country's libraries:	No data provided (2005: No)
Is it free of charge for library users to access the Internet on library computers:	Yes, in school libraries; but not at the College of the Bahamas, where users pay a technology fee allowing them access to computers (2005: No)
Has the state or other library authorities made any extra funding available for Internet access in the library system of your country in the last two years:	Yes, in some cases – funding has been provided to acquire additional terminals (2005: No)

* Public library service points, including branch libraries.

** Online population numbers are from Internet World Stats (www.Internetworldstats.com).

*** Local content is defined as content that originates in the country.