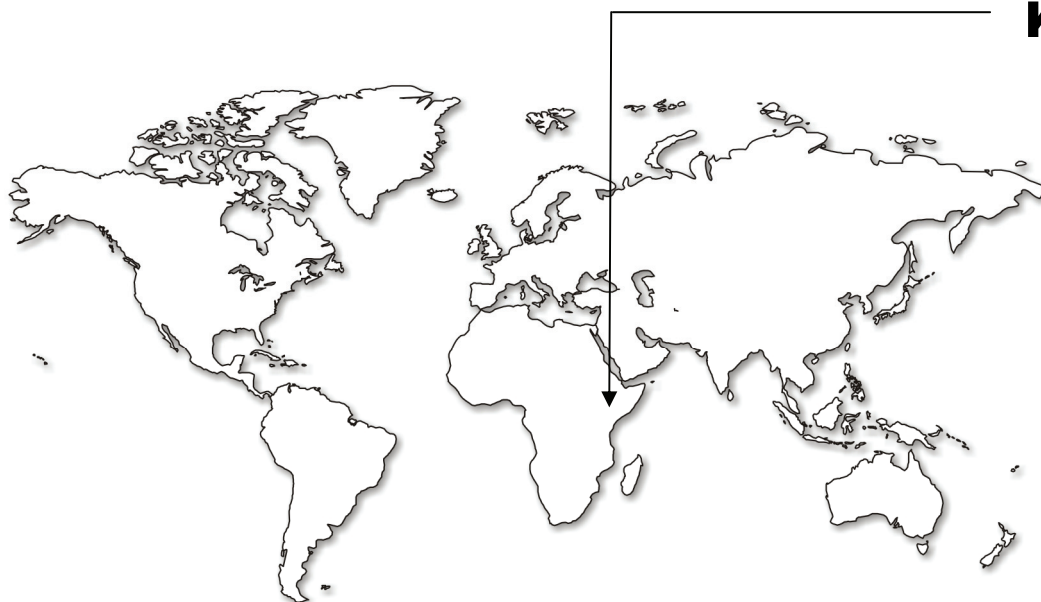


Kenya



Responding institution:
Kenya Library Association

Kenya is responding for the fourth time, with previous responses in 2001, 2003 and 2005. This report concerns 45 public library service points and 288 research libraries, including 20 university libraries, 250 school libraries and 18 government-funded research libraries. (The 2005 report indicated 40 public library service points and 25 research libraries; it might be that research libraries have been interpreted differently from the current questionnaire response.)

In September 2006, Internet penetration for Kenya was estimated at 3.0% (*CIA World Factbook*, 2007 edition). This is a slight increase on the 1.2% penetration level reported for 2005. Internet access for libraries in Kenya is estimated at less than 20% for all public and school libraries, 61-80% for university libraries and 41-60% for government-funded research libraries. (In the 2005 report it was indicated that fewer public libraries were providing access to the Internet than indicated in the 2003 report, and that this might be due to differences in the method of data collection. In the 2005 report it was indicated that 81-100% of research libraries offer Internet access, which is in sharp contrast to the much lower estimates for 2007. As pointed out earlier, it may be that a different interpretation of research libraries was held for 2005.)

There is very little coverage of local content and local languages on the Internet. The literacy rate has not been indicated by the respondent; the 2007 *CIA World*

Factbook sets it at 85.1%. Access to the Internet is not free of charge, as all users pay either directly or indirectly to use Internet services. All university students pay a computer fee per semester, while public libraries charge users a fee for Internet use. (This is in contrast to the response for 2005 indicating that Internet access is free of charge in all libraries. In 2003, however, Internet access for library users was indicated as not free.)

In some cases, the state or other library authorities have made extra funding available for Internet access in the library system over the last two years. The government ministry under which the public universities fall has allocated some money for purchasing computers and for Internet connectivity.

The library association in Kenya is to some extent in favour of filtering information on library Internet terminals, and the use of filtering software is to a certain extent widespread in the country's libraries. Reasons for filtering include the need to protect children and to safeguard religious values, the national ethos/culture and public morality. Bandwidth protection is also mentioned as a reason.

Regarding special areas of focus, the respondent indicates that libraries in Kenya are still not troubled by anti-terror legislation. There have, however, been violations of intellectual freedom.

Libraries have been involved in programmes promoting HIV/Aids awareness, but – in contrast to the 2005 report – are not involved in programmes to provide HIV/Aids information to members of the community

who cannot read. Libraries have also not been involved in initiatives designed to promote women's literacy or women's access to topics such as social information, the economy, education, health and family planning.

The Kenyan library association adopted a code of ethics in 1986, but no URL is available for the code. Although the IFLA Internet Manifesto has not been adopted, the Glasgow Declaration has.

User privacy and anti-terror legislation

No anti-terror legislation has been passed in Kenya, although the 2005 report refers to the fact that attempts to pass such a Bill have raised a great deal of political debate in the country. (No mention is made of it in the 2007 response.)

According to the respondent, there is a section of a Bill that demands that anyone who has information on a terrorist suspect must give it to the police or be treated as a criminal him- or herself. (More specific information on the particular bill has not been provided.) The respondent has indicated that, if passed, anti-terror legislation would impact on user privacy. (This is in contrast to the 2005 report.) The keeping of user records would also affect the individual Internet library user's freedom of expression.

According to the respondent, there are different reasons why people read information materials. Monitoring people's use of the Internet infringes on their privacy and can lead to fear and harassment. (This response is also in contrast to the 2005 report.)

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

In 2001, a worrying picture of freedom of access to information was painted in terms of the government control of acquisitions, censorship and self-censorship. At the time, the library association recognised that the issue of censorship would have to be addressed. Incidents of the violation of intellectual freedom were not, however, reported for 2003 or 2005.

The respondent reports on one incident in March 2006, when the government hired people who raided a media house, confiscated computers and burned copies of newspapers, claiming that the media house was about to publish information that would affect national security. The respondent lists the media, the Kenyan Human Rights Commission and sources for civil society, such as Release Political Prisoners (RPP), as sources that could be consulted for more information on intellectual freedom in Kenya. Several incidents of violation of intellectual freedom have also been noted by third-party resources. A few examples follow to illustrate the point.

The Amnesty International reports for 2006 and 2007 reflect on several incidents of intimidation and harassment of the media and journalists, where the authorities took aggressive measures to silence investigative or critical voices. Criminal libel charges were, for instance, brought against Kamau Ngotho, an investigative journalist, arising from an article about corruption published in the *Standard* in January. Following a public outcry, the charges were dropped. In September, David Ochami of the *Kenya Times* was arrested and charged with "publishing alarming information" for writing an article critical of the President (<http://web.amnesty.org/report2006/ken-summary-eng>).

Several more reports of raids on media facilities and the arrest and harassment of journalists exist, for example at:

<http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/77106>
<http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/76393>
<http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/72683>
<http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/72599>
<http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/72404>
<http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/82649>
http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=22163&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html
http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id_article=17386

IFEX reports on the Media Bill 2007, which intends to establish a statutory, but self-regulatory, press council known as the Media Council of Kenya (MCK). The Bill provides for a complaints committee that has the power to remove a journalist from a registered list, or to deny a journalist accreditation (<http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/83856>). The Bill has raised concern among the media and other groups about the government's true intentions. According to a report, Paul Muite, chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee on Administration of Justice, has said that the Bill is an attempt to "control and gag the media" (http://allafrica.com/stories/20070604_1452.html).

HIV/Aids awareness

Libraries in Kenya have been involved in programmes promoting HIV/Aids awareness. Every branch of the national library service has an HIV/Aids section with a librarian to run it. Such a section stocks books, pamphlets and other information material on HIV/Aids. Due to a lack of logistics, however, libraries have not been involved in programmes to provide HIV/Aids information to members of the community who cannot read. (This is in contrast to the 2005 response, where it was indicated that HIV/Aids

awareness programmes were extended to members of the community who are unable to read).

Women and freedom of access to information

Libraries in Kenya have not been involved in initiatives designed to promote women's literacy or women's access to social information and information on the economy, education, health and family planning. The respondent has suggested that nobody has come up with such an idea and that libraries consider this an area to be handled by other non-governmental organisations, especially the ones that deal with gender issues.

IFLA Internet Manifesto

Kenya has not adopted the IFLA Internet Manifesto. Some libraries block sites from users for various reasons, and for moral and cultural reasons many libraries do not allow any use of pornographic information. The library community intends to adopt the Manifesto in two years' time. (This is similar to the 2005 response.)

IFLA Glasgow Declaration on Libraries, Information Services and Intellectual Freedom

Since the 2005 response, the library association has

adopted the Glasgow Declaration. Libraries do not keep user records for the purpose of tracking users. All library users are free to visit any website they choose without restriction. According to the respondent, most libraries do not directly control Internet use, as this is often handled by the information and communication technology departments. (This appears to contradict the respondent's explanation on the IFLA Manifesto.)

Ethics

According to the respondent, the library association adopted a code of ethics in 1986. (There is no URL available for the code.) The respondent has cited information on a particular incident where a member of the library association was called before the disciplinary committee for spreading unfavourable information on other members in the media.

In the 2005 report, however, it was indicated that the library association drafted a code of ethics in 1991, but that the strategic work of implementation was never put in place. It was also indicated in the 2005 report that the library association intended to adopt a code of ethics within two years' time.

Main indicators

Country name:	Kenya
Population:	36 913 721 (July 2007 est.)
Main language:	English (official), Kiswahili (official), numerous indigenous languages
Literacy:	85.1%
Literacy reported by respondent:	No data provided

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

Kenya contributed to the World Report series in 2005, 2003 and 2001. 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*:	45 (2005: 40)
Estimated number of school libraries:	250 (rough estimate)
Estimated number of university libraries:	20
Estimated number of government-funded research libraries:	18
Source of these numbers:	Kenya National Library Services; Kenya Education Directory

Internet access

Population online**:	1 054 900 Internet users as of Sept. 2006 (3.0%) (2005: 1.2%)
Percentage of public libraries offering Internet access to users:	Less than 20% (2005: Less than 20%)
Percentage of school libraries offering Internet access to users:	Less than 20%
Percentage of university libraries offering Internet access to users:	61-80%
Percentage of government-funded research libraries offering Internet access to users:	41-60%
In your estimate, how much local content*** is available on the Internet:	Very little
To what degree is content on the Internet available in local languages:	Very little
Is the library association in favour of filtering information on library Internet terminals:	Yes, to a certain degree (2005: Yes, to a certain degree; motivated by the desire to protect children and safeguard public morality)
Is the use of filtering software widespread in your country's libraries:	Yes, to a certain degree – to protect children; to safeguard religious values, the national ethos/culture and public morality; and to protect bandwidth (2005: Yes, to a certain degree)
Is it free of charge for library users to access the Internet on library computers:	No – all users pay to use Internet services either directly or indirectly (2005: Yes, in all libraries)
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 – the government ministry under which the public universities fall has allocated some money for the purchase of computers and Internet connectivity (2005: Yes)

* 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.