On behalf of Makerere University Library, I am pleased to welcome and thank you all for honouring our invitation and for sparing your precious time to celebrate this year’s World Library Day with us. We acknowledge that you are all very busy people but the fact that you came is an indication that you value library services.

The World Library Day has been celebrated internationally in different parts of the World since 1897. In Uganda, it was first celebrated at Makerere University Library on 22nd May 2009. Since then, it has become an annual event. The World Library Day is an occasion to appreciate the value of information services. The theme for this year’s celebrations is: Libraries transforming society’. This is in line with the current theme of the international body governing libraries (IFLA), which is: ‘Libraries. Solidarity. Society’. The theme highlights the role of libraries, technology and librarians in transforming society through facilitating creation, acquisition, collection, preservation, access and utilization of information resources to contribute to society as informed citizens.

The aim of the commemoration is sharing experiences and achievements, showcasing and displaying our activities and services through exhibitions by various sections of the Library. We also wish to draw the attention of policy-makers, library users, administrators and all stakeholders, to the role of the Library in the University, in shaping culture and in national development.

This year’s celebrations have deliberately been organized in the College of Health Sciences to recognize the tremendous contributions made in the academic and research activities of the University, Uganda and the rest of the world. Researchers in CHS have published the highest number of academic papers in the University, and have hence immensely contributed to the rankings and web visibility of Makerere University. Two of them received awards at the previous World Library Day. I wish to recognize all these outstanding researchers. As you may realize that despite challenges that the University has faced and continues to face, Makerere has consistently been ranked among the top ten positions in Africa. This has been
largely due to the prolific research profile, especially in the CHS and access to up-to-date research information through library databases.

The College library (Albert Cook Medical library), which is our host today, is named after a pioneer medical doctor, Sir Albert Huskin Cook. His initials medical notes from earlier patients at Mengo hospital transferred to Mulago in the late 19th and early 20th century. The medical notes, together with medical illustrations provided the first teaching aids and thus information resources in the training of early medical students. This marked the beginning of teaching modern medicine. This collection has been preserved by the library, courtesy of the British Library and it now forms part of our national and cultural heritage.

Other than Albert Cook, our current host, allow me to give you a broader overview of the library services in Makerere. The Library is one of the largest units in Makerere University in terms of sections/branches and staff numbers. It comprises of the Main Library with 10 sections, 10 college libraries, and Makerere University Agricultural Research Institute, Kabanyolo (MUARIK) Library (See the brochure).

The entire library collection now consists of over 450,000 monographs and 35,219 electronic books, 100 electronic books excluding donations, gifts and exchange; 82,000 bound serials/periodicals with an annual subscription of 330 serial titles. There are approximately 267,844 Book Bank books scattered in all the college libraries.

Albert Cook Library has access to several databases including;

1. HINARI (can give a few details of the contents of these databases)
2. PubMed
3. EBSCO
4. Wiley InterScience
5. E-books
6. Cochrane Library

**Staffing**

The Library currently has a total number of 142 (38 professional staff, 104 support staff). Seven members of staff attained Ph.D. since 2007. We have one Associate Library Professor and four PhD holders. More are still pursuing PhD and Masters
programmes. The Library now serves a population of over 30,000 users, consisting of Makerere students and external students; and over 1000 Makerere staff and external researchers.

The Library provides a variety of services, some of which are accessible through the online catalogue and electronic resources including:

- Reference and information services,
- Binding,
- ICT and training,
- Digitization,
- Document delivery services,
- Reading and study space,
- Photocopying, among others.

ICT facilities in the main and all its branches. Improved facilities include:

- Space for discussion,
- Research commons,
- Learning commons,
- Power point room,
- Music digital archive of Uganda music and
- Mother’s room (Refer to Brochure).

The major funding of the University Library comes from Government, internally generated funds and Development Partners (Carnegie, Sida, NORAD, etc).

**Achievements**
The library has registered enormous achievements mainly through an increase in information resources, especially e-resources and in expanding facilities. Both undergraduate and graduate students have access to both resources and facilities. For example, undergraduate have a specific fully equipped computer lab in the Main library on level 2. Graduate students and researchers too, have their lab on level four in the new building and in addition, the library has research carrels in the Main library, CEES library and in Albert Cook for individual reading.

**Major Challenges**
The major challenges include inadequate funding, understaffing and inadequate space, especially in the college libraries.
Although the budget for books was ring-fenced, the library has not received money for books in a long time.

Library services operate on average 13 - 15 hours a day, therefore it is important that adequate staffing is guaranteed for all the operational hours.

When the college system was introduced, Book Bank libraries were supposed to be merged into college libraries. There is no single sufficient space in most colleges for one College Library. An example is the college of Health Sciences where there are more than 22 departmental Book Bank libraries. Albert Cook was originally built to serve 200 students but we now have over 2000 of them. This means that we need real libraries in the colleges.

The Library is committed to full automation of its functions and services and this again requires a substantive budget and support.

Allow me to introduce library staff who are here:

Staff from Main Library

Staff from College Libraries

I thank the organizing committee that was headed by Dr. Alison Kinengyere.

Thank you