MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

**SPEECH BY THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN,
DR. HELEN BYAMUGISHA**

AT THE WORLD LIBRARY DAY CELEBRATIONS – 13TH JULY 2018,

THE 24/7 SPACE, MAIN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, 2:00PM

Our Guest of Honour, the Minister of ICT and National Guidance, Hon. Frank Tumwebaze,

The Keynote Speaker, Executive Director, National Planning Authority, Dr. Muvawala,

Members of Makerere University Council,

The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe

Fellow Members of Management

Librarians from other institutions

Fellow Librarians and staff from Makerere University

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of Makerere University Library, I am pleased to welcome and thank you 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: **_Remodeled Library Services: Informed Societies._** This is in line with the current theme of the international body governing libraries (IFLA), which is: **_Transform Libraries, Transform Societies: Reaching out to the hard to reach"._** 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 academic Library in the University and in national development.

Hon. Minister and guests, allow me to our current host, allow me to give you a broader overview of the library system and services in Makerere.

Historical Background

The Library started in small room in the Main Administration building in 1949.

The first wing was constructed and was opened in 1959 by Her Majesty the Queen of England.

The Library had space of 33,000 Sq. ft., sitting capacity of 270 and served a population of 750 students and 40 staff. It had 120,000 volumes of books.

The Library you see now has been extended three times. The current extension with an area of 8,000 sq. meters was commissioned in 2012. The total area is 12,000 sq meters with a sitting capacity of 3,980 and serves approximately 35,000 Makerere students, over 1000 Makerere staff as well as external researchers.

Makerere University Library serves as:

- An academic library.

- The National Reference Library.

- National Legal depository for all works published in, on Uganda and by Ugandans, including Government Publications.

- A depository for the United Nations and other UN- related bodies' publications.

The Main Library has nine sections that provide various services as you have seen in the exhibitions. We also have 10 college libraries that provide similar services.

The library collection consists of:

Over 400,800 monographs

Over 82,000 titles of bound serials/periodicals

Over 18,000 titles of electronic journals.

Over 35,000 titles of electronic books

Over 267,844 copies of Book Banks books

The academic library has traditionally been seen as the 'heart of the university'. The main function of Makerere University Library is to support the university in achieving its mission and objectives. The Library provides support for teaching, learning and research activities in the university. The library's core responsibility is sustained through collecting, processing, preserving, storing, and providing information services to enable discovery and use of research outputs in all formats

Before the advent of information and communication technology (ICT), the library was the sole custodian of information, which was predominantly in print. Digital technology has revolutionized not only the way information is packaged, processed, stored, and disseminated, but also how our users seek and access information. Today, Makerere University library no longer restricts itself to print services. We are currently managing hybrid library resources (print and electronic) and staff are also challenged to acquire the necessary ICT skills. It is hence not surprising to find our librarians talking about concepts such as computer software, hardware, telecommunication and technology.

Remodeled facilities in the main Library include:

- Computers for students and staff.
- Discussion rooms.
- Research Commons.

- Learning Commons.

- Power Point Room.

- Multi-media unit.

- Music digital archive of Ugandan music.

- Well-equipped training unit.

- Computer Lab for people with disabilities.

- A mothers' room

The Library provides a variety of services, some of which are accessible through the online catalogue.

Remodeled Library services include:

- Reference and information services
- Binding, Photocopying
- ICT and training
- Digitization
- Document delivery services
- Reading and study space; Study Carrels.
- Current awareness; Information Literacy trainings
- Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI)
- Korean Corner for teaching Korean language
- French Corner with books in French

In a world where digital is becoming the default format for information, Makerere library remains a vital presence on campus, sustaining serious scholarship and providing opportunities for interactive research and study environments. The nature of the library has undergone a fundamental shift away from merely providing access to scholarly literature, and librarians are moving away from mere handling of print materials and into research support roles.

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

Achievements

The library has registered achievements through increased information resources, especially e-resources and ICT facilities. The Library prides itself in highly trained and skilled staff that includes 2 Associate Library Professors and 3 PhD holders. More staff are pursuing doctoral studies while all the senior staff have Masters in information Science.

Major Challenges

The major challenge for the Library is that it has depended heavily on donors for most of the electronic information resources and ICT facilities. The Government of Sweden has supported Makerere University and the Consortium of Uganda University Libraries (CUUL) institutions since 2001 through Sida. Activities that have been supported include electronic resources subscription, computers, other related equipment as well as trainings and workshops.

In the 2017/2018 financial year, Sida provided USD 164,000.00 while CUUL institutions paid USD 78,166.00. These resources are shared by all public university libraries.

Sida will wind up its support in Makerere at the end of 2020. However, the consortium cannot sustain the resources because the mother institutions are financially constrained.

Makerere University Library is the National Coordinator of the electronic resources and has been charged with the responsibility of ensuring sustainability of the resources.

Information is the engine for development and access to it is a cross-cutting issue that supports all of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Library services hence contribute to improved outcomes across the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Hon Minister sir, inviting you and the Executive Director of the National Planning Authority was a strategic decision.

I and my fellow library staff, on behalf of all the librarians in Uganda University Libraries asked me to request you, through my Vice Chancellor, to request you to be our Champions in this cause.

Our appeal to you is to:

1. Include academic libraries such as Makerere University in the National Development Plan.

2. Request the Ministry of ICT and National Guidance to support Makerere University and other public University Libraries in funding electronic resources and facilities.

"It is not to the museum, or the lecture-room, or the drawing-school, but to the library that we must go for the completion of our humanity. It is books that bear from age to age the intellectual wealth of the world (Ireland (1884)".

Finally, Hon. Minister, allow me to introduce librarians who are here:

Staff from Makerere Library

University Librarians from other universities

Staff from other Universities

Thank and introduce the organizing committee.

We Build for the Future

Thank you