

## Connecting with the Community

### Horn of Africa Communities



#### Horn of Africa Communities: Library and information needs

- Accurate, up-to-date and sufficient information about government and community services.
- Information skills and IT skills essential to work and school.
- Access to computers and the Internet.
- Connections to the broader community.

## Horn of Africa Communities: Factors influencing library use

- Awareness
  - Generally low level of awareness of services offered by public libraries.
  - Lack of familiarity with libraries as a concept.
- Engagement
  - Willingness to participate in library activities (presenting opportunities for promoting wider community engagement).

## Horn of Africa Communities: Factors influencing library use

- Collections, programs and services
  - Limited collections in community languages.
  - Low-level literacy and computer skills.
- Policies and procedures
  - Difficulties in taking up library membership.
  - Lack of awareness of library rules.
- Customer service
  - Sensitivity of library staff to user's comfort levels.

## Horn of Africa Communities:

### Opportunities for libraries to reach out to communities

- Collaboration and partnerships
  - Libraries work collaboratively on planning, promotion, collections development and staff training.
  - Libraries establish partnerships with local community organisations and complementary service providers.

## Horn of Africa Communities:

### Opportunities for libraries to reach out to communities

- Engagement and promotion
  - Use existing African library users and community representatives to promote library services and support new library users.
  - Use children's programs, other established library programs, council programs and community locations to promote library services.
  - Support and collaboratively promote specialist collections and library centres.

## Horn of Africa Communities:

### Opportunities for libraries to reach out to communities

- Collections, programs and services
  - Collaborative development of and investment in library collections.
  - Map existing collections in community languages.
  - Support development of literacy and computer skills.
- Library facilities
  - Provide computers with Arabic keyboards.

## Horn of Africa Communities:

### Opportunities for libraries to reach out to communities

- Customer service
  - Libraries employ library staff of African origin or who speak relevant community languages.
  - Libraries provide professional development related to cultural awareness.

## Connecting with the Community

### Indigenous Australians



### Indigenous Australians: Library and information needs

- Access to information, resources and services to improve literacy and numeracy.
- Access to information, resources and services that support Year 12 completion, educational attainment and development of pathways to employment.
- Capacity to capture, maintain and access information about Indigenous people's language and cultural heritage.
- Engagement in provision of library and information services to Indigenous people.

## Indigenous Australians: Factors influencing library use

- Awareness
  - Low levels of awareness of the services offered by public libraries.
- Engagement
  - No compelling reason for using library services.
  - Use of alternative library services.

## Indigenous Australians: Factors influencing library use

- Library programs and collections
  - Limited collections and programs for and about Indigenous Australians.
- Policies and procedures
  - Perceived discomfort in library environment.
- Customer service
  - Limited numbers of or no Indigenous library staff.

## Indigenous Australians:

### Opportunities for libraries to reach out to communities

- Awareness
  - Promote access to library services to and through Indigenous communities.
- Engagement
  - Position the library as a meeting place for Indigenous Australians and a place of Indigenous culture.
  - Engage communities through Indigenous elders and children.

## Indigenous Australians:

### Opportunities for libraries to reach out to communities

- Library programs and collections
  - Develop library collections and deliver library programs for, about and through Indigenous Australians.
- Customer service
  - Employ Indigenous library staff.
  - Provide cross-cultural awareness training programs for library staff.

## Connecting with the Community

### Low Income Families



### Low Income Families: Library and information needs

- Access to information, educational resources and entertainment that they cannot obtain through their own means:
  - children's books and reading programs;
  - homework and school study resources;
  - DVDs and CDs;
  - the Internet.



## Low Income Families: Library and information needs

- Information skills and IT skills essential to work and school.
- A family-friendly environment to access library and information services:
  - free time to find the books and resources they need;
  - empathy and understanding from library staff and other library users.

## Low Income Families: Factors influencing library use

- Awareness
  - Lack of awareness of library resources and services relevant to low-income families.
- Engagement
  - Perceptions of libraries as quiet and not family-friendly or child-friendly places.
  - Low-level literacy and information skills.
  - Limited transport options to access public libraries.

## Low Income Families: Factors influencing library use

- Policies and procedures
  - The threat of library fines.
- Customer service
  - Perceived adverse attitudes of library staff and other library users.

## Low Income Families: Opportunities for libraries to reach out to communities

- Awareness
  - Promote library services and facilities through organisations and community members that interact with low-income families.
- Engagement
  - Create family-friendly library spaces.

## Low Income Families:

### Opportunities for libraries to reach out to communities

- Library programs and collections
  - Maintain relevant information and educational resources and programs.
  - Support development of literacy and computer skills.
  - Review policies for library fines.
- Customer service
  - Provide a welcoming and supportive library environment to overcome potential unease and uncertainty.

## Connecting with the Community

### Disadvantaged Young People



## Disadvantaged Young People: Library and information needs

- Equal access to computers, the Internet, books and information resources.
- Information skills and IT skills essential to education and employment.
- Access to information on health, housing and other issues relevant to young people.
- Library services in their space.
- Support and encouragement in accessing library services.

## Disadvantaged Young People: Factors influencing library use

- Engagement
  - Perceptions of libraries as old, quiet and bookish places of learning.
  - Do not feel physically or emotionally comfortable in libraries.
  - Authority figures promote library use.
- Collections, programs and services
  - Limited interest in services provided by libraries.

## Disadvantaged Young People:

### Opportunities for libraries to reach out to communities

- Engagement
  - Take libraries to the young people.
- Library programs and collections
  - Leverage interest in computers to extend use of library services.
  - Provide entertainment for young people.

## Disadvantaged Young People:

### Opportunities for libraries to reach out to communities

- Policies and procedures
  - Make libraries more comfortable for young people.
  - Expand access to library resources and services.