GATES GLOBAL LIBRARIES

Myanmar Beyond Access Evaluation Phase 1 Trip Report

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I.   Introduction

Beyond Access Myanmar seeks to modernize public libraries in an effort to improve digital literacy in Myanmar. The evaluation design is based on an integrated, whole-system view with primary source data collection planned for:

- June-July 2015 (phase 1)
- June 2016 (phase 2).

Phase 1 data give an understanding of the starting point from which the libraries embarked on the Beyond Access Myanmar initiative, as well as provide an opportunity for early learning that can inform the implementation of Beyond Access over the coming year. Phase 1 data collection also offers lessons learned for the evaluation process, including reflections on the methodology and adaptations to the evaluation design that might be beneficial.

The primary audience for this report is Myanmar Book Aid and Preservation Foundation (MBAPF), International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX), and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (hereinafter the Gates Foundation). Any segments of the report that are shared with other stakeholders should be reviewed by IREX or the evaluation team to ensure that the content is appropriate for distribution. The report's findings may also assist other project stakeholders, including the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Ministry of Information, Ooredoo, Microsoft, and the University of Washington.

II.   Myanmar's Rapidly Changing Environment

Since 2010, Myanmar has been undergoing a rapid political transformation, including preparations for national democratic elections and the loosening of press controls. At the same time, economic liberalization is quickly changing the economic and labor market landscape. While Myanmar is currently one of the poorest countries in Asia, ranked 170th out of 240 countries in the world in gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, it also has one of the highest growth rates.[1]

Economic reforms are similarly changing the digital landscape at light speed: mobile penetration is expected

Exhibit 1: Anticipated Rate of Increase in Mobile Penetration in Myanmar

2014:
4%

2015:
80%

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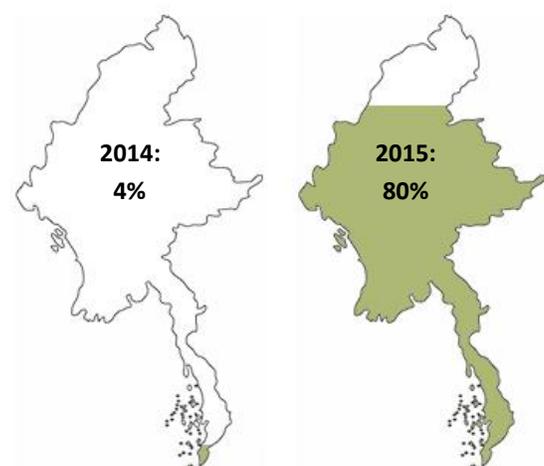
[1] *The World Factbook 2013-14*. Washington, D.C.: Central Intelligence Agency. 2013

to increase from just 4 percent in 2014 to 80 percent by the end of 2015, all in a country where internet penetration was less than 1 percent in 2013[2,3]. With an estimated 93 percent adult literacy rate (see Footnote 1, page 1), this digital revolution is already expanding access to information.

In a context where all information was tightly controlled, citizens are now able to navigate a barrage of new information. And while news and the political transformations are often at the forefront of conversation, Myanmar citizens are also accessing the Internet to learn new skills, find employment opportunities, and engage in social networking. Although many would-be Internet users have an interest in accessing data, the widespread poverty throughout the country makes mobile data too expensive for many to access. This is particularly true of vulnerable populations.

Beyond Access, an initiative implemented by IREX and supported by the Gates Foundation, posits that public libraries are often untapped resources that can be leveraged to support development goals. In Myanmar, there are currently an estimated 5,000 active libraries, the majority of which are community and government libraries (Asia Foundation 2014).[4, 5] As traditional centers for learning, these institutions are already positioned as information access points and ideally suited to support digital inclusion goals.

However, in order to expand libraries beyond traditional print collections to become community centers for accessing digital information, they must undergo a transformation in both mindset and services. The Beyond Access Myanmar project is designed to bring about these transformations.

III. The Beyond Access Myanmar Project

Beyond Access Myanmar is a collaboration between IREX, the Gates Global Libraries grantee for the Beyond Access project; MBAPF, the Beyond Access implementing nongovernmental organization (NGO) in Myanmar; and a coalition of other stakeholders including:

- The Ministry of Information
- Private sector organizations – Ooredoo and Microsoft
- The University of Washington
- Local governments.

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[2] Melody Clark, *Teaching information literacy & digital skills in mobile-centric Myanmar* (blog). *TASCHA*. June 15, 2015. http://tascha.uw.edu/2015/06/teaching-information-literacy-digital-skills-in-mobile-centric-myanmar/
[3] Dan Arnaudo, *Myanmar: Temples and towers* (blog). TASCHA. April 10, 2015. http://tascha.uw.edu/2015/04/myanmar-temples-and-towers/
[4] Both categories are considered public libraries, with the former typically funded by the community, a private benefactor, or monastery and overseen by a committee, and the latter funded and managed by the Information and Public Relations Department (IPRD).
[5] The Asia Foundation. *Myanmar Library Survey: A comprehensive study of the country's public libraries and information needs.* 2014. http://asiafoundation.org/resources/pdfs/MyanmarLibrarySurvey.pdf

IREX provides technical expertise in libraries and collaborative technology; MBAPF provides daily management of the collaboration on the ground and a history of working with libraries in Myanmar; and mobile network provider Ooredoo provides tablets and Internet connection to the libraries involved in the program.

Beyond Access Myanmar plans to equip 55 libraries throughout six regions of Myanmar with tablets and access to the Internet, as well as to train librarians on how to serve as infomediaries for communities. The librarian training program will focus on introducing technology (tablets and Wi-Fi) through the libraries, redesigning library spaces to make libraries a more welcoming venue, and increasing library use through outreach and responsiveness to user needs. By creating safe spaces in libraries to access technology and training for free, the project hopes to reach groups that would otherwise not benefit from the rush of new technology and information available in Myanmar.

Exhibit 2: Beyond Access Myanmar Theory of Change

Improved digital literacy outcomes

Community members use services

Libraries reach out to communities to offer services that meet needs and provide access not otherwise available

Library spaces are equipped to offer modern services, including catering to digital literacy

Librarians have skills to offer services

IV. Evaluation Design and Methodology

EVALUATION DESIGN AND QUESTIONS

The evaluation of the Beyond Access Myanmar project seeks to understand **how the Beyond Access intervention in 55 Myanmar libraries has supported progress toward access to technology and digital literacy.**

This trip report provides an overview of the phase 1 data collection process and themes. These data will then be used again in conjunction with phase 2 primary source data and project monitoring data to conduct a summative evaluation, the report for which will be generated in summer of 2016.

The summative evaluation will respond to the following key evaluation questions:

1. What are the enablers and constraints that have an impact on technology use in the library?
   - Do library users have access to the technology and the Internet?
   - Do library users see the value in building digital literacy skills?
   - Do librarians provide the support needed to enable use?

- What other enablers and constraints have an impact on technology use in the library? Are there particular barriers for women or children?

2. Are communities in Beyond Access intervention areas building digital literacy skills?
   - Is technology drawing users to the library?
   - Do library users feel they are building digital literacy skills?
   - What purpose are the technology resources being used for?
   - What more could libraries do to encourage technology use and skill development?

In order to understand changes over time, the evaluation team, in close collaboration with key stakeholders, designed an evaluation that collects primary data in two phases: once early in the lifecycle of the project before libraries have been provided with the full extent of Beyond Access Myanmar support (phase 1), and once approximately 1 year later in order to assess changes that have taken place with the support of the intervention (phase 2).

PHASE 1 METHODOLOGY

Phase 1 data collection occurred between June 29 and July 11, 2015. The data collection team was led by an EnCompass LLC evaluation associate, and additionally consisted of an interpreter and an MBAPF staff member. For the first half of data collection, the team was joined by a program officer from IREX.

SAMPLE

During phase 1, data were collected from a total of six libraries, representing just over 10 percent of the Beyond Access Myanmar libraries, as presented in **Exhibit 3**. These libraries were purposively sampled based on the categories outlined in **Exhibit 3**, which were determined jointly with IREX and MBAPF to reflect the diverse spectrum of library types, rather than a representative sample of project beneficiaries.[6] This strategy leverages learning potential of the phase 1 sample by capturing a range of perspectives with the potential to affect the project. All sampled libraries agreed to participate, reflecting a 100 percent response rate at the library level.

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[6] The sample was drawn purposively to represent the breadth of library types, which helps capture the spectrum of views, but does not provide a representative sample. Consequently, although different types of libraries are included in the sample, this does not enable disaggregating data by different sampling criteria, such as library type or setting.

Exhibit 3: Intervention Libraries and Phase 1 Sample

Category	Intervention Libraries (55 total)	Sampled Libraries (6 total)
Setting (rural/urban)	35 urban 20 rural	5 urban 1 rural
Library type	17 IPRD 38 community, of which: • 5 youth-run • 4 monastic	1 IPRD 5 community, of which: • 1 youth-run • 1 monastic
Region	9 Magway Region 13 Mandalay Region 7 Sagaing Region 16 Yangon Region 7 Bago Region 3 Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory	2 Magway Region 2 Mandalay Region 1 Sagaing Region 1 Yangon Region

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Phase 1 data collection employed semi-structured interviews with librarians, focus group discussions with library users, individual questionnaires with library users, library observations, and document review. In the context of community libraries, this report uses "library organizer" to refer to individuals who play a guiding role in the library, but are not formally given the title librarian by the group that runs the library; reflecting the organic and grassroots structure of community libraries, this group is broad and includes individuals such as board members, volunteers, and key advisors. Methods are described below and the final tools are included in Annex 1.

Semi-structured interviews with librarians and library organizers elicited the perspective of the librarian with respect to library services and recent changes, with a particular focus on library technology services and early changes resulting from the introduction of tablets and Beyond Access training.

Focus group discussions with library users sought to tap into group knowledge about the role of the library in the community, with particular focus on pull factors that bring users to the library, constraints that limit use, and the ways community members use the library, especially technology services.

Individual questionnaires with library users focused on individual respondents' reasons for frequenting the library, preferences for using technology at the library as compared to other locations, experiences engaging with library technology services, and impacts the library-based technology has had on the respondent.

Library observations focused on the demographics of the library visitors during the team's time in the library, how users spent their time in the library, and how they interacted with technology in the library space. Observation was conducted at various points throughout the visit, with a total of at least 1.5 hours of observation at all libraries.

Document review helped contextualize findings and inform the evaluation design and tool development.

Use patterns, demographic trends of library visitors, and the factors that enable and constrain different subpopulations of library visitors to use library technology services – particularly among vulnerable populations – were cross-cutting themes common to all the tools. Based primarily on qualitative methods, the tools were designed to be flexible and accommodate probing by the data collection team based on emergent themes and key points of interest. In some situations, the semi-structured interview and questionnaire guides, both designed for administration in single-respondent settings, were administered to pairs or small groups of respondents. All tools included a verbal informed consent. Additionally, the evaluation team conducted an open group informed consent discussion as part of the introductory meeting at each library prior to the start of data collection. All respondents were aged 16 or older. **Exhibit 4** provides the total number of respondents by tool.

Exhibit 4: Respondents by Tool Type

Tool	Males	Females	Total (number of tool administrations)
Librarian interviews	13	1	14 (8)
Focus groups	35	23	58 (8)
Individual questionnaires	8	1	9 (7)
Observations	n/a	n/a	(6)
Total	**56**	**25**	**81 (29)**

Qualitative data from interviews, observations, and focus group discussions were transcribed and coded in Dedoose, a cross-platform application for qualitative and quantitative analysis. To ensure confidentiality, this report refers to respondents by stakeholder category only (i.e., librarian, library organizer, and library user).

V. Key Findings from Phase 1

The evaluation team has arrived at the following key findings based on phase 1 data:

1. The vision of the modern library is being embraced by library stakeholders.
2. User demand for Beyond Access tablets and Wi-Fi is strong.
3. Access to technology is attracting more users, but not new types of users to the library.
4. Beyond Access capacity building for librarians is showing positive results.
5. Libraries are creating enabling environments that support digital literacy, but changes in user skill level are not currently known.
6. There is a desire for stronger and more stable Internet connection.
7. Potential differences among library types deserve further investigation.

FINDING 1: THE VISION OF THE MODERN LIBRARY IS BEING EMBRACED BY LIBRARY STAKEHOLDERS

Librarians and library organizers are excited by the vision of the modern library as a community center with services that extend beyond traditional print collections and many are striving to achieve this vision.

All libraries visited are striving to expand beyond traditional print collections to offer a wider variety of services. While librarians describe their visions using a variety of terms and the services they want to expand into vary, the evaluation team found these evolving understandings of the role of the library to align broadly with the Beyond Access vision of the modern library as a vibrant community center offering a range of activities that meet users' needs. Librarians seldom stated their goal in terms of becoming a "modern library", but instead discussed the desire to help meet users' diverse needs by providing a technology access point, services

> *Internet [is the most appreciated library service], because today is the ICT age, the information technology age.*
>
> *- Library organizer*
>
> *After the training on modern library services, the library provides eBooks through the tablets, and the user can also read eBooks and PDFs on the tablet. And the user can also get the eBooks with their USB drive.*
>
> *- Librarian*

for job seekers, and expanding print collections to offer more sources of information. These goals were idiosyncratic to each library and defied consistent themes, but echoed Beyond Access themes. Community libraries exhibited an especially wide variety of goals, unified only by their common sensitivity to the needs of their communities.

Libraries are at different stages in this evolution; for some, the introduction of Beyond Access technology appears to be a first step towards modernization, while others are already achieving this broader role. Community libraries in particular offer a broad variety of services, ranging from English and critical thinking lessons to discussion groups driven by user interests. Regardless of the library

type, however, technology services were identified as a critical function at every library visited. Specifically, respondents across all categories frequently mentioned the Beyond Access tablets and Wi-Fi to have quickly become key pillars of libraries' services. When librarians described their vision of the future, they all spoke of a more prominent role for technology, using phrases such as "this is the digital age" and referencing the role of information within the sociopolitical transformation underway in Myanmar.

Two organizers (representing two different community libraries) who have each benefited from Beyond Access and the University of Washington trainings specifically explained their library's work in terms of a vision of modern libraries. Importantly, both emphasized the importance of accessing information via digital platforms. Summing up his vision of libraries as community centers, one of the respondents said, *"I believe in 20 to 30 years, there will be very few book readers, people will be online, and we have to provide these services, we have to show the way. We can't just wait for the users, we have to invest in the technology and invest in the Internet."*

FINDING 2: USER DEMAND FOR BEYOND ACCESS TABLETS AND WI-FI IS STRONG

The things users are doing on the tablets and Internet are extremely diverse and run the complete gamut of games, news, personal education, leisure reading, work, religious applications, and socializing.

As in other countries, the breadth of information available on the Internet and tablet use patterns makes it difficult to give relative importance to one use over another, but among the most mentioned and observed functions were games, accessing news, language learning, accessing electronic books, and searching for a wide variety of information of personal interest, such as health, movies, and music.

Specific applications mentioned include Facebook, YouTube, Viber, Coursera, iTunes University, Skype, library-specific apps, and a plethora of language learning resources. **Exhibit 5** illustrates apps mentioned by users, with weights corresponding to the number of mentions (apps including library names have been redacted for anonymity). Many of these apps are being used for more than just entertainment purposes. For example, many people are accessing their news through Facebook and using YouTube for foreign language learning.

> *When I use the Internet, I use it for reading the news and health information. Whenever I have free time, I come here to use the Internet and to read, I can't do that at home, so only here at the library.*
>
> - Library User

> *For me, I use the Internet here sometimes, especially I am downloading some software that I need. But most of the time I read, I read some blog, some PDFs, or some articles or novels or poems. I use different kinds of English learning apps, specifically Learning English, [cannot remember exact name of the app], ah, I will tell you later. I also use short series produced in Thailand, about crime and short stories, they have English subtitles so that makes it easier to learn English, series like CSI.*
>
> - Library User

In all libraries visited except one, users are more commonly accessing the Wi-Fi via personal mobile phones than on the tablets. This may, however, be due to supply constraints: observation revealed tablets to be in almost constant use during visits. Despite this observation, many users mentioned specific functions they prefer to do on the tablets. For poorer and more rural groups that were not in possession of their own device, the tablet provided the sole means of accessing the Internet at the library and, in some cases, in general.

No libraries were observed to restrict game use on the tablets, but librarian opinions did seem to indicate that games were considered a lesser value use for the technology.

Exhibit 5: Applications Most Mentioned by Users[7]

FINDING 3: ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY IS ATTRACTING MORE USERS, BUT NOT NEW TYPES OF USERS TO THE LIBRARY

Librarians and library organizers reported that Beyond Access technology is driving an increase in the number of library users. However, new users tend to match the existing library user demographic profiles. As such, the program does not yet appear to be drawing significant numbers of users from disadvantaged populations.

Respondents across all categories and libraries perceived an increase in users coming to libraries in recent months; when a time period was specified, it was most commonly during the past half year. When asked for key factors driving this trend, respondents commonly referred to the tablets and Wi-Fi provided by Beyond Access.

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[7] Facebook (22); Google (14); YouTube (9); Viber (8); Wikipedia (7); Coursera (7); Slideshare (3); iTunes University (3); DropBox (2); Twitter (1); Spirit Science (1); Skype (1); Library App (1) PDF Reader (1); Khan Academy (1); Internet Explorer (1); Google Drive (1); Gmail (1); Dhamma Download (1); Conference Call (1); Chrome (1); BookFi (1); BeTalk (1).

More users come here now because of the tablets.

- Library organizer

The age of this library is over 24 years, so over 24 years…the most important change for the visitors is their use of the Internet and Wi-Fi and the tablet use, they appreciate this.

-Librarian

As one librarian noted, *"In the past year, we got the Internet, the tablet, these new tables, and the bookshelves. These new changes influence the library users, especially the tablets, they have the ability to use the tablet. In the former times, they could read the books only. But now they can listen to songs, see pictures, and download knowledge for their education because some users are university students. And users want to visit to the library more and more because these things are attractions for them."*

Additionally, many respondents mentioned expanding library collections as an equally important factor drawing more library users. When clarification on expanding collections was sought, most responses referred to print collections. However, in many cases, both users and librarians also referred to electronic media collections. The introduction of the Public Digital Library Service at government libraries was particularly emphasized at the IPRD library sampled, while many community libraries explained that electronic collections have been expanded through the ability to download electronic or PDF books.

Interviews with librarians, users, and user focus groups reveal that the perceived increase in users is due to both more frequent visits from the existing users, as well as new users. Observation and librarian interviews show that increased visits from youth are driving these trends, in particular increased visitation from young men and boys. Every male asked pointed to the technology as the key factor bringing him to the library, while females were more divided in pointing to print collections, as well as the technology.

One of the applications for the tablet is eBooks…by using these tablets, they don't need to borrow the books, they can find them on the tablets, and then also sometimes download them on their phone to read at home and then they don't need to borrow them.

- Librarian

Based on library observation, new users tend to match the existing demographic profile of library users; that is, the libraries are attracting more users of the same background rather than expanding into new subpopulations. The profile of the typical library user is primarily young (particularly teens and twenties), middle class, educated (or currently a student), and tilts towards male users. Beyond Access Myanmar is working in the central regions where the ethnic makeup is primarily ethnic Burmese, which is also reflected in the makeup of the current library users. Sampled libraries do not

yet appear to be drawing increased numbers of disadvantaged populations, such as elderly people, persons with disabilities, and socioeconomically more disadvantaged people of all ages.[8]

This finding has one notable exception, which was found in an urban community library where library organizers reported an increase in socioeconomically disadvantaged children coming to the library. Library observation confirmed the presence of this group. Library organizers were careful to say that there have been other changes besides the Beyond Access technology in the library that could explain this increase, but emphasized that the primary service these children use is the tablets, which is another perception confirmed by observation. The increase in library use by this group has carried some tension – the organizers explained that the children are not very well-behaved. When observed, the children were running around and relatively noisier than other patrons. Children were primarily observed to be playing games and having a very short attention span – they were quickly flipping between activities. The organizers worry that this may be alienating other users and they wish they could have a space for those who crave a quiet library environment.

For girls and women, the extent of use seems to vary greatly by library. Two of the libraries seem to be doing a good job of getting more of this demographic to visit. However, in general, it seems that the number of women and girls is notably lower than of men and boys. Females are also less likely to use the technology when they come to the library and, in at least one library, this subpopulation is almost entirely absent.

> **Q: Would you ever be interested in an activity that is mostly about technology?**
>
> *A: Social pages for girls because we are not allowed to go out as much as boys. These pages don't exist so we'd like them to be created. Also, teenage news, fashion, funnies - we don't know as much as the boys because we're not allowed to go out or hang out as often.*
>
> - Two female library users (simultaneously) during an interview

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[8] It is important to note that the *type* of users frequenting the library was based on library observation and triangulated with the perspective of librarians and library organizers, while the overall *number* of users frequenting the library was based on the perspective of librarians, library organizers, and in some cases regular library visitors. Neither the type nor the number of users could be confirmed with visitation logs.

FINDING 4: BEYOND ACCESS CAPACITY BUILDING FOR LIBRARIANS IS SHOWING POSITIVE RESULTS

Librarians cited improved technological skills as a key outcome of Beyond Access trainings. In addition, peer learning that is facilitated by Beyond Access supports librarians to make further changes and is a strong motivator for librarians.

Librarians consistently pointed to improvements in their technological skills – i.e., digital literacy – as a key takeaway of the Beyond Access trainings. The ability to use the tablets – specifically the ability to navigate tablet settings and broadcast Wi-Fi networks – was mentioned by many librarians when asked what they found important from the training. Librarians pointed out that these skills increased their confidence in assisting users and made them feel more comfortable with their library providing this service. Also mentioned were skills gained in specific applications covered in Beyond Access trainings, including Google Drive, Skype, conference calling, Dropbox, and other communication- and management-oriented programs.

Before I got the trainings, especially from Beyond Access, I had less access in helping the users and now I'm getting more and more comfortable providing users help. In general, I get enough confidence to provide [support]. I am currently taking a basic computer training course. Before I took the computer and tablet training, I had limited confidence in my ability, but now I'm getting more and more confidence in how to use these applications and what the specific purpose for these applications is.

- Librarian

In addition to providing training, one of the most important roles Beyond Access seems to fulfill in Myanmar is in convening actors and conversations about technology and libraries. In particular, during interviews with librarians the MBAPF Facebook group emerged as a key third pillar of the program that is facilitating peer learning between librarians, standing alongside the technology and training components in terms of the role librarians feel it plays in supporting them to make changes. Several librarians were able to point to concrete ideas they had developed through this channel and others referred to the sense of connection the group facilitates as encouraging to them. The Facebook group has also facilitated connections that are leading to new outreach programs independent of Beyond Access, as is the case with two community libraries that are now partnering to conduct a civic education training program.

Role of MBAPF Facebook Group in Peer Learning

I can know [see] what other participating libraries are doing through the MBAPF Facebook group, and I can learn experience from other libraries, and I can also upload these activities of our library onto that page.

- Librarian

I can learn other things from other libraries through this [Facebook] group. For example, I learned the idea for these tablet stands from Intensity Library in Mandalay, when they posted photos of that, so that's why I also did like that.

- Librarian

While librarians did not explicitly connect the evolving library visions captured in <u>Finding 1</u>: The vision of the modern library is being embraced by library stakeholders to Beyond Access librarian capacity

building initiatives, there is a clear overlap between Beyond Access' efforts and the goals for the future that librarians articulate. In phase 1, only one librarian mentioned understanding "aspects of a modern library" as a training outcome. More broadly, only one other librarian mentioned *any* training outcome other than knowledge of the tablets and specific applications as the key training takeaway (this librarian referred to "library operations"). Of these two librarians, neither was able to point to concrete changes they had made in the library as a result of what they learned in the training. It will be interesting to see if during phase 2 in 2016, librarians are better able to articulate the connection between Beyond Access trainings and broader changes aligned to visions of modern libraries as an ongoing effort.

Overall, librarians were highly appreciative of the Beyond Access capacity building and expressed a strong desire for more skills building, both in the form of training and peer learning. This desire for continued growth was reflected in a broad openness to new ideas and advice. For example, the evaluation team was frequently asked to give recommendations to the libraries for how they could improve their services and operations, in some cases even before data collection at the library began.

FINDING 5: LIBRARIES ARE CREATING ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS THAT SUPPORT DIGITAL LITERACY, BUT CHANGES IN USER SKILL LEVEL ARE NOT CURRENTLY KNOWN

Library users clearly articulated an appreciation for this enabling environment and provided numerous reasons why the library is a good place to access the Internet. Some libraries are going further by also offering guided learning opportunities for users to build their digital literacy. However, most users struggled to articulate concrete technology skills they have acquired.

Reflecting the strong demand for and use of Beyond Access technology services described in Finding 2: User demand for Beyond Access tablets and Wi-Fi is strong, many users expressed an appreciation for the ability to use the library as an Internet access point. As discussed above in Finding 2: User demand for Beyond Access tablets and Wi-Fi is strong, most library visitors who use the library Wi-Fi also access the Internet outside the library using mobile data. Tea shops and school and university libraries were other common access points mentioned, although neither is truly public because tea shops in Myanmar typically require Internet users to purchase something and school libraries are restricted to students and faculty.

Nonetheless, even those library users with other Internet access points appreciated the access provided by the library, with many stating a preference for accessing the Internet at the library over other options. One reason driving this preference is the continued high price of mobile data, which makes it expensive even for those with middle-class incomes. Many library users with mobile data indicated that using data at their desired levels would be unaffordable. Another commonly cited reason was the conducive environment for reading provided by libraries, as well as the ability to

cross-reference information with books and seek librarians' assistance in finding additional information.

In addition to providing a user-friendly environment in which to improve digital literacy skills, each library sampled during phase 1 proactively promotes technology skill development through targeted activities or interactions, both formal and informal. For example, one community library is conducting user-facilitated technology discussion sessions, while in an IPRD library the librarian was observed to mentor children in tablet use for 10- to 15-minute intervals periodically throughout the day. In the four libraries where this additional instruction involved structured activities, they were conducted by a community member, volunteer, or another library organizer, and not the head librarian. This shows the librarians to have been effective at delegating responsibility in order to involve local talent in supporting technology at the library.

Ultimately, however, such directed instruction was minimal. At present, most users appear to be building digital literacy through self-directed experiential learning. Trial and error and discussion between users constitute the primary channel for this experiential learning.

While users strongly appreciated this enabling environment and particularly appreciated the ability to use the tablets and the Internet at the library, most users interviewed struggled to articulate concrete skills they developed by using the technology. When asked about skill development or other learning, most users reverted to describing the *activities* for which they are using the tablets and the Internet (see Finding 2: User demand for Beyond Access tablets and Wi-Fi is strong for more detail). Some respondents pointed to knowledge of how to use the tablet itself as an important skill users are gaining, but could not point to other tangible learning. Probing and clarification did not yield substantial additional insights into the evolution of users' digital literacy. Instead, responses often returned to what users were *doing* on the tablets and the Internet. Consequently, the extent to which Beyond Access Myanmar has influenced users' digital literacy to date is not known. This unknown is in part the result of the limitation that phase 1 did not measure users' digital literacy directly, but instead relied on respondents' self-perceptions of learning; this limitation is discussed further in the recommendations section below.

> **Reasons Users Prefer Accessing Internet at Library**
>
> *The library is quiet, so it's a convenient place to study what I want on the Internet. At tea shops and the university, I more use Facebook.*
>
> - Library User
>
> *Here [at the library] I mainly use the Internet for downloading online courses because if I download online courses with my own mobile data, it would cost me a lot of money. So, I also use other specific websites and links in here, especially for education and general knowledge purposes.*
>
> - Library User
>
> *There are pros and cons for using the Internet at the library. Pros are there are a lot of people who have more knowledge, so pro is there are people who can help. A disadvantage is there are a lot of people who use the Internet here at the library, so the traffic, the connection is relatively slower here sometimes than outside.*
>
> - Library User

From the tablet, it mostly goes to the kids, and it's difficult to say how we are going to measure [improvement]. If we're going to talk about knowledge of tablets, familiarity with the device, it's a huge benefit for them, but from an educational perspective, there's not much benefit to them.

- Library Organizer

If there is a basic computer training they will come here because they want to learn the basic computer – what it is. Without any basic trainings, they hesitate to come because they don't know how to use the Internet, even though there is Internet here. Although the librarian and volunteers assist people always, if it were more structured and more frequent, more people would come.

- Library User

FINDING 6: THERE IS A DESIRE FOR STRONGER AND MORE STABLE INTERNET CONNECTION

All respondent categories desire a stronger and more stable Internet connection and many desire additional tablets.

Across all library types and locations, the most common wishes of all respondent categories were for more tablets and stronger, more stable Internet connection. In many libraries, tablets were observed to be in almost constant use. Meanwhile, the Internet connection broadcast from the tablet is only sufficient to serve 10 users simultaneously, a number many libraries could easily exceed without the limit. Some libraries are also exhausting their monthly use limits and worry that, once provided with the routers that allow more than 10 users to access the Internet simultaneously, they will exhaust their data limit even faster. Finally, at every library respondents mentioned that the Internet speed decreases quickly with the number of users and some worried that speeds were already becoming too slow to be usable, especially for more intensive applications such as distance learning platforms.

Illustrative examples of respondent wishes include:
- *"If I had to wish, the first would be to get more tablets and a better Internet connection."* Librarian
- *"Now, the Ooredoo, they give 60GB. But sometimes, during 1 month, we use all of that up. So first would be for more GBs. Another wish would be to get a Wi-Fi router. And then last, at present we only have the five tablets, and that's not sufficient for the users, so more."* Librarian
- *"The Internet connection, I'd like it to be stronger."* Library user

FINDING 7: POTENTIAL DIFFERENCES AMONG LIBRARY TYPES DESERVE FURTHER INVESTIGATION

Although the sample size is not sufficient to disaggregate findings among library type or setting, some potential patterns were observed that may warrant additional investigation by the Beyond Access Myanmar team to determine if they are born out more broadly.

Reflective of their organizational nature, for example, community libraries tended to be less formally organized than the IPRD library, a trend that was reflected in library records, which were more thorough at the IPRD library. At the same time, community libraries all hosted a much broader range of activities and seemed highly responsive to community needs, while the IPRD seems inherently more cautious in expanding into new services. Both potential patterns make sense given the differences between these library types, but this study was too small to generalize.

A larger potential difference is the unique format of monastic libraries, which are embedded in monasteries that also include schools. The data collection team's experience at the one monastic library visited indicated clearly a different library model that is substantially more structured than other libraries and serves a narrower demographic of users. The difference in this model appeared more distinct than the differences between government and community libraries. By design, the monastic library was less concerned with community outreach and more focused on serving the specific educational needs of the associated school, particularly the curriculum-based learning needs of students and informational needs of teachers.

Exhibit 6: Potential Library Differences to be Explored

Community Libraries	• Less formal • Broader range of activities • Highly responsive to community needs
IPRD Libraries	• Well-organized • Maintain thorough records
Monastic Libraries	• Highly structured • Community outreach reflects monastery services (school and clinic functions) • Focused on students and teachers at embedded schools

VI. Conclusions and Recommendations

The qualitative evaluation design is well-suited to understanding the role of Beyond Access given the complexities of a rapidly changing ICT landscape, many overlapping partners working in the sector, and the flexible program model. This is a dynamic context in which it is impossible to know what would be happening in the absence of Beyond Access. Thus, instead of attempting to determine attribution, this evaluation builds broader understanding of how these different initiatives interact to produce change.

Beyond Access is clearly contributing to the modernization of public libraries in Myanmar in important ways. The program is a vital part of the large web of actors and organizations that are helping make the vision of modern libraries a reality. IREX, in its partnership capacity, serves as a convener by provoking conversations on the role of libraries in today's society, articulating visions for the purpose of technology in libraries, and connecting Myanmar actors to the global community of actors working in the field. This can be reasonably expected to benefit many libraries and citizens beyond just the 55 program libraries where IREX is contributing more directly by building capacity. MBAPF is a central actor, both in its role as the Beyond Access implementing partner and in its broader work. MBAPF is connecting libraries to resources and helping them transform their services, while also continuing to support expansion of traditional services, such as print materials.

More broadly, the opening of the mobile and Internet sectors is rapidly expanding access to information across the country. In intervention libraries, Ooredoo has provided an additional access channel that technology users strongly appreciate and in many cases prefer to other channels. The University of Washington, meanwhile, is helping build a deep understanding of digital literacy among 25 Myanmar participants in its Information Strategies for Societies in Transition fellows program, some of whom are also key figures in Beyond Access libraries.

Based on the phase 1 findings, the data collection experience, and the evaluation team's understanding of what Beyond Access hopes to accomplish over the next year, the team offers the following programmatic considerations and recommendations for phase 2.

PROGRAMMATIC CONSIDERATIONS

- **Reframing monitoring and evaluation expectations based on library type** - The differences between government, monastic, and other community libraries naturally affect library priorities and activities, which in turn may affect libraries' needs, as well as how they react to different aspects of the Beyond Access Myanmar program. In balancing these differences with the need for standard indicators and limited ability to mentor libraries individually, it may be useful to consider how library type will affect the project, both in terms of library support needs and expected outcomes. For example, community libraries may perform substantially better in terms of community outreach because they are starting from a perspective that is already more focused on the diverse needs of the population they serve. Government libraries, on the other hand, may have more complete records that are better able to capture changes in user trends over the course of the intervention. If these differences in expected outcomes are large, Beyond Access may want to reframe monitoring and evaluation targets accordingly. Related to this, the technology skill-building activities discussed in Finding 5: Libraries are creating enabling environments that support digital literacy, but changes in user skill level are not currently known that are more on the informal side of the learning spectrum may not be captured by current monitoring indicators.

- **Targeting vulnerable communities** - Considering the current program targets, one aspect of Beyond Access Myanmar that may need strengthening is targeting vulnerable communities. Girls, persons with disabilities, and socioeconomically disadvantaged populations are not yet substantially increasing their visitation to the libraries sampled during phase 1. Because differences in priorities between libraries and the project team have the potential to affect this program goal but were not examined in phase 1, the project may consider further investigating whether targeting vulnerable communities is important to librarians.

- **Reinforcing learning messages** - It may be beneficial to reemphasize some of the training messages, including community outreach channels and targeting new users, which were less retained following the first two trainings. The Beyond Access network and MBAPF Facebook group in particular provide promising options to promote these continued learning needs. Building on these early successes holds great potential. For example, with strategic guidance from technical experts, the network of librarians could be used to more fully harness the potential of peer learning. The MBAPF Facebook group, meanwhile, provides a low-cost channel for reinforcing training messages. "Learning bites" may be appropriate for this platform and also encourage sustained engagement between trainings. The Facebook group could also serve as a gateway to connect libraries in Myanmar with global communities of practice.

- **Advocate for continuing technological improvements** - Beyond Access Myanmar should, to the extent possible, continue advocating for technological improvements that respond to needs identified by librarians. At present, librarians desire stronger, more stable Internet connections with increased monthly data limits, as well as more devices for users. Beyond Access advocacy could take a variety of forms and, as the project evolves, may increasingly focus on equipping librarians with the skills to conduct this advocacy for themselves. Another potential way that Beyond Access could facilitate this advocacy is by determining how many libraries are currently exhausting their data limit before the month ends.

DATA COLLECTION RECOMMENDATIONS AND DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Lessons learned from phase 1 that can be applied to phase 2 - Based on the experience during phase 1 data collection, the evaluation team suggests the following modifications for phase 2:

- **Develop a concrete definition of digital literacy and consider more direct methods to collect data on this indicator** - This evaluation did not measure users' digital literacy directly; it relied instead on the self-reported perceptions of library users. The evaluation may be strengthened by the inclusion of a data collection tool that measures digital literacy directly. During phase 1, this limitation was compounded by the fact that digital literacy was a nebulous concept. Clarifying the understanding of digital literacy is a necessary precursor for any efforts to measure this skill directly during phase 2.

- **Adjust tools for different types of library environments** - Different library environments with varying degrees of structure may warrant a more individualized approach to collecting qualitative data. The library observation tool and considerations for visiting monastic libraries in school environments would, in particular, benefit from further revisions.

Additional avenues of analysis and design considerations to explore - The following additional evaluation design options may be suitable based on the Beyond Access Myanmar context and project stakeholder evaluation goals:

- Conducting an organizational or social network analysis could further explore the dynamics of the MBAPF Facebook group or Beyond Access library network, holding potential to capture the successes of Beyond Access as a convener and knowledge transfer agent.
- Visiting non-intervention libraries could provide a qualitative counterfactual that builds evidence for the unique contributions of Beyond Access by helping provide a better understanding of what has happened in libraries outside the program. This may be particularly useful given Myanmar's dynamic ICT and information context.
- The exact timing of phase 2 and library sampling method are key determinations that will affect the summative evaluation. Phase 2 could return to the same phase 1 libraries in order to provide a longitudinal perspective or, alternately, could visit different libraries in order to broaden the total number of libraries sampled. Both approaches have advantages.
- Project monitoring data will be an important source of information for the summative evaluation, providing quantitative data, as well as helping focus data collection for phase 2. The evaluation team reviewed a draft set of the Beyond Access Myanmar monitoring indicators to determine overlap with key evaluation questions in mid-September 2015. The following indicators are of particular interest for the summative evaluation:
  - 1.1: Number of library users
  - 1.2: Number of computer users
  - 2.2: Number of people who use the library for development-related purposes.

As the monitoring indicators are finalized, the evaluation team will continue to engage with IREX and MBAPF to plan for integration of the monitoring plan and the evaluation design. More broadly, the ultimate determination on all design options will be made in consultation with the Beyond Access project team.

Annex I: Data Collection Tools

FOCUS GROUP GUIDE
BEYOND ACESS MYANMAR: EVALUATION PHASE 1 (2015)

Date (Day-Month-Year):
Venue name:
Facilitators:
Start time:
End time:

Participants

Note for each, respondent number, sex, age, and educational level, *e.g.,:*
> R1: Male,
> R2: Female

Introduction and Consent

INTRODUCTION: Thank you very much for setting aside time to talk with us today. [introduce interviewers, including the interpreter]

INTRODUCE PROJECT: We are visiting today as part of the Beyond Access libraries program in Myanmar, which is implemented by the Myanmar Book Aid and Preservation Foundation in collaboration with the Information and Public Relations Department.

INTRODUCE EVALUATION: Our visit today is part of a broader evaluation of the Beyond Access program, which seeks to understand how Beyond Access activities are supporting improved digital literacy in the communities where it works. Your feedback and reflections during this focus group will help us learn about how the project is functioning, which will in turn help Beyond Access to strengthen this program and also provide lessons for future initiatives like this one. This is one of six libraries sampled in four states of Myanmar for this phase of the evaluation. This is not an evaluation of your library, its performance, or any of the partners collaborating in the Beyond Access initiative, and we will not be reporting on this library to anyone – instead, the goal is to help us learn about the Beyond Access program *in general*. I also want to tell you that we are not directly involved in any funding decisions for Beyond Access; we are here simply to gather information about factors that support and impede the program.

EXPLAIN CONFIDENTIALITY: Before we begin, we want to let you know that no information or examples we discuss during this focus group will be attributed to you or any other specific person, and we will not disclose the libraries sampled as part of this evaluation. At the end of the effort, we will write a report that makes recommendations for Beyond Access stakeholders so that they can continue to make this program as effective as possible. All quotes used in this report will be attributed to a general stakeholder group (e.g., librarians, library users, community members, etc.),

not to an individual. You are free not to respond to any of our questions or to stop the interview at any time. If you don't want to participate in this focus group, there will be no negative consequences for you or this library.

CONFIRM INTERVIEW TIMEFRAME: The focus group will take about [insert time], but sometimes takes longer. If we go over an hour, we'll stop to ask if you want to continue.

INFORMED CONSENT and PERMISSION TO RECORD: Do you have any questions about what we have explained so far?

Note any questions:

If you have no further questions, do you consent to proceed with this interview?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No (politely address concerns or ask non-consenting individuals to leave)

If you don't mind, we would like to type notes during our conversation to have record for our analysis. Is this okay with you?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No (take no notes; depending on respondent, may discontinue interview)

Finally, in order to improve the quality of our notes, we would like to audio-record this conversation. This recording will be used to check the accuracy of written notes and will be subsequently destroyed. Do we have your permission to audio-record?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No (do not record)

We would also like to take pictures during our visit today for the final publication; you and any other visitors will not be identified in any photos. Is that alright?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No (Take no pictures)

ANY QUESTIONS? Before we begin, do you have any questions about this interview or evaluation?

Users

How do you use the library? (Let respondents volunteer different uses, surveying the group to determine how many other participants use the library for the same purpose. If respondents don't volunteer technology, ask: How many of you come to the library to use the technology and Internet connectivity that is available?)

How long have you been frequenting the library? (For long-term users, probe for how their library use has changed over time.)

What improvements have you seen in the library (e.g., signs, services, chairs, tables, bathrooms, reading areas) in the last 6 months?

Tell a story of a time when public access to technology and/or Internet services in the library made a positive difference in your life. What happened? Why was the experience important?

How do librarians support the use of technology and Internet at the library?

What more could libraries do to encourage technology use and skill development?

Other than at the library, where else can you access the Internet? At what cost?

What library services are the most important to you?

What else do you think we should understand about the role of the library in your community or your use of the library?

Is there anything else you think we should know?

Thank participants for their time.

Non-users

What are the words that come to mind when you think of the community library?

How would you describe the typical library user?

How many of you are aware that the library offers access to technology and Internet connectivity? (If users weren't aware of this service, probe for what the library could do to publicize this better.)

Are these technology services important to you? Why or why not? (If important, probe for why respondents haven't been using the library.)

What services or offerings could the library provide to encourage technology use and skill development?

What external factors make it difficult for you to use library services? (e.g., time, distance, etc.)

Other than at the library, where else can you access the Internet? At what cost?

Thank participants for their time.

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR LIBRARIANS
BEYOND ACCESS MYANMAR: EVALUATION PHASE 1 (2015)

Date (Day-Month-Year):
Venue name:
Interviewers:
Interview start time:
Interview end time:

Informed Consent

INTRODUCTION: Thank you very much for setting aside time to talk with us today. [introduce interviewers, including the interpreter]

INTRODUCE PROJECT: We are visiting today as part of the Beyond Access libraries program in Myanmar, which is implemented by the Myanmar Book Aid and Preservation Foundation in collaboration with the Information and Public Relations Department.

INTRODUCE EVALUATION: Our visit today is part of a broader evaluation of the Beyond Access program, which seeks to understand how Beyond Access activities are supporting improved digital literacy in the communities where it works. Your feedback and reflections during this interview will help us learn about how the project is functioning, which will in turn help Beyond Access to strengthen this program and also provide lessons for future initiatives like this one. This is one of six libraries sampled in four states of Myanmar for this phase of the evaluation. This is not an evaluation of your library, your performance, or any of the partners collaborating in the Beyond Access initiative, and we will not be reporting on this library to anyone – instead, the goal is to help us learn about the Beyond Access program in general. I also want to tell you that we are not directly involved in any funding decisions for Beyond Access; we are here simply to gather information about factors that support and impede the program.

EXPLAIN CONFIDENTIALITY: Before we begin, we want to let you know that no information or examples we discuss during this interview will be attributed to you or any other specific person, and we will not disclose the libraries sampled as part of this evaluation. At the end of the effort, we will write a report that makes recommendations for Beyond Access stakeholders so that they can continue to make this program as effective as possible. All quotes used in this report will be attributed to a general stakeholder group (e.g., librarians, library users, community members, etc.), not to an individual. You are free not to respond to any of our questions or to stop the interview at any time. If you don't want to participate in this interview, there will be no negative consequences for you or this library.

CONFIRM INTERVIEW TIMEFRAME: The interview will take about [insert time], but sometimes takes longer. If we go over an hour, we'll stop to ask if you want to continue.

INFORMED CONSENT and PERMISSION TO RECORD: Do you have any questions about what we have explained so far?

Note any questions:

If you have no further questions, do you consent to proceed with this interview?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No (discontinue interview)

If you don't mind, we would like to type notes during our conversation to have record of what you say. Is this okay with you?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No (take no notes; depending on respondent, may discontinue interview)

Finally, in order to improve the quality of our notes, we would like to audio-record this conversation. This recording will be used to check the accuracy of written notes and will be subsequently destroyed. Do we have your permission to audio-record?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No (do not record)

We would also like to take pictures during our visit today for the final publication; you and any other visitors will not be identified in any photos. Is that alright?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No (Take no pictures)

ANY QUESTIONS? Before we begin, do you have any questions about this interview or evaluation?

General Information

1. Respondent Name:
2. Respondent Title:
3. Gender:
4. Age (in years):
5. Level of education: (none, primary, secondary, technical, university, master's degree or higher, other, don't know)
6. How long have you been working as a librarian (in years)?
7. How long have you been in this library (in years)?
8. How many hours a week do you work at the library?
9. Do you get paid for your work at the library? (yes/no) If yes:

a. Who pays this salary?

b. What is your approximate monthly salary (in Kyat)?

If no: How do you earn your income?

Tell us a bit about your roles and responsibilities.

What library services do you think are the most appreciated by users and why? (Prompt: access to materials that can be borrowed, community gathering space, etc.; probe for how this appreciation has changed over time and how it varies between groups.)

What are some of the factors that influence patrons' ability to visit the library? (Time, access, proximity, interest; probe for both enablers and constraints.)

Do patrons usually come by themselves or with others? If they usually come with others, whom do they come with?

What types of support do library users most frequently ask for from you? (Probe: How have those types of support changed in recent times? How capable do you feel providing users with the types of support they commonly request?)

Library Services:

Library Services	Do you have this service?	Do you want your library to have this service?	For services that you have, on a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the best rating, how satisfied are you with the following library services?
Leisure books to read/borrow			
Newspapers/magazines to read			
CDs/DVDs to borrow			
A space to meet with others			
Services to job seekers (e.g., advice on how to write CVs, job search information)			
Information for entrepreneurs/businesses			
Access to government information (services, forms, etc.)			
Technology and Internet skills training			
Children's materials			
Education materials (textbooks)			

Photocopiers/printers			
Free access to tablets			
Free access to the Internet			

What improvements have you seen in the library in the last 6 months (e.g., additional signs, changes in furniture, bathrooms, reading areas)? How have these improvements influenced the amount of time users spend at the library? (Probe for who made the improvements and how they came about.)

Tablet and User Focus

When did you first receive tablets for your library?

When did they first get connected to the Internet?

How many of your library's tablets are available to the public?

Are they currently all connected to the Internet?

How would you characterize the quality of the Internet service at your library? To what extent does it meet patron's needs?

How would you rate your level of satisfaction with the state and availability of tablets in your venue?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

If dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, please explain.

In the last year has your library organized any special events or trainings promoting public access to Internet services? If yes, probe for focus of event, including any particular populations targeted (e.g., women, children aged 14 and younger, youth aged 15 to 18, unemployed, disabled, retired, or rural populations).

How has the community benefited by having access to the tablets/Internet at your library?

What have been some of the challenges associated with having the tablets/Internet?

Which segments of the community seem to be the most interested in using the public access tablets? Why do you think that may be? (Probe: to what extent are these segments coming with preexisting skills to accomplish their aim – i.e., they are coming for access – versus to what extent these segments need support to build their skills – i.e., they are coming for access and assistance?)

Tell a story of a time when public access to Internet services made a difference in a library user's life. What happened? How did you know it was important?

What makes the library a desirable place to access technology and Internet services?

Librarian Focus

Have you received any librarian skills training during the past 12 months?

- If so, what training did you receive and when?
- If they don't mention the ICT skills training from Beyond Access, ask if they have participated in that training.
  - If yes, where you satisfied?
    - If no, what needs to be improved?
  - If yes, what were the most important takeaways from the training?

If you had three wishes to improve library services to meet community needs, what would they be?

Interviewer Notes

Include any comments, impressions or special information about the person or organization interviewed or interview process.

1. What were the most important or memorable statements the respondent made during the interview? OR What were the most salient points that came out of this interview?

2. What was the most compelling story the respondent shared?

3. Overall, what do you think was the most important to the respondent?

4. What did you learn that should be further explored?

5. What did you already know that this interview confirmed?

LIBRARY OBSERVATION PROTOCOL
BEYOND ACESS MYANMAR: EVALUATION PHASE 1 (2015)

Date (Day-Month-Year):
Venue name:
Observers:

At the beginning of the visit (once per library visit)

How would you describe the library space? What potential physical access barriers might exist (e.g., for persons with disabilities, children, etc.)? What makes the space appealing and comfortable, and what aspects are less appealing and comfortable? (Note: lighting, number of rooms, room size(s), temperature, available seating and formation, etc.)

When you first arrive, ask the librarians to show you where the tablets are and explain what the process is for accessing a tablet. Where are the materials kept and do they seem accessible? Do they appear to be used?

If consent is provided, observers should take photos that could be useful during analysis. These photos could include the library space in general, depict users interacting with library features, and/or key pieces of public information/records that may be useful later. The observers should obtain permission for all photos, including the consent of all individuals photographed.

Periodically throughout the day

Sit in a part of the library and observe behavior for a period of time. Take notes on what you observe. Try to do this at a few different points in the day for 10- to 15-minute intervals.

Observation number: 1
Observation start time:
Observation end time:
Duration:

Describe the flow of traffic and number of users:

Describe the library users – Men? Women? Children? Age ranges? Duration of stay?

How, why, and at what points do users engage with the librarian? (At the beginning? Throughout their visit? When they leave?)

Do users interact with people other than the librarian? With whom and how?

How many of those who come in are using the tablets? (Note by key subpopulations, e.g., men, women, children, people with disabilities, etc.) Other observations? Do users who access the tablets

seem to be comfortable using the technology or did they ask for support/instruction? If possible to observe without intrusion, what are tablets being used for?

What else do users do in the library? (Note by key subpopulations.) Distinguish between other activities for those who use tablets versus activities for those who do not use tablets. Are there any accompanying guests who do not use any services?

What is the general attitude of users?

Do different populations use the same spaces or are people organized in certain ways (e.g., men's versus women's areas, children's areas, etc.)?

Periodically throughout the day

Sit in a part of the library and observe behavior for a period of time. Take notes on what you observe. Try to do this at a few different points in the day for 10- to 15-minute intervals.

Observation number: 2
Observation start time:
Observation end time:
Duration:

Describe the flow of traffic and number of users:

Describe the library users – Men? Women? Children? Age ranges? Duration of stay?

How, why, and at what points do users engage with the librarian? (At the beginning? Throughout their visit? When they leave?)

Do users interact with people other than the librarian? With whom and how?

How many of those who come in are using the tablets? (Note by key subpopulations, e.g., men, women, children, people with disabilities, etc.) Other observations? Do users who access the tablets seem to be comfortable using the technology or did they ask for support/instruction? If possible to observe without intrusion, what are tablets being used for?

What else do users do in the library? (Note by key subpopulations.) Distinguish between other activities for those who use tablets versus activities for those who do not use tablets. Are there any accompanying guests who do not use any services?

What is the general attitude of users?

Do different populations use the same spaces or are people organized in certain ways (e.g., men's versus women's areas, children's areas, etc.)?

After final observation

What works well about the setting?

How could the setting be improved?

LIBRARY USER QUESTIONNAIRE
BEYOND ACESS MYANMAR: EVALUATION PHASE 1 (2015)

Date (Day-Month-Year):
Venue name and interview number:
Interviewers:
Interview start time:
Interview end time:

Instructions

Approach library users and ask them to participate in a brief interview. Try to do this with a variety of users at different points in the day. For the open-ended portions of the questionnaire, depending on the respondent, their answers, and the extent of probing, some questions may be redundant. Data collectors should use their best judgment to avoid the interview becoming repetitive and respect the respondent's time. The interview should be completed in about 15 minutes (plus introductions) and should not exceed 20 minutes.

Informed Consent

INTRODUCTION: Hello, I wonder if you might have a few minutes to speak with me today regarding your experiences as a library user at this location. [introduce interviewers, including the interpreter]

INTRODUCE PROJECT: This library is part of an initiative that is working with libraries throughout Myanmar to provide improved services to communities. We are here to get a better understanding of how people in your community use the library.

EXPLAIN CONFIDENTIALITY: Before we begin, we want to let you know that no information or examples we discuss during this interview will be attributed to you or any other specific person. You are free not to respond to any of our questions or to stop the interview at any time. If you don't want to participate in this interview, there will be no negative consequences for you or this library.

CONFIRM INTERVIEW TIMEFRAME: The interview will take about 15 to 20 minutes.

INFORMED CONSENT: Do you have any questions about what we have explained so far? (Note any questions)

If you have no further questions, do you consent to proceed with this interview?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No (discontinue interview)

PERMISSION TO RECORD:

If you don't mind, we would like to type notes during our conversation to have record of what you say. Is this okay with you?

☐ Yes
☐ No (take no notes; depending on respondent, may discontinue interview)

Finally, in order to improve the quality of our notes, we would like to audio-record this conversation. This recording will be used to check the accuracy of written notes and will be subsequently destroyed. Do we have your permission to audio-record?

☐ Yes
☐ No (do not record)

We would also like to take pictures during our visit today for the final publication; you and any other visitors will not be identified in any photos. Is that alright?

☐ Yes
☐ No (Take no pictures)

ANY QUESTIONS? Before we begin, do you have any questions about this interview or evaluation?

Demographic Information

1. Gender:
2. Age (in years):
3. Marital Status:
4. Number of Children:
5. Level of education: (none, primary, secondary, technical, university, master's degree or higher, other, don't know)
6. What is your employment status? (employed/self-employed, unemployed but looking for work, student, retired, unable to work due to illness, responsible for looking after the home, prefer not to say)
7. What is your profession?
8. What is your race/ethnicity?

General Use

1. How often do you visit the library?
2. What brings you to the library? What prompts you to visit?
3. What are some of the factors that influence your ability to visit the library? (time, access, proximity, interest)

4. What improvements have you seen in the library (e.g., signs, services, chairs, tables, bathrooms, reading areas) in the last 6 months? How have these improvements influenced the amount of time you spend at the library?

5. How often have you used the following services at the library in the last 12 months? Why have you used them or why not? (Probe for lack of access, lack of ability, lack of time, etc.)
   a. Free access to tablets
   b. Free access to Internet
   c. Technology and Internet skills training

6. Other than at the library, where else can you access the Internet? At what cost?

Questions about using tablets and the Internet at the library, if they use the tablets

1. How often do you use the tablets at the library?

2. What do you use the tablets at the library for? (Probe: Are these things you previously knew how to do? In not, who has helped the individual learn? To what extent have they relied on support by librarians to accomplish these aims? Use categories include: creating online content, reading the news, using email, communicating with family and friends, communicating for business purposes, searching for information, education, job search or conducting business, and government services.)

3. What have you appreciated the most about having the tablets/Internet access at your library?

4. What have been some of the challenges associated with using the tablets/Internet?

5. What is one thing you have learned while using the tablets at this library?

6. Tell a story of a time when public access to technology and/or Internet services at the library made a positive difference in your life. What happened? Why was the experience important?

Conclusion

1. If you had three wishes to improve library services to meet your needs, what would they be?
2. Do you have any questions for me?

INTERVIEWER NOTES

Include any comments, impressions, or special information about the person or organization interviewed or interview process.

1. What were the most important or memorable statements the respondent made during the interview? OR What were the most salient points that came out of this interview?

2. What was the most compelling story the respondent shared?

3. Overall, what do you think was the most important to the respondent?

4. What did you learn that should be further explored?

5. What did you already know that this interview confirmed?