



Responding institution:
National Archives of Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe responded to the IFLA questionnaire twice previously, in 2001 and 2003. There are an estimated 28 public libraries in Zimbabwe. The source of this number is given as municipal annual reports. There are 12 university libraries and 61 government-funded research libraries. The source of these numbers is given as the National Library and Documentation Services. (Where the number of school libraries is requested in the questionnaire, the respondent indicated "N/A".)

Internet penetration is fairly low in Zimbabwe, with 8.1% of the population being Internet users. Levels of access in the country's libraries are correspondingly low: less than 20% of all public libraries and school libraries offer Internet access to their users. Of the university libraries and government-funded libraries, only 21-40% offer Internet access.

In libraries where Internet access is provided, it is free of charge. The state has, in some cases, made extra funding available to improve Internet access in the last two years.

The respondent has indicated that practically no local content is available on the Internet, and practically no content is available in local languages. The literacy rate is given as 80% (90.7% according to the 2007 *CIA World Factbook*).

Although the library association is in favour of filtering information to a certain extent (e.g. for children), the use of filtering software is not widespread in libraries. This could be due to the low percentage of libraries offering Internet access. The respondent has stated that the government does not have the capacity to monitor Internet activity, but that a Bill has been tabled (the Interception and Communications Bill), which is aimed at effecting controls on the type of information disseminated.

A number of violations of intellectual freedom have been reported by the respondent and by third-party sources; some of these are discussed below.

Libraries in Zimbabwe are involved in programmes to raise awareness of HIV/Aids. There are no special programmes focusing on the promotion of women's literacy, and none that focus specifically on women's access to certain information.

The respondent has indicated that the Zimbabwean library association is defunct and that "there is nothing on the ground to point to the possibility of reviving the association". As such, no code of ethics has been adopted and neither the IFLA Internet Manifesto nor the Glasgow Declaration has been adopted.

User privacy and anti-terror legislation

No anti-terror legislation has been passed. It is felt that keeping user records would affect the freedom of expression of the individual Internet library user.

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

Several incidents have occurred in the last two years that adversely affected the freedom of access to information or the freedom of expression. Specifically mentioned are a number of pressure groups that have been arrested for exercising freedom of expression, for example WOZA (Women in Zimbabwe Arise).

Amnesty International reports that “repressive laws, including the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act and the Broadcasting Services Act, [are] used to curtail freedom of expression. In July [2007] the government introduced the Interception of Communications Bill in Parliament which, if passed into law, would further restrict freedom of expression. It would allow the authorities to intercept both telecommunications and mail, and raised fears that the government would use it to spy on the activities of human rights organisations and the political opposition” (<http://thereport.amnesty.org/page/1140/eng/>).

The tabling of the so-called “spy Bill” is condemned by third-party sources such as Amnesty International (<http://web.amnesty.org/report2006/zwe-summary-eng>) and Reporters Without Borders (<http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/84256/>) in an article that supplies the following links for further details:

- *MISA*: <http://tinyurl.com/2udcsl>
- *RSF*: http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id_article=17623
- *International Herald Tribune*: <http://tinyurl.com/2vo566>.

HIV/Aids awareness

Libraries are involved in programmes to raise awareness of HIV/Aids (no further information has been given).

Women and freedom of access to information

Libraries in Zimbabwe have no special programmes that focus on the promotion of women’s literacy, as well as no programmes that focus specifically on women’s access to certain topics (e.g. social information, the economy, education, health and family planning). The reason given is that the libraries cannot do anything due to lack of funds, but that non-governmental organisations are trying to establish such programmes.

IFLA Internet Manifesto

The IFLA Internet Manifesto has not been adopted. The reason is that the library association is defunct and there are no indications of reviving it.

IFLA Glasgow Declaration on Libraries, Information Services and Intellectual Freedom

The Glasgow Declaration has not been adopted for the same reason.

Ethics

No code of ethics has been adopted, as the library association is defunct.

Main indicators

Country name:	Zimbabwe
Population:	12 311 143 (July 2007 est.)
Main language:	English (official), Shona, Sindebele (the language of the Ndebele, sometimes called Ndebele), numerous minor tribal dialects
Literacy:	90.7%
Literacy reported by respondent:	80%

Population figures, language and literacy are from the
CIA World Factbook, 2007 edition
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>.



Libraries and Internet access

Zimbabwe contributed to the World Report series in 2003 and 2001. The following section compares data and answers from 2007 with the 2003 IFLA/FAIFE World Report and adds context from the respondent's estimates, where possible.

Library services

Estimated number of public libraries*:	28
Estimated number of school libraries:	N/A
Estimated number of university libraries:	12
Estimated number of government-funded research libraries:	61
Source of these numbers:	Municipal annual reports; National Library and Documentation Services

Internet access

Population online**:	1 000 000 Internet users as of Sept. 2006 (8.1%) (2003: 0.88% in 2002)
Percentage of public libraries offering Internet access to users:	Less than 20% (2003: Less than 20%)
Percentage of school libraries offering Internet access to users:	Less than 20%
Percentage of university libraries offering Internet access to users:	21-40%
Percentage of government-funded research libraries offering Internet access to users:	21-40%
In your estimate, how much local content*** is available on the Internet:	Nothing, or practically nothing
<i>To what degree is content on the Internet available in local languages:</i>	Nothing, or practically nothing
Is the library association in favour of filtering information on library Internet terminals:	Yes, to a certain degree (2003: No)
Is the use of filtering software widespread in your country's libraries:	No (2003: Yes, to a certain degree)
Is it free of charge for library users to access the Internet on library computers:	Yes, in all libraries (2003: Yes, in research libraries)
Has the state or other library authorities made any extra funding available for Internet access in the library system of your country in the last two years:	Yes, in some cases

* Public library service points, including branch libraries.

** Online population numbers are from Internet World Stats (www.internetworldstats.com).

*** Local content is defined as content that originates in the country.