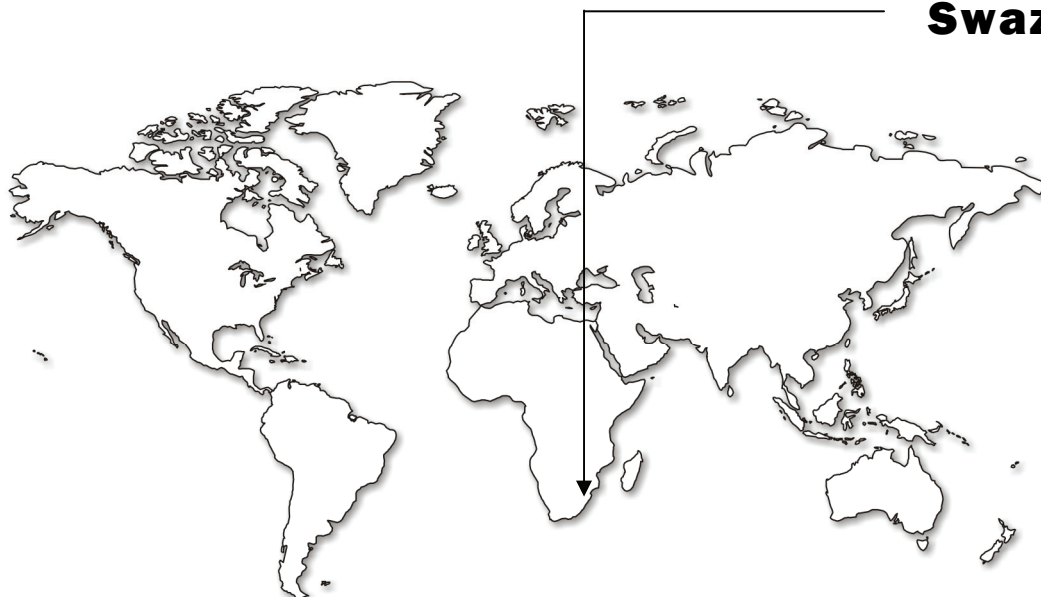# Swaziland

Responding institution:
Swaziland National Library Services

Swaziland is responding to the World Report for the third time, having previously contributed in 2003 and 2005. This response refers to the activities in 15 public library service points and 3 research libraries (including 2 government-funded research libraries and 1 university library; no school libraries have been indicated). (The 2005 response reported on 15 research libraries – it might be that the term "research libraries" was interpreted differently.)

In September 2006, Internet penetration for Swaziland was estimated at 3.1% (*CIA World Factbook,* 2007 edition). Internet access in public libraries is estimated at 21-40%, for university libraries at 81-100% and for government-funded research libraries it is less than 20%. Although no figures have been given for school libraries, Internet access there is estimated to be less than 20%.

The respondent has indicated that there is average Internet coverage of local content, but that nothing or almost nothing is available in local languages. The respondent estimates the literacy level at 78% (81.6% in the 2007 *CIA World Factbook*).

Due to the country's economic climate, libraries cannot afford to offer Internet access free of charge. Fees are charged on a cost-recovery basis only. In some cases, the state or other library authorities have made extra funding available for Internet access. Libraries are provided with a budget for the provision of services, so that heads of libraries may decide how to spend the budget on Internet access according to user needs.

The library association in Swaziland is to a certain degree in favour of filtering information on library Internet terminals and, accordingly, there is to a certain extent widespread use of filtering software to protect children. (This is contrary to the 2005 response, where it was indicated that the library association was against filtering Internet content and the use of filtering software was not widespread.)

The respondent has indicated that libraries in Swaziland are not troubled by anti-terror legislation. (The 2005 report indicated great concern about a royal decree that restricts dissemination of various publications. Concerns about the decree have not been repeated in the 2007 response.)

In contrast to some concerns noted by third-party sources, the respondent has not reported on any incidents of violation of intellectual freedom. Neither have additional sources that may shed more light on intellectual freedom in Swaziland been suggested.

Libraries have been involved in programmes to raise awareness of HIV/Aids, as well as in programmes to provide HIV/Aids information to members of the community unable to read. Although programmes to promote literacy and access to certain types of information are offered, these are not aimed at women only, but include children and other groups.

Swaziland's librarians adopted a code of ethics in 2004. At the time of response the code was not available on

the Internet, as the website of the National Library Services was in the process of being updated.

According to the respondent, Swaziland has adopted the IFLA Internet Manifesto since the 2005 response, but not the IFLA Glasgow Declaration.

User privacy and anti-terror legislation

No anti-terror legislation has been passed in Swaziland. The respondent has indicated that the keeping of library user records would affect the individual Internet library user's freedom of expression. Some users may feel intimidated to a certain extent, leading to an element of mistrust and some users avoiding the library.

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

According to the respondent there have been no violations of intellectual freedom. Some such violations are, however, noted by third-party sources. For example, IFEX reports that the king's aide forbade media questioning during a press conference (8 March 2007); warnings were issued to the media not to criticise the king (29 August 2006); a Member of Parliament sued the *Swazi Observer* for defamation (8 March 2007), and there is concern that the suing of newspapers may lead to media self-censorship (27 November 2006) (http://www.ifex.org/).

HIV/Aids awareness

Similar to the 2005 response, libraries in Swaziland have been involved in programmes promoting HIV/Aids awareness. They arrange talks by healthcare professionals, applicable dramas by students who use the libraries, and awareness programmes for staff and users. By means of DVD or video shows and talks in vernacular languages, libraries have also been involved in programmes to provide HIV/Aids information to members of the community who cannot read.

Women and freedom of access to information

Libraries in Swaziland have been involved in initiatives designed to promote literacy, and these are aimed at women and children, as well as other groups in need. They also focus on access to agricultural, health and legal information, as well as business information at grassroots level.

IFLA Internet Manifesto

Since the 2005 response, the library community in Swaziland has adopted the IFLA Internet Manifesto. According to the respondent, the Manifesto is under discussion by high-level authorities to align it with law affecting libraries in the country.

IFLA Glasgow Declaration on Libraries, Information Services and Intellectual Freedom

Despite the intention expressed in 2005, the IFLA Glasgow Declaration has not been adopted yet. As it was under discussion by the executive committee of the library association at the time of the response, it has not been possible to indicate whether or not the association plans to adopt the Declaration within the next two years.

Ethics

The library association adopted a code of ethics in 2004. At the time of response the code was not available on the Internet, as the website of the National Library Services was being updated. The executive committee of the library association is attempting to align the code to the Employment Act and other legislation governing libraries. They are also discussing the code with employers to facilitate consolidation with other documents that are used whenever disciplinary measures need to be taken.

Main indicators

Country name:	Swaziland
Population:	1 133 066 (July 2007 est.)
Main language:	English (official government business is conducted in English), siSwati (official)
Literacy:	81.6%
Literacy reported by respondent:	78%

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

Swaziland

Libraries and Internet access

Swaziland contributed to the World Report series in 2005 and 2003. The following section compares data and answers from 2007 with the 2005 IFLA/FAIFE World Report and adds context from the respondent's estimates, where possible.

Library services

Estimated number of public libraries*:	15 (2005: 15)
Estimated number of school libraries:	No data provided
Estimated number of university libraries:	1
Estimated number of government-funded research libraries:	2
Source of these numbers:	Personal knowledge of respondent

Internet access

Population online**:	36 000 Internet users as of Sept. 2005 (3.1%) (2005: 2.6%)
Percentage of public libraries offering Internet access to users:	21-40% (2005: 21-40%)
Percentage of school libraries offering Internet access to users:	Less than 20%
Percentage of university libraries offering Internet access to users:	81-100%
Percentage of government-funded research libraries offering Internet access to users:	Less than 20%
In your estimate, how much local content*** is available on the Internet:	Average
To what degree is content on the Internet available in local languages:	Nothing, or practically nothing
Is the library association in favour of filtering information on library Internet terminals:	Yes, to a certain degree (2005: No)
Is the use of filtering software widespread in your country's libraries:	Yes, to a certain degree – for the protection of children (2005: No)
Is it free of charge for library users to access the Internet on library computers:	No (2005: No)
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 (2005: Yes)

* 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.