EVALUATION OF THE LSTA FIVE-YEAR PLAN FOR THE
PALAU PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM
2020–2022

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Date of submission:

March 27, 2022

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EVALUATION SUMMARY

This document is an evaluation of the implementation of the 2020-2022 Five-Year Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Plan for the Republic of Palau State Library System, also known as the Palau Public Library. The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is the federal agency responsible for implementing the LSTA Grants to States program, which distributes federal funds to each of the U.S. states and territories. In 2020, the IMLS began providing LSTA funds to the Republic of Palau, along with the two other Freely Associated States (the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands). The IMLS' authorizing legislation requires LSTA fund recipients to conduct an independent evaluation of each Five-Year Plan period for programs funded. While the current LSTA funding cycle is 2018-2022, Palau formally joined the LSTA planning and evaluation program midway through the cycle, in 2020. To date, Palau has only expended FFY2020 LSTA funds. This report therefore focuses on the activities of the only evaluation year available – FFY2020 – for Palau.

The evaluator found that Palau has risen admirably to the challenge of joining a complex federal grant program requiring significant overhead and management, while navigating a global pandemic that closed the borders of the Republic of Palau for virtually the entire evaluation period. While this first implementation of an LSTA Five-Year Plan was not without stumbles, the evaluator found that Palau fully achieved two of four goals. One goal was derailed by the global pandemic, and regular spending planned for the fourth goal was unexpectedly not required. The Palau Public Library (PPL) is well positioned to act on lessons learned from these first years in the LSTA Grants to States program as it develops its second Five-Year Plan in the coming months.

Below is a brief summary of progress made towards each of the four goals. These are expanded upon in the body of the report.

RETROSPECTIVE QUESTIONS

A-1 To what extent did the Five-Year Plan activities made progress towards goals?

Goal	Evaluator's assessment
Goal 1: Update and expand library collection development	Achieved
Goal 2: Acquire and upgrade Palau libraries technology infrastructure	Achieved
Goal 3: Provide trainings and professional development for librarians	Not achieved
Goal 4: Maintain, enhance, and promote the Online Public Access Catalog	Partly achieved

GOAL 1: UPDATE AND EXPAND LIBRARY COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

The evaluator concludes that Palau has achieved goal 1. In FFY2020, PPL used 26.6% of LSTA funds under goal 1 to purchase hundreds of copies each of two locally published children's books in both

Palauan and English, which are being distributed to every elementary school and community library, including public and private, as well as to Head Start and kindergartens. Funds were also used under goal 1 to purchase educational and other supplies for students as part of the Back-to-School programming events in which over 200 children participated. Eighty percent (80%) of the children's books that were purchased for goal 1 were used for programming and outreach, given away to children as part of Back-to-School programming. If these giveaways are not included in analysis, only about 3.5% of total LSTA funds were spent on collection development for libraries.

The implementation process laid out in the Five-Year Plan was enacted to the best of PPL staff's ability for this first year. However, as Palau moves into its second year of LSTA expenditures, a more sustainable collection development framework will need to be developed. While MOE and school library staff believe that the highest priority for future LSTA expenditures is additional new books, particularly in rural areas that do not have access to the major collections at the Palau Community College (PCC) and Palau Public Library (PPL), collection development on this scale will require significant staff time. Given local constraints, much of the process will likely need to be centralized and performed by the PPL Head Librarian, with input from school librarians. One major challenge to centralizing collection development for school libraries at PPL is the longstanding reluctance of many school libraries to cataloging their collections in the IMLS-funded OPAC, making it impossible for PPL staff to know what books already exist across the majority of school libraries. The requisite time and resources will need to be provided in the future for designated staff to manage collection development with the new LSTA funding stream.

GOAL 2: ACQUIRE AND UPGRADE PALAU LIBRARIES TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

The evaluator concludes that Palau has achieved goal 2. Under goal 2, PPL used 73.4% of FFY2020 funds to purchase 38 Dell Otiplex 3080 desktop computers along with 38 Dell Monitors, as well as accompanying antiviral software and the Microsoft Office suite. These were distributed as replacement and upgrade machines to the public library computer lab, to each of 17 public school libraries, and to the five governmental libraries in states without a school-supported library. In the evaluator's end user survey, 70% of respondents said that public access computers are an important library service for their family, and 90% of those who use public access computers at PPL report that they are "very satisfied" with the service. Additionally, 54% of respondents believe that improving technology infrastructure with IMLS funds has been one of the highest impact activities. Statistics on computer use at PPL since the new machines were installed show use to be on the rise until COVID closures in January 2022 negatively impacted use. Due to pandemic restrictions on holding group classes, PPL has not conducted the planned group computer training classes. However, staff have taught patrons one-on-one as they come to the computing area. A number of programs in the Five-Year Plan under goal 2 relate to technology training provided at the annual summer workshop for public school librarians sponsored by the Ministry of Education (MOE). This critical training had to be canceled due to COVID restrictions in 2020 and 2021, but is planned to occur in summer of 2022, if circumstances allow. This mandatory three- to four-day workshop provides essential training on use of the OPAC, conducting online research, and advanced computing skills.

GOAL 3: PROVIDE TRAININGS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR LIBRARIANS

The evaluator concludes that Palau has not achieved goal 3. This is due to the convergence of several factors, the global pandemic primary among them. No LSTA funds were expended on goal 3, mainly because the borders of Palau have been closed since March 2020 due to the global pandemic. This caused library staff to be unable to travel to continuing education opportunities off island, and trainers were not able to be flown on island. Time zones, cultural practices and preferences, and internet connectivity across Palau make virtual trainings a difficult alternative. Many school librarians in outlaying states cannot depend on a reliable internet connection needed for virtual trainings, and most synchronous continuing education options are offered in time zones that fall outside of work hours for Palau. MOE staff hope that Palau's borders will open later in 2022, allowing FFY2021 and FFY2022 LSTA funds (which have not yet been expended) to be used in support of goal 3. The IMLS approved the transfer of funds that had been planned for goal 3 in FFY2020 to goals 1 and 2.

GOAL 4: MAINTAIN, ENHANCE, AND PROMOTE THE ONLINE PUBLIC ACCESS CATALOG

The evaluator concludes that Palau has partly achieved goal 4. No FFY2020 funds were expended on goal 4 due to the unexpected absence of the regular annual fees associated with the OPAC, and the IMLS approved the transfer of funds that had been planned for goal 4 to goals 1 and 2. The Palau Union Catalog (PUC) is a shared OPAC that has allowed libraries of all types across Koror as well as in outlying states with internet connections to establish and access a growing electronic network of library resources based primarily at PPL and Palau Community College. Typically, PPL pays an annual licensing fee for the Follett Destiny OPAC service. In FFY2020, OPAC services were moved to a cloud platform and staff believe that due to this transition, the expected annual fees were delayed. PPL has used IMLS funds via the Pacific Competitive Program to fund OPAC services since the catalog's inception, and PPL plans to use LSTA FFY2021 and FFY2022 funds to support the OPAC.

A-2 To what extent were funds spent on each Measuring Success focal areas and intent?

Goals 1 and 2 both achieved results related to Lifelong Learning. Goal 1 increased patrons' general knowledge and skills by purchasing books to teach children about the natural sciences and environment in Palau, as well as bilingual books to help children learn both English and Palauan. Goal 2 aligned with the intent of improving users' formal education by funding the only desktop computers available in elementary and secondary school libraries across Palau. Goals 2 and 4 achieved results related to Information Access and increasing patrons' ability to discover, obtain, and use information resources. Goal 4 aligns with both the intent to improve users' ability to discover information resources and the intent to obtain information resources. While circumstances in FFY2020 created a one-off situation in which no LSTA funds were expended on goal 4, FFY2021 and FFY2022 funds will fund online access to the PUC shared catalog. Goal 2 also affords the ability to discover information resources by providing the only computers in many libraries across Palau. Goal 3 focuses on staff continuing education, aligning with the focal area of Institutional Capacity and the intent to improve the library workforce. Unfortunately, the pandemic caused PPL to be unable to expend FFY2020 funds for continuing education, but FFY2021 and FFY2022 funds will be expended under goal 3. Funds were

not spent in direct relation to the national priorities of Economic and Employment Development, Human Services, & Civic Engagement, and there are no plans to use FFY2021 and FFY2022 funds in specific pursuit of these focal areas.

A-3 Did any of the following groups represent a substantial focus for your Five-Year Plan activities?

Three of the designated groups made up a substantial focus of PPL's LSTA expenditures. These were individuals living below the poverty line, ethnic or minority populations, and school-aged youth (6-17). The first two groups are based not on a calculatable 10% expenditures threshold, but on population thresholds in Palau. The average household income in Palau is significantly below the US 2021 poverty guidelines, the majority of LSTA expenditures is therefore considered to be expended for the benefit of individuals living below the poverty line.

Virtually all residents of Palau are part of ethnic/minority populations, according to definitions of such groups by the IMLS. Seventy-five percent (75%) of the population is native Palauan and 16% of the population is from the Philippines.

PPL is the official school library for the only public high school in Palau, and LSTA funds support not only the public library, but all public school libraries within Palau. Of FFY2020 funds, 26.6% went to collection materials and back-to-school programming directed at school-aged youth under goal 1, and 18 of the 38 new computers and accessories purchased with the remaining 73.4% of funds under goal 2 went to school libraries supporting school-aged youth.

PROCESS QUESTIONS

B-1 asks how libraries have used data from State Program Reports (SPR) to guide activities included in the Five-Year Plan. The Republic of Palau received LSTA funding for the first time in FFY2020, and has no SPR data prior to FFY2020. PPL is not part of the Public Libraries Survey.

B-2 asks whether changes were made to the Five-Year Plan. No changes have been formally made to the Plan. However, travel restrictions in place for the pandemic caused PPL to be unable to expend funds as expected under goal 3, Professional Development. Additionally, an earlier-than-expected system upgrade for the OPAC into a cloud environment resulted in an unexpected lack of an OPAC licensing fee in FFY2020 under goal 4. The IMLS approved a reallocation of funds from these two goals into goals 1 and 2.

B-3 asks how libraries have shared data from the SPR. Palau received LSTA funding for the first time in FFY2020, and therefore has no SPR data prior to FFY2020. PPL has no additional evaluation resources to share.

METHODOLOGY

C-1 addresses the selection of an independent evaluator. This was the first time that the Republic of Palau participated in the IMLS Five-Year Evaluation process. PPL staff consulted with fellow Pacific Islands and selected Ms. Chapman, who had conducted several evaluations for the Outlying Territories in the last Five-Year Evaluation cycle. Ms. Chapman has over a decade of experience working in

assessment and data analysis in academic, state, and consortial libraries. Ms. Chapman conducted the LSTA Five-Year Evaluations in the previous cycle for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, and Guam, and thus had an understanding of the particular challenges facing Territories and Freely Associated States.

C-2 explores evaluation methods. The evaluator relied on triangulation of data from interviews, surveys, and administrative records to inform the evaluation. The evaluator has an extensive background in survey design, and worked with PPL and MOE staff to design and deploy two anonymous surveys: a web survey for library stakeholders and a paper-based survey for library patrons. The evaluator additionally undertook one-on-one interviews with staff at the MOE, PPL, school libraries, and National Congress Library. The evaluator additionally reviewed SPR data, photographs of library spaces, administrative documents, and demographic and other data to determine the extent to which program targets, target outputs, and target outcomes had been met.

C-3 examines stakeholder engagement. The evaluator did not perform an on-site visit, as the borders of Palau were closed due to the global pandemic. The evaluator met with stakeholders regularly via Zoom from October 2021 through March 2022. The evaluator worked primarily with PPL Head Librarian Mary Arius and additionally met several times with staff at the MOE: Aileen Mikel, Chief of Division of School Management, and Raynold Mechol, Director of the Bureau of Education Administration. The evaluator also performed one-on-one interviews with several stakeholders. The evaluator produced a list of information, data, and documents that would assist in the evaluation process. Staff delivered data and documents via email, and involved other staff members at the library as needed to find data and information necessary for the evaluation process. Additionally, two anonymous surveys were distributed to engage end users and stakeholders respectively.

C-4 asks how the evaluation report will be shared. PPL plans to share key report findings and recommendations during various meetings with stakeholders, as well as with the public on the MOE and PPL Facebook pages.

EVALUATION REPORT

BACKGROUND

This document is an evaluation of the implementation of the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2020-2022 Five-Year Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Plan for the Republic of Palau State Library System, also known as the Palau Public Library (PPL). The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is the federal agency responsible for implementing the LSTA Grants to States program, which distributes federal funds to each of the U.S. states and territories. In FFY2020 the IMLS began providing LSTA funds to three Freely Associated States: The Republic of Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. Prior to FFY2020, the Freely Associated States were eligible to take part in the Pacific Competitive Program (PCP)[1] alongside the Pacific Territories and the U.S. Virgin Islands, which provided an opportunity for the State Library Administrative Agencies (SLAA) of these regions to apply for a maximum of $30,000 annually for competitive project grant funding. The PCP was discontinued after FFY2019, and the three Freely Associated States joined the LSTA program the following year.[2] The Pacific Territories and the U.S. Virgin Islands were already participants in the LSTA program.

The IMLS' authorizing legislation requires LSTA fund recipients to conduct an independent evaluation of each Five-Year Plan period for programs funded. While the current funding cycle is FFY2018-FFY2022, Palau formally joined the LSTA planning and evaluation program midway through the cycle, in FFY2020. To date, Palau has only expended FFY2020 LSTA funds.[3] This report therefore focuses on the activities of the only evaluation year available – FFY2020 – for Palau, though the report takes the SLAA's plans for FFY2021-FFY2022 funds into account, and also discusses some of the historic expenditures made with PCP funding.

Description of the community and libraries

The Republic of Palau is comprised of a group of over 300 small islands, nine of them inhabited, located in the Western Pacific Islands region with a population of 17,661 (2015).[4] The majority of the population (65%) lives on the island of Koror, and while 75% of the population is native Palauan, foreign workers and citizens of other countries make up the remaining quarter of the population, including 16% of the population from the Philippines. Palau has a 99% literacy rate, and 69% of the population has the ability to read, write, and understand both Palauan and English. From 1947 to 1994, Palau was a "district" within the United Nations Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands along with

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[1] Pacific Competitive Program: https://www.imls.gov/sites/default/files/lstapacificgrants2019nofo_jan2019.pdf
[2] Email from Madison Bolls, Senior Program Officer for Grants to States IMLS, to Joyce Chapman. February 24th 2022.
[3] Two years are afforded to expend each fiscal year's allotment, so Palau is not behind the allowed schedule.
[4] The US Census is not conducted in Palau. This data is based on Palau's latest census in 2015
https://www.palaugov.pw/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/2015-Census-of-Population-Housing-Agriculture-.pdf

other Pacific Islands. On October 1st 1994, Palau regained its independence and now shares a close relationship with the United States under a Compact of Free Association.[5]

Palau is not part of the current US Census,[6] but the Republic of Palau's Ministry of Finance Office of Planning & Statistics conducts a periodic Household income and Expenditures Survey. According to the most recent public data from 2014, the distribution of income throughout the population is highly unequal, with the poorest 50% of households in Palau accounting for only 16% of the total household income, and the average household income falls below the U.S. government poverty threshold. [7]

The library community in the Republic of Palau is comprised of a wide range of institutions. Other than PPL, it includes 17 public school libraries, six of which are only accessible by boat; six private school libraries; one community college library for Palau Community College (PCC), the only post-secondary school in the Republic serving students from Palau, Micronesia, and the Pacific region; and 10 additional libraries associated with the government, research centers, and museums. For residents in more remote villages and islands, the local school libraries double informally as public library facilities – meeting the needs of underserved community members by providing free access to the Internet and to information sources. Due to MOE school consolidations culminating in FFY2012,[8] residents from three states of Palau – Ngiwal, Ngchesar and Ngatpang – have no schools within their states, and therefore also no school library for the children or community. Each state government was able to work with the MOE to establish a small library resource center in government buildings through funding from the PCP in FFY2017. The state government of Ngiwal additionally had no internet connection for the LSTA-funded computer; FFY2021 ARPA funds were used to provide internet access.

PPL is the only public library in Palau and is also a part of the school library system. PPL operates as part of the Palau Ministry of Education (MOE), and the LSTA Project Director is not a PPL staff member, but the MOE's Chief of School Management. As such, PPL does not have a dedicated budget; rather, funding comes from the MOE budget as needed. The PPL also serves as the official school library for Palau High School, the only public high school in Palau,[9] which is across the street from PPL. PPL has three full-time staff: The Head Librarian, the Library Assistant, and the Library Aide/Bookmobile Operator. The library has one physical location, which is on the main island of Koror. PPL currently serves 5,064 active patrons and has collections of roughly 20,000 items. In addition to the general collections, PPL houses the Palau Bookmobile collection and provides library materials and services throughout Koror and Babeldaob islands and among underserved communities in Palau.[10] There are three inhabited islands to which the bookmobile cannot travel because it is too big to fit on the only boats to the islands. The first Palau Bookmobile and its collections were enabled by IMLS PCP grant

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[5] "Palau Public Library Five-Year Plan 2020-2022." http://www.imls.gov/sites/default/files/state-profiles/plans/palau5yearplan.pdf

[6] Palau was included in the US Census from the 1970s to the 1990s, but participation was discontinued after Palau gained its independence in 1994.

[7] "2014 Household Income and Expenditure Survey." Office of Planning and Statistics, Bureau of Budget & Planning, Ministry of Finance, Palau. https://www.palaugov.pw/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/2014-ROP-HIES.pdf

[8] Ngiwal and Ngchesar consolidated with Melekeok Elementary School in the 2011-2012 school year. Ngatpang consolidated with Aimeliik Elementary School in the 1990s. (Source: interviews with MOE staff).

[9] In addition to the public high school, there are four private high schools in Palau. "LSTA – clarification on high schools." Email from Aileen Mikel to Joyce Chapman, 3/17/2022.

[10] "Palau Public Library Five-Year State Plan 2020-2022." https://www.imls.gov/sites/default/files/state-profiles/plans/palau5yearplan.pdf

funding; the current bookmobile was funded by a grant from Japan in 2018. PPL is responsible for expending LSTA funds in support of the entire school library system, not just the public library.

The MOE oversees 17 additional public school libraries, and PPL and the MOE coordinate training for school library staff. A significant challenge facing Palauan libraries is the persistent high turnover rate among school librarians. For example, during the 2020-2021 school year there was a 24% turnover rate (4 o 17 school librarians). One of the reasons libraries experience high turnover is that the government salary scales for public school teachers and school librarians are different, with teachers earning more. If a school librarian gains the skills and degree necessary to become a teacher, it is common – particularly in remote areas with limited hiring pools – for the school librarian to be first in line for a teaching position that opens.

Palauan public schools used to have both school librarians and computer lab managers. Over the years, the MOE shifted to provide tablets to all students and to eliminate all school computer labs, which were deemed unnecessary with classroom tablets. The MOE then moved to train school librarians and computer lab managers on guidance counseling and reclassified school librarians and computer lab managers as guidance counselors, while consolidating the roles of school librarian and guidance counselor into one position.[11] The only educational requirement for the position of school librarian is a high school diploma. The high school diploma has historically also been the required education level for school teachers, but beginning in 2023 school teachers will be required to have an Associate of Science (AS) in Education, which is offered at the PCC. There is an AS program for Library Science at the PCC as well; however, it will not be required for school librarians.

The Palau Association of Libraries (PAL) is the professional organization on island for staff working in all types of libraries. According to evaluator interviews, as of 2022 there are roughly 30 PAL members, with about half who are active. PAL members pay annual dues, and PAL holds quarterly in-person meetings that rotate throughout school library locations to equalize the travel burden on members. The MOE is typically able to subsidizes the cost of PAL travel. One of the most valuable services PAL provides is support for new school librarians. High turnover in school library staff means that new librarians often come to the job with no knowledge of how to organize or operate the school library, and must often wait until summer to take part in the annual multi-day training provided by the MOE. PAL asks new librarians to host the quarterly meeting, and spends the rest of the day after the meeting collectively helping the librarian organize their library, weed materials to be shipped to outlaying state libraries, and learn to catalog and arrange books. PAL offered similar help to the new government libraries created after school consolidations.

Technology infrastructure

The Republic of Palau's remote geographical location and island nature meant that the nation relied on satellite connections as the only source of internet until 2017.[12] Speeds were extremely slow, and rain or other inclement weather would easily disrupt service. In 2017, the first submarine fiber optic cable became operational to Palau. Despite this program, internet connectivity in Palau is much slower,

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[11] "RE: LSTA evaluation – school librarian turnover rate?" Email from Ray Mechols to Joyce Chapman, 3/22/22.
[12] https://www.pacificnote.com/single-post/2017/12/07/palau-has-fiber-optic-connectivity

more expensive, and less widely available when compared to other U.S. States. This must be taken into account when considering community needs, as well as the ways in which libraries are able to serve and interact with their communities.

To this day, the three southernmost states have no internet, phones, or electricity. These islands are 24 hours by boat from Koror, and each island has as few as fifty residents.[13] In FFY2022, VHF radios are being installed for the first time on these islands to provide a means of communicating with Koror in case of medical or other emergencies. VHF receiving radios are being placed at the Koror MOE, hospital, and police stations. Solar panels have also recently been installed on the school houses in these remote locations so that the children have lights in school. While an MOE representative travels to each island once a year, these small schools in particular would greatly benefit from new books for their remote collections.

Students and the community rely heavily on libraries for internet access for school works and other electronic resources. Although technology infrastructure and use in Palau is rapidly growing, Palau still faces challenges with telecommunications and internet access. Palau National Communications Corporation (PNCC) is the primary provider of telephone and Internet access to government, businesses, and individuals alike. As of the most recent public data in 2014,[14] 28% of households do not have access to landline phones. Approximately 90% of all households in urban areas and 60% of households in rural areas own an active mobile phone. For the most part, residents do not have internet at home. Only 12.1% of households have access to a wired internet connection and 14.5% have access to a wireless internet connection.[15] With cell service unavailable in many rural areas of Palau, a number of residents have no way to access the internet from their homes. The majority of schools have internet access, and students have access to the internet from school libraries or via school-provided tablets for in-class use. While the MOE and PPL have been able to provide one computer to each school library since the 1990s, these devices are mainly for staff use and funds have not been available to update the devices frequently. To date, students have not had consistent access to internet and computers in school libraries.

Note on COVID
PPL closed in March 2020 with the arrival of the COVID-19 global pandemic, though there were at that time no cases of COVID in Palau. Schools were closed, and library staff worked fully remotely. The public library facilities were closed, but services such as curbside pickup and book return were still available to the public on an as-needed basis. While curbside pickup was offered, staff report that it was barely used. PPL reopened in the fall of 2020 at the same time as the schools began their in-person school year. PPL and the school libraries were then fully opened to the public until January 2022 when the Omicron variant of COVID caused the schools and libraries to close once again shortly

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[13] Only 1% of Palauan households do not have access to the electrical grid. "2014 Household Income and Expenditure Survey."

[14] Unfortunately, the most recent data in the 2014 Household survey is before the submarine fiber optic cable become operational in 2017. Statistics on internet access are likely on the rise, but staff and the evaluator were unable to find any publicly accessible updated data on this topic.

[15] "2014 Household Income and Expenditure Survey." Office of Planning and Statistics, Bureau of Budget & Planning, Ministry of Finance, Palau. https://www.palaugov.pw/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/2014-ROP-HIES.pdf

after the spring school semester began (the end of the second week of January 2022). The libraries and schools began reopening again at the end of February 2022. During this second closure, Palau experienced many cases of COVID with rapid community spread.

RETROSPECTIVE QUESTIONS

"Without grants like LSTA, it would be difficult for the libraries to acquire new resources or use better technologies to do library programming and to provide quality services to patrons."

– Library stakeholder

This report contains a retrospective assessment of each of the Five-Year Plan's four goals and its corresponding program components, output targets, outcome targets, and evaluation methods. For each goal, the program is discussed, followed by a table showing whether the Plan targets were met. Recommendations for the 2023-2027 Five-Year Plan can be found at the end.

A-1. TO WHAT EXTENT DID YOUR FIVE-YEAR PLAN ACTIVITIES MAKE PROGRESS TOWARDS EACH GOAL?

PPL's inaugural LSTA Plan consists of four goals. FFY2020 are the only funds to have been expended to date. The expenditures on each goal in FFY2020 are shown in the table below. Because the IMLS allows up to two subsequent years to finish expending funds, Palau is on track to expend all funds in the allowable timeframe.

Goal	Expenditures (FFY2020)	% of Total
Goal 1: Update and expand library collection development	$18,146.00	26.6%
Goal 2: Acquire and upgrade Palau libraries technology infrastructure	$50,109.00	73.4%
Goal 3: Provide trainings and professional development for librarians	$0.00	0.0%
Goal 4: Maintain, enhance, and promote the Online Public Access Catalog	$0.00	0.0%
Total expenditures	$68,255.00	
Total LSTA allotment	$68,255.00	
Administrative overhead	$0.00	

GOAL 1: UPDATE AND EXPAND LIBRARY COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

Under goal 1, PPL used 26.6% ($18,146) of FFY2020 funds in the fall of 2021 on books and back to school supplies. $11,985 (66% of goal 1 expenditures) was spent on 750 copies of two children's titles (250 copies of one bilingual book and 500 copies of a second book, 250 copies in English and 250 copies in Palauan). The two books are, "Sechelik" by J. Ngoriakl and "Cheldechedechal a kekerei el Ngasech el osiik er a Daob" ("The Baby Hawksbill Turtle's Adventure to the Sea") by Bola Majekobaj. Staff selected these local children's books with the goal of helping students better connect with the Palauan language. Eighty percent (600 copies) of the books were given to children as part of library outreach efforts in summer 2021. The remaining 150 books are being distributed to every elementary school (17 public and two private) three State Public Library/Resource Centers located in states without an elementary school library, and to 12 Head Start and kindergarten facilities and two daycares. The distribution process began in October 2021, and distribution on the main island of Koror was completed prior to the start of the school year in January 2022. As of February 2022, the books have yet to be distributed to school libraries on islands that can only be reached by boat.

Figure 1. One of the books purchased for Goal 1, in English and Palauan

The evaluator was unable to acquire information on circulation of the LSTA-funded books at the libraries, anecdotes about their use, or feedback on the materials from librarians or community members.

As part of goal 1 activities, PPL also conducted a one day Back-to-School library program for grades K-12 "to instill a love of reading and to promote early reading literacy," which included a Back-to-School Library Walkathon and parade on July 30, 2021. As part of this effort, $6,161 (33% of goal 1 expenditures) were used to purchase educational and other supplies for students to give away at the event, including notebooks, water bottles, hand sanitizer, library T-shirts, backpacks, pencils, and stickers. Children who participated received backpacks with educational supplies and three free books (both the English and Palauan copies of "The Baby Hawksbill Turtle's Adventure to the Sea," and the bilingual copy of "Sechelik"), and all participants received an "I love libraries" T-shirt. Two hundred children joined the program. If the book giveaways are considered to be part of programming and outreach, then roughly 87% of goal 1 expenditures and 23% of total LSTA expenditures were spent on programming and outreach, and 13% of goal 1 expenditures (3.5% of total LSTA expenditures) were spent on library collection development.

Figure 2. Back-to-School library parade, July 30 2021

Figure 3. PPL staff filling backpacks with school supplies for the Back-to-School program July 30 2021


As mentioned above, 80% of the books purchased by LSTA funds were given away to children and 20% were retained for library circulation. When asked why the library had focused to such an extent on giving away books instead of adding more books to the collections, PPL staff explain that in Palau it is not customary for parents to read to their children at home, and most children have no books in the house. PPL wanted to reach out to children who are not current library patrons to encourage early literacy. The Back-To-School programming brought in many non-users due to the incentive of free school supplies. By sending books home with the 200 participating children, PPL hoped to provide each child with what may well be the only children's books in the household, interesting them in reading and hopefully encouraging them to return to the library. PPL was unable to gather any outcome data on whether or not this effort succeeded. If PPL is considering continued largescale outreach efforts via book giveaways with LSTA funds, the evaluator suggests that a method of evaluating the impact of the program be development and implemented (for example, tracking recipients, tracking whether they are current library users, and then tracking whether they then begin coming to the library).

Interviews provided insight that may be helpful to PPL as it plans future expenditures of goal 1 funds. For FFY2021 and FFY2022 funds, the LSTA Project Director would like to provide additional new books – including a wider variety – to PPL and school libraries across Palau. Currently one of the main ways Palau libraries receive new materials is via donated used books that are sent by Hawaii's State Senator Glenn Wakai. In recent years, Hawaii has sent a shipping container with thousands of used books weeded from Hawaiian libraries to Palau annually. School library staff who were interviewed also believed that the highest priority for future LSTA expenditures is new books under goal 1, particularly in rural areas without access to the major collections at PPL and PCC. In the words of one librarian, "Computers are helpful, yes; but our internet connection isn't stable and when it goes out the computers are useless… We really need new books for the students, especially the lower grades. We need books for learning, and for reading for fun...even with computers in the school library now, students come looking for more physical books to read."

In the evaluator's survey of stakeholders, the area most frequently cited as highest impact was goal 1: 62% of respondents cited the high impact of collections development funding. Many respondents were thinking of prior PCP funding of collections and not basing their responses solely on the two new titles provided by FFY2020 LSTA expenditures. Comments about impact included, "most of our libraries' [materials] are either outdated or need to be weed out from the shelf, but with this support, it provided huge additional collections to our libraries collections of its much-needed resources and materials" and, "the purchased new books has been a great change making the patrons excited and keep returning for the new books."

Figure 4. Stakeholder survey results – areas with highest impact
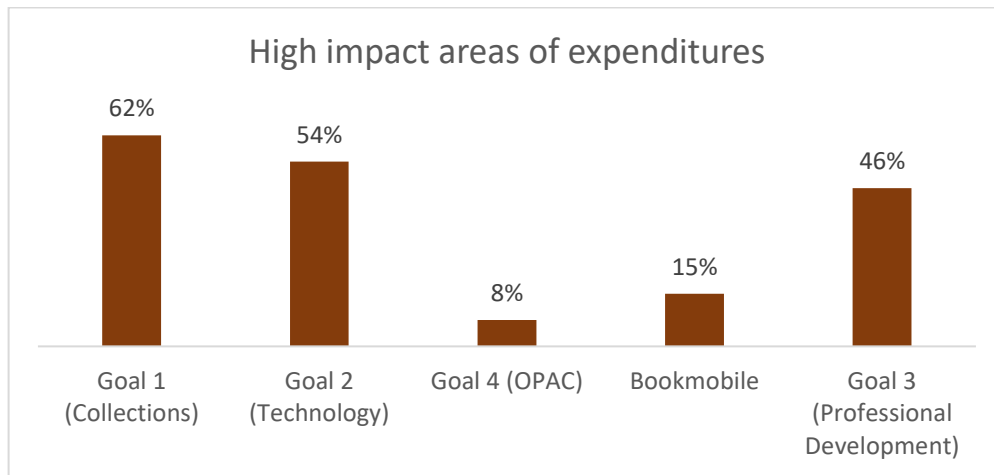
When asked to consider future ways LSTA funds could have impact, respondents had a number of ideas, some of which related to goal 1. Some themes that emerged include an increase in funding for programming at libraries around Palau, and increasing the variety and type of reading materials available in libraries through increased collection development support. See appendix E for the detailed stakeholder survey report.

According to the Five-Year Plan, the process for determining which materials to purchase for goal 1 is to acquire recommendations from librarians, students and community for new materials for each library. This ensuing list from each library would then be reviewed during the quarterly PAL meetings,

and materials would be prioritized and selected for purchase. This process was implemented to the best of PPL staff's ability for the first year of LSTA expenditures. According to interviews, the two titles purchased were selected using the process outlined in the Five-Year Plan. Both were recommended by active PAL members when the Head Librarian sent out a request, and discussed at a quarterly PAL meeting. However, there are difficulties inherent in this bottom up collection development process that relies on school librarians to have time for collection development research and attendance at PAL meetings. Typically, no more than half of PAL members attend the quarterly in-person meetings and only a few active members provide requests for books to purchase when requests are solicited. There is high turnover among school librarians, who are not required to have the AS degree in Library Science that is offered at the local community college, and school librarians typically do not have much, or any, training in collection development. When working on a purchasing deadline for LSTA-funded materials, the approach outlined in the current Five-Year Plan inevitably places the burden of selection on the PPL Head Librarian and pushes purchasing decisions to be rushed just before deadlines for expenditures. While acknowledging that centralizing the majority of collection development work at PPL is likely necessary, one significant difficulty with this approach is that PPL staff have no ability to see what materials are in most of the school libraries' collections because the majority have never catalogued their books. While the shared OPAC was implemented over a dozen years ago and provided for free to school libraries, only a handful of the school libraries have cataloged their materials and only one library (George B. Harris (GBH) Elementary, the largest in Palau) consistently catalogues all of its materials. If school libraries catalogued their materials, PPL staff would be able to work more effectively and efficiently on collection development in support of school libraries.

The Director of the Bureau of Education Administration was asked to reflect on the overhead that will be required to manage the selection process for 18 school library facilities that may each want to request a unique set of new books with new LSTA funding. He does not believe that the overhead will prove a challenge and instead considers the new funds to be an expanded opportunity, stating: "We are fortunate and grateful to have the [IMLS] funds doubled. It is our responsibility to make the best use of them. It's a matter of organizing ourselves to utilize the funding in the best possible way, even if the school libraries each have different needs." The Director believes that PAL can be a great help to this end, lessoning the administrative burden on the PPL Head Librarian by having librarians across Palau come together to prioritize and organize around materials for purchase. An interview with an active PAL member highlighted the difficulties of bottom up collection developing in Palau, and a historic difficulty in acquiring suggestions for new materials from PAL members. As Palau moves into its second year of LSTA expenditures, a more sustainable collection development framework will need to be developed. The requisite time and any necessary training or resources should be provided in the future for designated staff to manage collection development with this ongoing new funding stream.

Table 1 shows the programs, target outputs, target outcomes, and evaluation methods set forth for goal 1 in PPL's Five-Year Plan. The evaluator identifies whether each has been completed, partly completed, is incomplete, or if assessment of completion was not possible.

Table 1. Completion rate table for goal 1

Programs (activities)	Unable to assess	Incomplete	Partly complete	Complete

	Unable to assess	Incomplete	Partly complete	Complete
Gather and input recommendations from all librarians, students and community for new materials for each library			X	
Librarians in Palau will meet during PAL quarterly meetings to review the list and select materials for purchase			X	
Place an order for all new selected books for all libraries				X
Library staff will catalog and processed all new and updated materials acquired for their libraries			X	
All new and updated books will be made available for all students and the community			X	
Library staff will disseminate information through flyer, brochures and advertisement for the newly purchased materials				X
Output targets	**Unable to assess**	**Incomplete**	**Partly complete**	**Complete**
New and updated resources for all libraries.			X	
Improve library services through acquired new and updated resources.	X			
Promote and encourage the development of reading literacy.				X
Outcome Targets	**Unable to assess**	**Incomplete**	**Partly complete**	**Complete**
Patrons will have access to new and updated resources for educational, professional and personal development.			X	
Evaluation Methods	**Unable to assess**	**Incomplete**	**Partly complete**	**Complete**
A survey for students, teachers and librarians will be provided in order to gauge interest and encourage use of newly acquired materials.		X		
We will also provide a report through OPAC to review statistics of all added materials in order to both review effectiveness and future needs.		X		
Library staff will provide a monthly statistic report on number of books circulated and collection usage data.				X

The library staff will provide records of library usage statistics and note any change or increase in library usage with the availability of new library materials.				X

Of the programs listed above, PPL successfully ordered the new books with FFY2020 funds, but because distribution has not been completed and many school libraries do not catalog books, not all books have been catalogued and made available to the community. The activity of librarians coming together at PAL meetings to review and select materials for purchase from lists of suggestions is partly complete. Because so few PAL members attend each quarterly meeting and so few members submit suggestions for new purchases, the material lists for review are much more limited than desired. The final advertising-based program was achieved: When school libraries receive new materials from PPL, they create a flyer advertising the materials to teachers and students that is posted publicly on a school bulletin board. As for output targets, it is expected that all libraries will have updated resources by the end of the evaluation period, though this is currently marked as "partly complete." One output target that was unable to be assessed was to improve library services through acquired new and updated resources. While new materials were acquired, there was no data available to evaluate whether this had improved library services. The only outcome target set for goal 1 was that patrons will have access to new and updated resources for educational, professional and personal development. While this is expected to be achieved by the end of the evaluation period when books have all been distributed, it is not a true outcome. See recommendations at the end of this report about how to formulate outcome measures.

PPL was able to complete half of its target evaluation methods during its first year in the LSTA program. PPL staff report that monthly statistics reports from the OPAC were used to stay abreast of circulation and collection usage, and to identify changes in usage levels when the new books were made available. There was no discernable increase found in circulation; however, in this first year of expenditures, collection development efforts focused on only two new titles for each library. While PPL hoped to report OPAC statistics specifically for new materials added, it turned out that the OPAC does not allow for this type of report to be run by staff. If this is not possible, it should be removed as a target in the next Plan. PPL did not provide a survey for students, teachers, and librarians to gauge interest and encourage use of the newly acquired materials. The idea behind this evaluation method was that PAL would request that school librarians each develop a local questionnaire to distribute to their teachers and students to collect suggestions for new library materials. Then the librarians would compile the results and send them to PPL and PAL. While the plan was discussed in PAL meetings and PAL asked librarians to undertake the effort, no template or guidance was provided and individual libraries did not create surveys. If this evaluation is to succeed in the future, the evaluator recommends that PPL/PAL create a single questionnaire that can be used by all libraries and distribute it to them, making it as simple as possible for school librarians to gather the desired data.

As an additional note, substantial funding under goal 1 was used for programming expenses. Programming is not mentioned under goal 1 in the Five-Year Plan, but is an integral part of library services and an expense that Palau has used PCP funding for in past years. In the next Five-Year Plan, PPL could consider formalizing support for programming under an individual goal.

GOAL 2: ACQUIRE AND UPGRADE PALAU LIBRARIES TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

Under goal 2, PPL used 73.4% ($50,109.00) of FFY2020 funds to purchase 38 Dell Otiplex 3080 desktop computers along with 38 Dell Monitors, antiviral software, and the Microsoft Office suite in August 2021. The goal of the equipment purchase is to assist staff in increasing their knowledge and skills in use of new and upgraded technology, and to expand library services for learning and access to online information. Fifteen computers were distributed as replacement upgrades to the public library, including 10 new computers for use by the public, and installed in November 2021.

*Figure 5. Public computing area at PPL: newly stalled LSTA-funded machines*

One computer was provided to each of the 17 school libraries, with a second computer distributed to GBH Elementary School library, which has the largest student body. An additional five computers were distributed to government libraries in the states of Ngiwal (2), Ngchesar (2) and Ngatpang (1). These states do not have schools and the library resource center in located in a government building. The computers sent to schools and government libraries were all technically upgrades of existing hardware; however, some schools' existing computer had broken years ago, leaving them without a computer for a lengthy interim, and others still have functioning computers, allowing the new machine to serve as a second computer. The new LSTA-funded computers are technically for school library staff only, though some schools are able to allow student access. PPL would like to use LSTA funds to provide a second computer per school library so that each library also has a dedicated work station for students to conduct research and write papers. PPL is considering using FFY2021 funds to purchase a second computer for each school library.

Unlike goals 1 and 3, computer refresh cycles do not occur each year and PPL does not expect to have such significant goal 2 expenditures each year of the five-year funding cycle. Grant funds will hopefully be expended on replacement computer hardware once per LSTA cycle, when the money is available.

According to evaluator interviews with staff, Palau libraries do not have sufficient local funding to provide and upgrade technology infrastructure for staff or the public; therefore, grants and external

funding are critical to providing computing technology. While computing technology continues to be limited in school libraries, the situation is better within the schools in general. Most public school students in Palau do not have home internet access. But four years ago, a grant from the United States Department of Education (DOE) provided tablets for students to use at school during classes. Palau receives funds in a yearly grant from the DOE to upkeep tablets that must be replaced. Additionally, each school teacher in Palau has a laptop. Some of the schools used to have computer labs with outdated computers; however, once the DOE grant enabled the purchase of tablets for students, the computer labs were retired. In an interview with a school librarian, they reflected that computers are still the easiest way for students to write papers, as this is difficult on a tablet. The new LSTA-funded computers in the school libraries have taken on an important role for this purpose where they are available for student use since computer labs were retired.

Figure 6. Use of new public computers at PPL
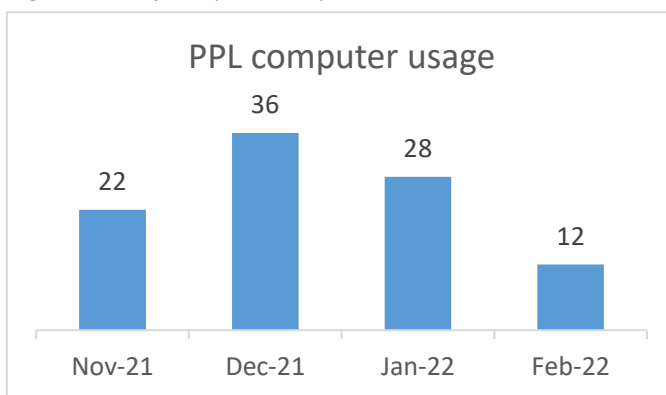
In the evaluator's end user survey, 70% of respondents said that public access computers are an important library service for their family, and 90% of those who use public access computers at PPL report that they are "very satisfied" with the service. See appendix G for the detailed end user survey report. Statistics on computer use at PPL since the new machines were installed show use to be on the rise until COVID closures in January and negatively impacted use.

Due to pandemic restrictions on holding group classes, PPL has not conducted the planned group computer training classes. However, staff have trained patrons one-on-one as they come to the computer area. Statistics on one-on-one assistance were not kept. The evaluator recommends tracking this in the future.

Each year the MOE and PPL organize a mandatory three- to four-day summer workshop for all public school librarians that provides training on use of the OPAC, how to conduct online research, and advanced computing skills. Staff from special and private libraries are also invited to attend, and there are typically 20-25 participants. Such training is needed annually because school libraries have high staff turnover and new hires are left without basic library skills until they can attend.

In the evaluator's stakeholder survey, 54% of respondents cited the high impact of improving technology infrastructure. When asked to consider future ways LSTA funds could have impact, respondents had a number of ideas, some of which related to technology. One theme that emerged was ongoing and expanded support for technology, including expanding to technology beyond computer hardware and software. See Appendix E for the detailed stakeholder survey report. At the same time, a school library interviewee in an outlaying state reflected on the tradeoff between technology and books. While the technology is necessary and helpful, the staff person viewed additional print books as a more critical resource for the rest of the five-year cycle than additional computers.

In the evaluator's end user survey of PPL users, the top three services that respondents said are important to them relate to the library's technology: 90% listed "completing school work or researching schools (which often includes use of public computing and the internet), 80% listed "printing, photocopy, scanning, typing & laminating," and 70% listed "computers for internet access." While only 40% listed "Workshops and trainings (such as computers, typing, or researching)" as important to them, this training is another crucial aspect of the library's technology support. When asked how well these services met their needs, 90% reported that they are "very satisfied" with services for completing school work or researching schools, and computers for internet access. A lower number, 70%, were "very satisfied" with printing, photocopy, scanning, typing, & laminating, and only 50% were "very satisfied" with workshops and training. No one reported being dissatisfied with these services, but there is room to grow, particularly with the 40% of respondents who are only "somewhat satisfied" with technology-related trainings. The survey also asked what programs or services respondents would like the library to begin offering in the next five years that it does not already, and 40% of respondents requested that the library allow patrons to charge their personal devices (phones, laptops, tablets) at the library, which can be considered a technology-related service. Public computing, free internet access, and printing, photocopying, and scanning services were all cited as essential services that the library should continue offering. See Appendix G for the detailed end user survey report.

Table 2 shows the programs, target outputs, target outcomes, and evaluation methods set forth for goal 2 in PPL's Five-Year Plan. The evaluator identifies whether each has been completed, partly completed, is incomplete, or if assessment of completion was not possible.

Table 2. Completion rate table for Goal 2

Goal 2. Programs (activities)	Unable to assess	Incomplete	Partly complete	Complete
Purchase thirty (30) computers and related accessories for the use of training librarians, students and community and will be placed at the library for library patrons to use				X
Develop training program schedule for OPAC, advance use of computers, and online research skills.		X		
Create training packets for each librarian to use upon return to their libraries to train local teachers, students, and community members.		X		
Conduct training for Palau librarians on the use of OPAC to catalog and search for library materials, and online research techniques for them to be able to provide trainings for students and the community.		X		
Librarians will conduct training programs for students and the community on computer literacy skills, advance use of computers, the use of OPAC to search for library materials, and internet research techniques.			X	

Output targets	Unable to assess	Incomplete	Partly complete	Complete
Increased computer training programs for patrons		X		
Computers and related accessories will be purchased for Palau libraries, which will be used for accessing the OPAC and internet resources				X
Number of patrons using the computers in the library				X
Number of new library materials catalogued				X
Number of new library users				X
Number of patrons using new tools and services	X			
Outcome Targets	**Unable to assess**	**Incomplete**	**Partly complete**	**Complete**
Library staff will acquire the knowledge and new skills to apply in their work.		X		
Patrons will use the knowledge and skills learned from the training programs in their school, home or at work place and also be able to find information that are not available in physical collection	X			
Computers will be available for patrons to use, and use for trainings as needed.				X
Patrons will be able to do more online activities and have more online resources to use.				X
Evaluation Methods	**Unable to assess**	**Incomplete**	**Partly complete**	**Complete**
Survey for library staff, students, teachers, and the community will be provided to assess the knowledge and understanding of the OPAC-library online catalog, advance use of computers, and online research skills.		X		
Survey for all librarians will be provided at the beginning and end of the each of the workshops asking participants baseline questions in order to gauge the knowledge and skills gained.		X		
Survey will also be conducted six months after the completion of each training programs in order to assess continued use and implementation of the skills taught and impact on the quality and availability of library services being newly offered or improved through participation in the workshops.		X		

Monthly statistic reports of cataloged materials, collection usage, circulated materials and number of patrons using the library computers will be provided.				X

Three of PPL's five goal 2 projects related to this training and were incomplete because the pandemic caused the annual summer librarian training to be cancelled in 2020 and 2021. However, it will be offered again beginning in the summer of 2022, so while currently incomplete, there will be an opportunity within the evaluation period to complete these three programs for FFY2022. Due to limited internet access and speed, as well as cultural practices strongly favoring in-person training, staff do not believe it would be effective to offer this training virtually. Librarian-led technology training programs for the public has been marked as "partly complete" because PPL staff are providing one-on-one trainings to computer users during this period when group classes are restricted.

The majority of output targets for this goal were completed, though no data was tracked that could identify the number of patrons using new tools and services. It was unclear what new tools or services referenced in the Five-Year Plan, and the wording should be clarified if this target remains in the next plan. As for outcome targets, half were achieved and half were not. Some of the targets were not true outcomes, and can be corrected in the next Five-Year Plan. The first outcome was not completed due to the cancelled summer librarian training. No data was collected that would allow the second outcome to be evaluated; additionally, the wording in the latter half is confusing and should be clarified in the next Plan.

As for evaluation methods, the first was not completed and the pandemic hindered the second and third due to cancellation of the summer librarian training program and inability to teach group technology classes to the public. The fourth evaluation method was completed.

GOAL 3: PROVIDE TRAININGS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR LIBRARIANS

As of March 2022, no LSTA funds have been expended on goal 3, mainly because the borders of Palau have been closed due to the global pandemic. This caused library staff to be unable to travel to professional development opportunities off island, and trainers were not able to be flown on island. Time zones, cultural practices and preferences, and internet connectivity across Palau make virtual trainings a difficult alternative. According to MOE staff, in-person interactions are culturally preferred in order to build trust, particularly during first contact with a trainer. Most staff are additionally unfamiliar with virtual training formats, and some past virtual training efforts on the part of the MOE have had limited success compared to in-person trainings. Many school librarians in outlaying states cannot depend on a reliable internet connection needed for virtual trainings, and most synchronous professional development options are offered in time zones that fall outside of work hours for Palau. According to interviews with staff, librarians in Palau did not take part in any professional development – including free opportunities or those otherwise not provided through LSTA funding – during the evaluation period.

Figure 7. IMLS-funded attendees at a prior PIALA conference

IMLS approved funds planned for goal 3 to be transferred to goals 1 and 2 in FFY2020. While no LSTA funds were spent on professional development since Palau joined the Grants to States program, IMLS funds from the PCP program have long been used in support of professional development. For example, prior to COVID in FFY2019, 65.6% of Palau's PCP IMLS funding went to professional development. PCP performance reports reviewed by the evaluator show that in each year FFY2017 to FFY2019, PCP funds were used to send a rotating group of Palauan librarians to the PIALA conference, as well as to send two staff members to the annual IMLS conference in Hawai'i and to send two rotating staff members to the American Library Association conference. These funds were also used to support the annual MOE-mandated summer training workshop for librarians, discussed under goal 2. MOE staff hope that Palau's borders will open later in 2022, allowing FFY2021 and FFY2022 LSTA funds to be used in support of goal 3.

In the evaluator's stakeholder survey, 46% of respondents discussed the positive impact of IMLS funds spent previously on professional development. One respondent reported that, "Trainings and professional development has help me to better the library services," and another said that "As a librarian, I had the experience of benefiting from LSTA programs. It help[ed] most of us librarians to received professional developments." In interviews, one library staff member highlighted the important role IMLS funds have played in supporting CE in the past, "professional development provided by the PCP grant, it really helps. It's been a huge assistance to the libraries in Palau."

Table 3 shows the programs, target outputs, target outcomes, and evaluation methods set forth for goal 3 in PPL's Five-Year Plan. The evaluator identifies whether each has been completed, partly completed, is incomplete, or if assessment of completion was not possible.

Table 3 Completion rate table for Goal 3

Goal 3. Programs (activities)	Unable to assess	Incomplete	Partly complete	Complete
Professional development training opportunities for Palau librarians will be offered in a variety of ways. We will use the training the trainer method, and we will focus on the actual needs of the Palau libraries and librarians		X		
Seek and attend off-island professional development workshops/trainings and conferences in order to both increase the on-island knowledge and expertise and allow for experts who will be available to Palauan libraries in the long-term		X		

Trained librarian will provide training programs for all librarians in Palau based on library trainings and conferences acquired		X		
Output targets	**Unable to assess**	**Incomplete**	**Partly complete**	**Complete**
The head librarians and the library specialist will research and select relevant training for library staff in Palau		X		
At least one library staff from each of the Palau libraries will complete at least one professional development training for each year in line with the work they are doing for the library.		X		
Head librarian and library specialist will provide opportunities for trainings needed.		X		
Number of workshop and conferences attended.				X
Number of trainings provided on-island				X
Number of library staff attended				X
Outcome Targets	**Unable to assess**	**Incomplete**	**Partly complete**	**Complete**
Library staff will demonstrate and implement the knowledge and new skills in their workplace		X		
Library staff will be up-to-date in the new library information and technology in the 21st century skills		X		
Library services and programs will be improved	X			
Students and the community will experience the quality and availability of library services being improved	X			
Palau will have more trained and experienced library workers.		X		
Evaluation Methods	**Unable to assess**	**Incomplete**	**Partly complete**	**Complete**
Library staff will greatly benefit from training the trainer's method, and networking with other professionals when attending off-island library professional trainings and conference.		X		
Training and conference participants will submit a trip report summarizing conference activities and share with other Palau librarians what they learned through a formal workshop presentation, to be held in conjunction with PAL meetings.		X		

Survey will be provided to measure the patron's satisfaction, comments and feedbacks of library services and programs.			X	
Survey from library staff on the effectiveness and quality of the trainings and conferences.		X		

None of the programs under goal 3 in the Five-Year Plan were able to be completed due to Palau's closed borders during the evaluation cycle and other reasons discussed in the section above. Half of the output targets were technically successfully completed, though the counts for all three are zero. Meeting output targets was not possible due to the cancellation of in-person professional development opportunities and the fact that no one participated in virtual professional development. Most outcome and evaluation targets were also impossible to complete due to the lack of professional development and impact of the pandemic. Not all outcome are outcomes and not all evaluation techniques are evaluation methods, as written in the Plan. This can be corrected in the forthcoming Plan. One evaluation method was marked as partially complete: "Survey will be provided to measure the patron's satisfaction, comments and feedbacks of library services and programs." The evaluator worked together with PPL to distribute an end user survey in December 2021 through January 2022 that collected such feedback; however, ideally this type of feedback would be collected without the evaluator and on a more frequent basis.

This report would be remiss not to mention the role that PAL often plays in professional development. Established in 1994, PAL brings together all types of librarians in Palau, with efforts focused primarily on providing CE for library staff and creating a professional support network for library workers. For example, in 2018, PAL organized local agencies and an external trainer from Hawaii and put on a week-long training workshop for librarians including training on customer service, collection development, program and activity planning, and grant writing.

GOAL 4: MAINTAIN, ENHANCE, AND PROMOTE THE ONLINE PUBLIC ACCESS CATALOG

No funds were expended on goal 4 in FFY2020 due to the unexpected absence of annual fees associated with the OPAC, and the IMLS approved the transfer of funds planned for goal 4 to goals 1 and 2. Typically, PPL pays an annual licensing fee for the Follett Destiny OPAC service. In FFY2020, OPAC services were moved to a cloud platform and staff believe that due to this transition, the expected annual fees were delayed. PPL plans to use LSTA FFY2021 and FFY2022 funds to support the OPAC.

IMLS funds made available through the PCP have been used for over a dozen years to support the Palau Union Catalog (PUC).[16] PUC is a shared OPAC that has allowed libraries of all types across Koror as well as in outlying states with internet connections to establish and access a growing electronic network of library resources based primarily at PCC and PPL. Currently, three OPAC instances are funded with LSTA funds (PPL, PCC, and a shared instance for all elementary school libraries) and one instance is self-funded (Belau National Museum (BNM)). In the past, as many as six instances were funded with IMLS dollars, but both BNM and the National Congress Library (NCL) instances were able

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[16] https://palau.follettdestiny.com/common/welcome.jsp?context=saas906_8501185

to take over funding and free up IMLS funds for other purposes. The cost of membership when paid without LSTA-support is not insignificant and can be problematic for libraries: for example, after the NCL became self-funded, it subsequently had to request to leave the shared catalog service due to the non-subsidized annual fee.[17]

In an interview conducted by the evaluator, a school librarian reflected on the value the OPAC provides to their library via the basic yet critical ability to keep track of books, which otherwise go missing. For a rural library with only a few hundred books in its collection, the ability afforded by PUC to find a book required by a patron at another location and request it is of high value. Additionally, professional development around use of the OPAC (discussed under goal 2) has proved very helpful to staff at different types of libraries around Palau.

Figure 8. Online interface for the Palau Union Catalog (PUC)
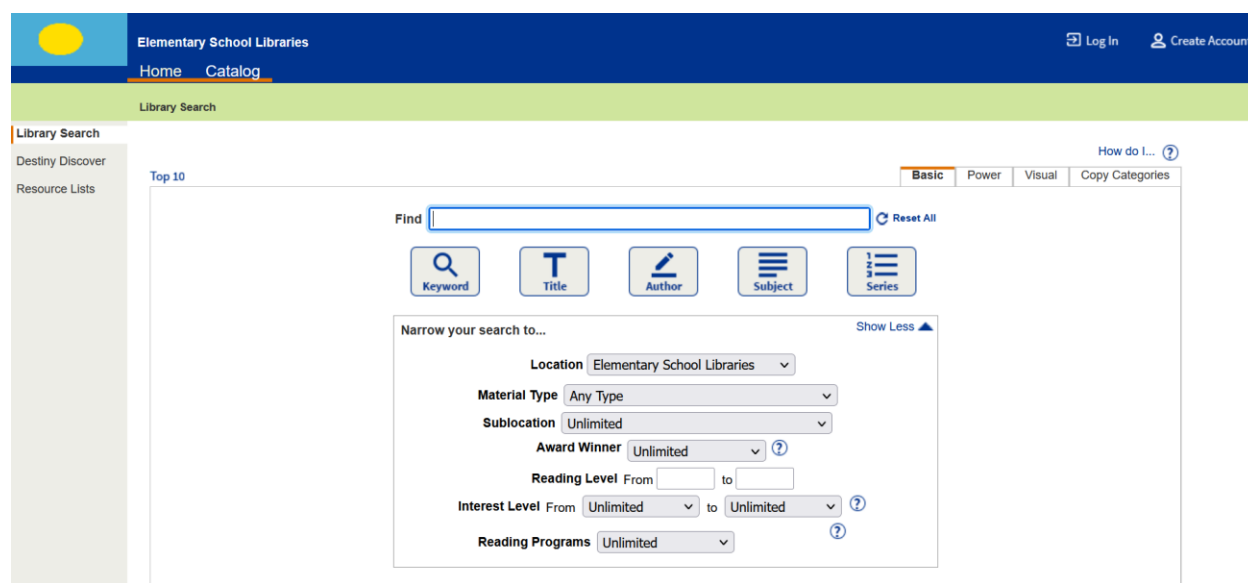
While the OPAC was implemented over a dozen years ago with a shared instance for the schools, Palau's library community has been challenged by the barrier of cataloging school library materials. Over time, only a handful of the school libraries have cataloged any of their materials and only one library (GBH Elementary, the largest in Palau) consistently catalogues the majority of its materials. High turnover, cultural practices, lack of library science training, geographic distribution, internet reliability, and limited annual opportunities for cataloging training all contribute to this ongoing problem. Despite encouragements from PPL staff and trainings sessions and refreshers offered at summer workshops and PAL meetings, most school libraries have not catalogued their materials.

Table 4 shows the programs, target outputs, target outcomes, and evaluation methods set forth for goal 3 in PPL's Five-Year Plan. The evaluator identifies whether each has been completed, partly completed, is incomplete, or if assessment of completion was not possible.

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[17] The nature of this library is such that underwriting the $1,000+ fee comes into question every four years when elections occur and the administration changes. Both chambers of congress must approve the library's expenditures, and if one chamber holds up the payment, the ability to pay the licensing fee is derailed.

Table 4. Completion rate table for Goal 4

Goal 4. Programs (activities)	Unable to assess	Incomplete	Partly complete	Complete
Continue to renew and upgrade the three sites connected to the PUC OPAC				X
Conduct training on the PUC OPAC once a year for all library staff to re-fresh and keep up to date with upgrade system		X		
Expand and recruit other libraries in Palau that are not connected to connect to OPAC		X		
Output targets	**Unable to assess**	**Incomplete**	**Partly complete**	**Complete**
Increasing number of new library materials cataloged			X	
Increasing number of member patrons				X
Statistic data of library materials circulated			X	
Statistics data on inventory of library collection			X	
Outcome Targets	**Unable to assess**	**Incomplete**	**Partly complete**	**Complete**
Library patrons will be able locate and obtain library resources through OPAC				X
Library patrons will report or share the improvement of the use of OPAC in searching, locating, and reserving books online	X			
Patrons will be able to search for availability of local library materials from anywhere in the world through OPAC.				X
Evaluation Methods	**Unable to assess**	**Incomplete**	**Partly complete**	**Complete**
Library monthly report of the usage of the OPAC, number of cataloged library materials, number of patron's member, and number of circulated materials will be provided				X
Statistical reports on library programs and training using the OPAC will be provided.				X

OPAC trainings were unable to be held due to gathering limits set by the government due to the pandemic. While PAL continues to believe it should be a goal to expand the OPAC to more libraries, these efforts were not undertaken due to the pandemic either. In terms of outputs, the target to increase the number of items catalogued was partly complete because while PPL, PCC, BNM, and one or two school libraries did continue to catalog new materials, many school libraries did not catalog materials. Similarly, statistical data on circulation and inventory is marked as partly complete because of non-participation by many school libraries in the catalog. Until materials are catalogued, there is no way to run reports on inventories or use of materials at the school libraries. Two of three outcome

targets were complete. Library patrons[18] are almost uniquely interested in materials held at PCC, PPL, and BNM. These patrons are able to use the OPAC to find these materials from anywhere in the world. However, no data was collected to support assessment of the third outcome measure: whether the user experience improved for searching, locating, and reserving books via the OPAC.

A-2 ALIGNMENT WITH MEASURING SUCCESS FOCAL AREAS AND INTENTS

Retrospective question A-2 asks: "To what extent did your Five-Year Plan activities achieve results that address national priorities associated with the Measuring Success focal areas and their corresponding intents?"

Lifelong learning: Goals 1 and 2 both achieved results related to Lifelong Learning. Goal 1 increased patrons' general knowledge and skills by purchasing books to teach children about the natural sciences and environment in Palau, as well as bilingual books to help children learn both English and Palauan. Goal 2 aligned with the intent of improving users' formal education by funding the only desktop computers available in elementary and secondary school libraries across Palau to be used in pursuit of formal education.

Information Access: Goals 2 and 4 achieved results related to increasing ability to discover, obtain, and use information resources. Goal 4 aligns with the intent to improve users' ability to discover information resources and the intent to obtain information resources. While circumstances created a one-off situation in which no LSTA funds were expended on goal 4 in FFY2020, FFY2021 and FFY2022 funds will fund online access to the PUC shared catalog, and the OPAC allows librarians to track materials, patrons to discover materials, and facilitates the sharing of materials between libraries to meet patron needs. Goal 2 also affords the ability to discover information resources by providing the only computers in libraries across Palau.

Institutional Capacity: Goal 3 focuses on staff professional development, aligning with the intent to improve the library workforce. Unfortunately, the pandemic caused PPL to be unable to expend FFY2020 funds for professional development, but FFY2021 and FFY2022 funds will be expended under goal 3. Goal 4 aligns with the intent to improve library operations via the shared OPAC.

Economic and employment development, Human services, & Civic engagement: Funds were not spent in direct relation to these national priorities.

A-3 GROUPS REPRESENTING A SUBSTANTIAL FOCUS

Retrospective question A-3 asks: "Did any of the following groups represent a substantial focus for your Five-Year Plan activities?" According to the IMLS' definitions of the groups, three of the groups made up a substantial focus of PPL's LSTA expenditures. Two of these groups are based not on a calculatable 10% threshold, but on population thresholds in Palau.

Group	Yes/No
Library workforce (current and future)	No
Individuals living below the poverty line	Yes
Individuals that are unemployed/underemployed	No

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[18] The word "patrons" in the Plan refers to patrons other than children at their school libraries

Ethnic or minority populations	Yes
Immigrants/refugees	No
Individuals with disabilities	No
Individuals with limited functional literacy or information skills	No
Families	No
Children (aged 0-5)	No
School-aged youth (aged 6-17)	Yes

Individuals living below the poverty line: While U.S. federal government poverty guidelines are not defined for Palau, the IMLS directs evaluators to use the poverty guidelines for the contiguous states and D.C. for the purposes of the LSTA Evaluations.[19] Palau is not part of the current U.S. Census,[20] but the Republic of Palau's Ministry of Finance Office of Planning & Statistics conducts a periodic Household income and Expenditures Survey. According to the most recent public data from 2014,[21] the average household income is $25,600 a year, and the average household's cash income in rural areas is less than $17,000 a year.[22] The distribution of income throughout the population demonstrates a high degree of income inequality, with the poorest 50% of households accounting for only 15% of the total household income. While there is no data on the number of household members for Palau, the U.S. 2021 poverty guidelines are $26,500 for a family of four: more than the entire average household income for Palau. A majority of LSTA expenditures in Palau for public and school libraries is therefore considered to be expended for the benefit of individuals living below the poverty line.

Ethnic or minority populations: Virtually all residents of Palau are part of ethnic/minority populations, according to definitions of such groups by the IMLS.[23] The majority of the population (65%) lives on the island of Koror, and while 75% of the population is native Palauan, foreign workers and citizens of other countries make up the remaining quarter of the population, including 16% of the population from the Philippines.[24]

School-aged youth (ages 6-17): A significant amount of the PPL's use is by students and school-aged children, and PPL is the official school library for the only high school in Palau. Furthermore, LSTA funds

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[19] US government Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation 2021 Poverty Guidelines: https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines/prior-hhs-poverty-guidelines-federal-register-references/2021-poverty-guidelines#threshholds. The US federal government poverty guidelines are not defined for Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, or Palau. In cases in which a Federal program using the poverty guidelines serves any of those jurisdictions, the Federal office which administers the program is responsible for deciding whether to use the contiguous-states-and-D.C. guidelines for those jurisdictions or to follow some other procedure.

[20] Palau was included in the US Census from the 1970s to the 1990s, but this ended after independence was achieved in 1994.

[21] "2014 Household Income and Expenditure Survey." Office of Planning and Statistics, Bureau of Budget & Planning, Ministry of Finance, Palau. https://www.palaugov.pw/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/2014-ROP-HIES.pdf

[22] In Palau, "cash income" loosely equates to income from salaries and wages, as most people are paid for work in cash.

[23] Email correspondence from IMLS staff to Sandra Stanley of the Guam Public Library System on February 12, 2017 indicated that the Pacific island populations would fall into the categories of ethnic and minority populations.

[24] "Palau Public Library Five-Year Plan 2020-2022." http://www.imls.gov/sites/default/files/state-profiles/plans/palau5yearplan.pdf

support all public school libraries within Palau. Of FFY2020 funds, 26.6% went to collection materials and back-to-school programming directed at school-aged youth under goal 1, and 18 of the 38 new computers and accessories purchased with the remaining 73.4% of funds under goal 2 went to school libraries supporting school-aged youth.

PROCESS QUESTIONS

B-1. How have you used any data from the State Program Report (SPR) and elsewhere (e.g., Public Libraries Survey) to guide activities included in the Five-Year Plan?

The Republic of Palau received LSTA funding for the first time in FFY2020. PPL has no SPR data prior to FFY2020. Palau is not part of the Public Libraries Survey.

B-2. Specify any changes you made to the Five-Year Plan, and why this occurred.

No changes have been formally made to the Plan. However, travel restrictions in place for the pandemic caused PPL to be unable to expend funds as expected under goal 3, Professional Development. Additionally, an earlier-than-expected system upgrade for the OPAC into a cloud environment resulted in an unexpected lack of an OPAC licensing fee in FFY2020. The IMLS approved a reallocation of funds from these two goals into goals 1 and 2.

B-3. How and with whom have you shared data from the old and new SPR and from other evaluation resources?

The Republic of Palau received LSTA funding for the first time in FFY2020. PPL has no SPR data prior to FFY2020, and no additional evaluation resources to share.

METHODOLOGY

C-1. Identify how PPL implemented an independent Five-Year Evaluation using the criteria described in the section of this guidance document called "Selection of an Independent Evaluator."

This was the first time that the Republic of Palau participated in the IMLS Five-Year Planning and Evaluation process. PPL staff consulted with fellow Pacific Islands and selected Ms. Chapman, who had conducted several evaluations for the Outlying Territories in the last Five-Year Evaluation Cycle. Ms. Chapman has over a decade of experience working in assessment and data analysis in academic, state, and consortial libraries. She worked as the Data Analysis & Communications Consultant and State Data Coordinator in the Library Development office of the State Library of North Carolina, and has currently served for eight years as the Assessment Analyst & Consultant at Duke University Libraries. Ms. Chapman conducted the LSTA Five-Year Evaluations in the previous cycle for the Commonwealth of

the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, and the Guam, and thus has valuable understanding of the different challenges facing Territories and Freely Associated States compared to U.S. states.

C-2. Describe the types of statistical and qualitative methods (including administrative records) used in conducting the Five-Year Evaluation. Assess their validity and reliability.

The evaluator has an extensive background in survey design. She worked with library staff to design and deploy two anonymous surveys: a web survey for library stakeholders and a paper-based survey for library patrons. The evaluator additionally undertook one-on-one interviews with staff at the Ministry of Education, PPL, school libraries, and the NCL. The evaluator reviewed SPR data, photographs of library spaces, and administrative documents; analyzed demographic and other data, and spoke with staff to determine the extent to which program targets, target outputs, and target outcomes had been met.

C-3. Describe the stakeholders involved in the stages of the evaluation and how you engaged them.

The evaluator did not perform an on-site visit, as the borders of Palau were closed due to the global pandemic. The evaluator met with stakeholders regularly via Zoom from October 2021 through March 2022. The evaluator worked primarily with Head Librarian Mary Arius and additionally met several times with staff at the Ministry of Education: Aileen Mikel, Chief of Division of School Management, and Raynold Mechol, Director of the Bureau of Education Administration. The evaluator also performed one-on-one interviews with stakeholders. The evaluator produced a list of information, data, and documents that would assist in the evaluation process. Staff delivered data and documents via email and involved other staff members at the library as needed to find data and information necessary for the evaluation process. The evaluator offered use of a cloud-based file sharing system, but staff had not previously used the tool and were more comfortable emailing information. Additionally, two anonymous surveys were distributed to engage end users and stakeholders respectively.

C-4. Discuss how you will share the key findings and recommendations with others.

PPL plans to share key report findings and recommendations during various meetings with stakeholders, as well as with the public on the Ministry of Education and PPL Facebook pages.

PLANNING FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

Palau will submit its next LSTA Five-Year Plan for 2023-2027 by June 2022. Below are some suggestions that may assist in the planning process. There is no requirement for PPL to use any of these suggestions in the next Five-Year Plan.

SETTING GOALS

In FFY2020, a good deal of goal 1 funding was used to support programming and outreach instead of collection development. Comments in response to both the stakeholder and end user surveys discussed the importance of programming and a desire to see increased funding for programming and outreach. Incorporating programming and outreach as a unique goal in the next Five-Year Plan could be considered. Alternatively, if programming support will continue as part of goal 1, goal 1 could be reworded to include programming activities. Currently goal 1 only targets collection development for libraries.

It is desirable for funds to be expended in each goal area during each five-year cycle. Interviews conducted by the evaluator indicate that computer upgrades may only take place once every five years in the future, and these were the extent of goal 2 expenditures in FFY2020. Depending on what year the upgrades occur, they may fall outside the three years that are typically included in each cycle's evaluation. If PPL plans to fund only computer hardware and software upgrades under goal 2 in the future, one option to consider is combining goal 2 and goal 4 into a single technology-related goal that funds the OPAC and computer upgrades as different projects. Because the OPAC has an annual fee, PPL could be assured of annual expenditures in this area.

SETTING APPROPRIATE OUTPUT AND OUTCOME TARGETS, AND EVALUATION METHODS

An *output* tells the measurable story of what an organization does or produces – these are countable targets such as the number of patrons served or programs taught. Outputs are direct products of program activities, usually measured in terms of work accomplished.[25] An *outcome* measures benefit or change – change in attitudes, behavior, knowledge, skills, or an improved condition or state – for individuals or populations during or after participation in library programming or using library services. Outcome data is used as proof of effectiveness or impact, and are typically harder to quantify than outputs. Some of the target outputs and outcomes in the 2020-2022 Five-Year Plan are not actually outputs and outcomes. For example, under goal 3, the first and third outputs are actually program activities ("The head librarian and the library specialist will research and select relevant training for library staff in Palau," and "Head librarian and library specialist will provide opportunities for trainings needed").

When setting outcomes, remember that each must be measurable, and the evaluation methods that you will use to measure outcomes (as well as outputs) should be documented in the "Evaluation Methods" section. In the next Five-Year Plan, consider developing fewer, more meaningful outputs.

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[25] http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2014/12/inputs-outputs-and-outcomes-oh-my/

For each proposed output and outcome ask yourselves the question, "how does this target help PPL and MOE staff assess the success of programs and services, or improve library operations?" If there is no clear answer, the target does not need to be tracked for the Five-Year Plan.

For outcomes tracking, the IMLS provides simple, brief outcome-based survey templates (see appendix H). For example, PPL can distribute a version of the questionnaire to each librarian who participate in LSTA-funded professional development. The results can be input in a Microsoft Excel file so that the number and percent of participants who report their knowledge increasing from professional development or their intent to apply the skills they learn can easily be reported. Once baseline data is collected, the library can develop goals around increasing the impact of trainings (e.g., "X% of staff will report they have learned new skills"). A new outcome target for goal 3 could be directly relate to the IMLS outcomes questionnaire, such as: "The majority of professional development participants will report that they have learned new skills by participating in trainings," or "Participants report that they intend to apply what they learned at their library."

TRACKING DATA AND REVIEWING THE PLAN

Track the data over time that will be needed to identify whether output and outcome targets have been met. In some instances, it is not possible to recreate this data at a later date. For example, the four output targets listed in goal 3 under the current Plan could be evaluated with a single spreadsheet that tracks the name of every staff person participating in professional development, the library where they work, the name of the professional development opportunity in which they participated, the date of the training, the name of the trainer, and the location of the training.

Bring staff together to review the Five-Year Plan on an annual basis. What progress has been made towards each goal? Do modifications need to be made to the Plan? Is data being tracked that can measure output and outcome target listed in the Plan and if not, what steps can be taken to begin tracking this data? Are the outcomes and outputs proving useful to management and evaluation of LSTA-funded operations or are different targets needed?

SURVEY INPUT FOR THE NEXT FIVE-YEAR PLAN

The interviews conducted and stakeholder and end user surveys distributed as part of this evaluation asked respondent to consider future ways LSTA funds could have impact, and respondents had a number of ideas that can be considered or further researched when developing the next Five-Year Plan. Some themes that emerged include a wide array of new books for school libraries; continuing to support professional development, an increase in funding for public programming; ongoing and expanded support for technology, including expanding to technology beyond computer hardware and software; expansion of the OPAC to more libraries; and increasing the variety and type of reading materials available in libraries through increased collection development support. Below is a list of ideas from library stakeholders:[26]

- Ongoing programming support

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[26] See appendix E for the full report of findings from the survey of staff and stakeholders. See appendix D for the survey instrument.

- Expanded technology support
- STEM programming
- Continued and expanded OPAC support
- More variety of new lending materials
- Library-provided training in use of technology
- Funding for private school libraries, including bringing them into the shared catalog
- Extended formats of lending materials beyond physical books
- Annual customer service training for all library staff
- Increased outreach programs to promote reading for children

In response to the evaluator's end user survey, 40% of respondents used one of the free text questions to request that the library allow patrons to charge their personal devices (phones, laptops, tablets) at the library. This was the most requested service. Other requests for future services include:[27]

- Expand bookmobile service areas beyond schools, to community locations
- Faster internet connection
- Collaborate with NGOs to offer more creative programs for young people
- More books, and more updated books and resources
- More family-oriented reading programs
- More library activities
- Increased outreach
- To be able to bring food, drinks, and bags into the library

The services that respondents believe are very important for the library to continue offering, or to expand include:

- Programs including After School Tutoring, Summer Reading, Read Aloud, Early Literacy Reading Hour, Storytime, Reading Challenge
- Public computing
- Free community internet access
- Bookmobile services
- Printing, photocopying, scanning, and laminating services

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[27] See appendix G for the full report of findings from the survey of end users. See appendix F for the survey instrument.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: ACRONYMS

ALA   American Library Association

AS   Associate of Science degree

ATL   Acting Territorial Librarian

BNM   Belau National Museum

CE   Continuing Education

DOE   U.S. Department of Education

FFY   Federal Fiscal Year

GBH   George B. Harris Elementary School

IMLS   Institute for Museum and Library Services

LSTA   Library Services and Technology Act

MOE   Palau Ministry of Education

NCL   National Congress Library

OPAC   Online Public Access Catalog

PCC   Palau Community College

PCP   Pacific Competitive Program (IMLS program dissolved in 2019)

PIALA   Pacific Islands Association of Libraries, Archives, and Museums

PLS   Public Library Survey

PNCC   Palau National Communications Corporation

PPL   Palau Public Library

PUC   Palau Union Catalog (Palau's shared OPAC)

SLAA   State Library Administrative Agency

SPR   State Program Reports

VHF   Very High Frequency

APPENDIX B: LIST OF PEOPLE INTERVIEWED

1. Mary Arius, Head Librarian, Palau Public Library
2. Raynold Mechol, Director of the Bureau of Education Administration (former LSTA Project Director), Ministry of Education
3. Aileen Mikel, Chief of Division of School Management and LSTA Project Director, Ministry of Education
4. Reilly Hideos, School Librarian at Ngaraard Elementary School
5. Pasquana Tirso, National Congress Librarian

APPENDIX C: DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

- Records on books purchased with LSTA funds
- Inventory of technology purchased with LSTA funds and location of technology
- OPAC circulation reports for the public library - FY20 through January 2022
- Visitor counts during the evaluation period
- Computer usage statistics, PPL
- Materials (handouts, booklet, etc.) used for the advanced OPAC training course for library staff
- List of PPL staff names and position titles, as well as whether they are part time or full time
- Monthly statistical reports on number of patrons using the computers (November 2021 - February 2022)
- Pacific Competitive Program Final Performance Reports for Palau, FFY2017-FFY2019
- PPT presentation on Palau Libraries presented at the 2018 IMLS conference in Hawaii by Raynold Mechol and Mary Arius.
- Photographs and promotional materials for the July 2021 library Back-to-School program
- Photographs of PPL
- Circulation records from Ngaraard Elementary School library for FFY2020 LSTA-funded books
- Institute of Museum and Library Services State Program Report reports
- US government Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. 2021 Poverty Guidelines: https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines/prior-hhs-poverty-guidelines-federal-register-references/2021-poverty-guidelines#threshholds
- 2014 Household Income and Expenditure Survey. Office of Planning and Statistics, Bureau of Budget & Planning, Ministry of Finance, Palau. https://www.palaugov.pw/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/2014-ROP-HIES.pdf
- 2015 Census of Population, Housing, and Agriculture of the Republic of Palau. Volume 1 Basic Tables. Office of Planning and Statistics, Bureau of Budget and Planning, Ministry of Finance, Palau. https://www.palaugov.pw/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/2015-Census-of-Population-Housing-Agriculture-.pdf
- www.PalauGov.pw – Bureau of Budget & Planning
  - Statistical Publications https://www.palaugov.pw/executive-branch/ministries/finance/budgetandplanning/#Publications
- Palau Ministry of Education website: http://173.230.128.80/?p=Schools&p1=Public%20Schools
- Palau Association of Libraries Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/groups/2013351115398578/

Palau Public Library 5-year LSTA Evaluation

Stakeholder questionnaire

Every five years, each state library administrative agency that receives federal funding from the United States government is required to conduct an independent evaluation of its implementation of the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) "Grants to States" program. This evaluation must be submitted in order to qualify for ongoing federal funding. The Palau Public Library (PPL) joined the Grants to States program in FY2020 and is conducting this evaluation now. We'd like your help in assessing the impact of the federal funds provided by the LSTA program on the library and the people that the library serves. Thank you in advance for helping the public library serve the community better!

Beginning in FY2020, Palau Public Library (PPL) received a little over $68,000 in LSTA Grants to States funding each year. In the first year, PPL spent roughly 27% of LSTA funds on *Goal 1, to update and expand library collection development*, including purchasing new books and materials for all libraries, cataloging and processing the new materials, and making them available to students and the public. PPL spent roughly 74% of LSTA funds on *Goal 2, to acquire and upgrade Palau libraries technology infrastructure*, including purchasing new library computers and training library staff on use of the online library catalog. Goals 3 and 4 will be addressed with FY2021 and FY2022 funds. Goal 3 is to provide trainings and professional development for librarians and Goal 4 is to maintain, enhance, and promote the Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC).

Think back over the past two years. Which of the program mentioned above have had the greatest impact on your library and community? (The programs are: "Update and expand library collection development," "Acquire and upgrade Palau libraries technology infrastructure," "Provide trainings and professional development for librarians," and "maintain, enhance, and promote the Online Public Access Catalog")

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Think ahead to the next five years. Are there changes in the way that LSTA dollars are invested that you think would significantly improve library services in Palau? If so, what are they and how would they make a difference? (LSTA funding cannot be used for construction or facilities).

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please feel free to offer any additional comments about PPL's LSTA program. What do you like or dislike about the program? What could be improved?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

My role is... (select all that apply)

☐ Palau Public Library staff

☐ School library staff

☐ Partner agency or NGO

☐ Ministry of Education staff

☐ Teachers & faculty members

☐ Donor

☐ Community member

☐ Library volunteer

☐ Other. Please describe: _____

Report of findings
PPL staff & stakeholder survey
FY2020-FY2022 LSTA Evaluation

Joyce Chapman, Independent evaluator

As part of the FY2020-FY2022 LSTA Five-Year Plan evaluation process, the Palau Public Library (PPL) worked with independent evaluator Joyce Chapman to collect feedback from library staff and stakeholders via a web survey. The survey was built in Qualtrics survey software and distributed by the PPL Head Librarian via email. The survey ran from December 4th 2021 through January 2022. The goals of the survey were to assess the impact of the funds provided by the LSTA program on the library and the people that the library serves, and to inform the library's 2023-2027 Five-Year Plan for LSTA funds. The survey asked respondents how the LSTA program has benefited libraries and library users in FY2020 and to think about new ways in which LSTA funds could be invested in the future.

The four goals of the current LSTA Plan were shared with respondents in the survey's introduction, though expenditures have only been made in the first two areas to date:

- Goal 1: Goal 1, Update and expand library collection development
- Goal 2, to acquire and upgrade Palau libraries technology infrastructure
- Goal 3 Provide trainings and professional development for librarians
- Goal 4 Maintain, enhance, and promote the Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC)

PPL foresaw difficulty garnering survey responses due to the dual issues of the global pandemic and the limited availability of internet services (and therefore email) within the Republic of Palau. Despite issues of internet access for some stakeholders, a web survey was determined to be the best approach.

Respondents by role (multiple selection)

| Role	Percent
School library staff	38%
Teachers/faculty members	31%
Community member	15%
Parnter agency or NGO	15%
PCC	15%
PPL staff	15%
MOE staff	8%
Library volunteer	8%
Donor	8%
Other	8%
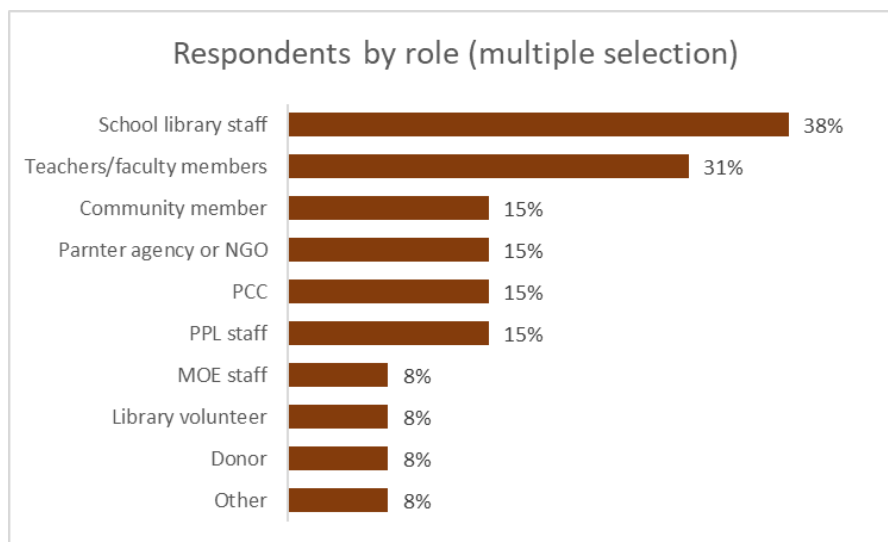
PPL received 13 responses to the survey, including responses from two of three PPL staff members. The largest group of respondents were school library staff, followed by teachers at schools and faculty members at the Palau Community College (PCC).

Prior to joining the LSTA Grants to States program in FY2020, the Republic of

Palau had long received limited IMLS funding via the IMLS' Pacific Competitive Program (PCP). There was understandably some confusion among stakeholder respondents differentiating between prior use of IMLS funds via the PCP and FY2020 LSTA expenditures. Some responses therefore discuss historic expenditures dating further back than FY2020; however, this is still useful as it points to what stakeholders value and how IMLS funds have had an impact.

The areas most frequently cited as highest impact were the two Goals that were funded in FY2020: 62% of respondents cited the high impact of collections development funding and 54% cited the high impact of improving technology infrastructure. Only one respondent (8%) discussed the OPAC, which had not been funded as part of the LSTA program. Of those respondents who praised funds for collection development, many were clearly thinking back to PCP funding of collections along with FY2020 LSTA expenditures. Comments about impact included, "most of our libraries are either outdated or need to be weed out from the shelf, but with this support, it provided a huge additional collections to our libraries collections of its much needed resources and materials" and, "the purchased new books has been a great change making the patrons excited and keep returning for the new books."
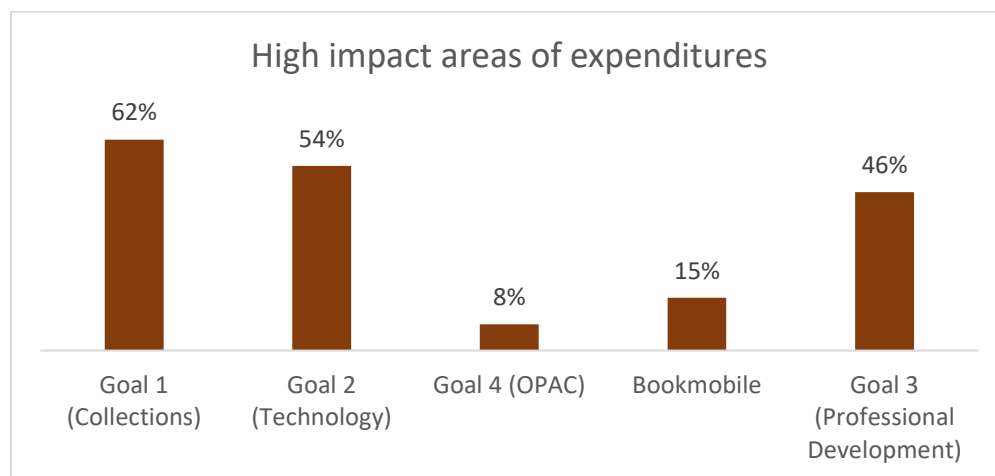
While no LSTA funds were spent on professional development since Palau joined the Grants to States program, 46% of respondents discussed the impact of IMLS funds spent previously in this area. One respondent said, "Trainings and professional development has help me to better the library services," and another said that "As a librarian, I had the experience of benefiting from LSTA programs. It help[ed] most of us librarians to received professional developments." The high impact of the bookmobile was discussed by two (15%) respondents, though its funding was unrelated to FFY2020-FFY2022 LSTA funds. The original bookmobile was purchased and equipped with PCP funds prior to Palau's entry to the LSTA program; the current bookmobile (a replacement) was funded via a grant from Japan in 2018. One librarian praised how, "we have…met the needs of the community and the underserved community through the bookmobile program."

When asked to consider future ways LSTA funds could have impact, respondents had a number of ideas. Some themes that emerged include an increase in funding for programming at libraries around Palau; ongoing and expanded support for technology, including expanding to technology beyond computer hardware and software; expansion of the OPAC to even more libraries; and increasing the variety and type of reading materials available in libraries through increased collection development support. Below are a list of ideas:

- Ongoing programming support
- Expanded technology support
- STEM programming
- Continued and expanded OPAC support
- More variety of new lending materials
- Library-provided training in use of technology
- Funding for private school libraries, including bringing them into the shared catalog
- Extended formats of lending materials beyond physical books
- Annual customer service training for all library staff
- Increased outreach programs to promote reading for children

Sample comments from this question include:

"Expand services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats, in all types of Libraries, for individuals of all ages in order to support such individuals needs for education, lifelong learning, workforce development and digital literacy skills. "

"Looking ahead to the upcoming years, I would very much appreciate if LSTA would continue to help Palau libraries with improving their material collections and upgrading their technologies. Without grants like LSTA, it would be difficult for the libraries to acquire new resources or use better technologies to do library programming and to provide quality services to our patrons."

One suggestion for improvement in the future was that PPL be more inclusive of other libraries in collection development decisions than they were in FY2020 when Goal 1 funds were used to purchase hundreds of copies of two books that were distributed to all libraries across the island: "I just hope that next year, we could work together and instead of them choosing books to order for our school, maybe we could work together and submit a list for those that are on demand books from our respective school library."

The final question provided a place for any additional comments. The majority of comments here were thanks for the IMLS' financial support. In the words of a school librarian, "these LSTA funds are investments that help Libraries deliver relevant and up to date services to the communities." A librarian from the Palau Community College said, "I appreciate so much what the LSTA grants has done to all libraries in Palau. We couldn't have done any of these without your funding assistance. Thank you very much, and another respondent closed with, "LSTA has help[ed] our small community libraries all throughout Palau through grants that gave us librarians the chance to improve our services and I hope that we continue to improve with your help to work in our community with every day advancement of our livelihood."

Library satisfaction survey

The Palau Public Library is assessing its services and gathering information to help plan for library services over the next five years. This survey will help us write a formal plan we will submit to the Institute of Museum and Library Services, a federal agency that provides us with funding each year. Your input will help shape future library services and the funding that supports them.

Which library services are most important to you and your family? (Check the boxes)

- ☐ Checking out materials (such as books)
- ☐ Access to electronic resources (such as journals or databases)
- ☐ Printing, photocopy, scanning, typing, & laminating
- ☐ Early literacy reading hour
- ☐ Storytelling, read aloud, & reading challenge program
- ☐ Summer reading program
- ☐ After school tutoring
- ☐ Meeting friends or relaxing
- ☐ Provide basic career training and assistance with school applications
- ☐ Computers for internet access
- ☐ Completing school work or researching schools
- ☐ Library/Educational games
- ☐ Workshops and trainings (such as computers, typing, or researching)
- ☐ Community program or meetings
- ☐ Bookmobile services
- ☐ Library tour and orientations

How satisfied are you with these services?

	Very dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied	N/A
Checking out materials (such as books)	○	○	○	○	○
Access to electronic resources (such as journals or databases)	○	○	○	○	○
Printing, photocopy, scanning, typing, & laminating	○	○	○	○	○

	Very dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied	N/A
Early literacy reading hour	○	○	○	○	○
Storytelling, read aloud, & reading challenge program	○	○	○	○	○
Summer Reading Program	○	○	○	○	○
After school tutoring	○	○	○	○	○
Meeting friends or relaxing	○	○	○	○	○
Provide basic career training and assistance with school applications	○	○	○	○	○
Computers for internet access	○	○	○	○	○
Completing school work or researching schools	○	○	○	○	○
Library/Educational games	○	○	○	○	○
Workshops and trainings (such as computers, typing, or researching)	○	○	○	○	○
Community program or meetings	○	○	○	○	○
Bookmobile services	○	○	○	○	○
Library tour and orientations	○	○	○	○	○

If you'd like to elaborate on why you were satisfied or unsatisfied with particular service in the question above, you may do so here.

For your family, what programs and services are most important for the library to continue, or to expand?

What programs or services would you like the library to begin offering in the next five years that it does not already?

What other feedback would you like to provide to the library?

Report of findings
PPL end user survey
FY2020-FY2022 LSTA Evaluation

Joyce Chapman, Independent evaluator

As part of the FY2020-FY2022 LSTA Five-Year Plan evaluation process, the Palau Public Library (PPL) worked with independent evaluator Joyce Chapman to collect feedback from PPL users via a paper survey. The survey was offered to patrons who visited PPL in January 2022; unfortunately, the Republic of Palau experienced COVID closures during this time as the omicron variant reached the island, and schools were closed for much of the month with many citizens abstaining from visiting the library and other indoor locations. PPL staff were only able to gather 10 survey responses. Nonetheless, the responses were helpful. The goals of the survey were to inform the library's 2023-2027 Five-Year Plan for LSTA funds. The survey asked respondents which library services are most important to them and their families, as well as their satisfaction with these services; what programs and services are most important for the library to continue or expand; and what programs or services they would like the library to begin offering in the next five years that it does not already. Respondents were also offered a place to provide any other comments about library services. This survey did not directly mention PPL's four LSTA Goals.

Findings

The survey asked which services were most important to them and their family. Above and beyond the circulation of library materials, three services stand out as the top most important: completing school work or researching schools; printing, photocopying, scanning, typing & laminating services; and public access computers.

Table 5. Which library services are most important to you and your family?

Service	Percent
Completing school work or researching schools	90%
Printing, photocopy, scanning, typing, & laminating	80%
Computers for internet access	70%
Checking out materials (such as books)	60%
Access to electronic resources (such as journals or databases)	60%
Summer reading program	60%
After school tutoring	60%
Meeting friends or relaxing	60%
Storytelling, read aloud, & reading challenge program	50%
Bookmobile services	50%

Provide basic career training and assistance with school applications	40%
Workshops and trainings (such as computers, typing, or researching)	40%
Community program or meetings	40%
Library tour and orientations	40%
Early literacy reading hour	20%
Library/Educational games	20%

Patrons were next asked how well the same services meet their needs. There were some services that mas many as half of respondents did not use, many related to younger children – this may simply be due to the nature of who was entering the library during the COVID crisis in January. Incorporating those responses into analysis can confuse the feedback, so two tables are shown below: one that includes N/A responses, and one that excludes them.

Table 6. How satisfied are you with the following services? ("N/A" responses included)

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied	N/A
Checking out materials (such as books)	0%	0%	30%	70%	0%
Access to electronic resources (such as journals or databases)	0%	10%	30%	60%	0%
Printing, photocopy, scanning, typing, & laminating	0%	0%	30%	70%	0%
Early literacy reading hour	0%	0%	10%	40%	50%
Storytelling, read aloud, & reading challenge program	0%	0%	0%	80%	20%
Summer reading program	0%	0%	20%	30%	50%
After school tutoring	0%	0%	30%	20%	50%
Meeting friends or relaxing	0%	0%	20%	80%	0%
Provide basic career training and assistance with school applications	0%	0%	30%	40%	30%
Computers for internet access	0%	0%	10%	90%	0%
Completing school work or researching schools	0%	0%	10%	90%	10%
Library/Educational games	0%	0%	40%	20%	50%
Workshops and trainings (such as computers, typing, or researching)	0%	0%	40%	50%	10%
Community program or meetings	0%	0%	30%	20%	50%
Bookmobile services	0%	0%	10%	60%	30%
Library tour and orientations	0%	0%	10%	50%	40%

When "N/A" responses are excluded and only the responses of service users are considered, satisfaction is high with almost all services. The services with the highest levels of "very satisfied" responses include Storytelling/read aloud/reading challenge; public computing, completing school work, and bookmobile services. The only service that registered some dissatisfaction was access to electronic resources. The

areas in which there are high level of only "somewhat satisfied" include library/educational games, basic career training and assistance with school applications, after school tutoring, and community programs/meetings.

Table 7. How satisfied are you with the following services? ("N/A" responses excluded from analysis)

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied
Checking out materials (such as books)	0%	0%	30%	70%
Access to electronic resources (such as journals or databases)	0%	10%	30%	60%
Printing, photocopy, scanning, typing, & laminating	0%	0%	30%	70%
Early literacy reading hour	0%	0%	20%	80%
Storytelling, read aloud, & reading challenge program	0%	0%	0%	100%
Summer reading program	0%	0%	40%	60%
After school tutoring	0%	0%	60%	40%
Meeting friends or relaxing	0%	0%	20%	80%
Provide basic career training and assistance with school applications	0%	0%	43%	57%
Computers for internet access	0%	0%	10%	90%
Completing school work or researching schools	0%	0%	10%	90%
Library/Educational games	0%	0%	67%	33%
Workshops and trainings (such as computers, typing, or researching)	0%	0%	44%	56%
Community program or meetings	0%	0%	60%	40%
Bookmobile services	0%	0%	14%	86%
Library tour and orientations	0%	0%	17%	83%

The remaining questions were free text and provided a place for respondents to expand upon their service satisfaction responses, asked what programs and services are most important for the library to continue or expand, asked what programs or services they would like the library to begin offering in the next five years that it does not already, and provided a place for any additional comments.

Forty percent (40%) of respondents used one of the free text questions to request that the library allow patrons to charge their personal devices (phones, laptops, tablets) at the library. This was the most requested service.

Other requests for future services include:

- Expand bookmobile service areas beyond schools, to community locations
- Faster internet connection
- Collaborate with NGOs to offer more creative programs for young people
- More books, and more updated books and resources
- More family-oriented reading programs

- More library activities
- Increased outreach
- To be able to bring food, drinks, and bags into the library

The services that respondents believe are very important for the library to continue offering, or to expand include:

- Programs including After School Tutoring, Summer Reading, Read Aloud, Early Literacy Reading Hour, Storytime, Reading Challenge
- Public computing
- Free community internet access
- Bookmobile services
- Printing, photocopying, scanning, and laminating services

The library also received several thank-yous and positive reviews, such as:

"I love this library. They are very friendly and they really help me with resources I need for my research."

"The library…helps me with free internet access to help me with my school works and since I don't have any at home I'm so grateful. Thank you."

APPENDIX H: IMLS-PROVIDED OUTCOMES SURVEYS

The IMLS provides templates to LSTA Grants to States recipients for short outcomes-based questionnaires that can be provided to participants in various LSTA-funded activities. The following links and templates were provided to LSTA Grants to States recipients in 2018.[28]

SPR Outcomes (PDF 117KB)

- SPR Outcomes Survey for Instruction (Program) – Library Workforce (PDF 64KB)
- SPR Outcomes Survey for Instruction (Program) – General Public (PDF 70KB)
- SPR Outcomes Survey for Content (Acquisition or Creation) – Library Workforce (PDF 44KB)
- SPR Outcomes Survey for Planning & Evaluation – Library Workforce (PDF 53KB)

SPR Outcomes Questions by Activity and Beneficiary

Response options for each question: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree (or Non-response)

Instruction (Program) – Library Workforce

- I learned something by participating in this library activity.
- I feel more confident about what I just learned.
- I intend to apply what I just learned.
- Applying what I learned will help improve library services to the public.

Instruction (Program) – General Public

- I learned something by participating in this library activity.
- I feel more confident about what I just learned.
- I intend to apply what I just learned.
- I am more aware of resources and services provided by the library.
- I am more likely to use other library resources and services.

Content (Acquisition or Creation) – Library Workforce

- I am satisfied that the resource is meeting library needs.
- Applying the resource will help improve library services to the public.

Planning & Evaluation – Library Workforce

- I believe the planning and evaluation addresses library needs.
- I am satisfied with the extent to which the plan or evaluation addresses library needs.
- I believe the information from the plan or evaluation will be applied to address library needs.

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[28] "RE: Copy of IMLS-provided outcomes survey?" Email from Madison Bolls to Joyce Chapman, 3/11/2022.

Below is an example of how the questions for a library workforce instruction program might be presented via a paper or web-based questionnaire.

Thank you for your participation in this program. Please provide your feedback about the program by completing the following questions. Thank you!

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. I learned something by participating in this library activity.	○	○	○	○	○
2. I feel more confident about what I just learned.	○	○	○	○	○
3. I intend to apply what I just learned.	○	○	○	○	○
4. Applying what I learned will help improve library services to the public.	○	○	○	○	○

What did you like most about this library program?

What could the library do to better assist you in learning more?