



LUBUTO LIBRARY PROJECT

FACTSHEET

Bringing knowledge and enlightenment to Africa's most vulnerable children



1st Lubuto Library at Fountain of Hope, Lusaka, Zambia.
Left to right: insaka, reading room, arts/activities center



Motivational Mentoring in the reading room's 'talking circle'

The Lubuto Library Project (www.LUBUTO.ORG) is an innovative development initiative that, in cooperation with governments, creates opportunities for equitable education and poverty reduction through model library services housed in beautiful, indigenously styled buildings that

- provide safe havens, literacy skills, and opportunities for educational growth, discovery and joy through reading and enrichment programs for sub-Saharan Africa's street children, orphans and other vulnerable and out-of-school children by building and stocking open-access libraries hosted and staffed by community-based organizations; and
- connect North American and European volunteers and students with their African peers through community service.

LLP is a professional organization whose programs – rooted in local communities and guided by prominent Zambians – are important and unique in Africa. Lubuto Libraries, completely owned and run by their host organizations, provide sustainable institutional focal points – urban and rural – for Zambian adults to guide and care for the nation's children.



- Lubuto's open-access libraries fill a critical gap in services to orphans and other vulnerable children (OVC) by providing a bridge to schools and social services that are beyond the reach of vast numbers of them, particularly the street children.
- Lubuto was 'born' in Zambia, inspired by the observed impact of a makeshift library established in a converted shipping container at the Fountain of Hope in Lusaka in 2001, which enabled users to pass the secondary school exam and proved sustainable after 5 years with no external inputs.
- Lubuto's headquarters are in Washington, DC, USA, an incorporated nonprofit since January 2005, whose regional office in Lusaka, Zambia has been a registered NGO since September 2005.

- Lubuto Libraries are internationally recognized as model library services for disadvantaged children, with specially designed programs, led by Zambian professionals, that support children in developing their talents, skills and self-esteem, including: **Performing and Visual Arts; Literacy, Read-aloud and Storytelling; Motivational Mentoring; One Laptop Per Child XO laptops; HIV/AIDS and Health; Environment;** and encouraging children to write their life stories and create their own books.



- Each Lubuto Library starts with a high-quality, balanced and comprehensive collection of 4,000 sturdy books whose selection is guided by experts in children's libraries and OVC and feedback from library users. Collections are assembled and cataloged with a specially-designed access system by U.S. volunteers and are sent shelf-ready to Africa, where local-language books are added. Library staff appointed by the host organization receive in-service training from professional librarians to offer enriching programs and services sensitive to users' psychosocial needs.
- The inspiring environments of indigenously-styled Lubuto Library compounds are intrinsic to the experience and impact of library programs on individual users. Completely faithful to vernacular building patterns and a source of pride and celebration of Zambia's cultures, the purpose-built structures cost-effectively support Lubuto's wide range of services and programs, including defined outdoor space amid buildings for performances.
- Lubuto Libraries don't impose western educational systems but, rather, are based upon traditional approaches by which African children learn about the world and their place in it. Beyond its libraries, the Lubuto Project works to identify and bring traditional Zambian stories back into print. Lubuto is also developing a child protection policy and a girls' outreach program whose benefits will extend to many other organizations that support orphans and vulnerable children.
- Lubuto's experienced and award-winning staff has designed its model to scale to at least 100 libraries in Zambia and provide ongoing support to its library network with continuous staff training, collection enrichment and updating, program revision based on community and user feedback and evaluative studies. Its collection development policies and classification and access system will evolve as new needs are identified, and along with Lubuto's service and program model, will benefit schools and libraries serving children throughout the country and in other African countries.

"Lubuto" is a Bemba word meaning "enlightenment, knowledge, light"