

MORE SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS VISIT THE LIBRARY THAN BEFORE THE PANDEMIC



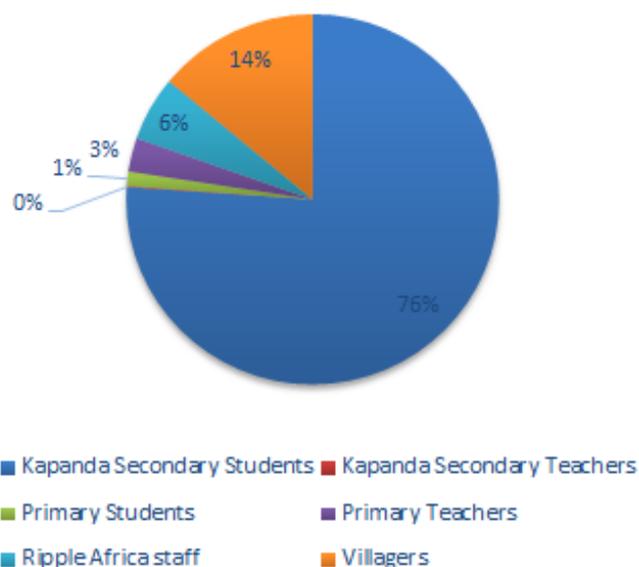
The Mwaya Community Library team have had their work cut out to get numbers back up to where they were pre-pandemic and although they still have a task ahead of them in some areas, they are pleased to have welcomed more secondary school students than in 2019.

Across 2019 they recorded 1,513 student visits to read and borrow textbooks and other educational books. In 2021 this number has steadily increased to 1,618 visits. However, the same cannot be said for primary school visits. Despite being located next to one of the largest primary schools we support, the children have not been making full use of the facilities. When speaking to the teachers they feel that it is partly due to students trying to catch up on their missed learning.

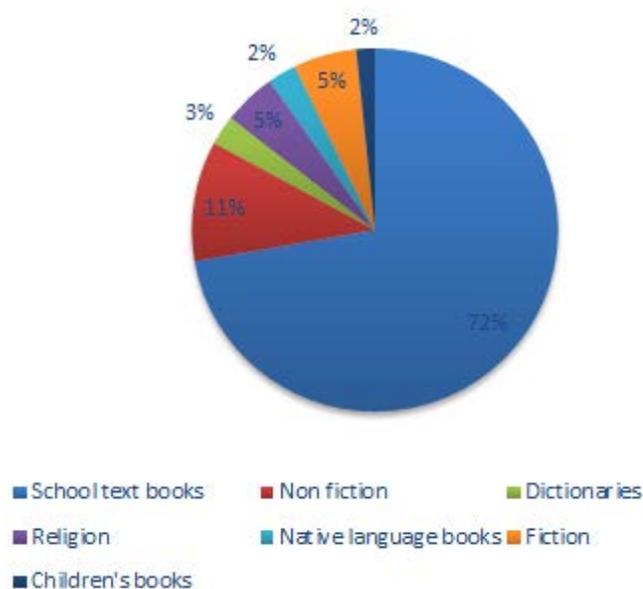
The initiatives that we were running pre-pandemic will be reviewed in the hope that we can encourage more primary students to come and enjoy the many age-appropriate fiction and non-fiction books available.

Book borrower numbers were back near normal at 2,636 books borrowed and 3,443 readers registered, 1,000 down on 2019 but significantly higher than last year. We are pleased to have welcomed 51 new members too, up on last year as well.

Visitors for 2021



Genres of books borrowed in 2021



Not unsurprisingly, secondary school textbooks are still the most borrowed books with 3,073 textbooks lent out during the year. It is worth noting that even though Kapanda Community Day Secondary School have opened their own school library, large numbers of students are visiting Mwaya library which has an extensive selection of textbooks for students living in and around Mwaya to access.

In 2021 we did not receive funding to buy more textbooks but we did receive a wonderful donation to purchase novels. Amongst the 80 books bought were many African authors such as Chinua Achebe and novels for children by authors like Roald Dahl.

The children who do visit the library are already getting stuck into the new books but the team will continue to encourage younger readers to come during their reading lesson at school and to our Saturday Children's Corner reading club.





However, even though primary student visit numbers fell, we welcomed five times more primary school teacher visits across the year than ever before. Teachers in Malawi can be moved to new schools so new teachers moving in are enjoying having access to books not only for themselves but for finding inspiration for lessons. One teacher, Wilfred Mwase said, "I've been teaching in this area now for one year and love coming to the library at the weekend - mainly to read the newspaper and borrow books. Jack Higgins is my preferred author."

Adult Education classes resumed in 2021 and Kelvin Phiri was one learner who attended. Having finished Form 4 with 35 points, he wanted to re-take his final examinations to improve on his results. He said, "The classes were great, they really helped. Now that I have finished school I still visit the library most weekends to read the newspaper and borrow books. Although history was my favourite subject at school, I like to read mystery books."



Head librarian Burton said, "In the year 2021 we had frequent borrowers who borrowed the African novels which were recently bought for the library. It is good to see that the number of borrowers and readers has increased compared to the previous year where the library was temporarily closed because of the COVID-19."

From everyone who uses and benefits from the community library, thank you very much for your continuous support.