



Foreword by the Library Director

It is my pleasure to present Issue 9 of the Botswana Open University Library and Information Services (LIS) Bulletin. I extend warm greetings to all our readers.

This issue provides an overview of the Library's activities and engagements from December 2025 to March 2026. During this period, the Library continued to support teaching, learning, and research through both physical and digital services.

We are pleased to share highlights of our work, including participation in institutional and national initiatives, support for new academic programmes, and ongoing efforts to strengthen partnerships with other institutions. The Library has also continued to promote the use of its online resources, including Primo, EBSCOhost, ProQuest, and LibGuides, to ensure that students and staff can access information conveniently.

User education remains an important part of our work, and we have continued to guide students on how to use library resources effectively and develop their research skills.

We appreciate the continued support and engagement of our users and partners, and we look forward to further improving our services.

Ms Thabea Motubudi,
Acting Director, Department of Library & Information Services

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The bulletin outlines the activities that the library undertook and participated in from December 2025 to March 2026.

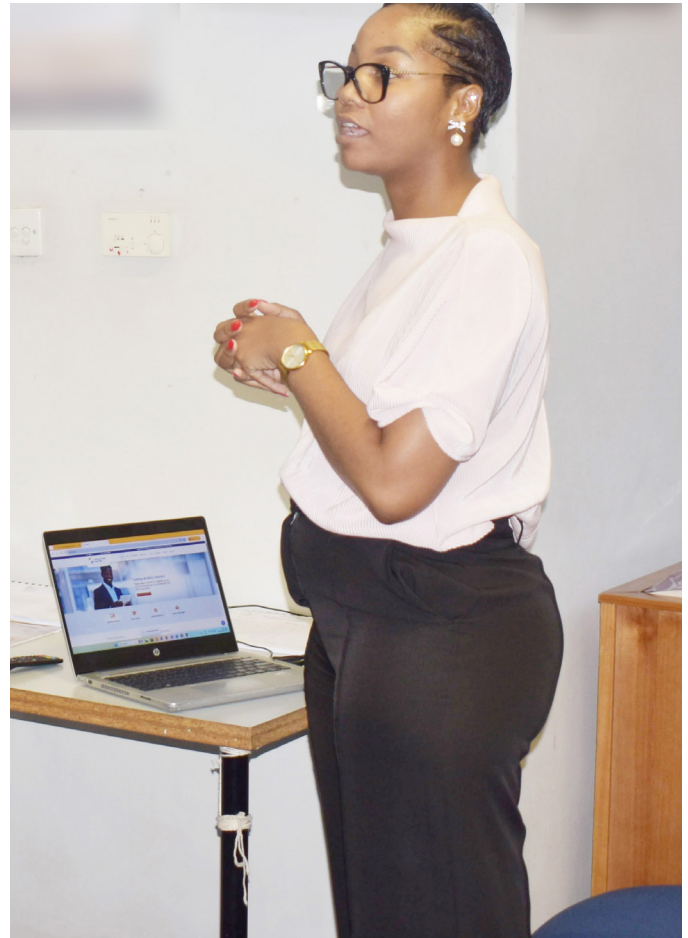
Presentation for the Vice-Chancellor of UnISCED, Prof. Martin Laita, on 8th December 2025

The Vice Chancellor of the Open University Institute of Sciences and Distance Education (UnISCED), Prof. Martins Laita, visited the Botswana Open University to explore potential areas of collaboration and strengthen institutional ties, paving the way for the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in the future. The proposed partnership will focus on the following areas:

Development of joint research and academic programs, including undergraduate degrees, postgraduate studies, and short professional courses.

Student and faculty mobility, aimed at promoting knowledge exchange, capacity building, and academic internationalisation.

In support of this initiative, the library made a presentation to Prof Martin Laita and his colleagues. The presentation focused on the online library resources (Primo Discovery Services, EBSCO & ProQuest Databases, LibGuides, Past Examinations Data Bank)



BOU Library Showcases Capacity to Support New MSc in Public Health Programme, on 10th December 2025

The Botswana Open University (BOU) Library continues to position itself as a strategic partner in the University's academic programmes. As part of the accreditation process for the proposed Master of Science in Public Health programme, Mr P. Difele, Assistant Librarian delivered a presentation to the Botswana Qualifications Authority (BQA) demonstrating the Library's readiness and capacity to support teaching, learning, and research in the new programme.

The presentation formed part of the programme accreditation engagement led by Botswana Open University, where various institutional units provided evidence of their preparedness to support the proposed qualification. In his presentation, Mr Difele outlined the comprehensive range of scholarly resources, online databases, and information services available through the BOU Library that are relevant to public health education and research.

A key highlight of his presentation was the Library's extensive access to international academic

databases, including EBSCOhost, ProQuest Central, and ProQuest Ebook Central. These platforms provide students and researchers with access to peer-reviewed journals, e-books, dissertations, and other scholarly materials covering a wide range of disciplines, including health policy, global health, and community health.

Mr Difele also emphasised the Library's role in developing students' information literacy skills, which are critical for postgraduate research. Through structured training sessions, online tutorials, and research support services, the Library equips students with the skills needed to effectively locate, evaluate, and utilise credible scientific information.

BOU Library continues to shine as a central pillar of the University's academic ecosystem, ensuring that new programmes are supported by world-class information resources and professional library services.



BOU Library Shares Operational Insights Behind Digital Library Services to Boitekanelo College Delegation, 4th March 2026



The Botswana Open University (BOU) Library recently hosted a benchmarking visit from a delegation from Boitekanelo College, providing an opportunity for professional exchange and institutional learning between the two academic institutions. During the visit on the 4th of March 2026, Mr Perseverance Difele delivered a presentation highlighting the innovative digital library services offered by the Botswana Open University Library.

The presentation focused on sharing best practices for delivering library and information services in a modern academic environment, particularly in open and distance learning contexts. In his presentation, Mr Difele showcased the University Library's digital platforms and online resources, enabling students and researchers to access scholarly materials remotely.

Mr Difele also provided insights into the Library's strategic approach to service delivery. He explained how the Library leverages digital technologies and partnerships with global academic content providers to ensure accessibility, resource diversity, and continuous enhancement of digital services to support both on-campus and remote learners.

Additionally, the presentation highlighted the Library's role in promoting information literacy and research support.

Through user training sessions, online tutorials, and personalised research assistance, the Library equips students and faculty with the skills needed to effectively navigate digital information resources and conduct high-quality academic research. This engagement reflects the growing recognition of the BOU Library as a centre of excellence in digital library service delivery.

BOU Library Takes Part in the Botswana National Open Data Hackathon 2026

Botswana Digital and Innovation Hub (BDIH) hosted a two-day Open Data Hackathon Progress & Planning Workshop, bringing together key stakeholders from academia, research institutions, government, the private sector, and the broader innovation ecosystem.

Botswana Open University Librarians, P. Difele and K. Mosweu based at Head-Quarters attended the Open Data Hackathon Preparatory Workshop, held on 10-11th February 2026. They had an engaging session, during which they even met their previous Library Director, Ms Naniki Maphakwane.

As part of the mentoring and evaluation panel, Mr Difele contributed to guiding teams throughout the development process and assessing the final project submissions.

The hackathon concluded with a grand finale where teams showcased their solutions to a panel of judges and stakeholders. Top honours were awarded to Team IKMS (in full) in the Tourism category, Team Agrimart in Agriculture, and Team Beam.Inc in Health. Each winning team received a cash prize of BWP 5,000, along with a pre-incubation technical support package designed to help transform their prototypes into viable real-world applications.



Building on the initial Open Data engagement session, the workshop focused on:

- Reviewing the outcomes and agreements from the previous engagement
- Validating and confirming priority datasets for the upcoming Hackathon
- Assessing data readiness, access considerations, and institutional progress

These collaborative efforts are paving the way for the Open Data Hackathon scheduled for March 2026, ensuring that datasets are accessible, relevant, and ready to power innovative solutions.

This initiative is supported by the European Union, through the EU Support to Digital Transformation in Botswana Project, implemented in partnership with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

Gaborone Region and Headquarters Librarians attend EBSCO Information Day



The BOU Gaborone Region and Headquarters Librarians attended the 2026 EBSCO Technology Day Series, held at the **Hilton Garden Inn in Gaborone on the 24th February 2026**, which brought together librarians, partners, and colleagues for an engaging session focused on innovation, collaboration, and the future of library technology.

The session comprised the following presentations and activities:

- Welcome and Introduction – Colleen Mills
- SaaS Update: FOLIO – Bronwyn Rassmann
- AI and Linked Data – Mandisa Lakheni
- Open Athens – Deane Kearns
- EBSCOhost Database Updates – Lebo Mosimane
- Subscription Services Update – Colleen Mills
- Everything eBooks – Deane Kearns
- EBSCO Experience Manager – Pius Nketiah
- eReserve Plus – Bronwyn Rassmann
- “30 Seconds” – a fun game to recap the day

BOU Librarians expressed particular interest in the eReserve Plus, noting its potential benefits for students, researchers, staff and the entire BOU community. eReserve Plus is a sophisticated reading list tool that integrates seamlessly with major learning management systems (LMS). It simplifies the management of educational resources, ensures compliance with copyright regulations and enhances the overall learning experience.

The platform effectively bridges the gap between library systems and learning management systems, making it easier for faculty and students to access and utilise resources effectively.



BOU Strengthens Global Presence Through International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) Engagement

Botswana Open University (BOU) continues to strengthen its global footprint in the library and information services sector by actively participating in 2026 initiatives led by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions.

In a notable achievement, a BOU Librarian based at the Francistown Regional Campus, Ms Ntlotlang, has been appointed as the Information Coordinator for IFLA's Academic and Research Libraries Section. This prestigious appointment reflects both her professional expertise and her continued contributions to the advancement of academic librarianship at national and international levels. Her role as Information Coordinator places her at the centre of global knowledge exchange, where she will support communication, information sharing, and collaboration among academic and research libraries worldwide. This milestone not only elevates her professional profile but also strengthens BOU's visibility and participation in international library networks.



As part of her ongoing engagement with IFLA, Ms Ntlotlang attended the IFLA Professional Council Division D Virtual Meeting on 6th February 2026. The meeting provided a platform for strategic discussions, knowledge sharing, and collaboration among library professionals worldwide.



BOU takes pride in this achievement, which aligns with the University's commitment to excellence, innovation, and global collaboration. The appointment further reinforces the institution's role in shaping the future of library and information services and contributing to international best practices.

Benchmarking Visit ENHANCES Strategic Collaboration Between BOU and Tonota College of Education

On 19th February 2026, the Botswana Open University (BOU) Francistown Regional Library had the pleasure of hosting four officers from Tonota College of Education for a benchmarking visit to foster knowledge sharing and explore best practices in library services.

The visit began with a warm meet-and-greet session with the Acting Regional Director, Mr Lekgaba, who officially welcomed the delegation. In his opening remarks, he expressed sincere appreciation to the visitors for choosing BOU as a benchmarking partner. He encouraged active engagement throughout the visit, emphasising the importance of learning from one another.

The Acting Director highlighted that such initiatives present valuable opportunities to build meaningful partnerships and strengthen collaboration between institutions. He noted that by working together and addressing existing gaps, institutions can enhance their service delivery and better retain their clientele. He further acknowledged the financial constraints currently faced by government institutions, noting that collaboration, particularly in areas such as resource sharing, can lead to more sustainable and impactful outcomes. In closing, he encouraged both parties to explore practical avenues for collaboration while ensuring compliance with the Data Protection Act in any information exchange.

A key highlight of the visit was a presentation by the Librarian Ms Tuelo Ntlotlang, who provided an overview of BOU's library structures and its information literacy delivery model. She also shared insights into how the university enhances its library collections through a combination of subscribed databases, Open Access publications, and Open Educational Resources. These resources are made readily accessible through the university's discovery tool, PRIMO.

The visit concluded on a positive note, with Ms Ntlotlang sharing links to relevant Open Access resources, enabling Tonota College of Education to assess and potentially integrate them into their own collections.

This benchmarking engagement marks a significant step towards strengthening institutional partnerships and advancing the quality of library services through shared knowledge and innovation.



SUSTAINING AND STRENGTHENING BOU AND BNLS PARTNERSHIP

In its continued effort to strengthen and sustain partnerships with the Botswana National Library Service (BNLS), librarians from the Botswana Open University (BOU) Gaborone Region led by recently visited selected public libraries in Ramotswa, Kopong, and Molepolole. These libraries host BOU collections that support both Tertiary and Open Schooling programmes.

During the visits, BOU librarians met with the public library staff and emphasised the important role these libraries play in extending access to BOU library resources to a broader audience. Discussions also focused on the general usage of the collections, and it was encouraging to observe that members of the public actively utilise the materials. Both parties agreed on the need to continue raising awareness about the satellite collections.

It was reassuring to note that the BOU collections are well-maintained and clearly displayed for

easy access. This reflects not only the value of the resources but also the dedication of BNLS staff in ensuring that users benefit fully from the materials provided. BNLS staff further appealed for the expansion of the collections, noting that some subject areas are currently underrepresented. They emphasised that the collections serve both BOU students and the wider public.

Additionally, BOU staff took the opportunity to promote their online resources, encouraging public library staff to consistently inform and guide users, particularly students, on accessing the BOU online library. Both parties agreed to strengthen engagement through training sessions, during which BOU librarians will provide guidance on the effective use of online resources.

The collaboration between BOU and public libraries remains a vital component of their shared mission to deliver inclusive and accessible information services.



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