

# **Selection of non-print resources for Tsunami affected libraries of Sri Lanka: with special reference to public and school libraries**

By

Pradeepa Wijetunge  
Director  
National Institute of Library & Information Sciences  
University of Colombo  
Colombo 03

Tele/Fax: + 9411-2507150  
e-mail: [director\\_nilis@yahoo.com](mailto:director_nilis@yahoo.com)

## **1. Introduction**

This paper will define briefly what non-print resources are paying attention to the differences of the meanings of audiovisual media and multimedia. It will also briefly discuss the significance of having non-print resources in school and public libraries. In the second section it discusses in detail the selection of non-print resources under two main topics; collection development policy and evaluation of non-print resources. Related to evaluation, checklists are provided for the evaluation of educational videos, entertainment videos and feature films, CD-ROMs and other computer-based resources, Web sites and criteria for selection of equipment. In the third section preservation, security and copyright of non-print resources are discussed. Section four pays attention to the site planning for non-print collections, since this is ignored by most authorities and cause irreparable damages to library sites. In the final section new training needs of the librarians who are developing non-print collections are briefly outlined.

### **1. 1 Definition of terms**

It is essential to define what non-print resources are, since the terms “audio visual material” and “multimedia” are sometimes used as synonyms. “Audio visual materials is a generic term to describe information content held in storage and transmission media and formats that use images and sound rather than or sometimes in addition to textual matter. This includes audio CD, records and tapes; photographs, slides, films and video; and formats that combine two or more of the formats. Many of these formats are out dated now.” (Feather and Sturges 2003, p. 30).

“Multimedia literally means “many media”. Term is commonly used to describe digital objects that use a combination of text, graphics, sound and video. Such objects may be stored on Optical Disks or downloaded from the World Wide Web.” (Feather and Sturges 2003, p. 430).

## **1.2 Non-print Resources**

“Non-print resources” in the context of this paper will denote any kind of AV material, multimedia as well as some other additional resources other than books, journals newspapers, pamphlets or any such text based printed material;

### **Audio/Visual Formats (technology dependent)**

VHS cassettes, Digital Versatile Disks (DVD), audio CDs and cassettes, transparencies, slides and filmstrips.

### **Audio/Visual Formats (non-technology dependent)**

Maps, posters, graphics are included here since more than the textual print more emphasis is laid on images in them. Games, three-dimensional objects like globes and models, educational toys are such other non-print resources.

### **Electronic Formats**

Computer software, CD-ROMs, e-journals, e-books, full text and bibliographic databases, interactive software packages.

### **Audio/Visual Equipment**

To use most of the non-print resources special types of equipment are necessary. Computers and printers, TV/VCRs, overhead projectors, multi media projectors, slide and filmstrip projectors, CD/cassette recorders/players, modems and phone lines, digital scanner and duplicators, video camcorders, digital cameras and still cameras.

### **Other equipment**

Laminators, photocopiers, binders and paper cutters.

In this paper, attention is paid to selection of technology dependent AV resources, electronic formats, AV and other equipment since there are specific issues concerning them. In view of the fact that non-print resources are yet new in Sri Lankan libraries, not only the collection development and evaluation of material, but also other topics of concern like copyright and preservation, security, planning for technology, furniture and space and special training needs of librarians are also discussed.

## **1.3 Significance of non-print resources**

Forward-looking teachers have given up the view that teaching is telling, that learning is absorbing, and that knowledge is static. They look beyond their classrooms for resources that will enrich the learning environment. They are familiar with a variety of learning tools, both print-based and electronic, and they encourage their students to move beyond the textbook when seeking information and solving problems. Aside from more traditional print resources--textbooks, encyclopedias, newspapers, magazines--they use technological resources such as videotape and videodisc, CD-ROM, software tools, and simulation/modeling tools. They use computer networking and telecommunications for both data access and participation in learning communities. They use multimedia

technologies as materials for gathering data and as production tools. They use their school library media centers to locate and use many of these resources.

According to a recent research (Bishop 2001), it has proved that student learning is improved with the increased use of non-print media to complement the print media in school libraries. The survey indicated that by using non-print resources, a variety of student learning styles as well as teaching styles can be accommodated. Students are able to demonstrate their learning in many new formats i.e. video presentations, slide shows etc. The study further indicated that the students demonstrate more enthusiasm in learning when technology is used. Students also develop their critical thinking skills and they are exposed to more current information than when using only the print media.

In a resource-based learning environment students reach beyond classroom into their local communities to supplement the resources available in the school libraries. Public library will be their first choice to turn for more learning resources. Hence the Public library has an equal responsibility in developing collections of non-print resources. Not only for school children but also for the other age groups of the community, public library will have to offer especially audiovisual material for entertainment purposes. The other types of entertainment sources like cinemas and video rental shops may not be functioning as usual after Tsunami. Hence the community may be not have many sources of entertainment, especially at a time when they are needed to counteract the fears and miseries caused by the devastation.

## **2. Selection of non-print resources**

### **2.1 Collection development policy**

Some years ago non-print material, especially the audio and video productions were as not as popular as today in Sri Lanka. In order to select the most appropriate material with the limited budgets, it is vital to have a strategic planning. Organizational direction has to be determined through its vision and mission statements.

Primary mission of the public library is to serve all of its constituents. It is not possible to prescribe a mission common to all public libraries, but depending on the community each library can develop its mission statement. Surveys, focus groups or suggestions by community leaders can be used to study the community's size, socioeconomic profile, ethnic, racial and demographic factors. Based on these factors library can develop its mission statement i.e. whether it functions as a community center, a cultural gathering place or just store houses of information in a variety of formats. Demographic information will help to decide the nature of collection. For instance the higher percentage of the population is aged, there will be little value of sports or contemporary musical material.

Once the direction of the library is defined a most important step is to draft a collection development policy for non-print material. This will help public as well as school libraries to concentrate on their "core collection" - a collection that represents the

entertainment and information needs of the users of all categories. Some of the questions, which can be asked in relation to the core collection, are;

- Is there a core aspect to the collection?
- How is this core determined?
- Who will be involved in determining the core collection/
- What is the purpose of the core collection? Information, entertainment or both?
- Is it to support school curricula and other education programmes?
- What are the methods to determine the budget for non-print resources – additional funds, percentage of current budget?
- What is the proportion and size of funds allocated to each category i.e. Audio/DVD, feature films/documentaries, children's/adult material etc.

Mission of the school library is to support the curricular needs of the students and teachers and the collection development should cater to their needs. Having a well-defined Collection Development Policy will avoid developing a collection based on requests of a few individuals. The responsibility of selection can be assigned to a group of stakeholders including the librarian, principal, subject or grade heads, representatives of teachers and students and members of the Library Committee so that a well balanced core collection is developed.

For designing a Collection Development Policy for school libraries, Lukenbill (2002) has provided the following guidelines. This can be adopted for public libraries as well.

#### Components of the Policy document

1. Overall statement of policy – general policy of the governing body regarding the selection of material.
2. Objectives of selection – this section will offer definitions of terms and examples of materials that are expected to be purchased.
3. The role of the professional staff – the role of the professional staff in making selection decisions.
4. Responsibility for selecting materials – this is an important section because it spell out who will make the decisions on section.
5. Criteria for selection of resources – this section should outline how and why any particular material would be selected.
6. Procedures for selecting material – a step by step guide on how the materials will be selected and purchased.
7. Challenged materials – how to handle complaints and requests for reconsiderations.
8. Supplements – although a Collection Development Policy developed by a central body like the School Library Development Unit or Provincial Library Committee can apply for many libraries in general, there may be special requirements of individual libraries. This section can outline these special requirements.

## **2. 2 Evaluation criteria of non-print resources**

Once the decisions are made on what type of a core collection will be developed, it is necessary to make decisions on individual items. This section will provide check lists for evaluating educational and entertainment videos, CD-ROMs and other computer-based

resources, Web sites and other equipment, compiled with the aid of Kalispell (2000), Edulis (2001) and Handman (2002).

### **2.2.1 Evaluation of Educational videos**

#### Content

- Is the content relevant?
- Is the content factually correct?
- Does it transmit knowledge?
- Can the learners cope with the level of language?
- What are the nature and quality of accompanying material i.e. educator's guides, workbooks and worksheets?

#### Methods

- Is the target group indicated?
- Are the aims clearly stated?
- Are difficult terms explained in practical terms?
- Is the content presented in an innovative manner?
- Is the style of presentation suitable for the target group?
- Is the tempo of presentation suitable for the target group?
- Is there a summary at the end?
- Are activities provided?

#### Technical aspects

- Is the photography striking and clear?
- Is the quality of the sound good and clear?
- Is the acting convincing?
- Does the presenter have a good voice and good presentation skills?
- Is the music effective or too loud and overwhelming?
- Is the camera technique effective?
- Is the video PAL/VHS compatible?

#### Medium

- Is there good continuity?
- Is the presentation visual?
- Are there too many frozen frames?
- Does the viewer become emotionally involved?
- Is video the most suitable medium? (Could the same information not be presented better in a book or via another medium?)

### **2.2.2 Evaluation of entertainment videos and feature films**

In evaluating entertainment videos, four central criteria are; Critical reviews, Major awards, popularity and local interest. Critical reviews written on films and awards won are a good source for evaluation. Popularity may not be a deciding factor according to some librarians, but if the public library is expected to provide entertainment to the community, this cannot be ignored.

STARFAC (Scope, Treatment, Authority, Relationship to similar material, Format, Attitude and Cost) model is a useful method of evaluating the contents (Handman 2002).

Technical aspect, which covers the quality of visuals, sound, editing, acting and narration of the videos need a special attention since without high quality production techniques a video is often poor.

When evaluating the children's entertainment videos it is important to pay particular attention to; the appropriateness for the age group, creative use of images and narration, an engaging story or topic and portrayal of the world in the video.

### **2.2.3 CD-ROMs and other computer-based resources**

Technical aspects

- Does the computer system have sufficient RAM to use the resource?
- Does the software or CD show that it will run on your library's equipment?
- Is the technical quality such as sound, the speed of the video player, the animations and so on satisfactory?
- Will the supplier help you to install?
- Is there a guarantee?

Target group

- Does the resource suit the needs of the learners with respect to;
  - Their age group
  - Reading ability
  - Existing knowledge
  - Information technology literacy skills

Presentation of the information

- Who is the author or publisher?
- Is the information accurate and factually correct?
- The scope and the content: what is the range and depth of the information, the level of accessibility?
- How relevant is it to the Sri Lankan curriculum?
- Is the user actively involved or merely passively receive information?
- Is it logically organized?
- Do the various media elements integrate to form a unit? Or the animations, sound bytes, maps or timelines just loose additions to the text/
- How readily accessible are the help resources and online tutorial to the learner/

Navigability

- Is the lay-out and design clear or confused?
- Can the icons, menu bars, function keys, switches and links be accessed easily?
- Is the search facility user-friendly? Are there hints for searching?
- General Functionality
- Is the resource stimulating, interesting and learner-oriented?
- Does it make provision for learners of differing ability and styles of learning/
- Is it indispensable as a learning aid for the curriculum?

**NB: If possible test the CD-ROM before purchasing.**

## 2.2.4 Web sites

### Access

- Does it use the standard multi-media format?
- Do you have to download software in order to use it?
- Does it take too long load?
- Is it stable or has the address of the web site or URL changed?
- Does the web site use the kinds of words that the average user would expect in a search engine?
- Is it opened to anyone on the Internet or does it demand a subscription or membership fee?

### Design

- Are the web pages concise or does it take a long time to scroll through the work?
- Is it easy to access information or to reach a certain page?
- Is it user-friendly? Will the users' attention be held?
- Are there useful links to take you further?

### Content

- What is the aim of the web site?
- Are the scope and limitations clearly indicated?
- Is it sufficiently inclusive?
- Are the captions clear and descriptive?
- Is the text well written and a suitable language used?
- Is the information up to date?
- Are the facts accurate and well documented?
- Is the information comprehensive enough to be used as is?
- Is it clear who is responsible for the web site/
- Is the content unique or could be obtained elsewhere, for example, in a book or journal article?
- Are there critiques available of the web site/

### Key factors when judging web sites;

- Accuracy
- Suitability
- Clarity
- Curriculum compatibility
- Completeness
- Usefulness
- Scope
- Good lay-out
- Sufficient guides as aids

## 2.2.5 Criteria for selection of equipment

It is equally important to pay careful attention to the variety of equipment, which will be necessary to use the non-print resources, especially the technology dependent products. This section will provide a checklist to be used in selecting such equipment.

- Equipment should meet desirable performance standards in terms of specific functions
- Consideration should be given to the following properties and factors
  - Safety of operation

- Operational ease
- Durability
- Dependability
- Portability
- Available of service
- Initial and maintenance costs
- Reliability of dealer and manufacturer
- Versatility (Kalispell 2000).

### **3. Preservation, security and copyright**

#### **3. 1 Preservation**

Audio and videocassettes have a shorter life span than the CD-ROMs or DVDs. With the frequent use non-print material will deteriorate losing the information contained in them. Librarians who think of starting non-print collections need to pay attention to the storage, preservation and replacement costs as well.

Most of these resources need to be kept away from direct sunlight and magnetic fields. Especially in Tsunami affected areas, they have to be kept away from salty moisture and humidity. Tapes should never be dropped or touched with the fingers. Most favorable storage conditions are 63 degrees Fahrenheit and 30 percent relative humidity. For optimal storage videotapes should be re-tensioned every year. This process involves fast forwarding and then rewinding. A professional cleaning machine is recommended for heavily circulating material.

#### **3.2 Security**

Most non-print material are interesting enough to steal. Providing easy access while maintaining security of the stock has been an on-going issue in public as well as other libraries. To avoid loses, access can be closed with browsable binders of video covers to enable selection by users. Sometimes illusions of security like fake cameras, convex mirrors, security detectors are used to create an impression of vigilance. Although purpose designed security systems are available in the market these will not be financially viable for public and school libraries. (Vollamar-Grone, 2002).

Access is equally important to the collection, because developing the collection is futile if free access is not provided for the users. A suitable circulation policy may be developed. If students are expected to use the non-print resources for their projects and are expected to use the equipment to present their research findings. At the same time developing special collections will attract more users to the library. Hence suitable policies should be developed to provide free access while maintaining the security of the collection. (Keith 2002)



### **3.3 Copyright**

Copyright can be a special issue in particular for public libraries, which indents to use Audio visual material for public entertainment. Most of these materials do not have the provide the “Public Performance Rights”. Public Performance Rights (PPR) are necessary when using such material in public even within a library. Librarians need to be aware of the producer’s or publisher’s conditions about PPR

At the same time any library should discourage the practice of duplicating currently copyrighted material. Digital technology provides easy means of duplicating such material by the borrowers, hence it is wise to define a clear copyright policy and display it prominently in the library.

### **4. Site planning for non-print collections**

Planning the library building, planning electricity, lighting and furniture and allocating space for non-print collections are some key areas always overlooked by the authorities. Since most of the tsunami-affected libraries are being rebuilt from the scratch, the author feels that a brief discussion on these topics will be useful for the librarians. Johnson (2002) has given a comprehensive checklist for the librarian who plans a site for non-print collections. Following is a simplified version of his checklist.

- How will the new facility be used and by whom? How many users should be able to work in the media center at one time?
- What kinds of things will students be doing in the media center? What major projects or activities will require media center resources?
- What areas of the school should the media center be near and from what areas should it be distant? Do you want to hear noises from the music room or playground?
- How will the media center be staffed? How will the area be supervised? Will one person need to be able to see what is going on throughout the area?
- Should the computer labs have a lecture or lab type design?
- Does the media center allow for different kinds of use - individual, small group, and large group? Are all forms of information access and communication provided for, including print, audio-visual, video, and computerized
- Is the media center on a single floor for ease of supervision and accessibility? Is shelving along the perimeter and not over 30" high for easily supervision and accessibility?
- Do the traffic patterns make sense? Are the circulation areas and the computer labs(s) near the entrance? Is equipment storage near a hallway? Is the reading/study area away from high traffic areas so users are repeatedly distracted? Is the media center easily accessible from the rest of the building, but not a passageway between areas of the building?

- Are new technologies being accommodated? Is there an area for the network wiring closet, work area for file server maintenance, Have conduit and cable been put in place even if the money for wiring is not yet available?
- Have acoustical considerations been made? Do the ceiling tiles and flooring have sound proofing properties? Does the design allow for windows to the computer labs, conference rooms, AV or multimedia production areas for visual control and sound containment?
- Is the lighting adequate and non-glare? Are the light diffusers adequate? Is there natural light source? Is there a presentation area that can be darkened? Are the light switches in a single bank in a controlled area? Is there a "night light" near the door so the media specialist isn't at hazard getting to the light switch bank in the backroom?
- Has consideration been give to the aesthetic qualities of the area? Are colors coordinated; is there visual interest, a variety of textures, and warmth? Are there display areas for student work and new materials near the entrance/high traffic areas?
- Are spaces for using these technologies made available to the users especially in a school library? scanners, laser printers, video cameras, digital cameras, microphones, CD-ROM drives,.
- Are there sufficient numbers of electrical outlets with proper capacity?
- Are all areas and resources accessible by the physically disabled?
- Is the furniture of good quality? Is does it have a matte finish to reduce glare and eye strain? Does it resist scratching and marring? Are they suitable for salty air?

## **5. New training needs of the librarians**

Non-print resources have not been common in our libraries whether they are Tsunami affected or otherwise. On the other hand education and training programmes in LIS in Sri Lanka do not cover in depth the necessary topics required by the media librarians. Hence if any librarian who considers adding non-print resources to their collections, need to update their training in some of the essential areas. This is an aspect, which the Task Force on education and Training need to address before the librarians of Tsunami affected libraries commence developing their non-print collections. Ellison (undated) has provided a substantial list of areas which media librarian has to develop his/her competences. Following is a list of new knowledge requirements of the librarians managing non-print collections. National Library and the Task Force on education and training can consider covering these topics at least at introductory level in future seminars, so that the librarians are capable of managing their expensive collections effectively.

### **Management functions**

- Determine overall policies
- Conduct evaluation of adequacy and suitability of facilities, equipment, materials, and services
- Establish policies for maintenance of materials and equipment
- Prepare the media services' bulletin or newsletter
- Inform users and non-users of available services
- Prepare promotional materials

- Determine goals and objectives of media services
- Identify legislation which affects media services
- Develop written criteria for evaluating materials and equipment
- Plan operation and maintenance services
- Plan arrangements of space and furniture
- Conduct training for personnel
- Acquisition of materials and equipment

**Production functions**

- Assist in production of programs and materials using equipment
- Duplicate materials
- Record (video or audio) meetings, speeches, programs, and performances
- Photograph activities

**Instructional functions**

- Conduct in-service workshop on use of equipment
- Conduct in-service workshops on use of materials
- Orient users to materials and equipment
- Instruct others in the production of materials

**Maintenance functions**

- Inspect materials for damage
- Maintain equipment
- Weed collection to eliminate unused and out-of-date material
- Repair materials
- Supervise a storage and care program for materials

**Preview, evaluation, selection, and acquisition functions**

- Search catalogs and for ordering and duplication of materials
- Preview materials
- Select materials
- Evaluate materials
- Acquire materials
- Read evaluative reviews on materials
- Evaluate equipment
- Acquire equipment
- Select equipment
- Read evaluative reviews on equipment

**Utilization functions**

- Set up equipment
- Give instruction on the use of equipment
- Demonstrate effective utilization of equipment
- Operate equipment

## **6. Conclusion**

Tsunami affected libraries of Sri Lanka may receive lump sums of funds from a plethora of donor agencies to build up and expand their collections. Adding non-print resources to any library and maintaining the collection effectively is a highly expensive task than adding print resources. It also requires special knowledge of the library staff, which they did not have before. This is a new professional challenge, the librarians of the Tsunami affected libraries have to face. On the other hand they have a responsibility towards the

society devastated by the Tsunami to contribute to the social, moral and economic development of the community by providing new learning and entertainment opportunities. To fulfill this responsibility to the wounded society, librarians need to be enthusiastic, dedicated and professionally competent.

## References

Bishop Kay (2001). The impact of technology on school library media centers in two Florida school districts. IN: Inspiring connections: learning, libraries and literacy. Proceedings of the 30<sup>th</sup> annual conference of the IASL. Ed. by Peter Hughes and Linda Selby. Washington. IASL. pp. 36-53.

Edulis (WCED). (2001). Identification and selection of learning support material. Mowbray. Edumedia (WCED).

Ellison, John W. (undated). What are media librarians. [on line] (URL <http://informatics.buffalo.edu/faculty/ellison/syllabi>) Accessed on 10.05.2005.

Erikson, Rolf and Markuson, Carolyn (2001). Designing a school library media center for the future. Chicago. ALA.

Feather, John and Sturges, Paul (2003). International encyclopedia of information and library science. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. London. Routledge.

Hancock, Vicki E. (1993). Information Literacy for Lifelong Learning. ERIC Digest. ERIC Identifier: ED358870. New York. ERIC Clearinghouse on Information Resources Syracuse.

Handman, Gary P. Ed. (2002). Video collection development in multi-type libraries: a handbook. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Westport, Connecticut. Greenwood.

Johnson, Doug (2002). Some design considerations when building or remodeling a media center. [on line]. (URL <http://www.doug-johnson.com/dougwri/buildingquestions.html>) Accessed on 10. 05. 2005.

Kalispell School District (2000). Kalispell school district #5 Library Media Centers' purpose and procedures. [on line]. (URL <http://www.sd5.k12.mt.us/board/brd%20policy/2000/2309p.htm>) Accessed on 07.05. 2005.

Keith, Cassandra M. (2002). School library video collections. IN: Video collection development in multi-type libraries: a handbook. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Gary P. Handman. Ed. Westport, Connecticut. Greenwood. pp.40-46.

Lukenbill, W. Bernard (2002). Collection development for a new century in the school library media center. Westport, Connecticut. Greenwood.

Vollamar-Grone, Michael (2002). Public library video collections. IN. Video collection development in multi-type libraries: a handbook. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Gary P. Handman. Ed. Westport, Connecticut. Greenwood. pp.15-39.