

## **TANZANIA COUNTRY REPORT**

TANZANIA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

SCECSAL XVIII-LUSAKA ZAMBIA

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:**  
Presented by Mr Sam Kasulwa  
Deputy Chairperson TLA

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

SCECSAL members, non members, library and information personnel, para-professionals, invited guests, ladies and gentlemen.

I would like to thank the organizers for the work well done in organizing this version of SCECSAL XVIII. I want to assure them that that the Tanzanian Delegation is enjoying every minute of our stay in Lusaka.

Allow me now to present to you our country report which in principle will have three parts; part one will assess an overview of present day libraries in Tanzania focusing more and more on new developments that have been recorded in the course of the last two years since we last met in Dar-Es-Salaam in 2006. part two will focus on activities that TLA has undertaken in the last 2 years and part 3 will be a way forward/lesson learnt.

It would seem logical for me to begin my discussion of TLA programmes with a glance on an overview of the current situation of library development in Tanzania.

### **PART 1**

#### **2. OVERVIEW OF THE PRESENT SITUATION OF LIBRARIES IN TANZANIA**

Since our last meeting in Dar-Es-Salaam in July 2008 a lot of changes have taken place in library development in Tanzania as follows;

##### **2.1 ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW LIBRARIES**

2.1.1 As a result of a new government directive that each ministry, government office, private institutions, individual organizations and the civil service organizations (CSO's) must own a library/documentation centre/information unit or a resource center , we in Tanzania have witnessed a radical transformation of library growth. In between the two years over twenty new libraries have been established by these institutions.

2.1.2 On the other hand, TLSB has also established three new regional libraries in Dodoma, Singida and Manyara thus having regional libraries in all regions of mainland Tanzania.

2.1.3 TLA has also worked hand in hand with the newly established Zanzibar Library Association to start up a new library in Zanzibar. This is the first Public library in the Archipelago Island of Zanzibar.

2.1.4 While the growth of library numbers is very encouraging in Tanzania, the challenge remains to be, there are very few qualified librarians to manage all these libraries more effectively. The other challenge is how to reach the grassroot population and address their immediate information needs.

## **2.2 LIBRARY AUTOMATION AND TRAINING**

2.2.1 Library automation has continued to gain root in Tanzania. More and more libraries are now embarking on library automation. The university of Dar-Es-Salaam has almost completed an exercise of automating its library. Other libraries embarking on a similar initiative include Tumaini university colleges, NBAA, IFM, ILO, USIS, the International school, e.t.c.

2.2.2 TLA is continuing to help its members who have not yet embarked on this bandwagon with a sense of training on ICT so that they too can begin to plan going electronic. Some of these trainings that have been held in the last two years include internet usage (march 2008), library automation workshop (June 2008) and library software usage (August 2008) more details on library training will be highlighted later in my presentation.

2.2.3 The challenge here is that since many libraries are yet to be automated, the process of library networking which was emphasized at the SCECSAL XVII conference in Dar will be delayed for some of same.

## **2.3 TLA GROWING SYNERGY**

2.3.1 TLA's synergy has continued to grow very fast as evidenced by the presidential appointment of Dr. Alli Mcharazo to head the government owned TLSB. Dr. Mcharazo is now a full member of the Ministry of Education's Management team ( which also playing an advisory role to the President of the Republic). This new profile will help to move TLA to conduct advocacy and to lobby policy.

2.3.2 The governments' decision to establish libraries in all ministries will very much help to raise TLA's profile in the eyes of the government of the United Republic of Tanzania and give it more mandate and powers. The ball is in our court at the moment and the chance of moving ahead are now more clear.

## **2.4 INITIAL INITIATIVE OF TAKING LIBRARIES TO THE GRASSROOT**

In our last meeting in Dar-Es-Salaam, we resolved among other things that our services should reach the grassroot population and address their immediate economic needs. The Commission for Science and Technology (COSTEC) in Tanzania is working with UNESCO to establish information centers to rural areas. Already they have established an ultra modern information center in Sengerema. The center has internet services, a local radio station, and other communication facilities.

Since establishment, the people have been able to improve business opportunities with other regions in Tanzania as well as abroad, communication has been highly improved and lifestyles of the people have changed drastically. This experience is planned to be taken to other rural areas in Tanzania.

## **PART 2: TLA ACTIVITIES**

2.1 Over the last two years, TLA has continued to implement a number of activities which are stipulated in its strategic plan document. The activities performed include the following;

- Publication of Matukio newsletter
- Maintenance of TLA website
- Fundraising for the award of best students at SLADS
- Strengthening of contacts with like minded organizations
- Participation in book week festivals organized by BAMVITA
- Organizing IT workshops for members and non-members
- Held annual general meetings (Iringa 2006) (Mwanza 2007)
- Organizing training workshops on monitoring and evaluation of libraries, marketing/promotion of library services
- Participating in international conferences, i.e. World Social Forum (Nairobi), IFLA (Durban), IFLA (Canada), SCECSAL (Zambia) etc.
- Conduct advocacy and lobby for the development of libraries in Tanzania
- Increased TLA publicity through website, newsletter, media.

## **2.2 TRANSFORMATION OF GRACE LEMA FOUNDATION**

There has also been a new development with regard to GLF programme TLA, Norwegian Library Association and NORAD have decided that from now on, GLF scheme will be enlarged as to benefit not only a few TLA members with scholarships to study at SLADS in Bagamoyo but now it is envisaged to benefit more people in both Norway and Tanzania by giving them an opportunity to study, undertake research in either country. In this case, Tanzanians will have an opportunity to undertake their studies or research in Norway and vice versa in an exchange basis.

A few hitches however are still being worked out before the programme goes in action.

## **2.3 FORMATION OF A FEDERATION OF E.A. LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS**

As E.A. forges new links to form a federation, Library Associations in the region also busy working on the logistics to form this federation of library Associations. Initial work on the constitution of the federation is almost completed. The federation which is likely to be headquartered in Arusha Tanzania will bring together five library associations and will probably be a formidable association.

## **2.4 INCREASED MEMBERSHIPS**

There are now good signs that librarians and other information professionals in Tanzania are joining TLA enmasse. In the last two years, the numbers have soared from a few tens to over 150 individual members and about 60 corporate members.

With increase in libraries in the country, members will likely to increase two fold in the next one year or so, TLA is still lobbying for increased membership.

## **2.5 REORGANISATION OF TLA**

After Dr. Mcharazo's departure from TLA top leadership and the departure of Mr Hemengild Haule from the position of treasurer, TLA was reorganized and the new faces were brought into play. The new leadership team is comprised of;

Abdallah Hassan (chairperson), Sam Kasulwa (deputy chairperson), Mrs. Dorothy Sekimang'a (secretary general), Aileen Mfuru (treasurer), Peter Ntaki, Amina Hilka, Evans wema, F ndege are members of the executive committee.

## **2.6 NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN TLA'S RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS**

2.6.1 In the last two years, TLA has continued to make strides in undertaking research and publishing. In 2006, TLA published a book on 'knowledge management' which is based on papers presented at the SCECSAL XVII in Dar-Es-Salaam sales of the book is being cor-dinated by TLA.

2.6.2 In 2007 again TLA published another book 'making library associations functional: theory and practice with particular reference to Eastern, central and Southern Africa.' The book is a compilation of papers by Dr. Anthony Olden and Alli Mcharazo.

2.6.3 Plans are underway to re-launch Somem journal this year so as to create a forum for library and information scholar to share and exchange expenses.

## **3.0 LESSONS LEARNT**

In the course of undertaking these activities we have learnt a number of lessons which TLA would like to turn them into opportunities for its future growth. The lessons/challenges are as follows;

1. need for increased skilled manpower to manage the increasing number of libraries across the country. TLA is working with TLSB to lobby for increased number of colleges that offer training in library and information studies. Currently only SLADS offer these training at certificate diploma levels and Tumaini university is the only college offering these courses at undergraduate level while UDSM offers masters programme.

2.improved financial capability to undertake additional projects and expand services. TLA is strategizing new methods of fundraising including writing proposals, increasing subscription fee from its members, introduction of membership cards etc.

3. need to have closer working relation with the government of the URT. Will enable TLA to lobby more effectively, TLA is currently working to cement further relations with the government by involving the government officials in training programmes, linking our website to several government links, inviting the government to TLA annual

meetings. In Mwanza we had the Mwanza RS to open up and close our meeting, same was in Iringa in 2006.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In all respects, I feel very secure to say that despite the odds of having meager resources, TLA has continued to make gigantic strides in both inculcating professionalism among its members as well as spearheading the development of librarianship in Tanzania.

I would particularly wish to thank the retired chairman Dr. Alli Mcharazo for having created a clear vision for TLA, the interim TLA secretarial for working tirelessly and in very difficult conditions to enhance professionalism in TZ and finally to members for supporting TLA initiatives.