

**TANZANIA LIBRARY AND INFORMATION ASSOCIATION**



Standing Conference of Eastern, Central and Southern African Library and Information  
Association (**SCECSAL**) **XXII 2016**

**SWAZILAND**

**CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

**Presented**

**by**

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**Chairperson, Tanzania Library and Information Association**

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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

I would like to thank the organizers of this Programme for the work well done in organizing this memorial and outstanding event. This event would not have been possible without unalloyed commitments of Executive Committee (EC) members of Swaziland Library Association (SWALA).

It is my pleasure to deliver the country's report to the Standing Conference of Eastern, Central and Southern African Library and Information Association (SCECSAL). This report will have three main sections, section one will present the new TLA office bearers for 2016 to 2018. Section two will focus on activities that TLA has planned and undertaken in the last 2 years and section three will be about library sector status and recognition in the Country.

## 2.0 TLA OFFICE BEARERS FOR 2016-2018

TLA started in a year 2015 with many gaps in its leadership, four members from the EC resigned. These included the Chairperson and Vice chairperson who went for studies abroad and University of Dar es Salaam respectively. One EC member for research and publications resigned due to new appointment as Library Director Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) and the one for sectoral libraries did the same due to reasons associated with his employment. In that period, Dr. Evance Wema who was among TLA EC members, acting the position of chairperson.

During our Annual General meeting (AGM) on February 2015 which held in Bukoba region, Dr. Wema also resigned due to overload schedules in his working place i.e University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM). Thereafter, Mr. Richard Mhaha elected to lead the Association for one year until the election of TLA leadership which took place constitutionally in Dodoma regional during our AGM on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2016. As some of you may be aware that, TLA leadership is on voluntary basis despite been constitutionally elected. TLA leaders are employees for which they are bound to honor their employers working hours and so only on part and free times that some of the TLA leaders devote time to do some TLA activities. Nevertheless, after the TLA leadership election held in Dodoma the team of TLA office bearers comprised of:-

Dr. Juliana Manyerere	Chairperson
Mr. Seif Hikman	Deputy Chairperson
Mr. Leontine Nkebukwa	Secretary General
Ms. Irene Saria	Deputy Secretary General
Ms. Tumpale Mwakasangula	Executive Committee Member
Dr. Grace Msofe	Executive Committee Member
Mr. Daudi Danda	Executive Committee Member
Mr. Arstaric Maro	Executive Committee Member
Mr. Hermenegild Haule	Executive Committee Member

### **3.0 TLA PLANNED ACTIVITIES**

For the period of 2014 to 2015 TLA had planned to implement the following activities:

- Conducting TLA Annual General Meeting in Bukoba and Dodoma 2015 and 2016 respectively.
- Conducting training workshop and public lecture.
- Coordinating LIS schools forum
- Visiting LIS schools and preparation of best student Awards
- Establishing librarians' professional body.
- Preparation and production of a second proceeding.
- Conducting PR and publicity.
- Compiling a list of TLA members.
- Participation to International Conferences.
- Preparing a background paper on strategic plan.

Due to serious changes in leadership for TLA, many of the planned activities never took place. However, I report on few activities undertaken, challenges and the way forward.

#### **1. Conducting training workshops and public lectures**

It was planned that at least one workshop be organised by TLA. A topic that was identified and advert posted on the TLA Blog and Facebook was "Digitization for libraries and information institutions". The workshop was scheduled to take place from 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> December 2015, but there were no responses to it. Its way forward is to re-advertise it because the topic was considered important by members during previous AGMs.

#### **2. Coordinating LIS schools forum**

TLA was supposed to coordinate a forum which would help LIS schools come together and talk about reducing disparities in terms of programmes and outputs.

A list of schools (Jordan, Eckenford, SUA, Tumaini, Muccobs, SLADS, UDSM, SAUT, and RUCCO) to start with was prepared and letters were drafted and agreed to be sent out but it was decided to be sent to TCU and NACTE, as they are the ones, which are responsible for education programmes – from certificates to Ph.D. feedback had not been received yet. Since it is considered important the new leadership will take the matter aboard to coordinate a forum which would help LIS schools come together and talk about reducing disparities in terms of programmes and output.

#### **3. Visiting LIS schools**

This was intended to promote TLA to students by conducting public talk or lecture on contemporary issues related to information studies. A letter, which shows this intent, was drafted and agreed to be sent out to selected LIS schools in Tanzania but it delayed because of a lack of

administrative secretary. This was not done because of a delay of communication between TLA and LIS schools. The concept is still vital; therefore the new leadership will strategise its implementation. Effecting the visit of LIS schools would have also facilitated nomination of the best students for the TLA award in 2015.

#### **4. Establishment of Librarian professional body**

The process of establishing our professional body which is going to have a wider scope than that of TLSB is still underway. It seems it has delayed because it depends upon a research report on status of libraries in Tanzania whose proposal has just been completed, and a committee has not started its work because of financial constraints as well as the lead researcher left in September 2014 for PhD studies in the UK. Therefore, the new leadership will follow up and complete the study for possible outputs

#### **5. Preparation of producing a second proceedings**

It is TLA's strategic plan to publish workshop proceedings biennially. A total of 21 papers for workshops held in Pemba in 2014, Bukoba in 2015 have been collected and those papers presented during this year's workshop will be included. A major pending activity is to edit the papers on submission and making their final print out in form of proceedings. Therefore, the new leadership needs to identify an editor for editorial process and mobilizing fund for the work to be done. An effect to this item shall also form part of revenue to the association through sales of the proceedings.

#### **6. Conducting PR and Publicity**

Apart from the relatively increased awareness by the programmes undertaken in 2013 by opening Facebook account, appearing in the mass and institution media and word of mouth, not much was done after the slump in leadership in 2014/2015. However, during 2015/2016 we managed to reach 149 individual members and 39 institutional members through letters, telephone conversations and invoices. We have also appeared in the Times radio FM, radio that has a Programme on libraries every Wednesday. In the spirit of fostering publicity, we have also designed a take away flier for TLA which is being drafted to be distributed widely to all strategic key institutions. It is also planned that, the publication of Matukio will be reviewed for which all participating members are requested to send their articles for editing and scrutiny for inclusion into the journal.

#### **7. Building and maintaining relationship with key stakeholders**

The following institutions were selected to meet with EC members in order to influence a development of library sector in Tanzania. They were written letters seeking for an appointment to meet them individually and we have been waiting for their reply. These organisations are the World Bank, Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, Embassy of the United States of America, UNESCO international and national offices, and Ministry of Information, Sports and

culture. These meetings could pave a better way of getting support to accomplish the research and establishing our professional body.

But TLA has also been invited in a number of events organised by its stakeholders. These invitations include the 50th Year Anniversary by TLSB where the chairperson represented the library. Equally TLA was invited during the opening ceremony of the AHILA Tanzania Charter but there was no representation due to gaps in leadership at the time when the chairperson left for studies in the UK. SLADS Bagamoyo invited TLA to their 20<sup>th</sup> graduation ceremony at SLADS Bagamoyo main campus.

### **8. Compiling TLA members**

Effort has been made to start compilation of TLA members through available sources of information. We have managed to come up with a listing of members in the Excel spreadsheet but it does not mean all of them are active members. The total number of members was 257 individual members and 39 institutional members. This task has not yet been accomplished and it is a continuous exercise.

### **9. Attending IFLA and SCECSAL and their membership**

IFLA 2014 conference took place in the Republic of Ireland and TLA Executive Committee members were not able to attend because of financial constraints. IFLA membership was renewed in the areas of academic and research, public libraries, Africa, and management of strong library associations. TLA will try to benefit from one of the key initiatives of IFLA for 2015 plan, which is about Dynamic Libraries: Access, Development and Transformation. TLA received journal issues and brought them to TLA office for members to access them on request.

SCECSAL took place in Malawi in May 2014 and the chairperson with a few more participants from Tanzania attended the conference.

### **10. Preparing a background paper on strategic plan**

An organisation's strategic plan is an important one, TLA has also planned and Executive committee members have started to brainstorm on vision, mission, main goals, main activities/ outputs, and immediate outcomes for the Association. Due to changes in EC structure, the final draft is yet to come out. Since it is now long overdue the new leadership shall strategise on completion of the document.

### **11. Annual workshop and General Meeting of 2015 and 2016**

AGM went well, and we got a very good support from Tanzania Library Services Kagera and Dodoma Regional branches. We wish to extend our heartfelt appreciations for tireless efforts by the Regional librarians Mr. Faustin Kato and Mr. Peter Ntaki respectively, and their teams for making these events happen. Many participants did not confirm before the deadline and very few paid participation as requested. Although we have a good number of Bachelors, Master's

and a handful of PhDs but very few of them submitted papers and presentations. The fees seemed higher but they were set according to the market and value of the workshops. It was expected to have about a hundred participants in the annual workshop and a maximum of fifty members in the pre-workshop programme.

#### **4.0 Library sector status and recognition in the Country**

University of Dar es Salaam has introduced a bachelor of degree course in library and information studies in January 2014 and the first intake began in the academic year 2014/ 2015. Three variables of annual workshop participation showed that the number of members who have attained first and higher degrees is increasing. The same is the case with Mzumbe University which started their degree programme one year before.

Some institutions planned to improve their resource centres and asked for a technical support from TLA. These organisations include TCU who showed the interest upgrade their centres in order to serve their users better.

The current board of librarians which is Tanzania Library Services Board (TLSB) does not oversee a whole sector, that is, its scope and mandate are very limited. The initiative to have a strong board with wider scope and full mandate started in 2011 and is still underway. Currently, TLA is a de facto overseer of the library sector in Tanzania.

#### **Conclusion and acknowledgement**

It was a challenging experience but most of activities will continue in the year 2016 and more efforts will be made to accomplish them. Support from members in terms of paying their fees was not appealing which is a main source of TLA funds. I wish members who have Master's and PhD to write papers and make presentations during the annual workshop because it is one way of building confidence and developing a career. May I therefore take this opportunity to thank and congratulate TLA EC member, without their support all this would not have been possible. Thank you for listening and God bless you.

**Dr. Juliana Manyerere**  
**Chairperson**  
**Tanzania Library and Information Association**  
**April, 2016**