



Africa Section

NEWSLETTER

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From the Chair's Desk



Libraries and the Post 2015 Development Agenda

With respect to ALP update the following information was received from Julia Brungs: that IFLA is actively involved at the UN on sessions dedicated to the creation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which will follow the conclusion of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) at the end of 2015. The new goals are being discussed by the Open Working Group (OWG) on Sustainable Development.

The OWG has been holding a series of sessions focusing on different issues which will need to be represented in the UN's new development framework scheduled to begin in January 2016.

Stuart Hamilton, IFLA Director of Policy and Advocacy, attended the 8th session of the OWD in February 3-7 2014. IFLA's statement to the OWG was to discuss the importance of access to information as a fundamental human right and highlighted that in many communities, the library is the only place for people to access information. IFLA's other statements related to this topic, can also now be found on the UN website – a joint statement on access to information and post-2015 development agenda, *IFLA's Statement on Libraries and Development*.

Victoria Okojie, PhD, FNLA
Africa Section Registrar/CEO,
Librarians' Registration Council of
Nigeria

Standing Committee Mid Term Meeting Highlights



The Mid Term meeting of the Standing Committee of International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) Africa Section held in Kumasi Ghana from 8 – 9 February 2014.

Some of the key issues discussed at the meeting include:

➤ Participation in IFLA, WLIC 2014 in Lyon, France



The Standing Committee (SC) members considered workable strategies for having a good outing in Lyon France where the 2014 IFLA World Library and Information Congress would take place. The Chair, IFLA Africa Section, Dr Victoria Okojie said Africa Section is collaborating with the IFLA Section on Children and Young Adults to organize an open forum with the theme “Libraries

in Africa: Meeting the needs of Children and Young adults”. Out of about 35 abstracts received on this theme, 8 were selected for presentation at the Forum in France. The Committee also agreed on “Libraries as Confluence of Knowledge for Emerging African Societies” as the theme for the Section’s Poster at WLIC.



➤ Disaster Management Plan

The need to contribute to effective management of disaster across Africa was discussed by the SC members and the need to develop Disaster Management Plan for Libraries in Africa was identified. This plan has become expedient because there are documents that are very key to a nation’s life and very important that when such documents are lost or destroyed, it becomes impossible to replace them. The Section is therefore developing immutable strategies to keep them intact. When this plan is ready, it will be made available to all libraries in Africa to adopt.

There have been recent loss of human and material resources across Africa especially in countries experiencing uprisings and various forms of civil and political unrest but librarians in Africa think that loss to libraries could be monumental.

It was observed that a lot still needs to be done to ensure that library resources

are not completely lost to emergencies as some resources are irreparable.

The Standing Committee had selected the National Library of South Africa to drive the process.

The Chair of the Section Dr Victoria Okojie said that globally, the attention is now focused on devising implementable strategies to preserve library collections. Continuing, Dr Okojie noted that damages have been done to libraries by protesters during periods of unrest in different parts of Africa citing the Libraries in Alexandria, Egypt and Mali as examples. Libraries according to her hold sensitive history and important documentation hence the need for a plan that is not only proactive but preventive.



➤ **New Committees and Appointments**

Members were informed that Abraham Azubuike was elected into the Standards Committee of IFLA. IASIC was responsible for doing the newsletter, communicating with IFLA HQ and the section's members. Members were informed that Kathy Matsika had volunteered to take up this position. Members were reminded that everyone is expected to provide information for the newsletter. Joyce Myeza was confirmed as the webmaster.

➤ **Update from AfLIA, APN and CANL**

The Chair of AfLIA presented a report which highlighted the following points: AfLIA membership is increasing, has its account that has been opened, a website

that has been created. SC members were called upon to sensitize their LIS communities about AfLIA. The Chair of AfLIA said she was very happy that many associations and institutions were responding positively to calls for membership. AfLIA will organize its first conference next year 2015 in Accra Ghana. Members were informed that AfLIA is co-hosting the BSLA regional meeting with 45 participants.

It was reported that Gertrude Mulindwa who is the coordinator of APLN, has sent out information about the network. SC Members were informed that APLN was very active and working hard to recruit members. SC members were informed that CANL had been created alongside APLN and launched alongside AfLIA and APLN during the Second African Library Summit in Pretoria, South Africa. John Tsebe is the current Chair of CANL and a database of 55 African National Libraries on Africa is covered in the database..

➤ **ATINA SIG**

The SC meeting members were informed that ATINA SIG is still under the IFLA Africa Section and chaired by Abraham Azubuike. Members were made to know that Abraham Azubuike was setting up an ATINA SIG programme to take place during the IFLA WLIC 2014 billed for Lyon-France. The programme has the theme, "Effective Access to Information as Key to Sustainable Poverty Reduction and Thriving in Africa".

➤ Review of Africa Section Strategy Plan

The Africa Section Strategic Plan was carefully reviewed to cater for the future. Each strategic plan was assigned a coordinator to follow up its implementation.



NEWS DESK BSLA



The IFLA Building Strong Library Associations' programme, has now been reviewed and it is shifting from a country focus to a regional convening. The first is to start in Africa and to be hosted by Ghana from the 10th to 14th February 2014. It is hoped it will now have a wider impact. This first regional convening will be managed by IFLA and AfLIA and will draw trainers, participants from different parts of Africa.

Ghana, Mozambique and Nigeria join A4AI Coalition



Group work during the A4AI Multi-stakeholder meeting in Abuja

Ghana, Mozambique and Nigeria have signed Memorandum of Understanding with the Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI). This means that stakeholders in these countries would work closely together to drive down the cost of Internet access via policy and regulatory reform.

The Alliance for Affordable Internet is a coalition of private sector, public sector, and not-for-profit organizations who have come together to advance the shared aim of affordable access to both mobile and fixed-line Internet in developing countries.

The World Wide Web (www) Foundation serves as the secretariat for the Alliance. Nigeria is the first country in Africa to join the Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI) when it was launched, incidentally in Abuja, during the Commonwealth Technology Organization (CTO) Forum in October 2013.



Nigeria's Communication Minister, Mrs. Omobola Johnson during the A4AI Multi-stakeholder meeting in Abuja

Incidentally, Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) joined the Alliance during the celebration of the World Wide Web's 25th anniversary in Abuja. A4AI organized a multi stakeholder forum to mark the event. The forum, held at the Chelsea Hotel on March 11, was the Alliance's first activity to launch its work to spur policy and regulatory change for more affordable internet access in the country. In April 2014, Mozambique signed a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Alliance. Mozambique becomes the first SADC country to join A4AI, and the third developing country to sign an MOU with A4AI after Ghana.



Cross section of Panellists during the A4AI Multi-stakeholder meeting in Abuja

IFLA Takes Advocacy to AiGF



Panellists at the workshop

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), held a pre-event workshop on the sidelines of the Africa Internet Governance Forum held in Abuja from 10th to 12th July, 2014. The workshop chaired by Dr Victoria Okojie, Chair IFLA Africa Section was attended by over 100 participants and focused on 'Public Access to ICTs, Development and Post-2015 Agenda.'

The workshop called on policy makers to find a way to bring the next billion people online. The workshop explored the role of access to Information and knowledge under the development context and the extent to which the post 2015 framework will harness ICTs to improve the application of resources.

The workshop which was in 2 batches had the panel discussion and Question and Answers segment. IFLA, along with other ICT4D organizations, has consistently advocated for public access to ICTs as key enabling element for access to information and therefore for development.



Cross section of participants

Some of the panellists at the workshop are: Emilar Vushe of Association for Progressive Communications (APC); Ridha Guellouz, President (Association Tunisienne des TIC ATTIC); Paul Mamman, Deputy Director, National Library of Nigeria representing Alhaji Habib Jato. Others are: Shafii Ndanusa representing the Secretary, Universal Service Provision Fund (USPF), Nigeria; a representative for Getrude Kayaga Mulindwa of eIFL Public Library Innovation Programme and Nnenna Nwakanma from Web Foundation/Alliance for Affordable Internet.



Question and answer session

Nigeria

NLA Annual Conference holds in Enugu

Nigerian Library Association (NLA) held the 52nd National Conference and Annual General Meeting with the theme: Nigerian Libraries, Confluence for Knowledge: Empowering the Citizens and the Society held from 22nd-27th June, 2014 at Golden Royal Hotel, 10 Bisalla Road, Independence Layout, Enugu, Enugu State.

LRCN Champions Advocacy for Transformation of Public Libraries, Signs MOU for Development of e-Libraries

Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) and the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) are considering workable strategies to locate Rural Information Technology Centres (RITCs) in all Public Libraries across Nigeria.

Converting some sections of the Public libraries as RITCs will deliver content and value to teeming rural dwellers whose only contact to the affordable and robust internet services might be the libraries.

Registrar/CEO of Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria, Dr Victoria Okojie said LRCN will deploy its pool of human capital resource at its disposal to ensure the project succeeds and is willing to work with NITDA to actualize the dream. Dr Okojie who made this known when she led a team of LRCN Management on a visit to the office of the Director General of

NITDA, said it is more cost effective to use public libraries for RITCs.



Dr Victoria Okojie with the DG of NITDA, Mr Peter Jack during the visit

Dr Okojie further noted that LRCN and NITDA have successful collaboration which led to both organizations jointly hosting two workshops that focused on application of free and open source software in library operations. The two organizations jointly produced the draft standards for e-libraries in Nigeria.

Furthermore, LRCN had signed a

Memorandum of Understanding with the Universal Service Provision Fund (USPF) of the Nigerian Communication Commission to develop the e-libraries established by the USPF in 74 locations across Nigeria. According to the MOU, LRCN will conduct Baseline study and do needs assessment before conducting training for all librarians working in the 74 e-Libraries. There is also the Public Enlightenment component of the collaboration as well as Monitoring and Evaluation. The USPF will fund this collaboration fully.

South Africa

UNISA/ IFLA Regional Office for Africa host 7th Annual African Librarianship Public Lecture



Dr Buhle Mbambo-Thata (Executive Director: Unisa Library), Dr Eddie Maepa (Director: Unisa Library Corporate Services), Prof Peter Lor (UP), Segametsi Molawa (Director of Information Services: HSRC and President Elect: LIASA), and Dr Judy Henning (Deputy Executive Director: Unisa Library)

What can we learn from the theory of policy transfer and policy borrowing that we can apply in library and information science (LIS) in Africa? This was the question addressed during the 7th Annual Unisa/IFLA Public Lecture on African Librarianship in the 21st Century held on 22 May 2014 at the Unisa Muckleneuk Campus. The event was hosted by the Regional Office for Africa of the **International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions** (IFLA) in collaboration with the Unisa Library.

The lecture—*Understanding innovation, policy transfer and policy borrowing: Implications for LIS in Africa*—was delivered by the acclaimed LIS champion Professor **Peter Lor** of the University of Pretoria and lecturer of the online course on International and Comparative Librarianship in the School of Information Studies, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, USA.



Prof. Mamokgethi Phakeng (VP: Research and Innovation) provided the preface to the public lecture.

Lor engaged the audience of librarians and information sector specialists on issues around policy transfer within the LIS field. He remarked that library development in Africa had involved large-scale processes of policy transfer and borrowing, although theory had been developed in various disciplines to study policy transfer and policy borrowing, this had not been applied in LIS to any significant extent, but it could help gain an understanding of why attempts to transfer new ideas fail, how to select the ideas to transfer and how to improve the chances of successful transfer.

Lor mentioned how many LIS innovations are taken for granted, such as:

- The Dewey decimal classification—an American invention is used for the shelf arrangement, here and in many other types of libraries in many countries.
- The students are allowed to select books at the shelves ‘with their own grubby little hands’. Open access to the stacks was an innovation that was hotly debated in American and British libraries in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (Black, 2009), from where it spread to other countries, such as Denmark (Dahlkild 2006; 2009).
- The school library—the idea that there should be a library in every school—is part of an American school library model (cf. Knuth, 1999) that spread to South Africa from the United States

together with some competing British influence.

In conclusion, Lor observed that in policy transfer things are never quite what they seem. The precept he left the participants was “look the gift horse in the mouth”.

Segametsi Molawa, the Director of Information Services at the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and President Elect of the Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA), responded to the lecture. She highlighted the importance of policy transfers and the sharing of new ideas to help improve and strengthen service delivery across the African continent.

Unisa Library in partnership with the IFLA Regional Office for Africa took a solemn promise to provide this platform for scholars to share their knowledge with the rest of the continent.

You will find the previous six lectures posted on the **Unisa Institutional Repository**: <http://uir.unisa.ac.za/handle/10500/3338>.

**Submitted by Natalia Molebatsi
Unisa Library Marketing Coordinator*



Celebrating libraries in
20 years of democracy

As part of the national celebrations of 20 years of democracy, LIASA adopted the theme “Celebrating libraries in 20 years of democracy” for 2014. The adoption of this theme enabled the showcasing of libraries nationally and the value they add to education and socio-economic development. This theme further informed the following corporate activities:

- South African Library Week, 15-22 March 2014 - Celebrating libraries in 20 years of

- democracy: Check in @ your library
- The Librarians' Choice: Top 20 South African Books, 1994-2014 – Librarians across the country were invited to identify the Top 20 books published during these 20 years of democracy. It served to highlight the role librarians are playing in promoting local writers as well as influencing the reading habits of the communities they serve. This eclectic list is truly reflective of the social discourse that prevails in South Africa. <http://www.liasa.org.za/node/1274>
- Ten branch seminars during May-August that addressed the topic: *“Librarians as agents for social change, community development and democracy”*
- LIASA Annual Conference, 22-26 September 2014 - Celebrating libraries in 20 years of democracy: the dialogue continues...

Since 1994 great strides have been made to build new public and school libraries, merge academic libraries and upgrade historically disparate library facilities throughout the country. The burgeoning of the library and information services (LIS) sector in South Africa has resulted in a wide network of libraries that currently serves 51.7m South Africans. The current status quo of libraries include:

- The National Library of South Africa (Pretoria and Cape Town)
- The South African Library for the Blind
- 5 Legal Deposit Libraries
- Library of Parliament
- 23 Higher Education libraries
- 1993 public libraries (1612 provincial/381 metro)
- Approx 3000 school libraries

- Corporate libraries; law libraries and special libraries
- Research Council Libraries
- Government libraries
- Prison libraries

During this time, the sector has had huge investments in the form of grants from both internal and external entities that have contributed to the enhancement of existing library buildings, design of new buildings, and the purchase of resources in all formats. LIASA focused on training and development of librarians with a special emphasis on leadership, technology in academic libraries and scholarships for acquiring professional qualifications. As a sector, we have been on the receiving end of:

- approx. R2bn for public libraries that have been made available as Conditional Grants from the Community Library Services; Grant managed by the Department of Arts and Culture
- Over \$25m in grants from external donors including the Carnegie Corporation of New York, of which \$2.5m was awarded to LIASA

This national web of libraries has created the opportunity for a dynamic networked and connected society, which has access to information and knowledge from all types of libraries around the country. However, while this may be prevalent, it also raises the following questions with which library practitioners need to engage:

1. To what extent have we fully understood the philosophy of libraries and how have we incorporated this into the practice of librarianship?
2. Are we prepared to challenge the current public library outreach model for a more community led

- model?
3. To what extent have we integrated libraries in communities so that they take ownership of these places of learning and social engagement? Libraries matter - not only to school learners but also to entire communities. Libraries will stop being targeted during civil unrest when they are experienced as true community spaces.
4. Are librarians ready for a whole mindset and paradigm shift so that a dynamic librarian moves towards the next level of practice in the next decade?

I sincerely believe that with open dialogue and engagement we can take libraries and librarianship to a whole new level in the next 20 years. However for that to happen we must be prepared for serious introspection and review while we celebrate what we have achieved thus far. The dialogue continues...

Ghana

Ghana Library Association (GLA)

The Ghana Library Association (GLA) instituted a Flagship Reading Project in 2013 in a basic public school in the city of Accra. The name of the school is La Nkwantanang Cluster of Schools. It comprises eight schools, each starting from the pre-school, through primary to the junior high school. All the schools are on the same compound and have individual head teachers with separate teachers for each school.



The aim of the Flagship Reading Project is to improve the reading habits of pupils in public basic schools through reading clinics, reading clubs debating clubs etc. The Association has teamed up with teachers of the schools to achieve this purpose.

So far, volunteers from the Association have paid four visits to the school and carried out different activities including donation of reading materials, mobile library visit, reading and storytelling to the pupils.

The visits:

1. February 14, 2014 - Chocolate day in Ghana. Volunteers from the GLA took turns to read to the pupils and shared chocolates with pupils. February 14 is Chocolate Day in Ghana.
2. March 21, 2014. Pupils of the Reading Club of the La Nkwantanang Cluster of Schools were treated to an exciting experience when the Ghana Library Authority visited them with their mobile library van.

Pupils had a feel and experience of a library as there is none in the school and their community. (<http://www.gla-net.org/index.php/general-informations/34-ghana-news/41-la-nkwantanang-cluster-of-schools-madina-gets-a-feel-of-a-library>)

3. June 13, 2014. Volunteers from the Association engaged the pupils in 'reading aloud' sessions. The story which was read was entitled '**Kente for a King**' written by Angela Christian and retold by Kathy Knowles. This is an interesting fiction about the journey of Opoku, a weaver from Bonwire, Ghana and his quest to make the most magnificent kente cloth for his beloved King. Biblionef (Ghana), a subsidiary of the international NGO Biblionef (Netherlands) donated 250 books to the pupils. (<http://www.gla-net.org/index.php/general-informations/34-ghana-news/44-visit-and-book-donation-to-the-reading-club-at-la-nkwantanang-cluster-of-schools>)



4. July 11, 2014. Volunteers from the Association and special guests Wia Huisman-Smeenk, a librarian from the Netherlands and her daughter, Janneke Huisman paid a visit to pupils of La Nkwantanang. Pupils were entreated to a captivating story telling session. The special guests, Wia and Janneke who are friends of an NGO Biblionef (Netherlands) and Biblionef (Ghana) donated 400 books to the Reading Club. (<http://www.gla-net.org/index.php/general-informations/34-ghana-news/47-captivating-storytelling-session-at-the-la-nkwantanang-cluster-of-schools-reading-club>)

Namibia

Ellen Namhila reported on the Namibia Workers' Library and Information Association's activities and progress with a focus on the Namibia Library Symposium that took place in October 2013 that was directly linked to building, "*strong libraries, strong societies*", which is the current IFLA President's theme. The symposium attracted three IFLA Presidents; the current President, Sinikka Sipilä, Presidents Dr. Kay Raseroka and Ellen Tise. It was reported that the association in question is now strong after some period of weakness.