



BOTSWANA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION (BLA) SCECSAL REPORT 2008-2010

COMPILED BY:

K. F. RADJENG – President of BLA

1. INTRODUCTION

On behalf of Botswana Library Association and its members, the president of BLA wishes to express her gratitude for all SCECSAL members for having graced the occasion of SCECSAL XIX , 2010 in Botswana.

Below is the report on BLA activities and projects during the past two years.

2. PROGRESS REPORT

2.1 Strategic Plan

In February this year, ACHAP (The Global Libraries Project), funded a workshop on Strategic Planning for BLA. The workshop was attended by a number of people from different organizations in addition to members of the executive committee. 12 participants attended the workshop. Notwithstanding that, the workshop yielded good results and BLA now has a strategic plan in place. The strategic plan Was officially launched in August 2009. It is expected that the strategic plan will give BLA direction and a platform for following progress.

However, due to the organizing of the SCECSAL conference, the Strategic Plan has not been followed as desired with most of the activities remaining pending. It is expected that in the following year the new executive committee will pay more attention to the SP. This should give the EC and BLA members a more organized way of tracking activities and results of the association.

2.2 A book for a Child project

Last year BLA received a fund from IFLA to purchase books for 10 primary schools in Botswana. The books were handed over to the department of Primary education tomorrow, 31 July 2009. The project involved; selecting and buying the materials, identifying the schools, sorting and classifying the materials, and training the teachers from the 10 schools. BLA held a workshop in February for training of the teachers on how to set up and maintain a library and it was funded by ACHAP. This project left such a huge impact that it should not be left to rust. It is paramount that BLA follow up on the initial stage and upgrade

A warm appreciation is extended to the following:

- Department of Primary Education for receiving BLA with warm hands and helping with implementing the project by helping us identify the schools and in the selection of materials process.
- Ministry of Local Government and the Department of Curriculum assisted in the process of selecting the titles.
- Miss Gaolebale Sibanda from BIDPA, who helped with the sorting and classification of the materials
- PRG Company, for providing space to store the materials during the long 6 months interval between the purchase of the materials and the handing over.

2.3 Web site

The web site was completed and launched at the dinner in May 2009. It can be accessed at <http://www.bla.org.bw>. The web site is for the benefit of all members of the profession and in order for it to be interesting there is need for everyone to contribute content on activities taking place in your different institutions; so whatever activity you have in your organizations let the editorial committee know to include it on the web site.

2.4 Dinner

The fundraising dinner was held in May 2009. The dinner was a significant improvement from 2008 and it can only be hoped that it shall continue to be better in future. Different organizations purchased tickets in support of the event and these are:

- i. Kingsley and Associates
- ii. LIBWIN
- iii. Botswana National productivity Centre
- iv. BOCODOL
- v. Books Botswana
- vi. Botswana National Library Services
- vii. ACHAP
- viii. Tertiary Education Council
- ix. BOTECH

Additionally, the dinner was spiced by speeches given by Mr Motswaledi, who gave a moving and very encouraging speech about libraries; there was also another speech by the Managing Director of Books Botswana Mr Sugden.

2.5 The 2nd National Conference

The theme for the BLA 2nd National Conference, 2008, was *Information Services and Community Development*. The conference has been made possible by the generous donation of different items by the following companies.

- (a) SPRINGER
- (b) KINGSLEY AND ASSOCIATES
- (c) BOOKS BOTSWANA
- (d) EBSCO

(e) LIBWIN

We are very grateful for the support and hope to have a continued relationship with the sponsors. The challenge that this conference is facing that may lead to its ultimate death is lack of response for call for papers; it is a struggle getting colleagues to submit papers for the conference. The whole essence for the conference is to have a platform to share ideas and experiences and we can not do that if we do not submit papers. Further, the conference can help information professional in Botswana identify gaps in their professional development and service which can then be specifically addressed through specific training such as workshops. The second challenge is lack of participation by librarians and information workers, only the professional know the challenges that they have on the ground and it is only they who can bring a close to those challenges; a conference offers a platform to discuss issues and come up with solution while at the same time sharing ideas and experiences on how to solve day to day operation challenges.

2.6 Cooperation between LIMSA and BOSSLA

One of the key things identified have been identified as critical to the survival of BLA is that there is a need for better working relationship between BLA, LIMSA and BOSSLA and it was resolved at the 2009 AGM that LIMSA and BOSSLA should have representation in the BLA executive committee. This was done and the Secretary of BOSSLA and the chairperson of LIMSA sat in the outgoing BLA executive committee. However, the relationship has not been exploited to the fullest potential and there have been not reports shared between the association yet, but it is expected that with implementation of the BLA Strategic Plan, that relationship with grow even more.

There has not been exchange of information between the three groups due to different reasons advanced by the representatives. For example, the LIMSA

representative has indicated that the BLA meetings and activities clash with her class, study, tests and exam schedule. As such it is evident that the cooperation by representation in the manner in which it was implemented is not good enough, there is need for the three groups for forge a better working relationship where there can be better accounting.

2.7 BLA branches

Two branches have been formed one in Maun area and the other in the Ghanzi area. These were formed through the initiatives on members in those areas. There is need for a stronger relationship to be established between the parent body and the branches.

2.8 The logo

BLA members approved in 2009 that the logo should be changed. The current logo has proved to problematic as graphic designers complain that it is not clear and the color is dull therefore making it difficult to set on most surface colors.

2.9 Lesotho workshop

In October 2010, Lesotho Library Association, Botswana and Swaziland collaborated in hosting a workshop on Information Literacy Skills. The workshop was held in Lesotho and facilitated by Professor Peter Underwood. Colleagues trained at the workshop are expected to develop a module for sharing the knowledge with other information professional in their respective countries.

3. The BSLA Programme

The International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), BSLA (Building Strong Library Associations (BSLA)) is a new IFLA program, specifically targeting

at capacity building for library associations. The programme is aimed at working with library association leaders and members in each selected country to develop their leadership skills and capacity for the benefit of the associations, libraries, and their communities. Through a competitive bidding process BLA is one of the first 6 national library associations that have been given a grant by IFLA to go through the programme this year and in 2011. BLA has been assigned Mrs Winnie Vitasky, former Director of Danish Library Association, as a trainer and she will be working with BLA hand in hand in the implementation of the programme

BLA has already started implementation and its first activity was stakeholder meeting held in Palapye on the 18 and 19 November 2010. The objectives of the meeting were:

- Assess the role of the library system in Botswana in reaching Botswana Vision 2016
- assess the status of libraries in Botswana
- assess the status of the information profession in the country
- have a mutual understanding of where we would like to see the library system in Botswana in the future
- identify the roles of the different library stakeholders in the shaping of the library system

It is with pleasure that it is reported that meeting was a huge success, not only did all the stakeholders invited show up for the meeting but deliberations were very fruitful. The meeting paved the way for future activities and the report thereof shall be a valuable tool in shaping future of the BSLA programme at BLA.

4. The SCECSAL XIX Conference

The conference has formed the core activity of BLA in the past two years with the previous year being dominated primarily by planning activities for the conference. The theme for the conference was **Enhancing Democracy and Good Governance through Effective Information and Knowledge Services**. The attendance at the conference was more than 300 participants.

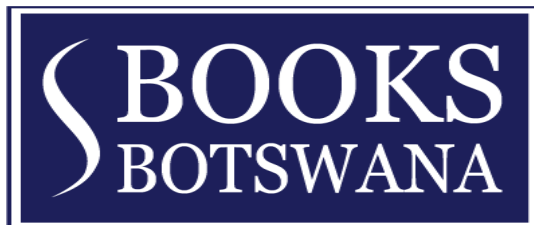
The success of SCECSAL would not have been possible without the tireless commitment of the organizing committee member. The committee comprised of the following:

SCECSAL XIX, 2010 Conference Organizing Committee

Chair/President	Kgomotso Radijeng
Secretary	Bongiwe Magocha, and Professor Mutula
Fundraising	Oarabile Rakgamanyane (Chair), Spando Molatedi, Goitse G. Isaac, and Pungie Sechele
Publicity and Exhibitions	Poloko Ntokwane (Chair), and Bagai Lame Bagai
Hospitality	Oonayang Dilebanye (Chair), Malebogo Lesokwane, Joshua Gachala, Boitumelo Garekwe-Modidi, Bohutsana Mathiba, Boshia Toteng, Doreen N. Serameng, Keseitse Same, Nametso Kgosiyame, Salome Mooketsi, Dikakanyo Keakantse Chabo, Florence Molebatsi, Bertha Lesole, Kefhilwenyana Lelang and Elsie Zacharia, Lynn Jibril, and Chatiwa Nsala
Editorial Team	Priti Jain, R.B. Nfila, T. Kuli

4.1 SCECSAL XIX sponsors

The SCECSAL conference was made possible by the generous support of the following:



5. CHALLENGES

The association has been faced with a number of recurring challenges. The major challenge that we have had to deal with is getting the library and information professional to become active BLA members. This is major hiccup as without membership there is very little that can be achieved. The other major challenge is funding; some activities that the executive committee desire to organize as way of selling the association to its members of the profession and the public are hampered by the lack of funding. The other challenge that has been facing the association for a while now is lack of office space which makes it difficult to keep the documents of the association safely.