

LESOTHO COUNTRY REPORT 2002 - 2004

Lesotho Library Association

Introduction

This report covers the period October 2002 to June 2004. The present executive committee was elected into office in October 2002. The executive committee held the first meeting in October 2002 and an action plan of the activities which were to be carried out during its term of office was tabled before the committee and subsequently adopted. The Executive committee resolved to meet once every month and report to the membership of the association once in six months. It was observed that one of the contributing factors to low morale amongst members was lack of communication. It was also resolved to identify activities which can inject new life into the Association.

Activities

The association was engaged in number of activities during this reporting period.

1. National Library Act

The Lesotho National Library Services has been operating without the supporting legislation since it was established and this hampered its growth and development. The Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture requested the Association to work on the National Library Act and for this purpose allocated funds in 2003/2004 financial year. In March 2004 the Association held a three day workshop entitled "Towards the National Library Act". The purpose of the workshop was to offer stakeholders a forum to contribute to the development of legislation to govern the National Library Services. I am happy to report that the first draft is out and we will soon be presenting it to the Minister.

2. Lesotho Library Association Constitution

The Lesotho Library Association recognized that its constitution was outdated and therefore urgently required to be reviewed. The Association has duly reviewed its constitution and the first draft has been completed and distributed to members.

3. Training

In June this year the Association organized a two day workshop with a theme An Association. The purpose of this workshop was to raise awareness of members as to their obligations as members of An Association. Amongst others the workshop deliberated at length "Ethics and Professionalism for librarians". The workshop subsequently resolved to draw a code of work and professional ethics for Association membership

4. General Meetings

In June 2003 the Association held a bi-annual general meeting to report to its membership. In October 2003 the Annual General Meeting was held. Because the 2003 A.G.M coincided with the U.N. day it took a different shape from the previous meetings. The A.G.M was held on 24 and 25 October

- a. The Association decided to conduct its A.G.M as part of the celebration of U.N. Day. The Association therefore joined other U.N agencies in the U.N celebrations. The agencies displayed their publications and we had the honour of being addressed by the Resident U.N. Representative on this occasion. The agencies donated their publications and the Association had the honour of being addressed by the Resident U.N. Representative on this occasion. The U.N. agencies donated their publications to the libraries represented on this occasion.
- b. Conference. Keynote speaker for the conference was the prominent citizen who after his address donated some money as a friend of the Association. Six papers were read by members.
- c. The A.G.M was held on the last day

5. Visits and contacts

The Association paid a courtesy calls to the following:

- i. Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Environment
- ii. Ministry of Communications
- iii. Ministry of Education and Training
- iv. Lesotho National Commission for UNESCO
- v. The National University of Lesotho

As a result of this visits the Association is already reaping benefits, UNESCO Commission has promised the Association support and the Ministries now recognize the existence of the Association as the Association is being invited to important occasions. At meeting with the Vice - Chancellor of the National University of Lesotho it was agreed that the Association jointly with the University should work on the modalities to introduce a Diploma course in Library and Information Studies. This is already being taken care of and we hope the program will start in 2005/2006 academic year.

Activities to resuscitate the Association

The concern was raised at the 2002 A.G.M that membership morale was very low and as a result the Vice- Secretary has been given an assignment to go out in the country to revive the Association's members who have lost interest in the Association. He has already visited librarians and libraries in the Southern part of the country.