

**Standing conference of Eastern, Central and Southern African  
Library and Information Associations**

**XXI<sup>st</sup> SCECSAL Conference, Lilongwe, Malawi**

**SWAZILAND COUNTRY REPORT: 2012 - 2014**

**JULY 2014**

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

It is that time again when we as Library and Information Associations in the Eastern, Central and Southern African countries meet to share ideas. This report reviews the period from 2012 to 2014.

## **2.0 SCECSAL RESOLUTIONS - 2012**

- i. Governments should create a conducive policy environment to facilitate sharing and provision of access to public information resources in digital formats;
- ii. Library parent institutions should adopt policies and strategies that support open access initiatives and development of institutional repositories based on international standards for information sharing exchange;
- iii. Library and information professionals should endeavour to acquire skills relevant to management and dissemination of information in digital formats;
- iv. SCECSAL, member associations and libraries in the SCECSAL Region should develop social media strategies and adopt the use of appropriate social media applications in their activities;
- v. SCECSAL member associations should develop and implement capacity development programmes to include training on the application of social media to Library and Information work, among others;
- vi. Library and Information Science schools in the SCECSAL region should review the curriculum to ensure that they respond to the emerging needs of the Library and Information profession in the region.

## **3.0 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SCECSAL RESOLUTIONS**

**3.1 To create a conducive policy environment to facilitate sharing and provision of access to public information resources in digital formats -** Swaziland has managed to finalise the draft National Library Documentation and Information policy, which will promote standards, regulate, coordinate and monitor Library and Information Services delivery to the general populace within the country.

The policy will also set rules and regulations, which will facilitate decision making in Library and Information Service delivery.

**3.2 On the resolution that Library and information professionals should endeavour to acquire skills relevant to management and dissemination of information in digital formats,** SWALA members had the privilege to be capacitated on *Web 2.0 and Social Media Learning Opportunity*. Skills acquired where they were taught selected Web 2.0 applications and how to use them hands-on in facilitating communication and information sharing.

**3.0 On the resolution that SCECSAL member associations should develop and implement capacity development programmes to include training on the application of social media to Library and Information work, among others,** Swaziland has collaborated with the Republic of China on Taiwan embassy to create Digital Opportunity Centres to capacitate communities with computer literacy skills. The visually impaired community has not been left out of this initiative, they are provided with internet access through Software called Jaws and they have free access to an embosser.

#### **4.0 SWALA ELECTIONS**

The Swaziland Library and Information Association recently held elections where Ms Jabu Hlophe was elected as Chairperson.

#### **5.0 MEMBERSHIP**

The association embarked on a membership drive which saw an increase in numbers. The establishment of school libraries also boosted the SWALA membership, in that the Teacher-Librarians joined SWALA. On the other hand, the introduction a course in library and information Science by the Institute of Development Management (IDM) has also contributed to the swelling membership numbers.

## **6.0 FUTURE PLANS**

- i. Hosting the XXII<sup>nd</sup> SCECSAL Conference
- ii. Review curriculum of the Library and Information course offered locally

## **7.0 CONCLUSION**

The past two years was a very difficult period for the Swaziland Library and Information Association, which almost saw the collapse of the Association. The newly elected executive committee are faced with the challenge of reviving SWALA back to the being the vibrant association it is known to be. Despite the challenges faced over the past two years, the association can bravely say SWALA is growing in leaps and bounds and is ready to host the **XXII<sup>nd</sup>** IN 2016.