

KENYA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

STATUS 2015/2016 REPORT TO SCECSAL TO BE HELD IN SWAZILAND

Introduction

Kenya Library Association (KLA) is pleased to participate in SCECSAL 2016 meeting to be hosted by Swaziland. KLA was established in 1974 and celebrated 40th anniversary last year at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) held in November 2015 in Meru. The AGM elected the following as executive committee members for two years:

Dr Tirong arap Tanui	-Chairman
Carey Francis Oyier	-Vice Chairman
Miriam Murithi	-Hon Secretary
Joyce Nyambala	-Hon Treasurer
Victor Kamau	-Editor
Prof Constantine Nyamboga	-Ex-Officio
Edward Oswe	-Executive Officer

The year under review was an eventful year for KLA by our own standards and based on target objectives. Several activities were done including meetings, conferences, collaborations, and development of policy and legal documents for management of the association. The challenges experienced that curtailed progress were mainly lack of adequate financial resources and time for officers to be engaged satisfactorily on KLA activities.

Collaborations

KLA entered into collaboration with Swedish Library Association in 2012 for a period of five years to implement the IFLA Building Strong Library Association (BSLA) programme. The collaboration input by Swedish Library Association includes initial training and exposure of KLA officers, administrative and office support, development of constitution and strategic plan 2012-2015 and establishment of eight KLA branches. The current KLA Executive Committee is due to travel to Sweden in May 2016 to give progress report on ongoing collaboration as well as submit proposal for further extension of the collaboration.

Other active collaborators include Jomo Kenyatta Foundation and Goethe Institute who are partners in funding and organizing KLA's major professional annual activity known as Maktaba Award (see below for details). KLA also collaborates with Kajiado County Government in ongoing construction of a county library at a cost of equivalent U\$ 2,574,257. KLA's role in the collaboration shall be capacity building, establishment of professional services, and quality assurance matters.

Activities

Maktaba Award

Maktaba Award is a 'library of the year' competition by organizations and institutions offering different categories of library and information services such as university, school,

public, special, community, archives, documentation centres, and research. In 2015 over 80 institutions bid for the competition and winners got different prizes including cash, laptops, Ipads, and book donations given during a gala day held in September 2015 at National Museums of Kenya. KLA and Goethe Institute hosted a poster session presentation during IFLA/WLIC event in Cape Town South Africa. Maktaba Award this year will be the 7th series having been established in 2010.

Conferences and Workshops

KLA hosted two international conferences in 2015 and two are slated for July and November 2016. Five KLA branches hosted regional workshops in 2015 and several are planned for this year 2016. Besides local conferences and workshops KLA officials attended international conferences such as Swedish Library Association Annual Conference (2015) and IFLA/WLIC (2015) in Lyon, France. This year there are plans to attend SCECSAL in Swaziland and IFLA/WLIC to be held in Columbus, Ohio, USA.

KLA 40th Anniversary

The current Executive Committee thought it prudent to celebrate 40 years of KLA since inception in 1974 by undertaking an activity that would recognize individuals and organizations that have contributed to the establishment and development of KLA. The AGM 2015 forum held in Meru was agreed to be the ideal occasion to do this by awarding certificates to 70 individuals and organizations carefully selected by a panel that developed citations for each of the shortlisted candidates. The citations were read during the meeting and inscribed on the certificate.

Support of Professional Groups

There are three large professional groups that operate independently of KLA who have now seen the need to be allied and associated with it for growth, recognition and legal legitimacy. The first group that has expressed interest to work with KLA is the United Nations/World Bank/University Librarians Committee comprising of over 100 members (established in 2008) who has commenced procedures for registration by government State law Office and to be known as Network of Information and Knowledge Organization.

The second group is the Kenya University Librarians Committee with has about 40 active members (established in 1986) comprising universities and constituent colleges that wants to be registered by the name Kenya Academic and Research Library Association (KARLA). The third one is the Network of information Professionals in Kenya (NIPK) which is currently a social media organization with over 300 members.

Development of Policy and Legal Documents

KLA during the period under review has developed several official policy documents such the revision of KLA 2012 constitution, strategic plan 2016-2020, Implementation of UN Agenda 2030, and Maktaba Award operational document. KLA on the legal aspects has also contributed recommendations for inclusion in the *County Library Services Bill 2015* which is currently awaiting third reading Senate. There is also the substantive KLA Bill

2015 which is currently undergoing parliamentary process to be passed into an Act. If and when the bill is passed into law, KLA would be among the few library associations in the African continent to have such a law that will empower the association legally and professionally.

KLA is currently pursuing development of school policy document by working together with key stakeholders. The policy document aims to compel government to establish, equip and manage a library in every school in the country. There is also ongoing a mega project called 'Digital Literacy Programme' being pursued by current government in fulfillment of election promise to provide laptops to primary school children in pursuit of enhancing e-learning. KLA intends to get involved in the project in capacity building and development of digital content.

Conclusion

Three features that are of major significance for KLA development since the last SCECSAL in 2014 are the devolved system of governance to regions, seeking empowerment and recognition through the legislature, and roping in for support other professional groups. The learned experience is that although funding activities is essential a lot more can be done by networking with various leaders within the profession. Marketing the association for higher membership registration is still a big challenge.

DR TIRONG arap TANUI
CHAIRMAN, KENYA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

15th April 2016