



**1ST MAY 2016-31ST MARCH 2018
REPORT TO SCECSAL GENERAL COUNCIL**

**MALAWI LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
22ND APRIL 2018**

1. Introduction

During the period under review the Malawi Library Association (MALA) has continued to support library and information profession activities in the country specifically in the areas of training, strategic planning for the Association and Constitutional Review.

2. SCECSAL Activities

MALA has been responding to issues and contributing ideas to SCECSAL.

3. Capacity Development

MALA continued to conduct the year-long certificate course in Library and Information Science. Most of the candidates who are school leavers take MALA as their bridging course for the Diploma in Library and Information Science at Mzuzu University's Department of Library and Information Science.

In this reporting period, the Association organised a two days (8th-9th February, 2018) Training Workshop under the topic: 'Understanding Legal Instruments that affect provision of Information services in Malawi'. Legal instruments discussed included the Copyright Act, the E-transaction Act and the Access to information Bill.

This activity was well patronised and enabled the members to interact and learn from each other as well as get understanding of how these legal instruments affect the provision, access, retrieval and preservation of information for us that are working in the information and

knowledge industry . A legal expert from the University of Malawi was the Resource Person at the Workshop.

4. National Conferences and Annual General Meetings

MALA also organised a conference and an Annual General Meeting (AGM) which took place at the Domasi College of Education from 1st – 2nd December, 2016 under the theme “Re-energizing the Role of Libraries, Archives and Information Services for achieving Sustainable Development Goals in Malawi”.

There were over 60 participants, 5 paper presentations and 2 keynote speakers. The key outcomes from the conference were as follows:

- **Gracing of the Official Opening of the Conference and AGM**

Government was applauded for gracing the 2016 conference and AGM and also commended for inviting MALA to partner with Government in the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- **National Policy Formulation and Decision-making**

It was agreed that Government should be persuaded to consider including library and information management professionals in national policy formulation and decision-making processes so that development programmes in Malawi should be informed by relevant and appropriate information in addition to ensuring that appropriate measures to put adequate financial resources are set aside for the provision of library and information services.

- **Recordkeeping and Archiving**

Government and private sector institutions should adopt appropriate policies and strategies that will help to improve the overall recordkeeping and archiving situation in the country.

- **Adoption of Open access Policies and Strategies in Libraries and Information Centres**

The library and information service institutions should adopt policies and strategies that support open access initiatives and development of institutional repositories based on international standards for information sharing and exchange and the Professionals should

endeavour to acquire relevant skills for the management and dissemination of information in digital formats.

- **Capacity Building and Professional Development**

Government and private sector institutions should set aside financial resources for the training of professionals to fully understand the essence of Sustainable development Goals and how they can integrate library and information services for the attainment of SDGs in Malawi and MALA should make provisions for continuous capacity development programmes such as seminars, workshops etc.

- **Strengthening Institutional Arrangements of MALA**

MALA should adopt a strategic approach to guide its short-term and long-term operations by urgently working towards establishing a Permanent Secretariat for the Association to coordinate, monitor and regularly report on the implementation of its decisions, resolutions and activities.

5. Elections of Executive Committee

At the AGM, the association also conducted elections for its executive committee members.

Members elected the following to serve for a 4 years term:

President:	Mrs Gift Kadzamira
Vice President:	Mr Felix Majawa
Secretary General:	Mr Robert Chalochiwawa
Vice Secretary:	Mr Wellington Soko
Treasurer:	Mr Robbins Mwanga
Publications Officer:	Mr Geoffrey Salanje

6. Publications

The association continues to produce Malawi Journal of Library and Information Science and MALA Update. The Journal, which contains professional articles from members, replaces the then MALA Bulletin. It is supposed to be a bi-annual publication. However, the journal has

met some challenges like inadequate papers for publication which have rendered it always missing publication dates. The MALA Update is like a newsletter for the association. It comes out anytime there is news, announcements, etc for its members. .

7. Partnerships/Collaborations

In the year 2017, MALA partnered with Zambia Library Association and Zimbabwe Library Association to come up with a joint workshop proposal for IFLA on SDGs.

8. Membership to International Associations

MALA has subscribed to the following professional bodies:

IFLA

SCECSAL

Locally, in conjunction with the Malawi Library and Information Consortium (MALICO), MALA had consultations with the Copyright Association of Malawi (COSOMA) discussing the implementation of the Marrakesh Treaty following depositing of the instrument for accession by Malawi at WIPO vis a vis the Copyright Act, 2016.

9. Other Activities and Initiatives

1. The strategic plan is in progress to improve the administrative machinery of the Association through the adoption of strategic management system. This will be realized by developing and implementing a Strategic Plan for MALA.

2. To acquire land for building MALA secretariat. MALA intends to partner with MALICO in coming up with a structure that will host secretariats for the two organisations

3. To review and amend the MALA Constitution to include terms of reference (ToRs) for the proposed Permanent Secretariat, and other appropriate emerging issues so as to strengthen its operations and monitoring mechanisms.

10. 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 professionals to become active MALA members. This is major hiccup as without membership there is very little that can be achieved but we are happy to report that the Treasurer General has gone on a campaign to ensure that all members are paid up and this is bearing fruit.

Marketing and promotion of the Association to its stakeholders is minimal such that there seems to be little recognition of the Association and its activities. Finding alternative funding sources of awareness campaigns would curb this challenge and this is why MALA is partnering with local and regional partners to increase its awareness programs and implement its services.

Lack of Secretariat for proper record keeping and easier access and safety of the Association's documents is another challenge for MALA. This has also affected the certificate course that MALA offers as the space that we have relied on ever-since the inception of the course i.e. Chancellor College has inadequate space for its own students and cannot accommodate MALA anymore and currently plans are underway to relocate the course to other another location where there is space until when the situation at Chancellor College is solved or when MALA secures its own office accomodation.

Membership Category	Total
Total individual	75
Institutions	16

With the mushrooming of ICT institutions and the importance of information in today's world, there has been an increase in institutions that see the need of subscribing to MALA's membership. An example if the recent interviews that were being conducted by the Civil

Service Commission for Librarians positions and one of the requirements was for candidates to show evidence of being current paid up members of the Association.

11. Obituary

Four colleagues have since passed on, three from the National Library Service and one from Mzuzu University .

12. Members of the Executive Committee

President	:	Mrs Gift Kadzamira, gkadzamira@ncst.mw
Vice President	:	Mr Felix P. Majawa, fmajawa@gmail.com
Secretary General	:	Mr Robert Chalochiwawa, robertchalo@yahoo.co.uk
Vice Secretary General	:	Mr Wellington Soko, wellingtonsoko@gmail.com
Treasurer General	:	Mr Robbins Mwanga, robinsmwanga@yahoo.co.uk
Publications Officer	:	Mr Geoffrey Salanje, gsalanje@bunda.luanar.mw
Ex-official	:	Mr Gray Nyali, graynyali@gmail.com
Ex-Official	:	Mr Hambani Gausi, hgausi@ncst.mw

Note: This executive was elected in December 2016 and the constitution provides for a term of three years.

13. Official Contact Address for the Association

Malawi Library Association

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Zomba.

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