
The state of Ugandan bibliographic control and strategies into the twenty-first century

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Abstract

The origins of librarianship in Uganda are indicated and the legislation affecting bibliographic control in the country described. Issues are discussed including publishing, a national library and national bibliographic agency, information technology, education and standards. Factors affecting the current state of bibliographic control in Uganda are examined and relevant agencies and publications listed. Strategies for further development are put forward and recommendations made.

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Introduction

Bibliographic control revolves around the concept that publications of a country should be systematically recorded and the resulting bibliographic records be published and publicised to present and potential users. Library and information institutions are the immediate beneficiaries of bibliographic control in that respect. In another respect, library and information institutions are practitioners in bibliographic control as they are involved in the creation, publishing and publicising of bibliographic records through accessions lists and other means. Library and information institutions are also involved in conserving and preserving the materials for posterity.

Library and information institutions play a direct or indirect role in bibliographic control. It is therefore appropriate to appraise library and information institutions and their services in Uganda before discussion of bibliographic control.

The origins of library services in Uganda are traced in the establishment of the East African Literature Bureau (EALB) by the then East African High Commission in 1944, to “provide reading services for the Africans” (Kigongo-Bukenya, 1977) as one of its functions. To implement the function the East African Literature Bureau developed branch, book-box, postal and mobile library services under Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda branches of the EALB, respectively.

In 1959, S.W. Hockey, Libraries Advisor for East Africa, was commissioned to survey the then library services offered by the EALB and recommend the nature of library development in East Africa. One of the Hockey Report recommendations was the setting up of national library services in each East African country (Hockey, 1960). The Uganda Public Libraries Act, 1964 was enacted and set up the Public Libraries Board which inherited the then East African Literature (Uganda Branch) library services. The Public Libraries Board now boasts 22 branch libraries in gazetted towns of Uganda. The mobile, book-box and postal services ceased due to lack of necessary resources.

University library services began in 1920 and were later enshrined in the Makerere University Act. It now boasts a Main Library and sub-libraries: Albert Cook Library, Makerere Institute of Social Research

Library, Institute of Education Library, Kabanyolo Farm Library, the Faculty of Veterinary Library and the East African School of Library and Information Science Library. In addition the University Main Library centrally administers the Bookbank, in that it selects, acquires and processes information materials before distributing them to Faculties, Schools and Institutes.

Other library services developed under appropriate legislation or administrative arrangements. The Uganda library and information landscape today includes: five University Libraries (Makerere, Mbale Islamic, the Uganda Martyrs, the Christian University of Uganda, Bugema and Nkumba Universities, and their sub-libraries); the National Documentation Centre System based at the Uganda Management Institute; the Uganda National Archives; the National Agricultural Information System; Government Department Libraries; Specialised Information and Library Services in banks, research institutes; libraries in foreign embassies, international organisations, non-governmental local and international organisations; and religious organisation libraries; etc.

Legislation affecting bibliographic control in Uganda

Makerere University Legal Deposit Act, 1965

Formal bibliographic control in Uganda was set in motion by Ordinance No. 26 promulgated by the then Legislative Council and first went into print as a Legal Statute on 1 March, 1958. The statute designated the Makerere Library the Deposit Centre for publications accruing from the Statute. The purposes of the Statute were also defined. The materials to be deposited and other provisions including penalties against defaulters were highlighted. Legal Notice No. 10 of 1963 created the 1965 version known as The Makerere University College (Deposit Act) 1965 which was revised in 1974.

The Act has many glaring weaknesses. First, it places the responsibility of deposit on the publisher and not the author and printer. This may be detrimental in the Uganda situation where the author might be his own printer and publisher. There is need to encompass both publisher, author and printer

in case of multiple roles. The Act does not include grey literature, which is unfortunate because much useful literature appears in this form. The penalties to defaulters are too lenient to stop non-compliance. There is no provision for a machinery to implement the Act. Exemption powers granted to the Minister contradict the spirit and philosophy of the Act.

The Deposit Library and Documentation Centre Act, 1969

The Deposit Library and Documentation Act, 1969 was next in line. It designated the Uganda Management Institute as administrator of the Legal Deposit Library and Documentation Centre. Although the Act does not specifically mention it, the centre should be unique and should specialise in collecting publications on public administration. It was for this reason that it was placed under the Ministry of Public Service. The Act stipulates the purpose of the act and lays out the penalties for defaulters. It also gives exemption powers to the Minister responsible.

Major weaknesses of this Act include lack of provision for the education and training of documentalists; the failure to set up an implementing machinery; and the weak and lenient penalties not effective to stop defaulters. The exemption powers vested in the minister are also contradictory to the spirit of the Act since the exempted works would deprive posterity of such literary culture.

The Copyright Act, 1964

The Copyright Act, 1964 should be discussed in Uganda bibliographic control because without it being effective the motivation to authors/producers of information materials would be minimal. The Uganda Copyright Act, 1964, originated from the Copyright Act 1956 of the United Kingdom which was operating in Uganda until after independence. As per section 17 the Act applies to both published and unpublished works produced before and after 1964. The works eligible for copyright are specified: literary, musical, and artistic works; cinematography films; gramophone records and broadcasts. The act also addresses other related issues including ownership, purpose, infringement of copyright; and remedies for infringement.

Several weaknesses of the Act have been identified: non-protection of folklore; favouritism to published as opposed to unpublished works; lack of strong implementation machinery; and excessive powers vested in the minister to decide on some issues.

Other legal provisions

Several other legal provisions could be mentioned as relevant to bibliographic control in Uganda. These include:

- The Newspaper and Publications Amendment Decree, 1972 which authorises government to prohibit publication of newspapers, a situation which would negatively affect bibliographic control through censorship and therefore depriving users of some publications.
- The National Information Policy and Co-ordinating Agency Statute, 1992 establishing the National Information Policy and Co-ordinating Agency to develop national information systems and services for Uganda: an act very instrumental in setting up and implementing national information policy which also affects bibliographical control.
- The Uganda National Council for Science and Technology Statute No. 1 of 1992, specifying the functions of the Council including among others “to protect intellectual property through appropriate patent laws and to operate a National Patent Office”, an important law supplementing copyright law to safeguard producers’ rights and entice them to produce more materials.
- The National Records and Archives Bill, 1994, which among its provisions has “to preserve and make available for consultation, public records in the National Archives or any other archival repository”, one of the functions of bibliographic control.

The overriding importance of the above legal provisions is that they form the basis of production, collection, preservation and conservation of the information materials which are the basic raw materials for bibliographic control. The effect of legal provision could be either positive when they effectively promote bibliographic control, or negative when, for instance, they censor or

prohibit publication of certain information materials. As already pointed out many of these legal provisions are wanting. Proposals to improve them will appear under “Strategies into the twenty-first century”.

Other important issues in Uganda’s bibliographic control

Publishing and booktrade

The publishing and booktrade sector has recently shown dramatic improvement. The most important development has been the establishment of the Uganda Publishers and Booksellers Association with the overall objective of bringing together and unifying publishers, booksellers and other persons and institutions engaged in the activities related to book publishing and bookselling in Uganda. UPABA has lobbied for an indigenous and independent publishing and bookselling industry and has organised sensitising seminars, held various book exhibitions and exchanged visits geared to improve the Uganda scene. UPABA is now the ISBN Distributing Agency.

Another favourable development has been the establishment of the Uganda National Book Council on which representatives from the Public Libraries Board (PLB), the Uganda Publishers and Booksellers Association (UPABA), Ministry of Education (MED) and the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), have been appointed. These appointments have measured up to the requirement of membership on the Council which should comprise representatives from the book professions on one hand and the bodies responsible for the implementation of book development policy on the other. Obviously the Council will be responsible for designing and setting in motion a policy to promote book development and reading which calls for combined efforts of bodies to tackle problems of literary creation, book production and distribution, literacy work, and library networks: a book policy for Uganda.

Local publishers have sprung up to an incredible number of 27 (see Table I). The growth of printers has also jumped up to 61 and the number of established binderies has gone up to six. Bookshops have also been on

Table I Publishers in Uganda which have acquired ISBNs

Bow and Arrow Publishers P.O. Box 4498 Kampala ISBN 9970-9002	Law Development Centre P.O. Box 488 Kampala ISBN 9970-02
Crane Publishers P.O. Box 3230 Kampala ISBN 9970-01	Kamalu Ltd P.O. Box 4511 Kampala ISBN 9970-403
Equator Multigraphic Printers Ltd P.O. Box 14142 Mmengo-Kampala ISBN 9970-12	McMillan (U) Ltd P.O. Box 4335 Kampala ISBN 9970-07
Fountain Publishers P.O. Box 7117 Kampala ISBN 9970-06	
M.K. General School Supplies Ltd P.O. Box 12385 Kampala ISBN 9970-405	Roce Consultants P.O. Box 14881 Kampala ISBN 402
Makerere University Press P.O. Box 7062 Kampala ISBN 9970-05	T&E Publishers P.O. Box 5784 Kampala ISBN 9970-9001
Nakawa Publishing House P.O. Box 9536 Kampala ISBN 9970-03	Typeset Express Ltd P.O. Box 6181 Kampala ISBN 9970-407
Progressive Publishing House P.O. Box 1725 Kampala ISBN 99704-01	Uganda Publishers and Booksellers Association (UPABA) P.O. Box 7732 Kampala ISBN 9970-04
Ren Publishers P.O. Box 11905 Kampala ISBN 99704-06	Women in Development (WID) P.O. Box 7136 Kampala

the increase and now total up to 66. The establishment of the Uganda Publishing and Printing Co-operation has beefed up the publishing of public documents (*New Vision*, 1997).

Despite the above fast developments, Uganda still imports a lot of information materials from UK, USA, India, etc., which suggests that the publishing and bookselling industry still has to improve. (See the section on “Strategies into the twenty-first century” for planned development.)

The National Library

The National Library plays a pivotal role in a nation’s bibliographic control. Living examples are there in the United Kingdom where the British Library houses the Bibliographic Services Division; in the USA where the Library of Congress plays a leading role in bibliographic control; the National Library of Nigeria, the Bibliothèque de France, etc. play roles in bibliographic control in their respective countries. The roles played range from libraries of last resort; storage, preservation and conservation of the national imprint; coordinating research; and housing the National Bibliographic Agencies.

The issue of the National Library has been very controversial in Uganda. No wonder that up to now there is no national library. Part of the reason has been “empire building” because the major library systems (Public Libraries Board and the University Library Services) both want to own the National Library. It is even surprising that the compromise proposal to establish a National Reference Library under the University Library Service, and a National Lending Library under the Public Libraries Board, has never been implemented. Instead we have a surrogate National Library, the Africana Section of Makerere University Library by virtue of housing the Deposit Centre established by the Makerere University Deposit Library Act, 1965. The Kawanda Research Station houses the Agricultural Research Information System Headquarters and effectively acts as a surrogate for the Uganda National Agricultural Library.

The above arrangements are inadequate because of lack of a national policy; accommodation; funding; qualified and experienced bibliographers; and external contacts.

The National Bibliographic Agency

The National Bibliographic Agency is normally an arm of the National Library. This is the case in the UK where the Division of Bibliographic Services is under the British Library at Boston Spa. It is only logical that the agency whose function, among others, is to compile the National Bibliography and other specialised bibliographies, should be within or near the building housing the National Library. This is to facilitate access to the deposited materials the National Library must store, preserve and conserve or need as a

library of the last resort. The functions of the National Bibliographic Agency involve the following:

- machinery to implement the Legal Deposit Laws or such arrangements by which national literary culture is deposited at a designated centre;
- creating the authoritative bibliographic records of publications published in the country;
- publishing the National Bibliographies (current or retrospective) and any other such specialised bibliographies;
- central cataloguing, resulting in production and distribution of records in standard forms (cards, machine-readable tapes or acceptable alternatives);
- receiving and distributing within the country national bibliographies and specialised bibliographies received from other countries;
- providing advice, direction, and supervision of local bibliographic activity, its stimulation and co-ordination;
- liaising in relation to bibliographic activities with international organisations: UNESCO, FID, IFLA, ISO;
- formulating union catalogues required for national and international resource sharing.

Uganda has no formal National Bibliographic Agency. However, there exist two bibliographic centres: the Africana Section of Makerere University Library, which handles the materials deposited by the Makerere University Legal Deposit Act, 1965; and the Deposit Library and Documentation Centre, handling materials deposited by the Deposit Library and Documentation Centre Act, 1969. These centres are yet to offer all functions of the National Bibliographic Agency as outlined above except two: the collection of deposited materials; creating the bibliographic records of these publications; and production of the National Bibliography, still irregular and incomprehensive. Details will be discussed under “Current situation of bibliographic control in Uganda”.

Information technology

The telecommunications infrastructure in Uganda is growing very fast. The infrastructure comprises the Mpoma Satellite Earth Station which boosts the telecommunications signals; the Uganda

Posts and Telecommunication Co-operation; private companies like StarCom, Informail, Transmail Limited and CelTel Cellular; the Television System comprising: the Uganda Television Services, International TV Network (Sanyu Television), CTV Cable Sat International, and MultiChoice Uganda Limited; and the Radio System comprising: Radio Uganda, Radio France (Uganda), BBC Radio (Uganda), CBS88.8 FM, Capital Radio, Radio Toro, F.M Gulu, and Church of Uganda Radio, etc.

The total number of telephone exchanges throughout the country is 98 with a capacity of 79,456 lines. Exchange connection in March 1997 was 47,927. EMS speed post joins the Internet for track and trace. Government policy in the telecommunications sector is to increase telephone density from the current 0.27 lines per 100 persons to 2.00 lines per 100 persons (*New Vision*, 1997).

The computer, the telephone and the modem are revolutionising the mode of bibliographic control and improving efficiency through accuracy, speed and capacity of the capture, processing, transfer, retrieval and dissemination of bibliographic information. It is hoped that national and international networks will soon evolve.

The problems of information technology experienced in Uganda include: staff with little enthusiasm, prejudice and resistance; prohibitive cost of capital expenditure and maintenance; power surge and failure at times and loss of information through viruses or carelessness. But these appear to be short-term problems which should be overcome when Uganda fully embraces information technology in bibliographic control.

Education and training

Granted that any information worker is a bibliographer at one stage or the other during the performance of duties, Uganda boasts 18 holders of Masters, 22 holders of post-graduate diplomas, over 150 graduates and some 130 diploma holders, in the library/information and related fields (Kigongo-Bukenya, 1996). Three of the masters holders are currently candidates for PhD. There are also numerous holders of the Certificate of Library and Information Science, a para-professional qualification.

The East African School of Library and Information Science Bachelor of Library and

Information Science syllabus offers publishing and booktrade, records and archive management, and bibliographic control courses which equip Ugandan information professionals with bibliographic control skills and techniques coupled with those of publishing, records and archive management.

The German Foundation for International Development (DSE) assisted in funding six Ugandans to attain Diplomas in Records and Archive Management, particularly in India and Ghana. The Eastern and Southern Africa Management Institute (ESAMI) has also contributed to the training of records managers (bibliographers) through its short courses. The Librarian of the “Surrogate” Uganda National Bibliographic Agency was attached to the Bibliographic Services Division of the British Library for three months to be exposed to the bibliographic services and operations to improve her performance once back in Uganda.

The above account reveals that, contrary to the fears, Uganda does not lack bibliographers. What they need is exposure to services and operations of well developed bibliographic and archive services like in Ghana, India, UK, USA, etc. so that they master techniques and skills and also keep abreast of trends of developments in bibliographic control.

Standards for bibliographic control in Uganda

Universal Bibliographic Control (UBC), Universal Availability of Publications (UAP) and Universal Availability of Information (UAI) are global interrelated bibliographic programmes. The philosophy of these programmes is that the systematically described information materials must physically be made available so that the information they contain is utilised by users. Availability on a global scale invokes a mechanism of similarity in handling of the materials and services so that there is universal compatibility. This calls for bibliographic standards.

The aims for bibliographic standards are: provision of means of communication amongst all vested interests in bibliographic control; promotion of economy in human effort, materials and energy in bibliographic services; protection of bibliographic clients' interests through adequate and consistent

quality of services; and promotion of access through removal of barriers caused by differences in national practices.

The state of bibliographic standards in Uganda still leaves much to be desired. True, we have the Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS), a parastatal body, set up by the Act of Parliament in 1964 to formulate national standards, encourage standardisation and develop quality control systems in Uganda. However, there is yet to be set a machinery between UNBS and the Uganda Library Association, the professional association which should control library and information issues in Uganda, in order to establish appropriate standards in library and information fields. We should follow the examples of the British Library Association which cooperates with the British Standards Institution, and the American Library Association which pairs with the American National Standards Institute, in formulating standards in bibliographic control and related fields.

Notwithstanding the above inadequacies, Uganda applies standards in bibliographic control. (See Table II below.)

These standards present problems including non-accommodation of Uganda subjects/topics because standards are Western biased; too much detail which is out of pace with small library services and is confusing to bibliographers and users alike, who would prefer simplified details; and multilingual materials whose bibliographic data is difficult to transcribe into the ISBD format. Possible solutions will be discussed under “Strategies into the twenty-first century”.

The current situation of bibliographic control in Uganda

The current situation in Ugandan bibliographic control could be studied under two major categories: formal bibliographic control based on Ugandan legislation; and informal bibliographic control based on its

Table II Standards applied in bibliographic control in Uganda

AACR2	For headings/names of persons
All ISBDs	For description
ISBN, ISSN, ISBDs	For numbering
DDC, UDC, Cutter, LC	For subject approach
UNIMARC, CCF	For machine-readable programme compatibility

own initiative; this itself is categorised into institutional and individual bibliographic ventures.

Formal bibliographic control

Formal bibliographic control is based on Acts of Parliament. The Acts in question are: the Makerere University Legal Deposit Act, 1965 and the Deposit Library and Documentation Centre Act, 1969. Both these Acts have been discussed earlier. What is relevant here is, they both designate the appropriate respective institutions as legal deposit centres and specify provisions related to bibliographic control. It is already argued that the slow development evident in Uganda's bibliographic control is due to the weaknesses of these acts in particular and other related Acts in general.

Activities at the Africana Section (Legal Deposit Centre) of Makerere University as set up by the Makerere University Legal Deposit Act, 1965

The Africana Section of Makerere University Library is the designated Legal Deposit Centre and therefore acts as the surrogate National Bibliographic Agency. The Section is responsible for the receipt of depository materials and because of failure of many publishers to deposit, it has taken on the search and purchase of newly published materials all over the country. The Section also creates bibliographic records of the materials deposited or collected. It uses DDC 20th edition and AACR2 in the description of the materials. The Section has published the *Uganda National Bibliographies*, though irregularly and not comprehensively because of many publishers' failure to deposit. National bibliographies produced so far are given in the Table III.

Recently the Section acquired computers and has created:

- the National Bibliography Data Base (1900-91);
- Data Base for Abstracts of Theses of Higher Degrees held by Makerere University Library; and

Table III Frequency of publishing the *Uganda National Bibliography*

Year	Specific detail area	Frequency	Comment
1987	Vol. 1 No. 1-4	Quarterly	Published
1988	Vol. 2 No. 1&2, 3&4	Bi-annual	Published
1989	Vol. 3 No. 1-4	Annual	Published
1990-93	Vol. 4	3 years	In process
1994	Vol. 5	Annual	Being compiled

- World Bank and International Organisations Data Bank.

Apart from the above mentioned functions and perhaps the storage, preservation and conservation of deposited materials, the Section is yet to perform other vital functions of a National Bibliographic Agency as discussed earlier. The problems at the forefront include: failure of comprehensive deposit of materials contributed to by weak Acts; lack of facilities like space, storage, conservation and preservation; adequate experienced bibliographers; funding; and outside contacts.

Activities of the Deposit Library and Documentation Centre as set up by The Deposit Library and Documentation Centre Act, 1965

The Deposit Library and Documentation Centre are situated at the Uganda Management Institute and were designated a Legal Deposit Centre by The Deposit and Documentation Centre Act, 1969. Its efforts to receive public document deposits from government departments and local authorities has been frustrated by the weak Act. So far the Centre has managed to collect a few documents as provided by the Act and has taken the initiative to collect anything that is a new publication from publishers and other sources like authors. The Centre has so far managed to produce the *Accession Bulletins* (a type of National Bibliography) illustrated in Table IV.

Informal bibliographic control

Informal bibliographic control refers to deliberate institutional or individual efforts in bibliographic activities, not based on legal provisions. Informal bibliographic control is divided into institutional and personal for the purposes of this essay.

Institutional bibliographic control

Library and information institutions undertake as a matter of course bibliographic activities by acquiring, processing, storing,

Table IV Published National Documentation Centre (NDC) *Accession Bulletins*

Year	Specific detail area	Frequency	Comment
1969-1993	NDC <i>Accession Bulletin</i> Series No. 1	–	Published
1969-1993	Supplement to the NDC <i>Accession Bulletin</i> Series No. 1	–	Published
1994	NDC <i>Accession Bulletin</i> Series No. 2		Published
1995	NDC <i>Accession Bulletin</i> Series No. 3		Published

and retrieving information materials. They carry out descriptive cataloguing and produce bibliographic records which feature in library catalogues. These institutions create awareness of their collections through publicity or publications – accessions lists and special bibliographies. For resource sharing, union catalogues are created. Information technology has been acquired by the major libraries in Uganda resulting in the creation of databases, CD-ROM work stations, and access to electronic communication systems like fax, e-mail and the Internet.

Makerere University Library Services have created the Bookbank, Journal Collection, Newspaper Index restricted to Uganda Government Newspapers, International Development Agency (IDA) Collection, Cataloguing, Dissertations/Thesis Collection, and National Bibliography databases. It is also linked to the Internet and enjoys free searching of the Web.

Of special note is the Albert Cook Library which accesses Healthnet and has Medline, Aidline, Popline and ABSCO on CD-ROM. It has created its database which is the basis of the *African Health Information Digest*, a bibliography started in 1997 and is to be published on quarterly basis.

The Agricultural Research Information System (ARIS) has the following databases:

- CARIN featuring completed and on going agricultural research projects in Uganda.
- AGRIN featuring agricultural literature on Uganda and by Ugandans.
- INFORM literature for research managers.
- ARIS also has AGRIS, AHI and TreesD on CD-ROM.

The National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) hosts the following databases:

- Non Government Environment Database, featuring addresses and types of NGOs related to environmental issues.
- Polluting Industries Database, featuring addresses and specifics of industrial polluting agents.
- Environment Chemicals Database, featuring literature on environmental Chemicals.
- NEMA has the following databases on CD-ROM: ENFOTTERA; GRDAETAR; and Global Resources Information.

The High Court of Uganda and the Supreme Court of Uganda Libraries, have created Legal Databases.

The Uganda National Council for Science and Technology, has the following databases:

- UNCST featuring research projects in Uganda.
- INNOV hosting science and technology innovations in Uganda.
- INENT hosting an inventory of scientists in Uganda.

The National AIDS Documentation and Information Centre (NADIC) has established the following databases:

- NADIC Bibliography.
- NADIC Agencies.
- NADIC Publications.
- NADIC Events.
- NADIC Policies.
- HIV/Aids Situation.

The Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics (IASSE) has the following databases:

- BOOKS featuring information materials on demography.
- PER featuring journal, and periodical literature on statistics, economics and related fields.
- STAT featuring statistical and computing literature.
- CDS featuring workshops, seminars and conference papers.

Other information and library services have joined the information technology queue also: The British Council has its own library database and is also linked to the Internet; so is the United States Information Services; the Makerere University Child Health Centre has created the Child Health Database; and the Makerere University Institute of Environment and Natural Resources has created the National Biodiversity Data Bank.

The above developments are insular – hardly do other institutions know what is being done by whom. What should be aimed at now is the creation of local area and national networks so that more local, national and international electronic bibliographic control is made a reality in Uganda.

Individual bibliographic control projects

The landmark individual contributor to bibliographic control is Professor Langlands who single-handedly compiled the *Uganda Bibliography*, starting with Vol. 27 of 1963.

The bibliography used to appear in the *Uganda Journal* and would consist of 200 items in each issue. Though he was expelled by the Idi Amin Regime in 1975, he continued on the project till his untimely death in an air crash. Other big names under this heading include S.A.H. Abidi, Olivia Mutibwa, Maria Musoke and others. Individual contributions in this respect appear in the Appendix.

Strategies into the twenty-first century

As we enter the twenty-first century we are already aware that individual and national development depends on the availability of the right information. Information systems providing effective information services will make the difference between a rich and a poor country or between a rich and poor person. But before we get the right information at the right time, the information materials must be produced, acquired, processed, and accessed for the decision makers, the implementers of decisions and everybody so that information is exploited from the materials and applied by the users. Certainly bibliographic control will be the starter of the “relay race” and in order to make each member of the team effectively run fast and first to the finishing line, efforts must be made to evolve an effective and appropriate bibliographic control system for Uganda.

In discussing strategies for the future there are pre-requisites we must consider: first, we must have a clear concept of who the stake holders are in bibliographic control; we must clearly establish the role each of the stakeholders plays or must play; it is also important to define the current problems so that we may come out with proposals as solutions to the problems.

Stakeholders in Uganda bibliographic control

Government

The government plays a vital and significant role in bibliographic control of a country. The overall government attitude towards information and related issues sets the pace and depth of library and information services which include bibliographic control. There is need therefore for the Government to produce a National Information Policy, giving guidelines on the philosophy, nature and administration of information development.

It is fair to recognise the Uganda Government’s contribution so far towards bibliographic control: legislation like the Copyright Law, 1964; the Makerere University Legal Deposit Act, 1964, and the Deposit Library and Documentation Act, 1964, is in place. The problem is that they have outlived their usefulness and need amendments to cope with new trends.

Another thorny issue facing the government is actualising its pledge to library development through releasing adequate funds. The practice of granting funds on *ad hoc* or haphazard basis must cease; instead there must be a method of allocating such funds based on a concrete formula like population or prescribed percentage of the national or local authority budget.

The government must participate in regional and international bibliographic issues, and should, for instance, be a signatory to Conventions, Agreements and Protocols.

At present the government sponsors undergraduate information professionals’ education and training only to refuse employing them on the excuse of an embargo on appointments and therefore failure to fill established posts or failure to create more established posts where due. This contradictory policy must be scrapped. Strategic Manpower Planning must be adopted.

Publishing and booktrade

The role of publishing and the booktrade in bibliographic control cannot be overemphasised since the materials have to be produced and distributed to the users. The current infrastructure of publishing and the booktrade has been discussed under current developments.

One of the problems in this sector is that authors are not motivated to produce materials. The market is small due to its fragmentation by numerous tribes each requiring production of materials in their respective vernaculars. The situation is not made any better because English, the official language, and Swahili, purportedly the national language, are both foreign and minority languages in Uganda.

Another problem is the high cost of printing which makes deep inroad in the authors’ profits. The importation of cheaper materials has had a heavy toll by kicking out of the market locally published materials. The

government policy on importation of educational materials is problematic because it keeps on changing and makes the situation in publishing and the booktrade erratic.

The present lack of firm distribution channels particularly up country is also one of the major problems.

To solve these problems and improve publishing and the booktrade, there is urgent need for UPABA to consolidate and expand its role in promoting indigenous publishing. UPABA should join hands with ULA in promotion or amendment of appropriate legislation; stopping import duty on educational materials (particularly those materials affecting publishing and the booktrade); sensitise local authors to augment their publishing both quantitatively and qualitatively; produce trade bibliographies, publishing and booktrade updates; start book review services, and hold national bookfairs. International working relations should be cultivated.

Uganda Library Association

Taking as examples the Library Association, UK, and the American Library Association, USA, Library Associations should play a leading role in bibliographic activities. However, to date the Uganda Library Association (ULA) is still facing problems. There is a lot of apathy among professionals which has led to non-participation in discussing professional issues.

Another problem is that ULA has no strategies for tackling issues like standards, education/training, and publishing. In this respect it should be appreciated that research is basic to effective development of any sector. Research must therefore be enhanced to probe problems in the information and related fields, to come out with new strategies geared to solve problems. There is also lack of collective tackling of professional issues as a profession. For example the issue of the National Library and the amendment to Legal Deposit and related acts is being approached by individual libraries.

Central to the teething problems of ULA is lack of funds to undertake projects let alone day to day administration. ULA's participation in international fora has also hit a snag as a result of termination of IFLA membership due to failure of payment of dues.

The profession still lacks a register of professionals and a code of conduct which are parameters for a developed and effective Association. It is vital that a Register of Professionals and a Code of Conduct are put in place to ensure quality in service as well as operational ethics.

It is imperative therefore that ULA changes its outlook and streamlines itself in order to effectively assume a leading role in bibliographic activities. Subcommittees must be set up according to types of libraries and within them subcommittees to research into technical problems like standards in classification, cataloguing, information technology, exchange of information, etc.

ULA should also pay due concern to education and training of bibliographers and to ensure exchange of experiences with bibliographers elsewhere to allow exposure to bibliographic developed systems. ULA could also pressurise the government to improve its attitude and support for bibliographic activities.

The information professionals

When we talk of information professionals we are no longer restricted to librarians, documentalists or archivists. We are in addition meaning a wider variety of groups: authors, publishers, composers, dramatists, dancers, museum personnel, journalists, broadcasters and many others. We are therefore today referring to a wider spectrum of professionals, the common characteristic being that they are participating in the information process.

The information professionals in the context of bibliographic control are very fragmented as each works in isolation to another thereby creating duplication and confusion. As the adage has it "unity is strength", so information professionals (bibliographers) will be better esteemed if they worked in unity to solve their problems. Very few Ugandan information professionals have studied the discipline of bibliography, so many of them are self-made or engage in it on voluntary basis. In such a situation one would not expect quality development. This is a warning to the education and training institutions in Uganda to mount specialist courses in bibliography to improve efficiency in the field. The publishing and booktrade and bibliography courses given at EASLIS and elsewhere are more theoretical than

practical. EASLIS and related institutions should incorporate practice/attachment for the students to enable students to acquire skills before they graduate.

The output of the National Bibliographies and other bibliographies is limited, not to mention their irregularity. This could be a symptom of few trained bibliographers in Uganda unable to cope with bibliographic activities. There may be other problems like lack of funds, etc. There is need for concerted efforts between ULA and UPABA and institutions engaged in bibliographic activities to expand the publication programme.

The National Library

The role of national libraries in bibliographic control has already been discussed. It is easy therefore to appreciate the problems of a country without a national library, particularly assuming that the National Bibliographic Agency is closely connected with the National Library. First of all bibliographic activities will be uncoordinated and in such circumstances there is likelihood of duplication of resources and services. Substandard agencies would proliferate as surrogate national libraries with the result that their performance would be unsatisfactory. Key functions like compiling and publishing the national bibliography and other related bibliographies including union catalogues would be irregular or non-existent. The machinery for implementing the legal deposit and copyright laws would be lacking and would affect the collection and preservation of the national imprint. International exchange of bibliographic records may also prove a problem.

Uganda is experiencing all the above problems at the moment. So it is urgent that a national library or libraries be established to fulfil the already mentioned functions. Uganda could decide to develop several national libraries based on disciplines, such as the National Library of Medicine based at the Albert Cook Medical Library; the National Library of Agriculture based on the Agricultural and Research Information System; the National Lending Library based on the Public Libraries Board Services; the National Research Library based on the Makerere University Library Services; or the National Library of Public Administration based at the Deposit Library and Documentation Centre.

Conclusion

The writing is on the wall: individual and national development will depend on how timely and effectively an individual or country accesses and utilises information.

Bibliographic control – the systematic procedure of creating and publishing bibliographic records, which themselves lead to the availability of publications, and ultimately the availability of information – is therefore the life-blood to development.

Universality of bibliographic control has corresponded with universal related programmes, namely Universal Availability of Publications and Universal Availability of Information. These programmes necessitate global development in these fields so that barriers to information flow are subdued. But the bases for these programmes are the national programmes.

Uganda must therefore take appropriate measures to evolve a national bibliographic policy, create the bibliographic infrastructure, amend laws to establish effective machinery, implement a comprehensive publications programme for the production of bibliographies and sister publications, produce adequate and experienced bibliographers and take on the taxing work of producing appropriate standards to allow bibliographic exchange and interconnection of information systems and services through creating a national network to start with and then international networks. Finally the issue of publishing and the booktrade, needs priority consideration.

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