ESARBICA NEWSLETTER

ESARBICA

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Editorial

This is the penultimate issue of ESARBICA newsletter for 2011. The articles in this issue cover events in archives and records management in ESARBICA region that occurred from May to July. As well, developments on national archival association are also reported.

In June 2011, ESARBICA hosted its XXI Biennial General Conference in Maputo, Mozambique on the theme "Access to Information: Archives in support of Public Sector Reform". Dr. Joel Tembe, ESARBICA president (2011-2013), reports on what transpired at the conference. Developments in Botswana involved the resuscitation of Records and Information Association in Botswana (RIAB). Mr Byn Mathias Chida introduces the executive committee of RIAB.

Lesedi Morapedi and Tebelelo Rantsho report on the proceedings of the 6th Information Society Technologies in Africa (IST-Africa) Annual Conference held in Gaborone, Botswana from 11 - 13 May 2011. The South African Society of Archivists (SASA) hosted its annual conference in Pretoria, South Africa from 14-15 July 2011. Mpho Ngoepe provides a report of the activities of SASA. In her article, Tshepho Mosweu urges information professionals to acquaint themselves with legislation that govern their field. In this way, information professionals will be able to align information policies in their organisations to the requirements of archival legislation.

To sustain ESARBICA newsletter, we need your active participation through submission of articles, case studies in archives, records management and oral history. Future contributions to the newsletter can be forwarded to Mr Mpho Ngoepe at mphongoepe@tsamail.co.za or Prof. Patrick Ngulube at ngulup@unisa.ac.za. The editors would like to thank the contributors for this issue.

Editors

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Mr Mpho Ngoepe

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A reflection on XXI ESARBICA Conference held in Maputo

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From 6-10 June 2011, the Arquivo Histórico de Mozambique/National Archives of Mozambique hosted the XXI ESARBICA Biennial General Conference on "Access to Information: Archives in support of Public Sector Reform", in Maputo, Mozambique. The event was co-organized by the Ministry of Public Services and the Arquivo Histórico de Mozambique (AHM) under the Eduardo Mondlane University.

As in line with ESARBICA tradition, the conference started with three activities undertaken from 6-7 June, namely the Pre-conference on "Preserving Records and Archives for Access: Disaster Management Plan", the Permanent Secretary Meeting and the Esarbica Board Meeting. The Pre-Conference had about 94 delegates and was facilitated by Prof. Patrick Ngulube of UNISA and Mr Alexio Motsi of the National Archives of South Africa. The Permanent Secretary Meeting reviewed the progress of the ESARBICA in implementing the Africa Agenda and assured all support by the government in the region.

The general conference started on 8 June and attracted over 250 delegates (about 110 from Esarbica member states) and some few participants from abroad such as New Zealand represented by Mr Mark Crookston, Secretary General of Pacific Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (PARBIC) and Ethiopia represented by two officers from African Union. The opening ceremony was officiated by the Minister of Public Services, Mrs Vitória Dias Diogo, as the guest of honor and the welcome words by the Rector of Eduardo Mondlane University, Prof. Orlando Quilambo. In her speech, the Minister recognized the importance of ESARBICA and the role played by ICA in the development of the archival and records management fields in support of the public sector reform. She also underlined the importance of the theme of the conference on access to information as a key aspect of people's rights and the role of good governance and fighting against corruption. Furthermore, she encouraged records managers and archivists to continue pursuing their role of preserving the documentary heritage and developing training programs under ESARBICA auspices or by national initiatives. She then, stressed the importance of strengthening the regional and international cooperation among professionals and national archival institutions and recalled the Cape Town Declaration on Archives in Africa during CITRA meeting in 2003 which established important guidelines for archival development in the continent. The conference had a broad coverage by print media, TV and radio stations reaching wide audience throughout the country.

During the opening session the Arquivo Histórico de Mozambique and the Eduardo Mondlane University presented the former director of AHM, Ms Maria Inês with public homage in recognition of her services for the development of archives in Mozambique for more than two decades.

The conference on "Access to information: archives and records in support of public sector reform in context" had about 27 presenters distributed into seven panels, namely: i) The role of records management in context; ii) Access to information contained in cultural objects; iii) Archival and archiving issues in context; iv) Challenges of records management in the electronic environment; v) Recordkeeping, public sector efficiency and accountability; vi) Challenges to archival institutions in preserving the documentary heritage; and vii) Social media, training and informetrics. The presenters shared their experience on progress and challenges facing the records managers and archivists, including educators in the region and examined critically the role played by archivists in supporting public sector reforms and making information accessible. Papers presented in the conference reviewed archival issues in the public institutions, universities, private sector, including TV stations. The conference recognized the healthy development of archival institutions and training facilities now being offered at professional levels, including university degrees in the region. Papers dealing particularly on access to information recognized the lack of legislation on access to information in most countries in the region, the scarcity of resources in applying ICT systems and the serious situation with several episodes of corruption. Unfortunately few countries in the region have passed the Freedom of Information Act. Therefore, the conference urged country members to enforce this fundamental human right issue.

Peter Mazikana, a former senior archivist of Zimbabwe National Archives and currently consultant for the "The Techtop Consult Group", delivered the keynote paper on "Access to Information: Re-configuring and Re-positioning the Archivist to play a Meaningful Role in Public Sector Reforms". In a thought provoking paper, he challenged archival professionals to do introspection during the conference before summarizing the key points to be discussed in the conference by stating that:

"As we examine where we are in relation to where we could be, the results of this assessment are likely to be sobering as it emerges that archivists have not been able to take advantage of opportunities that have presented themselves and that, unfortunately, they have remained transfixed in a time and professional warp which leaves them largely unable (perhaps unwilling) and ill equipped to play any meaningful role in today's rapidly modernising public sector and wider world".

Mazikana went on calling for more action by records managers and archivists in support of public sector reform and applying ICT systems and the need to occupy a central place within the public service reform agenda. In this regard he mentioned that:

"In all these reforms, there is another incontestable fact: that, by and large, archivists and records managers have not been given due regard and most of the systems have been developed and implemented with hardly any consultation, reference or input from them. But, one may legitimately ask: Do archives and records management have any significance or relevance to the public service reform process? If yes, what role is there for records and archives? Do you need to worry about records when you are installing a sophisticated ICT system? Is anyone at all bothering or having to make reference to archives in the process of reforming the public sector? Do the drivers of the public sector reforms ever visit or consult the archives to use its resources? Do they really care about archives when their focus is on futuristic systems that can take the public service into the millennium? As things stand at present, the answer to most of the above questions is probably negative, affirming what is widely known and acknowledged that records management is rarely given the status, importance and priority that it deserves and that those who should be using archives to reform the public services are not doing so".

Discussing access to information by looking at the experiences reported by each ESARBICA country member he assertively stated that:
"Access to information is also being affected by legislative and regulatory environment. In the ESARBICA region, there are several countries which are still operating under legislative instruments that were promulgated ages ago and that do not quite empower the archivists to do what they would like to especially in the area of managing current records as well as making necessary interventions in relation to electronic records. The weaknesses of the legislative instruments are often quoted, and legitimately so, as a major reason why, for instance, very little is being done to manage the current and semi-current records in the public sector."

Finally, the general conference elected new officer bearers for 2011-2013 as follows:

President: Dr Joel Tembe, the Director of Mozambique National Archives
Deputy President: Mr John M'reria, the Director of Kenya National Archives and Documentation Centre
Secretary: Mr Richard Wato, Head of Technical Services: Kenya National Archives and Documentation Centre
Deputy Secretary: Ms Chileshe Lusale-Musukuma, the Director of Zambia National Archives
Treasurer: Mr Kago Ramokate, the Director of Botswana National Archives and Records Services
Editor: Prof. Patrick Ngulube, Professor in Graduate Studies, University of South Africa
Deputy Editor: Mr Mpho Ngoepe, EDRMS Manger at Trans-Caledon Tunnel Authority, South Africa

The next ESARBICA general conference is scheduled for 2013 in Nairobi, Kenya.

Mr Peter Mazikana delivering a keynote address

The newly elected ESARBICA Board Members (2011-2013) with the Rector of Eduardo Mondlane in the middle

Some of the delegates of XXI ESARBICA conference listening to the presentations

A group photo of ESARBICA Board, permanent secretaries and other guests

Prof. Patrick Ngulube and Alexio Motsi facilitating the pre-conference workshop

Some of the paper presenters in the main Conference

Rebirth of Records and Information Association in Botswana

Mathias Chida
Chairperson: RIAB

The Records and Information Association in Botswana (RIAB) dates back to 1999 when it was registered with Societies Registrar's office. It however, faced unforeseen challenges which have forced it to idle until this date.

On 15 April 2011, 47 records practitioners from diverse professional backgrounds converged at Crystal Palace Hotel, Gaborone for a consultative forum. This culminated in the rebirth of the Records and Information Association in Botswana (RIAB). This was a milestone given the great strides Botswana has taken in the records and information management discipline over the years.

The Association is a professional forum for records managers, archivists, knowledge managers, consultants, lecturers, records management units' operatives, para-professionals and related professionals in Botswana. RIAB is mandated by a Constitution with an Executive Committee (Exco) as a governing body. The membership is derived from private organisations, parastatals, government ministries and departments.

The Exco comprises of the following:
- Chairperson – Mathias Chida
- Vice Chairperson – Leonard Mbakile
- Secretary – Meshack Mabure
- Vice Secretary-Mpho Mpai
- Treasurer- Kebarate Tshotlo

Additional members;
- Dr Peter Sebina
- Koziba Thanye
- Trevor Moatlhodi
- Julia Mogotsi

Some of RIAB's objectives are to:
- Represent professional interests nationally and internationally
- Commitment to work for high standards in line with ISO 15489
- Promote the exchange of expertise and experience among members
- Collaborate with other professional and regulatory bodies like ESARBICA, ICA, IRMT, ISO by setting standards of professional conduct and training
- Provide for continuous professional development through publications

RIAB convened a follow-up meeting in May 2011 whereupon challenges facing the Association were highlighted as;
- Official launch of the Association
- Coming up with a plan of activities
- Design of a logo
- Marketing and recruitment drive
- Fund raising
- Review of the constitution

Executive Committee Members of RIAB

Information Society Technologies in Africa - 2011 Conference and Exhibition

Lesedi Morapedi and Tebelelo Rantsho

Information Society Technologies in Africa (IST-Africa) is a multi-stakeholder initiative focused on raising awareness of African research capacity, strengthening the research dimension of information Society policy dialogues between the European Commission and African countries and key regional organizations, analyzing African ICT policy and research priorities, promoting participation of African organizations in the ICT theme of Framework Programme 7 and identifying co-operation opportunities in the fields of mutual interest.

IST-Africa provides a platform for promoting national and regional ICT policies and strengthening the regulatory framework in Africa based on international good practices. It also contributes in harmonizing ICT initiatives, including infrastructure connectivity and interoperability. It supports regional research and education networks. It provides an important opportunity to enhance cooperation between African Regional Economic Communities on mainstreaming Science, Technology and Innovation for socio- economic development and competiveness.

IST-Africa 2011 6th Annual Conference was held on 11 - 13 May 2011, at Gaborone International Convention Centre hosted by the Government of Botswana through the Ministry of Infrastructure, Science and Technology. The conference brought together representatives from leading government, commercial and research organizations from Europe and Africa in an effort to bridge the digital divide by sharing knowledge, experience, learnt and good practice.

The conference hoped to achieve the following goals:

- Community building to facilitate EU-African research cooperation and successful exploitation of research results,

- To promote knowledge sharing between commercial organizations, government agencies and the research community,

- To exchange experiences about the current state of eAdoption at a sectoral, national or regional level,

- Support International Cooperation and open up the European Research Area (ERA) to Africa.

The conference afforded delegates the opportunity to gain awareness on existing applications used to offer specialist services to remote areas in Botswana, malaria pilot project in Chobe, Kgakololo project for people living with HIV/AIDS, University of Botswana School of Medicine mobile learning application, and mobile financial services M-Pesa project in Kenya. This conference is relevant to both records managers and archivists in the sense that it affords the opportunity to take advantage of future exhibitions to showcase archives and records management services and products. Varieties of recent technologies and applications showcased also allow benchmarking on the technologies employed by advanced countries of the world. Since IST-Africa aims at building research cooperation and successful exploitation of research result, archives and records management professionals are better placed in this conference to find better solutions or applications that can be adapted to better records management services. implementation of the project.

Molao wa reng?: How well do you know the laws that govern information management in your organisation/country?

Tshepho Mosweu
Archivist: Botswana National Archives

The role of information managers have in recent years expanded as a result of the recognition of the need to give attention to the legal aspects of information. Information managers are mainly concerned with the management of organisational information. As some laws revolve around information management, information managers have an obligation to know and promote these laws. It is very crucial that information managers know and are able to apply the laws to their daily operation. As Smith (1997) would attest it is becoming increasingly necessary to acquaint ourselves (information management practitioners) with some basic legal principles and to have at least an elementary knowledge of the operation of the legal system generally and the application of relevant regulatory controls specifically as the law is complex and a complete knowledge of its intricacies is probably impossible.

In any country, there are various laws that have a direct impact on the management of information. Laws that directly have an impact on information management amongst others include Archival laws, Privacy laws, Legal deposit laws, National security laws and Freedom of information laws to mention a few of them. Some of these laws are sector specific like the laws that establish different agencies and thus their functions while others deal specifically with information management. To comply with these laws and regulations, information managers develop information management policies, guidelines and procedures guided by the specific legislation.

As organisations create information in their day to day business, information managers have to be aware of the relevant legislation in order to strike a balance between the protection of people's rights to privacy, the duty to provide the public with the information and to ensure that national security is not compromised in any way and doing their job on the other hand. Therefore, it is very crucial for information managers to know laws so that they abide with legal provisions to avoid the misfortune of committing criminal offences under the relevant legislations as most of these laws have penalties for contravening or falling to abide to the set provisions.

Moreover, knowledge of the law by information managers enables them to develop records management policies such as access, appraisal, electronic records policies that are in line with the legislative and regulatory requirements. Information management tools like retention schedules and classification schemes need to derive their mandate from the law. In that way an efficient and effective information management will be ensured in any setting as far as the law is concerned.

It goes without saying that information managers must then keep abreast with all the laws that govern the information they manage. They also have to know laws that give the mandate to their organisation as they form the basis of how information should be managed. Information managers need also to monitor the amendments of these laws in order to modify their policies and procedures accordingly. They say ignorance of the law is not an excuse and Jeremy Bentham, a philosopher and activist (1748-1832) argued that "lawyers are the only persons in whom ignorance of the law is not punished" so information managers, let's not be caught napping.

A reflection on SASA Conference

Mpho Ngoepe

The South African Society of Archivists (SASA) is a professional association representing people working in archives and records management in South Africa. However, membership is open to people interested in archives and records management beyond the borders of South Africa. SASA has been in existence since 1960. Its overarching objective is the development of archival science and the promotion of the archival profession in South Africa. SASA seeks to represent and support practitioners of all fields of archival and records management work and its membership is further open to anyone who has an interest in archives and records management.

SASA seeks to perform the role common to professional associations, such as providing a forum for the sharing of professional expertise; laying down professional standards of performance; representing concerns of members to outside organisations; and protecting the interests of the profession. In practice SASA achieves these objectives through inter alia the publication of a professional journal, the maintenance of a website, the development of regional branches, participation in the development of professional and training standards, the holding of conferences; and the provision of input on relevant matters.
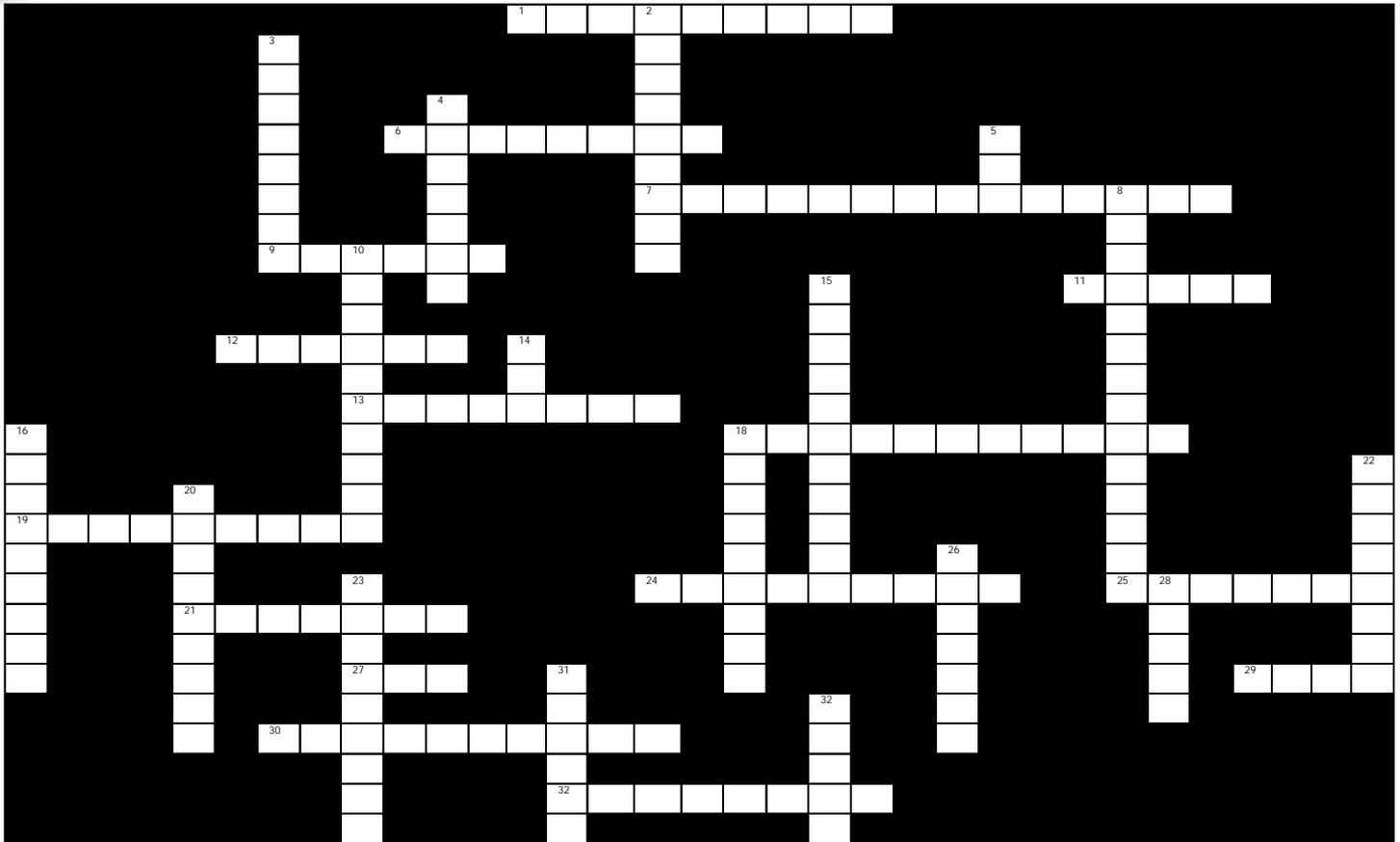
On 14-15 July 2011, the South African Society of Archivists (SASA) in collaboration with the University of South Africa and the National Archives of South Africa hosted an archival conference on the theme "Guarding against collective amnesia, is there a role for records and archives." The conference was hosted at the Sunnyside campus of Unisa. Over 60 delegates attended the conference, including delegates from countries such as Botswana, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Zambia and Uganda. The conference was graced by the presence of the acting National Archivist of South Africa, Ms Mandy Gilder who presented a paper on the state of archives and memory of the world, as well as the Director of Zimbabwe National Archives, Mr Irvin Murambiwa who delivered a keynote address. Speakers deliberated on various thought provoking topics ranging from wikileaks, liberation archives to the last archivist standing, all in relation to collective amnesia.

For more information on SASA activities, you can e-mail your enquiry to sasa@dac.gov.za or www.saarchivist.co.za.

Across

1. Records that do not have permanent value and can be eventually destroyed are known as _____ records.

6. USGS e-mail systems are for ___ use only by authorized personnel

7. ___ stored information (ESI) is information created, manipulated, communicated, stored, and best utilized in digital form, requiring the use of computer hardware and software.

9. A records _____ is defined as a "block of records having the same disposition authority and disposition date"

11. _____ records contain information that is essential for emergency operations during a disaster or national emergency.

12. A Federal _____ is any recorded information relating to the work of your office, regardless of who created it or how the information was recorded

13. Electronic records may be found in a _____; consisting of one or more files.

18. _____ of records is the major type of disposal action for temporary records – actions such as shredding and pulping materials.

Across Cont'd

19. The _____ of the United States at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) makes the decision to destroy or retain Federal records.

21. NARA Federal Records _____ are used for servicing and storing Federal records.

24. First step in developing a file plan: begin with a complete _____ or list of the current year's files

25. E-mail messages that are not records may be _____

27. _____ (Electronic Records Archive) is a NARA initiative to preserve and provide long-term access to historical electronic Federal records. (Acronym)

29. Employees _____ official records by following USGS records schedule item numbers rather than by placing everything in a folder.

30. The USGS _____ _____ program goal is to preserve and make accessible long-term or legacy USGS science data.

32. Records are the _____ of an agency's actions.

Down

2. _____ records are those records appraised by NARA has having historic or enduring value.

3. The National _____ issues regulations governing the management and disposition of Federal records. (Short name)

4. The Agency Records _____ oversees the agencies Records Management Program

5. A record containing social security numbers is considered to contain _____ (acronym)

8. A ____ ____ is a directive or mandate to suspend the normal disposition procedures for selected records in order to preserve the records in anticipation of potential litigation.

10. The Federal _____ ____ Requires Agencies to create and maintain adequate documentation of their policies and official business transactions

14. _____ Circular A-130, par. 8a (1) (k) requires agencies to incorporate records management and archival functions into the design, development, and implementation of information systems. (Acronym)

15. The USGS General Records ____ Schedule provides authorities for management of agency administrative records.

Down Cont'd

16. Records may not be removed or destroyed by a transferring or _____ employee.

18. Document production involves the _____ and turning over of potentially relevant USGS documents

20. Records pass through three stages: 1) creation; 2) maintenance; and 3) disposition – the entire process is known as the _____ of records.

22. A records ____ provides the authority for the final disposition of records.

23. Records _____ laws are intended to protect information of lasting value to the USGS.

26. _____ Manager's need to incorporate records management early in their planning.

28. _____ messages that meet the definition of a Federal record must be "printed and filed" with like records in an employee's files.

31. The Geology and Biology Resources Discipline use the "big ____" approach in scheduling of their scientific records.

32. _____ mail, or computerized telephone messages, that meet the definition of a record must be printed and filed.

Answer Key – Go to: http://internal.usgs.gov/gio/irm/answers.doc