

1. INTRODUCTION

The Association for Parliamentary Librarians in Eastern and Southern Africa (APLESA) held its conference at the Safari Court Conference Centre, Windhoek, Namibia from 19th to 23rd July 1999. Following the recommendations of the APLESA Conference in Lusaka in 1998, the format of APLESA 1999 was changed from that of a mere conference to a training workshop on management of parliament libraries and information services, which was sponsored by the Finish Embassy in Windhoek. The training programme (Appendix 1), among other things, included: resource sharing and networking, marketing and management of library and information services in parliament libraries, strategic planning, electronic information sources and the Internet, an overview of information and communication technologies, and practical training on using the various Internet facilities.

1.1. Workshop Resource Persons

The workshop was conducted by the Department of Information and Communication Studies of the University of Namibia. Professor Kingo Mchombu and Mr. Justin Chisenga, from the Department were the main resource persons. In addition, Ms Helena Theron from SABINET Online, South Africa, Ms. Paivikki Karhula from the Library of Parliament of Finland and Ms Felicity Whittle from the United Kingdom, House of Commons Library, contributed to the workshop in the form of presentations.

1.2. Participants

The workshop was attended by 17 participants (Appendix 2) working in parliament libraries in the following APLESA member countries:

Angola	2 participants
Botswana	1
Kenya	2
Lesotho	1
Malawi	1
Namibia	2
South Africa	4
Swaziland	1
Tanzania	1
Uganda	2
Zambia	1
Zimbabwe	1

One observer each from Angola and Ghana also attended the workshop. This is a report of the activities that were conducted during the APLESA Conference in Windhoek. It covers the workshop presentations, discussions, and resolutions that were formulated at the end of the training.

2. INSTITUTIONAL REPORTS AND PARTICIPANTS EXPECTATIONS

2.1 Overview

In this session, participants gave a five minutes presentations on various aspects of their parliament libraries and/or information centres. In addition, they also outlined their expectations from the workshop. Below are the presentations from each participant.

2.1.1 Zimbabwe Parliamentary Library and Information Service - Mr. Nelson Masawi

The report indicated that the Parliament of Zimbabwe is increasingly being called upon to play a leading role in the country's parliamentary democracy, and this process involves considerable change for the library, its structure and its working methods. It calls for members of Parliament to acquire new technical skills, better understanding of their role, responsibilities and rights, so as to enable them to perform as legislators and be able to hold government to account. In this light, Parliament of Zimbabwe engaged the services of consultants to look into the issue of information provision at Parliament, and this resulted in the review of the modus operandi of the library research and information departments. Provision of information is being done by four units whose new names are: the Parliamentary Library and Information Service; the Public Education and Public Relations Office, the Parliamentary Research and Analysis Service and Systems Analyst. Together they form the department which is called PIPAS – the Parliamentary Information and Parliamentary Analysis Service.

This restructuring also resulted in PIPAS defining its core business which is the identification, acquisition and dissemination of relevant up-to-date information for the information and research needs of Parliament, and identified its major users (public), who are the presiding officers, members of Parliament, officers of Parliament, approved borrowers, and the general public-seeking information. It further defined its values which are dedication and commitment, pro-activeness and responsiveness and professionalism. All this have resulted in the need to change the work culture and staff appraisal systems.

2.1.2 Parliament Library of Swaziland - Ms. Esther Nxumalo

The report indicated that the Parliament Library of Swaziland consists of one large room with one desk, a large table and ten readers' chairs and is manned by two people, the librarian and one support staff. The library produces the library brochure, quarterly acquisitions lists, and country specific information documents which are prepared if there is going to be a meeting at which members of the

Parliament are involved. The library offers the following services: lending, reference, periodicals, photocopy services and press cuttings. The library is not fully automated and has no access to the Internet or e-mail.

The Parliament Library in Swaziland is under the Civil Service and this presents a number of problems to library staff such as lack of cooperation with the government, staff can be transferred at any time, thus any projects being implemented in the library may be left incomplete and new staff have to acquaint themselves with the projects, etc. One major problem identified is that parliamentarians do not use the library very much. A survey is being conducted in order to identify their information needs.

2.1.3 Botswana Parliament Library - Ms Florence Butale

Presented an overview of activities that took place at Botswana Parliament Library since the the APLESA Conference that was held in Zambia. The library has implemented a number of resolutions made at APLESA '98 and has since then made a lot of improvements. The library collection is now more relevant to the information needs of the members of Parliament than it was before. This has been achieved by acquiring books and periodicals on subjects such as local government structures, materials of good governance, the topics on which Members of Parliament are generally looking for information on. The periodical collection has been enhanced and now include titles on foreign affairs, parliamentary affairs, internal affairs and economics. Although library functions are not yet computerised, the Library has access to Internet facilities and these are being used by both the library staff and the Members of Parliament. The Internet has enabled the Library to have access to some information resources that are not readily available in its collection. Plans are underway to automate the Library.

2.1.4 Parliament Library of Lesotho - Mr. Donovan Ralile

The parliamentary library of Lesotho was established in 1996 and is very small library in terms of space. Until 1994, the library was run by staff without any formal library studies qualifications. Now it has one professional staff member and an assistant librarian who is on study leave. The collection in the library is about 3 000 books and 100 periodicals plus newspapers. Internet connection is available and this is used for information retrieval, especially information events in Africa and elsewhere, if the staff think that this is a hot issue, the information is passed to members of Parliament.

2.1.5 Angolan Parliament Library - Mr. Sebastian Muzumbi

Angola was being represented for the first time at the APLESA Conference, and the delegate thanked the organisers of the conference for having invited Angola. The report indicated that the library is quite small and has around 2 916 materials of which 50% are concerned with the issues related to political and social sciences.

The library is manned by a professional and assisted by two assistants. Four computers are available in the library and plans are under to establish access to the Internet.

The report further emphasised the need for cooperation and indicated that although the language factor may be a limiting factor, it should not be a major stumbling block to regional cooperation. People can be trained in the regional languages.

2.1.6 Library of Parliament of South Africa - Ms Anja Donnelly & Ms Lutfeya Samsodien

The Library of Parliament in South Africa, which is 150 years old, is also in the process of re-strategising and restructuring. What was called the Library of Parliament is in the process of amalgamating with the Parliamentary Research Services, which is a big department on its own. The Library of Parliament consists of four sub-units, among which is the Projects Unit. Each unit in the library has drawn up a mission statement, vision, and objectives. Strategic plans for the information services section as well as for the library and research have been worked out.

We have performance appraisals and all those policies in place, and what we are looking towards now is implementing all those policies that we have put on paper. Although exact figures are not available, since no stock-taking has ever been done or weeding of materials, it is estimated that the Library has about half a million books. Weeding of the collection is being implemented. The Library produces a bi-monthly library journal and is in the process of setting up information kiosks for Parliament. The Library has looked at the information needs of members of parliament and efforts are being made to change and adapt the library's needs according to their needs. The biggest concern in the Library is the management of the human resources and staff motivation because there are several people serving under the four units.

The information technology section is a complete section on its own and the library does not have a dedicated IT person. The Library is connected to the Internet, and is already attending to the Y2K problem.

2.1.7 Library of the Zambian Parliament - Ms Muswa Suuya

The Library of the Zambian Parliament operates as a department on its own. It employs five professionals and six support staff. It has a collection of around 50 000 to 60 000 documents. However, due to budget cuts, the periodical section has suffered a lot and not many new periodicals are being acquired except for those obtained through exchange programmes other Parliaments and institutions. The major source of materials is mainly through donations, and very little is being purchased.

The most popular services offered to Members of Parliament are the research service and the indexing programme, and these attracts a lot of questions regarding what resources and information is available in the library. Articles relating to members of Parliament and other political figures in the daily newspapers, especially the Times of Zambia and the Zambia Daily Mail, are indexed and this enable the Library to provide answers to questions from Members of Parliament who want to know whether what they had said in the House was reported in the papers.

Since the APLESA Conference in 1998, the Library has acquired five computers, but unfortunately we are not yet connected to the Internet.

2.1.8 Malawi Parliament Library - Mr. Maxwell Banda

Since the last APLESA Conference in Zambia in 1998, the Malawi Parliament as a whole has gone through a lot of changes, and one of the major changes has been the establishment of the Department of Research, Library and Information Services. The library has moved into new premises, bigger than the old one. However, the library does not have a separate budget and all purchases are done on the main parliamentary budget. The collection is mainly made up of Malawi parliamentary publications, the Commonwealth financial documents, a lot of African Parliament documents, especially from parliaments in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, and documents from the Commonwealth Secretariat.. Generally, the Library does not subscribe to periodicals. Assistance is being received form the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the Finnish Government. NDI supplied the library with a computer, and the Library now needs the service of a computer technician to assist in the computerization of the library functions. Plans are underway to establish access to the Internet.

2.1.9 Finnish Parliament Library Ms. Paivikki Karhula

The Finnish Parliament Library was established 127 years ago. Since then, it has gone through various changes, and at one time it has operated as a public library and as a closed access library. At the moment it is more like a public library in the sense that its services are open to all citizens and the library building is open daily except Sundays. Its target user groups are Members of Parliament and officers working for the Parliament in different departments, students and researchers. The Library is also as deposit library for law and social sciences, and as a result a large number of students and researchers use the it daily. The third target group are the citizens in general, the Library is trying to strengthen the information delivery from the Parliament and the Central Government to the citizens by allowing them to access the library's information resources.

The Library has a collection of around 600 000 items, acquires around 10,000 items annually and issue on loan around 10,000 items annually. Reference service is one facility that is provided and the library has strong local and international network links (cooperation) with other parliament, national libraries and academic libraries. Use of information technology is quite advanced and the Library is working on projects aimed at developed news types of Internet services for its users.

Among the major problems being experience by the Library is the large number of services being offered and projects being implemented. Sometimes it is very difficult to coordinate all the services and projects.

2.1.10 Library, Research and Information Service of the Parliament of Uganda - Mr. Innocent Rugambwa

This was the first participation in an APLESA Conference for Mr. Rugambwa and he indicated that Department of Library, Research and Information Service of the Parliament of Uganda was established just a month prior to the APLESA Conference. This was done with the help of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

2.1.11 The Department of the Library - Ghana Parliament - Mr. Charles Brown

Attending as an observer, Mr. Brown outline the structure and resources available in the Library of the Parliament of Ghana, and the services and policies that have been put in place. The library is set-up for the provision of relevant, accurate and adequate information and research results for Members of Parliament. Its major functions include collection building, processing of the materials, retrieval and dissemination, i.e. clientele service, the library and information network, publication of annual reports, library bulletins, journals, and then evaluation, analysis and repackaging of information and research results objectively and impartially on behalf of users for optimum usage.

The library is staffed with two professional librarians having first degrees and Master degrees in Librarianship. In addition there are five library assistants. Regarding information technology infrastructure, there are two computers for word processing and access to limited browsing and electronic mail facility is also available. The collection of books and journals is mainly on government and politics, parliamentary systems, economics, law, education, sociology, public administration, statistics – human rights, environment, religion, culture and general reference works, external and internal parliamentary documents. Many of these resources have been acquired through donations and grants from the donor community, like the British Government, the World Bank, Friedrich Elbert Foundation, UNICEF, the United States Information Service (USIS) and many others .

The library provides its service to clients on parliament sitting days from the start of sitting until the rising of the house or the official closing hours, whichever are later, and then during recesses from Monday to Friday from 08:00 to 17:00.

2.1.12 Library of the Parliament of Tanzania - Ms Shauri

The Library of the Parliament of Tanzania “Bunge Library” was established in 1961. “Bunge” is a Swahili word for “Parliament”. The collection is almost 10 000 volumes, and this is made up of different materials which include legislative materials, books and newspapers, Hansards produced in the House, Bills and Acts. A large number of materials is acquired through donors, from Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) from other countries like Ireland, Britain, America and so on. The principal users are Members of Parliament, the staff of the Parliament and government officials only.

The Bunge Library has a total of 9 members of staff, of which two have masters degrees. Plans are underway to computerise some of the Library’s functions and to this effect it has acquired 4 computers. Plans to establish Internet access are also being considered. The Library has very good relationship with the National Library, the British Council, the High Court, USAID and the United States Information Services in Tanzania.

2.1.13 Kenya National Assembly Library - Ms Kamau

The Kenyan National Assembly library is a division in the National Assembly. It was established in 1910 to cater for the information needs of our legislators. The librarian in charge reports directly to the Clerk of the National Assembly and the use of the library facilities is controlled by the Speaker and the Clerk of the National Assembly. The library staff are recruited and trained by the Public Service. Hence they are members of the civil service. They can be transferred any time. However, plans are in an advanced stage to de-link Parliament from the civil service, probably by the Year 2000. The library is currently served by three librarians, two senior library assistants and one library assistant. It has over 6 000 books and periodicals which include both foreign and local titles, covering a large range of subjects. The library also keeps its own parliamentary and official publications, such as Hansards, the laws of Kenya, select committee reports, Acts, Bills, subsidiary legislation and annual reports from government and parastatals. It also has in stock official publications from other countries, for example the British House of Commons Official Debates, Inter-Parliamentary Union Reports, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association publications, the United Nations publications, encyclopaedias, books, year books, and periodicals. The Library subscribes to about six journal titles.

The library users or clients are only the Members of Parliament and staff of the National Assembly. Former Members of Parliament use the library and researchers can also make use of the library, but they have to get special

permission from the Clerk of the National Assembly. Books are loaned to Members of Parliament and staff of the National Assembly for a period not exceeding four weeks.

The library has expanded over the years, unfortunately it is not computerised.

2.1.14 Namibian Parliament Library - Ms Katanga

The Namibian Parliament Library is very small library, but fully computerised. In fact, there are more computers in the library than staff. The library is open to outside people who use it when conducting research, and it has been noted that there are more researchers from outside who use the library facilities than Members of Parliament.

2.2 EXPECTATIONS FROM THE WORKSHOP

Asked to indicate their expectations from the conference, participants indicated that the workshop should cover the following issues:

- identification of library and information resources that should be kept in the library to make it a good library for Members of Parliament;
- issues relating to marketing and promotion of parliamentary information services;
- aspects relating to library automation, specifically software systems appropriate to parliament libraries;
- issues regarding coordinating the functions of managing a parliament library and how to use whatever resources, human as well as physical resources, available to the maximum;
- issues on how to draw up a good budget; and
- use of the Internet and provision of Internet related information services in Parliament libraries

Taking the above views into account, the training workshop programmes was revised to include points expressed above that were not in the original programme.

3. PARLIAMENTARY INFORMATION RESOURCES , NETWORKING AND RESOURCE SHARING

Prof. Kingo J. Mchombu
Department of Information and Communication Studies

3.1 The Concept of Networking

Professor Mchombu, opened the session by commenting on the theme for the discussion: information resources, networking and resource sharing. He indicated that the three terms information resources, networking and resource sharing, are issues that information professionals come across on a daily basis, in their endeavour to provide information to their users, the parliamentarians and the members of the public who are interested in information. Information professional are always striving to satisfy the information needs of their users, those who are the core group of users as well as those whom may not be called “core”, but are also very important members of the group of information users.

Networking and resource sharing should be linked to the concept of information needs, whether it is there or not. Networking should be looked at from a number of angles, and the most popular angle these days is to look at it in terms of computerised networking. This view of networking is wrong. Whatever can be achieved with computers, which is a lot these days, still computers should be regarded as tools to be used in facilitating the achievement of decisions that have already been made and reach defined goals. Networking uses computers a lot and in fact, the computer as a tool has advanced even the concept of networking. With computers, it is now possible to do things that previously were impossible. However, the conceptual framework, the concept of networking has to be understood separate from the tool so that it should be clear as to how well computers can be used.

Networking should also be looked at as a methodology for implementing information programmes in a decentralised and democratised manner. The two concepts, decentralisation and democratic are useful in order to understand networking. Librarians and information professional are networking individuals who have their own autonomy, who have free choice, they can be members or not of a network. Networking is not a forced relationship and of course, decision-making has to be done in consultation, in a democratic manner if the network is to function and deliver. Networking brings together individuals or people who have similar activities and similar interests.

Information sharing has become a very globalised and regionalised process. Globalisation, is a concept now that has become a household word. It basically means that information is travelling from one corner of the world to the other and

that many decisions which are made far away affect us here right now and immediately sometimes.

Networking is a process as well, it is not only a methodology but it is also a process which makes it possible for groups, individuals, institutions to be linked together. The manner of this linkage has to be defined, how close should this linkage be. But there has to be a linkage of some sort, there has to be some contact if this is to be a network. The way this linkage is carried out these days is much easier, because of the use of communication tools such as e-mail. But the principle is there that even if you do not have these tools, this linkage still has to be maintained. One of the purposes for this type of linkage is to learn from each other, to share experiences, to know what the other people are doing which might be useful, and at the same time to make them know what you are doing which might be useful to them. There are Parliament Information Centres which are very advanced, very sophisticated. At the same time we have others which are less advanced, less sophisticated. But we share many problems. If there is no information we have problems and to resolve these problems, we need information to help us to find those answers and those solutions. So it is sharing of experience that is again an important facet of networking. This, of course, involves an exchange of information which is frequent. If you exchange information once in a year, that is hardly a network. It might be a network on paper, but it is not really a network in the functional sense of the word.

The other facet of networking is to strengthen our own work as individuals in our institutions by sharing of experiences, learning from each other. This helps us to strengthen our work. We can do certain things which we wouldn't be able to do by ourselves if we didn't have access to this pool of experience and knowledge. It allows us to take joint action. We may decide that we need to create a tool which tackles a specific problem.

There are many issues now which are common amongst all the countries that we come from. We may decide, as an aspect of our networking, to create tools which enable us to take joint action and this may include joint implementation of plans of action which were agreed upon in a democratic manner, so that we achieve or move forward at the same time. We may also look at other facts of networking as supplementing and deploying resources in a way that enables us to achieve what they call economies of scale, because we are not only deploying resources at one place, but we are deploying them at several places which enables us to achieve better results than we would be able to achieve if we were again working in isolation, and this will enable us to make an impact in our various situations. I think we have strength when we work as a group and when we carry out programmes which are coordinated in this manner. Of course, communication is a very important aspect of networking. There has to be a means and a way of cheap and easy communication. I think if it would take about six months or longer than that to communicate from one point to another or before a request for an item is met, this becomes a big problem in terms of making sure that the

network is alive, that it is not only something on paper. So communication is a very important fact of networking. Networking doesn't happen naturally. I suppose it does happen naturally, that is why people get married, it is a form of networking, but the sort of networking we are talking about here is something that have to be created and coordinated. It is not a spontaneous occurrence, we need coordination of some sort, an agreed upon mechanism for coordinating our network. This mechanism, there are various ways of looking at networking in terms of coordination, whether it is one central point that coordinates everybody, or whether you will create sub-units within the regions or within the sub-region, so that within each sub-region there is a coordinating point which coordinates one sub-region, whereas another one coordinates another subregion and then we have a central unit which coordinates the sub-units. Those are decisions which have to be taken as to the mechanisms and the structures of the network itself.

A major aspect of network and networking is the human side of it. We need commitment, we need people who are prepared to do extra work, to coordinate these activities and ensure that they achieve the results. We need a system in place which enables us to monitor what we have achieved. If we have a plan of action we need to have a system in place which allows us to look back and say, "if we wanted to achieve so much by this time, what actually have we achieved?" Therefore we need a coordinator of some sort for the network to make sure it works. Otherwise it becomes very difficult for things to happen because there is no-one who is monitoring and who is reminding people, who is playing this coordinator role. This can be played by one person, it can be played by several persons, it is not important. What is important is that this role is recognised and given a place in the mechanism for implementing the networking set-up that has been decided upon. The coordination by one individual, several individuals, requires to be carried out by a very committed team. They have either got to give the time and the resources required to implement the decisions, the plans of action which they have decided upon, and of course, from time to time one needs to have a mechanism for members to meet to evaluate their progress in terms of this, and I think APLESA is already playing this role or providing a forum for members to meet and from time to time to look backwards and forwards – where do we come from, where are we going, what do we need to do better, what have we already achieved? These are important mechanisms in ensuring that your network operates and achieves its desired results. Of course, one is resources. Whichever way one looks at this activity, resources are essential. What we should not do is to make the mistake of saying that if we do not have resources then we will not act. It simply means that we look at what we can achieve in relation to the resources we are able to mobilise. If we are going to mobilise a large amount of resources, then our plans of action become ambitious. On the other hand, if we are not able to mobilise large amounts of resources, then we have to cut our coat according to what we can afford.

One may ask, why do we need to network? Is isolation a problem where you are? That is one question that we need to ask ourselves. A problem that has been

found for many information professionals is the problem of isolation. We are dealing with a commodity that respects no borders, that flows across the borders easily because it is following the endeavours of the top decision-makers in a country to address problems that the country is facing, and quite often these problems do not respect geographical and political boundaries, they flow across. If one is isolated, you find you are in the business of rediscovering what the Egyptians used to call "the shaduf". You are in the process of rediscovering our own shadows and you think you have done something wonderful, but in fact you are coming up with a solution that another country just across has already dealt with great success. So, we need to look at the issue of isolation. We need to create mechanisms of overcoming this issue. We also need to look at the issue of experience and the human capital that is available in these information centres that are serving Parliaments. Are they all at the same level of development or are there some that are more advanced than others? Is there room for some to learn from the others or not? And again, I believe that learning in the classroom is very useful, otherwise I would have been in business. But there is a limit to learning in the classroom. There comes a time when seeing what other people are doing and participating in an active manner in what they are doing is much more useful, because you already have the foundation from the classroom learning. So, then I would pose a question: Is learning from each other an important issue in the way that you manage your information as information managers in serving your users who are the top decision-makers in the country?

The issue of the production of information materials, I think it is only person who told us of the range of materials they are producing, but I am sure that some of us, if we were rather put off by the roaring air-conditioner on top, would probably have mentioned a number of things they are producing in their own information centres. These are useful resources that are extremely valuable resources. They address problems that are not only found in one country, but are found in many other countries as well. Is there room for sharing this knowledge so that we benefit from what debates and discussions are taking place in one country, so that we create a common approach to solving these problems. We have been conditioned in developing countries to look overseas for information. We do not look across, we look overseas. If you were under the Portuguese, you look to Portugal or possibly Brazil. If you are under the French, you look to France. If you happened to be under Great Britain, you will look that way for information. You find it very easy – the language problem, the history, but ultimately it is just a paralysis of the mind in terms of exchanging knowledge and information. It boils down to an element of lack of confidence, not only in ourselves but in the knowledge that is being churned out and produced around us, which in most instances is much more valuable than that one which comes from far away, because the problems there are different, they are not immediate for us, we have other problems. So, it is an important area that we would benefit, that our users, our parliamentarians and other politicians would benefit, that they would have access, systematic access to this type of information. Then I think that sharing of information resources and materials is a major issue that we need to be concerned

with. Are we doing things over and over again which could take a shorter time? There are commissions of enquiry which are set up in Parliament to address all sorts of problems, employment, education, health, poverty alleviation, to mention just a few. They report back, they produce some wonderful reports, they are used sometimes within the confines of a country, unless someone is lucky to hear that the same thing is being done elsewhere. So there can be this type of sharing of experiences and avoidance of duplication, minimising this duplication and building up a knowledge resource base that cuts across boundaries of countries and, therefore, has components of value added elements, because it doesn't all address problems which are being faced now. It looks sometimes forward because these countries are slightly at different stages of development and one can learn of problems before they have even occurred. Just to give an example, a few months ago the government set up a commission to look into education. I happened to hear somewhere that Zimbabwe has also set up one and I wondered, how many others have set up similar commissions elsewhere and whether there is information sharing going on, because these types of channels, mechanisms for sharing information don't exist. We tend to know what Clinton has said – he is a good man, of course – but we do not really know what is being done across our borders here. I think this is a major, major, drawback in the whole issue of networking and why we need to network.

We have different experiences and I said, there are different levels of technology development. Of course, SABINET is going to make a presentation at the end, but I think, much more immediately, in the context of my discussion is that these differences in levels of development, what can we benefit, what can we learn, how can we shorten the learning curve and benefit from what is already here? Why rediscover something while something already exists? Why waste resources, because it is costly, to renew what has already been done? Why not simply adapt and learn quickly? I think in Africa, since this is a grouping of African parliamentary librarians, I think in Africa we have a major problem. This is a problem of leap-frogging the development process. We are lagging behind and when you look at all the statistics it is a major cause of concern. I think that sharing information, sharing knowledge and purposely creating a situation where we can learn quickly what took ten years in one or twenty years, is a major reason why we should talk and think about networking. To me, therefore, networking is, first and foremost, a conceptual framework of mind. We have to build it up here before we translate it to agreements, to arrangements. Those come after, those are implementation. But unless we get the concept correct, we just chase shadows, we copy from all over. I could have spent this time describing all sorts of networking exercises and case studies, but quite often there are so many things that we have copied in the past and no doubt, in future. We should, first of all, know what are the problems we are facing and how does this networking answer these problems. Given our situation, what type of networking arrangements will we create to meet our needs and our demands? Copying is useful, but I think it also makes it difficult for us to come up with innovative solutions for the problems we face. It is for that reason that I feel that we first of all have to look

at our problems and our needs and the progress we have made and not made before we decide which direction to take.

4. SABINET Online

**Ms. Helena Theron
SABINET Online**

4.1 Brief Background

The Southern African Bibliographic Information Network (SABINET) started off as non-profit company because of an initiative of 40 major libraries in South Africa, in 1983. The libraries needed a utility to help them to share their resources to cut out duplication in the work done in the libraries every day. Since then SABINET has developed and is going from strength to strength.

In January 1997, the SABINET was changed from a non-profit company to a private company, so that it could move faster and get in some investors and development capital to improve the services provided to users. This is the reason why the name was changed to SABINET On-line. Although SABINET is still there with its members, there is not much work being done in SABINET, everything is being done by SABINET On-line and all the staff members are employed by SABINET On-line.

4.2 SABINET Online

SABINET Online supports four different services and these are:

- technical services within the libraries, the cataloguing and acquisition of books
- inter-lending facility, to allow libraries to borrow books and also get periodical articles from one another when they cannot afford to buy those themselves
- information retrieval part of the system, and
- agency services, where SABINET Online act as an agent for overseas information providers

If we look at the information world as a whole, I think that there is only one thing that is certain and that is change. More and more now there is a need from the end-user to access the information themselves. They do not necessarily want to go to the library, the library will still play an important role, but the users want to search themselves to find information. Another trend in the information world is that people do not want only a reference to information, they want the full text. They are no longer interested in printed lists of which are available somewhere. They want the full text in their hands. These two aspects are going to change a lot of things and these will include:

- a situation where data bases referring to articles or books are not going to be paid for in future. What people will pay for in the end will be full text that they have in their hands
- more and more direct access to electronic journals will be possible in future. Data base providers will link the citations up to the full text and we all know that we have many periodical agents now who sell subscriptions to periodicals to us. With the coming of the electronic journals, agents will become less involved in getting access to these data bases. Full text will not be free of charge because publishers will look after their stream of income. They do not want to lose that income that they have from the full text where the users subscribe to the periodical. Subscribers will somehow have to pay for the full text, but not necessarily for the whole journal.
- more and more people within organisations which do research will be very careful not to publish their research material in a journal if they have to subscribe to that journal and buy their own research back again. They will find other means through the Internet or through other information data bases to make that available if they have free access and they can sell it to other information users
- middlemen will become less and less important unless they can add more value to the data that they supply. Otherwise users will go directly to the supplier of the information. Middlemen must differentiate their product from other suppliers. For example, at SABINET On-line we have full text of the Government Gazette information available. We do not take the Government Gazette away from the government, but we enhance it in the way that we make it available. We added more access points, index the full text so that users can search on words within the full text. We make it in such a way that it is easy to e-mail the whole document to a colleague, to provide a printed copy to a colleague or to end-user who wants that information, or to make it available to everybody with Internet access within your organisation if you subscribe to that specific product. So we add value and differentiate it from the other suppliers of the same information.

What is very important is for us to be able to customise according to our user needs, and in the past we had a service, we said that is what you can subscribe to, finish and klaar, nothing else, if you cannot afford that we could not accommodate you. We have changed that. We are very flexible now. We try to look at what the people really want and how can we fit that into the needs of that organisation.

What is especially important for this conference is to negotiate on behalf of groups or a country or a region for national licensing or purchasing of information. If

everyone of you need to pay for yourselves it is more expensive than if a group like APLESA comes to SABINET On-line and says "we have a need to get this type of information". Then we can do a special need analysis and we can provide you with a special price for that. That is what is going to make the middleman still surviving in the new information world. A lot of you have heard about the E-commerce, that is where you have the facility to pay, to order and to get delivery through your Web, the Internet in other words. That is a trend that is coming more and more in the forefront and SABINET will position itself to be able to look at that need as well. People will sit at their end with a credit card and fill in the credit card number and have access to data bases and pay only for what they need.

One of the topics of this conference is knowledge management, and you should note that there is always a discussion about what is knowledge and what is information? I think there is not one idea about it, but a lot of people say that knowledge is interpreted information. But I think it is important that you must manage your knowledge and I think there is a new culture of sharing knowledge, because you cannot have everything yourself any more. It is impossible for every library to have all the resources that they need. What will happen is that you will integrate your own libraries or your own information institutions, internal information, like parliamentary information and you will then also share that and integrate it with outside information. So you will still have your basic information and get sources from outside in addition to what you have available. I think that is where the two ends will meet, if you can manage to do those two. Management of information is also one of your topics and I think that is one of the most complicated ones, because it can look like that if you do not manage it. However, even though we have all the techniques and the tools to use in information management, it is more daunting to manage information because there is more information or data overload. If you have e-mail facilities, you many still not have enough time to read the e-mail because once you have access e-mail you may be getting many messages every day and you must handle them as part of the rest of your information work that you do. If you belong to an Internet discussion group, you may also be getting a lot of messages.

Then there is the Web. On the Web, you find so much information that you do not know how to handle it all that information, and sometimes the access to the Web can be so slow that you cannot get to the information that you want, and prevents you to deliver your information on time. As part of your management of information it will be very important to be able to match specific, strategic and tactical business needs, because remember, a library or information centre is a business. If you can match those needs with resources, you will have the winning recipe to provide the best service that you possibly can.

SABINET has proven itself in the past up to the present that it will provide and will still be there as the proven source of information. SABINET On-line is not only just for the South African or the immediate surrounding countries. SABINET

Online has not gone up further into Africa because of lack of Internet connections in many libraries. The Internet infrastructure, unfortunately, is the vehicle that SABINET Online uses to provide information services to libraries.

4.2 Questions and Answers on the Presentation

Mr Brown: What are the resources that are needed to access SABINET Online facilities and services?

Ms Theron: You must have a computer and an Internet connection. It need not be a dedicated Internet. A modem, telephone line and dial-up Internet connection also works well. These are the basic requirements. Other requirements will depend on the purpose that you want to use the facilities for. If you want to down-load information and print, obviously you need a printer. The type of printer does not really matter.

If you decide that to computerise your library, you can use the records from SABINET and download them into your own local system. In this case, library staff or the information officer need to add only the local information, like accession numbers and local notes to the records. If you need to use the inter-lending system, then you have to register with the State Library in South Africa. You pay an annual fee to the State Library, which is now in process of changing and becoming the National Library.

Ms Donnelly: You mentioned e-commerce in your work and the use of credit cards. People are hesitant to use credit cards over the Internet. Paivikki from Finland referred to computer money. Has South Africa or SABINET looked into anything like that?

Ms Theron: Up to now there is no total solution in that regard and indeed people are hesitant to use their credit cards. At SABINET we have what we call a deposit account. People and libraries get an account number and can deposit money at SABINET Every time they order something, or when using inter-lending facilities, if they order a document from somebody else, the amount will be invoiced to SABINET and it will be deducted from their deposit account. That is more like a sort of Internet money. So that is already there, we can already use it, but it is not the total solution yet.

Mr Brown: And how much money is involved, especially for individual connections?

Ms Theron: It depends on which facilities you are going to use. If you are going to use the enquiry facilities as well as the inter-lending and you would also like to download the records, as an individual user, at this stage you pay about R6 000 a year. This will allow you to have your basic databases, a citation database with the order facility and the inter-lending facility. That will give you access for a

whole year. This amount, R6 000, sounds quite expensive to some of the libraries, but if you take into account the time saved in finding documents, in not having to buy documents or subscribing to periodicals, in the end it is worth more than the R6,000.00.

In addition we have a pay-as-you-go option. It is like a bus ticket. You buy 500 units from the system and every time you do a search, it will deduct your search units and if you want to do an inter-lending request, it will deduct another unit. If you are a very big library and use about 10 000 units per year, then the price of the package can become too expensive because then you pay more than when you go for an annual subscription where you pay up-front at the beginning of the year rather than pay three times R2 000, because you never know how your work is going to develop during that year. So, if you have a fixed access fee for that year, you know that you have paid and you have access. If you go for the pay as you use and you double your searches during that year and you only made provision for one of those packages that you bought, you can end up without your access to the service, because then you have finished that and you do not have money to buy more.

Chairperson: What are the copyright implications regarding SABINET Online's use of Government Gazette and providing access in electronic format?

Ms Theron: At the moment we do not have copyright problems because the Government Gazette is public information. We have copyright on the format in which we produce it. So we have copyright on the electronic format. If another supplier comes along and they have a different system with different search capacities or whatever, they can also provide it that way.

5. STRATEGIC PLANNING

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5.1 Strategic Planning Concept

Strategic planning is not a new concept. Originally it was mainly a military concept that two armies when they are fighting for whatever reason they have to assess each other's strengths and weakness so that they try to cover up. One army will try to cover up where it is weak and try to make the best use of where it is strong, and at the same time try to guess where its enemy is weak and try to use this to make sure that it defeats its enemy. A lot of strategic thinking has this type of background. So if you have someone who is very strong in navy ships, you make sure you do not fight on the water. If you have someone who is very strong in the air, you make sure you do not fight with them in the air. If you have someone who is very strong in certain aspects of military, then you try to make sure that you do not try to go that way. In management strategic planning it started mostly in the 1980's as management by objectives, which essentially means that we set our objectives, what we want to achieve at the end of the year or in the long run. Once the goals are set, the next question is how do we manage our resources and get everything we have to achieve those goals. Since then, strategic management has become centre stage in discussions of how organisations develop and fight their battles to win against competition. If they are in the profit making sector or if they are in the public sector, it is to make sure that they offer the best services, which their customers want. It is therefore, if we have to come down to brief definitions, a selection of action which one wants to take out of alternatives which are available, which will give you the best outcome possible. You select what actions you can take out of a number of alternatives, which will give you the best outcome under the circumstances.

Where does strategic planning start? Strategic planning starts with mandates and mission. Mandates are what we are given to accomplish. Many times they come in the form of legislation or government policy documents. Or sometimes other forms of charters in companies which explain why a particular department, a particular organisation has been established. This is a mandate. It is what we must do, what we are expected to do. In the case of national libraries normally you will find that they have legislation which has been passed by the country. In the case of parliament libraries you will find sometimes this is prescribed in some documents. This is a mandate which tells us what is expected of us. On the other hand a mission is what we ourselves decide to do given the mandate. So whereas a mandate is a statement from above, a mission is a statement from within. We formulate it, and it is based on our own circumstances, our own situation. We try to answer the question why do we exist. What is the justification for our existence, why are we here?

5.2 Mission Statement

A mission is an internal statement and relates to what we want to do, to fulfil our mandates and what is expected of us. Building a library mission is not a simple process. I have seen many libraries that have come up with mission statements, which are basically copied from others. At one time one librarian said to me – *we looked at the mission statements of the universities of South Africa and others in the SADC region, and we chose one or two, which we found very attractive.* Now that sounds all right unless you realise that a mission statement has to come from the soul of the organisation in terms of how it looks at its environment. How it wants to address this environment, how it looks at its problems and how it wants to address these problems; the context, the broad picture of the country; what is happening in this country. A mission statement in a country like Kenya will probably be different from a mission statement in a country like Swaziland. This is my view. Because they all operate in a slightly different context. And when you copy these mission statements, they are good to show to people when they come. Other than that they do not serve a useful purpose. And because they have not grown from within the organisation, they have not been built up by the organisation in terms of how it sees its problems. A mission statement should address the following questions:

- who are we? It should identify you clearly
- what needs do we need to address?
- how should we respond to these needs?
- what is our philosophy and our core values?
- what makes us unique in the organisation and distinct from others?

If we are not distinct, if we are not unique, we probably have no reason to exist. We are duplicating someone's efforts. So this is the beginning of the process.

5.3 Stakeholders

Having answered the above questions you must move to the question of stakeholders. Who are your stakeholders? Who do you exist to satisfy their needs? We can define stakeholders, broadly, as anybody who has an interest in the activities of your parliament library, the information centre. Many of them are within your own organisation. Some are outside your own organisation. Some are your own members of staff. Other issues to be considered is how do they judge your performance. How is your performance in relation to a stakeholder's expectations. Are they satisfied? Are they dissatisfied? Are they indifferent to your performance? And how do you judge yourself in terms of your own performance against the stakeholders? Do you think you are doing very well but they are just misunderstanding what you are doing for instance?

Stakeholder analysis is a key concept in any organisation because we have to see ourselves from their eyes. This is again an expansion of the same concept, why do we exist, what is the justification for our existence. We have to see ourselves through their eyes. How do they see you once they get into your information centres, seated at our desks, doing cataloguing or whatever? What is the perception that they have of you? This is important because it may tell you how to move forward in terms of whatever obstacles that you may have. You have also to look at these stakeholders in relation to what influence they have over your organisation. Some would have positive influence; some would have negative influence. Some will have high influence; some will have very low influence. And from these then you decide who are the key stakeholders, those who have an influence, either positive or negative. As well as those who are very keen on what you are producing for them.

Your own mission statement, in other words, is to try to offer a service, which meets your stakeholders' expectations. And therefore first of all you must take the trouble to sit down and think and analyse and sometimes to carry some research as to how stakeholders see you. Now the next most important aspect, the heart of the strategic planning is SWOT analysis.

5.4 SWOT Analysis

If we look at SWOT acronym, it is **strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats – SWOT analysis**. It is an extremely interesting process. Here you try to analyse where you are strong, where you are weak, what are the opportunities, and what are the threats that you face as a unit, as a library serving parliament. As an information centre of parliament. The aim of the analysis is to give you information on the internal strengths as well as weaknesses in relation to the your external environment. Parliament libraries are operating in an environment. They do not operating in a vacuum. If the government devalues the currency, it means that your budget dwindles, if you were going to acquire 30 periodical titles based on your resources, now you will not be able to acquire those titles. You have to adjust and cut the number of titles to be acquired instantly because you will not be able to live up to your original goals. So these are the external environments that you operate in. The external environment gives us two things, the threats and the opportunities. If we want to look at the internal environment it has weaknesses as well as strengths. And we have to be aware of these concepts.

The **external environment** is made up of the external factors or outside factors. There are a number of factors and these are sometimes called PESTE – political, the economic, the social, the technological and education.

- a). **the political environment** is of course where you are major players. Parliaments are the key players as far as the political environment is concerned. It is important to note that many changes are taking

place in this environment, from multi parties which are emerging all over the place to changes in the laws and regulations of the country. Some of these effect you in terms of giving information. And many of the information needs that we talk about will emerge as a result of the legislative agenda that is being handled by parliament over a period of time.

- b). **economic factors** are also equally important. They have to be paid for by us or by someone else. And information is not free even when it is in the public domain it is not free. So the economic forces or structures are also very important.
- c). **the social arena**, the behaviour of people, the values that people have are also very important. The traditions are also very important to us in terms of strategic planning.
- d). **technology** is a major area now. Information provision is increasing becoming a technology intensive process. Technology enables us to do things quickly which we would otherwise be unable to achieve. IT is now a national anthem as far as information workers are concerned. We have to know what it is, how we can use it.
- e). **education** of course is also very important because it gives us many interesting context in terms of our environment. If the country is interested in education for instance it means that our work as information providers is much easier. If there is very little interest in education, it means that our work as information providers is much more difficult.

The question to be asked in relation to the external environment is that: *what is happening out there that may have an impact on our libraries and information centres?* We must be aware of what is going on there, not only in our own countries but of course in every country as well.

The **internal environment** is slightly different in that it looks at our internal strengths plus our weaknesses, in this case as a library. The main areas here are resources, inputs, strategy as well as performance outputs.

- a). **resources**, in the widest sense, include human resources, financial resources as well as time. We have to ask ourselves about these resources, whether they give us strength or whether they give us weakness.
- b). **inputs** include all the materials, the salaries, the supplies and the premises. The equipment you have to enable you to do what you are doing. Where do we rank the inputs, are they a strength or a

weakness? I think in many countries one area which is a weakness is salaries and remuneration. I think there are a few where this is very good, but there are many countries where this remains a weakness.

- c). **strategy.** Do we have a sense of direction of where we are as to where we are going? Does everybody know about this? Or are we simply living day by day and moving from one crises to another? This again is very important. If we do not have a strategy, that is a weakness. We have a clear idea of where we are going, we have a sense of direction, that is a strategy. Because we already have in place a clear sense of direction as to where we are and to where we are going.
- d). **performance.** How is our performance in the eyes of our stakeholders? How long does it take us to process information when it is asked for? How are we performing?

SWOT analysis is a process where you sit together as a group and discuss all these issues and come up with a common outlook in the organisation or in the library. Staff should participate in the discussion and feel ownership of the process. How can there be commitment if they did not participate in the discussion?

5.5 Key Performance Areas

Once you have a clear idea of your external and internal environment, and you also have a clear idea of what are the internal strengths and what are your internal weaknesses, you must then examine the key areas that you must concentrate on. These are also called the key performance areas. There is always a temptation to have a long list of key performance areas, sometimes called wishful lists. People do not really take these long lists seriously. They have to be consolidated. They have to be summarised to create a very small manageable number for you to be able now to say all right which one of these key areas reflect what strategy we follow. For each one of those key areas you ask your self where are we now, where do we want to go and how are we going to get there. To allow you now to focus on your strategy, on your practical steps. A strategy is useless if it is not brought down to earth to make it a practical guide as to what you want to do.

Assuming you have identified resources , communication, marketing and staffing as key performance areas which would contribute to you achieving your mission, taking you to the future which you have defined for yourselves. It is completely useless to just document them. For each one of the key areas you have to ask yourself the questions: where are we now? Where do we want to go? And how are we to get there?

Let us look at an example. Take financial resources. It is a major problem everywhere you go, and it probably will be for a long time. You have to have an idea of the resources you have now, the resources you have been having in the past few years. You have to find out what amounts of money you have been getting in the past years? Not only for the documentation unit, but for staffing, for other resources, for overheads and so forth. Then you should look at the trend. How much have you been getting let us say in the past three years or so. And you will probably be able to get this. Even if you do not get perfect figures, you will get some figures to work on. You see planning is very dependent on data. You have to have the data. You have to establish a miniature management information system. Now you have to think, to put up your thinking hat. If my organisation is only able to give me so much, what are the other alternatives. And this is where networking can play a very useful role. You have to look at the other options available. As parliament librarians I think your options are not very wide. You cannot go out and say I will do some fund-raising. It probably will be a bit difficult. But I presume that you have major advantages, one of which you are very unique. In a country there is only one parliament and there are various people who are willing to work with you. You have to know this, they are tapping into the most powerful people in the country - parliament. They are tapping into the most powerful people in the country and they want to be seen to be doing something.

Ultimately you will have a clear idea of how you move towards the problems which sometimes can be paralysing if you do not have a clear idea of how to get through this forest. And then you come out with a clear statement of which options you are going to use for each of those key performance areas - what is your main strategy and which option are you going to use. These options must be workable, practical and feasible. So there must be feasible and practical as well as politically and socially acceptable. They must not be unethical. And they must conform to the values of your organisation.

Now when you have your key performance areas in place, we have to have a rough idea of how much it will cost to implement the strategy. Because the finance we may not have too much of it, but unfortunately it is something we have to come to terms with. So budgeting becomes important in terms of our strategies that we choose. Some strategies are very expensive. We cannot afford them. Our members of parliament need information which is current and up to date and which is useable. So I suppose there could be some information brokers around who can do that for us. But are we going to be able to afford or not. So we have to think about our performance areas in terms of whether we are going to be able to afford or we want to buy a 100 titles of periodicals per year. It is a very good thing. They can get all the information which is current and up to date. But are we going to be able to afford it. So budgeting and financial resources become very important. Now we have made our choice in relation to what is workable, what is practical and what is feasible financially we come down now to having clear action plans. And this is now where we are moving even deeper into the ground.

We are sinking our roots in the ground. Because if we do not have our roots in the ground, the plan will not flourish. Our success, our growth depends on having action plans which can tie us to specific times and specific people given responsibilities. So that we are able to say by this time we would have been able to achieve this, and by this time we would have achieved this. And this preferably is put on a chart so that it is clear for everyone to see, that this is our expectations, this is what we hope to achieve by this time, and this is the person who will be responsible. Some organisation even put it outside on the notice board, that actions for this month are , one, two, three, four, five; and people responsible. So if you have got a short memory this should help you to remember. To put you under tremendous pressure to achieve what you have set out to achieve. Actions plans which are stated in this graphic way help us to monitor progress, help us to achieve our goal. It ties us, it commits us. There is no way we can know what everyone has committed himself to.

In conclusion I wish to reiterate just three or four facts. Strategic planning is a very powerful tool for changing organisation and managing change in organisations. It is very empowering if done democratically. It is a systematic process. It can be over complicated and you do not need to over complicate it. Simplify it. Make it simple. And if it is done that way, it usually is very helpful in offering you a sense of direction, where you are, what you are going to face in the future and where you will be if you are able to achieve all those goals which you have set for yourself.

5.6 Comments, Questions and Answers

Mr Masawi: On the budget I would just want to point out that most libraries in parliaments do have a budget but the librarian has no actual powers as it were to purchase directly when publications are out. This needs to go through a process for approval from either the accounts office or the clerk. So it is an issue probably in a number of parliaments.

Prof. Mchombu: Well within the strategic framework I would regard that then as a weakness and a result work out a plan of action to deal with this weakness.

Ms Donnelly: Libraries are very often somewhere at the bottom of the hierarchy being funded by other officers of parliament And one of the things that gives them power is control of the budget. We are all totally dependent on that, to get a signature to allow us to spend any amount.

Ms Whittle: In the UK, the way that our structure works, we are one department. The library is one department within the House. But I think we are largely an equal partner in the way that the organisation runs. And certainly developing co-operation between the different departments of the House has been quite a big challenge for us.

Mr Brown: The planing a budget and spending it is a major issue. In our library we have the library committee which is made up of members, and it is the members who determine to a large extent what they want which the librarian uses his profession skills to achieve in implementing the budget, I think they must be part of it. If they say that they need journals or books for their work, the clerk cannot refuse to implement their desires. They have a powerful voice. After all this money has been budgeted for in the national budget, from the budget for parliament to the national budget. There is evidence that parliament has budgeted for this. And that in parliament the library has this amount of money allocated to it to spend.

Ms Karhula: The parliament library in Finland has been an independent organisation and we have a separate budget which has been quite stable. Our library has been mentioned in a constitution even separately. So we have a very strong position.

Ms Namhila: The first year I went to parliament I did not know that we had a budget. And I was planning things and there was no money to spend. In fact when we got money it was like the finance division is doing us a favour by allowing us to buy what we wanted. This is how I understood it from the action that I got from my first year. But then as we went along we started planning our activities and we made sure that when it was time for the budget we submitted our annual budget at the end of the financial year so that money can be made available. Our division is also presented at the Economics Committee where they make financial decisions and also at management where some of the decisions are made.

Ms Kamau: In our country we also have a library committee. But I have worked for that library for the last five years and there has never been a single meeting in that library committee. I am also not sure that it is a solution. Again on the budget, every other financial year we make a budget for our library. But to spend that money is another issue altogether, because it has to be sanctioned from elsewhere. Occasionally we are told you will not buy this, there is no money. So our hands are tied.

6. MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE

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One could say that there are two types of management. One is the management that we study in school when we go there which has got things like planning, co-ordination, communication, budgeting, personnel, etc., etc. That is a very useful management because it gives us the basis for doing many of the things that we are doing. Many of the concepts there unfortunately are out of date. And this is what I will be trying to show in the course of my discussion today.

Let me start by asking: *who are you in your organisations? How do you regard your work there? What are you?* And if you defined yourself outside the context of strategic planning you would probably say I am the librarian, I look after the library. But if you looked at your work in the context of strategic planning I have a strong feeling that you would realise that you are in fact an information manager. Your role is to find, process, package information and present it to whoever is looking for it in the best possible way so that they can use it. In my view therefore, your role there is that of managing the information resources of the organisation to satisfy the information requirements that your parliamentarians and other users have. Now I think this is again a useful way of looking at your work. Because quite often we get trapped by labels. Labels unfortunately are unavoidable. Sometimes they can trap us to think that our work is only limited. It is only possible when you are carrying out the functions of being a librarian. Because quite often the librarian has got labels and the perception of some of the users we deal with see us in terms of very limited range of activities. My view is that we are there to manage information resources of the organisation rather than to manage a library. It means basically that we can manage information without even a library. Even though it would be unthinkable but it is quite possible. We have to realise that our job is information handling rather than the library. And that this thing is not an end in itself. It is a means to an end, the means to providing information. Therefore it means that there are times when we have to look for information in all sorts of sources including human sources to satisfy a need that an enquirer may have. If we regard our job in a much wider way, we are able to see our role as information providers, as linking persons between our stakeholders and the information they are looking for and getting this information from whatever source.

Theoretical management concepts help us to get a foundation of what it was before. But to be able to get into grips with what confronts us now and is likely to confront us in future we have to look at management from a different angle in terms of pro-active management. And of course our role not as librarians. I have nothing against that term but I think as information managers. That our territory is information handling in whatever format, from whatever source and that we

are doing this pro-actively in an anticipative manner. Rather than always waiting for people to come to us. Because sometimes they do not come. I believe the information seeking habits of our members of parliament do have a relationship with the general information seeking habits outside. It is not an area where people are active. They seek information in the easiest way. And quite often you will not see them constantly bothering you for information, except in situations where they are under pressure. Is when their parties are competing and when they are put on the spot, this is when they have to look for information. The book which is travelling around now is by Tom Peters which is called Thriving on Chaos. What he is saying in that book is that we live in a very chaotic situation where many of the old values have been turned upside down. It means that many of the old thinking that used to be very stable is no longer relevant today because the situation is very unstable. In fact Tom Peters is supported by many other management thinkers.

Old style management was built up on the basis that there is very slow change. Human beings in organisations have got a clear hierarchy. And those who are on the top will always know more than those on the bottom. And therefore it is the natural duty of those who are on the bottom to take the orders of those who are on the top because they know best. And that communication is made in the form of orders. It was called the chain of command. But that is not the case now. You find sometimes a person who is on the bottom knows more than the boss on the top. If you want to survive as an organisation, if you want to succeed as an organisation, you need to come up with innovative ways of managing human resources, managing people. To give them to do what they can do without being obstructive. Sometime management can be simply obstruction. Now I am looking at about five basic principles or areas. One is that we needed to be very interested, if I can use the word very obsessed with responding to our stakeholders, to our customers. The second area I look at is innovation, is that we need to be constantly innovative and creative. The third area is the area of partnership. We need to find other people with whom we can team up and achieve the goals which we are seeking to achieve. We need to look at leadership. Not in terms of power over other beings, but in terms of giving guidance, in terms of showing people the way and letting them do what they can do best. We need to have very simple and straightforward controls in place which allow us to monitor but not to prevent things from happening. We live in an environment where bureaucratic systems of management are no longer required to respond to needs of those who were serving our stakeholders. And this is what will give us our justification for existence. Rather than thinking we have a right to be where we are at the moment.

Now starting with the stakeholder responsiveness. We live now in an era where organisation must have systems in place of responding to their stakeholders, those who we are trying to serve. It means that we have to listen to them. We have to give them ways to tell us what they want us to do for them. We have to have in place an ability to respond quickly to what our stakeholders want from us. We

have to be flexible in our systems. If we are slow in responding, we sometimes find that by the time we respond the need has vanished. Therefore, it means that managing is to first of all create these channels which link you up with your stakeholders. We talked a little bit about committees and one or two said they do not work. I think the main question is why do they not work. We have to find out. Because I think they do provide us an opportunity if they are properly set up to be in touch with those who we are serving. We need to look for negative feedback. Negative feedback is very, very valuable. Positive feedback is okay.

That is very pleasant if it is done properly. But negative feedback allows us to see where there are problems which we can solve and therefore move forward. Human nature is that we do not like negative feedback. If someone comes constantly criticising you say that one will never be satisfied, she is always criticising. But the other way of looking at negative feedback is that it tells us where we can do better. We have to have a system where we can look for it, where we can tap into it. Of course the people to give us this feedback will be the stakeholders.

One of the most important principles is to have a clear mechanism for tapping the views of your stakeholders and responding to them quickly. You should go out of your way and encourage those who give you negative feedback. Reward them for it rather than turn them into people you do not like. Because this is really how to move forward. In our own system we have already heard many times of the question of adding value to our products. If someone comes and you give him a book of the size of the one that is going around now, what time do they have to read all of it. That is not value added. There is no value adding that has been done there. I think in Africa this is particularly more so than in the developed countries where people are much more familiar with information. Debate is going on about primary health care. Many members of parliament probably do not know much about primary health care. So what information do we give them which will make them have a clear grasp of the issues that are there in relation to where they come from, to be able to make an intelligent presentation. A report which is 100 pages? That will not be very useful because we have not done the value adding there to meet their needs. Value adding means we look for the information that is there and distil it to the level that it is easy for them to use at the time at their disposal. If it is 100 pages we have to have a way of reducing this to a small write up which they can quickly make use of. And that is how to meet the shareholders, how to respond to our shareholders or to meet their expectations and how to make ourselves indispensable. I think we have to seek to make ourselves indispensable in the information chain in the organisation.

The second principle is the principle of innovations and in the information field more than in any other field, a lot of innovations are taking place all the time. It is not only in ideas, in management concepts, but of course in technology. These innovations are enabling us to do things better and quickly. A few years ago before the establishment of micro computers, it was impossible to give current awareness services except the simplest. Because you could not really do a lot of

those things manually. But now we can create databases. We can index documents. We have got full text CD-ROM's available now we can get the information quickly. Not only of documents and bibliographic information but also of real data so that we are able to extract this information to give to our users. However it means that we ourselves must be innovative, we must learn and be prepared to learn. An information manager has to be someone who is prepared to learn.

The information society which is upon us now and part of our environment is one which demands that we are able to change ourselves, and we change ourselves through learning. The big mistake many people make is that your own learning is the responsibility of someone else. I think one should take a pro-active stance to learning by yourself but also take the initiative rather than delegating this initiative to other people. So if they do not want you to go or if they are slow to see, then you just stay where you are permanently. And of course rewarding those who work with us and are willing to learn and are creative, even when they do some things that are not approved. And some of the rules and regulations are very stifling. They are terrible. They are not meant to make libraries user friendly. They are meant to make libraries very bureaucratic, very difficult to release its information. There are so many rules and regulations. Some of them are useful. There are too many "don'ts". And when you read through them they are always places in very prominent positions. They inhibit the use of information and create perceptions which are always negative about the information centre. This is one way of slowing down the flow of information and its usefulness. We need also to think in terms of empowering our staff through participation, through involvement. Now this again is completely contrary to old management styles which had a steep hierarchy, the so-called pyramid which says that power decreases as you go down and authority increases as you go upwards. That is conventional management. But of course now if you want people to be involved, to believe in what they are doing, to do their best, not to work the eight o'clock to four thirty hour, but to work until the work is finished, then they have to be empowered and believe in what they are doing. It means that we have to minimise our authority. Or practising our authority has to be done to a minimum rather than to the maximum. To let people do what they can do. Make them empowered through democratic discussions of problems and issues through openness.

Systems which are open will allow good ideas to come even if they are from junior staff. In some instances they are many things which happen at the front desk which someone who is up there will never know. And the only way to tap this resource is to have management structures which empower the staff, which allow them to come and bring these ideas on how to improve things. We have a lot of performance appraisal forms in place. What are we appraising? Many instances when you look through those appraisal forms you find that what is being appraised is how obedient a person is, how compliant, how conformist the person is. And the more conformist, the more obedient the person is, the better the

appraisal results of this person. We have also bureaucratic systems which says that to be able to move from here to here you have to stay five years, to be able to move from here to here you have to stay one or three years. Now those are the typical bureaucratic systems that we probably can do very little about since they are above us. But if we want to tap into the brains of people we have to look at individuals as well as the systems. Otherwise you will lose all the bright young people because they say look up there, I will never move up there until I stay here for ten years. Some people just sit down and wait for the year. There are those bright ones who are not prepared to sit down and wait for those years. And you are likely to lose more of them if you do not create opportunities for them to be able to achieve what they are able to achieve within the time frame satisfactory to them. So empowerment of staff is also recognising talents which you have. It is called sometimes head hunting, you look for the best people, you give them opportunities to work for the organisation.

Now the civil service system. Many of you said you work in the civil service system, unfortunately it is notorious for its failure to recognise high performance in the so-called high flyers. But of course if you want to survive as an organisation, as an information centre, you somehow have to create room for the high flyers. Now these days we have got information technology. Many of the people coming with the best skills will be very young people. They will just go and train and they come and stay for three months and someone will put up an advert and offer them twice the salary you are willing to offer them, and they will be going out. Which means that the position of the parliament information centre will not improve because it is just a passage. People are passing through and get their training and they leave. So empowerment of staff is recognition of individual talents and creating and finding ways to reward them and of course retain them. It is also giving opportunities for people to learn and showing by example showing by example. If you are a leader you show by example. You want people to come to the office early and stay until they finish their work, you have to do it first and show it to them that this is how I want you to work. Then there will not be any conflict because you are already showing the example. This is what leadership is. It is not saying do what I say, not what I do.

Change is normally resisted. We are much more comfortable if things are the way they are. Until we realise that we are going towards destruction if things continue to be comfortable. I think there is a word for that - comfort zones. That you become so comfortable that you do not want to make the least effort to move forward out of where you are because it is so comfortable. And that is why I say sometimes it is good to be sacked from a job for honourable reasons of course. But sometimes you are forced to think and then you discover that were many opportunities in front of you, rather than that single one which was there. And the only way you can realise this is if you are forced to confront this change. I think the change oriented organisations are organisations where the leaders themselves take the role in showing people that change is welcome, not to resist change. If you have a leader who resists change, it is impossible to move forward.

We were just talking about strategic planning. Strategic planning is a leadership process. The leader must accept it. It is very difficult for you to do it if you do not have any authority of your own. So the role of the leader is very important. Leadership is showing people the way forward, showing them where to go. And acting in a way that they see by example that this is a role model in terms of these positive qualities. Many people have a fear of change and therefore they take comfort in doing the same thing over and over again. A librarian unfortunately in many of the processes, routines and regulations tends towards conservatism, tends towards being against change. You see we have got everything defined in terms of how we shall classify, index, categorise our materials. Everything is very orderly, very bureaucratic. Now in a way this is also bad. Sometimes when you ask people why are you classifying this way, they say because the classification shows that this document must be here. But of course these are just tools. You have to think in terms of your stakeholders - how would they approach this information. Is this where they will look for it or will they look for it somewhere else. And then you see now this is a tool I have, how can I use it to achieve the goal I want to achieve in a constructive manner. Of course it is difficult to be able to think at that level sometimes. Because our conditioning has been very much towards preserving systems as they are.

I think some of the books of collection management even say that you must get your materials from reputable publishers. That is one of the criteria used to judge the quality of a document is whether it comes from a reputable publisher. This is fair enough. Except when you realise that some of the best materials in terms of some subjects will come from very disreputable publishers. These will be Non Governmental Organizations which are sometimes fighting governments and they are publishing from the fringe so to speak. Some of these publications will probably not be acceptable in terms of the normal criteria we use. But in terms of the content, they are very good, they are very useful.

Leadership is also inspiring people through your own words and through your own vision, and of course you cannot achieve this on paper. They have to see you, they have to look at you. They have to look at your body language. So it means that as a leader you have to find room for this communication. You have to hold meetings with people. Even when time does not allow, but they have to be frequent. For people to get your vision, your idea, if you have a strategic plan, it has to be constantly communicated to them that this is our vision and this is our plan, this is our mission statement. So that everyone is able to remember and internalise it.

Giving people feedback on their performance, how well are they performing is also very important. If people have performed well, they need to be told so in private, as well as in public. It is not just a quiet word in the ear that you are doing very well - please keep it up. Now this inspiring, people want this to be public because we get satisfaction from recognition from our peers. So this has to be said in public and shown to everybody. It is one big motivator, recognition of

what a person has done. It is not only money. So leadership is doing all of these things. Is allowing others to grow, allowing an organisation to accept change, giving room for young people as well as juniors.

Time management is a major problem with leadership. Time is not empty space. Time cannot be created. It is a resource and we need to manage it very stringently in terms of having very tight time schedules and keeping up with appointments. In terms of deciding right in the morning how are you going to spend your time today. A simple diary saying from here to here I am doing this, from here to here I am doing this, is very useful.

Comments, Questions and Answers

Ms Samsodien: I think that our biggest problem is that we tend to write in a very formal manner. It does not address the person. And that is why it is felt that writing memos are not always the answer. We are not directing the communication to the person.

Mr Masawi: Since the school of thought in the new management is seeing the hierarchical type of management diminishing, do you see any prospects in the information management of any organic type of hierarchy where if you are there depending on the performances of those who are below, making it a flat type of structure?

Ms Samsodien: If I can just answer him. We have in our structures flattened it considerably. But what I personally find lacking is that you have so many managers and one person who has to look after those managers. And that is an impossible task. So there is a lack of support. A gap is created. And that is one thing I think we should address, we should try and look at. Who is going provide that support? One person cannot support six or seven people. And that inevitably happens with the flattening of the structures. So I do not have an answer. I just have a problem that there is lack of support.

Ms Whittle: Well this actually links with my contribution. Which was that we tend to talk now in term of team leaders rather than a boss. So that there is one person who is responsible for the work of that team. So in that sense it is much flatter. They will bring their different contributions to whatever the goal, the mission, whatever you are all trying to achieve. So that the scales are seen as in terms of leading your team and developing the skills and the contributions of the members of your team rather than strictly as a boss/subordinate in that way. The other part that I also wanted to make about the communication. One thing that we have found since E-Mail has become much more prevalent within the organisation is that we are actually moving back towards the situation where it is much easier to E-Mail somebody than to pick up a telephone, or to walk down the corridor and see them, and partly the time management thing. But it actually moves, it is a retrograde step because it means you do not have that face to face

communication with people. And often what you write in an E-Mail is perhaps less helpful. It tends to be more abrupt whereas actually talking to them on the phone or face to face is actually a more effective mechanism. So that is kind of a reverse if you like, a cycle that we are actually going through.

Mr Rugambwa: I think we are now looking at what I would call participatory management. Whereby you are not looked at like a boss, but as a fellow worker. Though you occupy a higher position in terms of authority in the chain of command, there are situation whereby your juniors work simply because you are there.

Ms Karhula: I just wanted to indicate the kind of management structures we have in the Finnish parliament library. The structure is quite complicated in the sense that it depends if you are talking about the power to act or power to the knowledge, if you know something special if you have some unique understanding of civil services, resources or if you have relationships to some other organisations or within an organisation. So it is kind of complicated. But I could say that the new style of management used in our organisation and if I talk about myself, I have gain a lot of encouragement and a lot of space to do different kind of things. And it has been very useful way to work. But in a way it requires a high level of responsibility. And also managers are kind of responsible to tell their employees what they expect from them. And give also realistic expectations, especially for the new employees. Because our young people are desiring good job satisfaction so much that their expectations are higher than normally organisations can offer to keep the things on a level which can be realistic. Because there is no fast way to make a good job for yourself. Or there is no fast way to success if you are not working hard. And just to give a short review of our organisation. We have three departments which have chief librarians. Then we have the library director and then we have separate teams. It is kind of a flexible organisation. And power is in all these levels.

7. INTRODUCTION TO INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Justin Chisenga
Department of Information and Communication Studies

In this presentation, I will look at the following:

- data or information processing
- what is a computer?
- what is computer software?
- computer configuration; and finally
- Y2K problem

7.1 Data and Information Processing

As information managers we always say that we are processing information. Indeed the major use of computers is for information processing. Originally, computers were used in activities that required numerical computations or calculation. Payroll, and other accounting related activities, and later stock control dominated. Thus the term data processing, which includes the following activities: recording the information, sorting, additions, subtraction, multiplication, division, and summarising. The term data is used to describe basic facts about business, an event and entity etc. and the results of data processing is information.

Nowadays, computers have proliferated in all areas of human endeavour. Libraries is one area where we can also find computers and these are being used for information processing and communication. They are used in database management and provision of access to electronic databases, electronic mail communication, and many more activities. Thus a computer is used for information processing.

7.2 What is a Computer?

A computer is an electronic device that accepts data as input, stores data, processes data according to internal instructions, and produces information as output. This definitions means that a computer is made up of electronic circuits, and generally requires electric power in order to work. Certain areas of our communities and societies may not think very much in terms of using computers because they do not have access to electricity.

Data has to be made available as input for processing. For example in the library setting, details about a book (title, author, date of publication, etc) or a library user (name, year of birth, address, telephone, etc) is are examples of data. The computer accepts and stores data, and when given instructions, the data is processed. Information, the result of data processing is given as output.

From the definition of a computer, we can see the following basic characteristics and components of a computer:

Basic Characteristics

- electronic device
- accepts input
- stores data
- processes data
- internal instructions
- produces output (information)

Components of a computer system

- Hardware
- Software
- Data
- People
- Procedures

Computer Hardware

Hardware is the physical devices that make up a computer, and these include:

Input devices

used to input data into a computer and include: **keyboard** (most common form of input device), **mouse** (the primary alternative to the keyboard), scanners, optical character recognition, magnetic recognition (ATM cards), microphone, etc

Central Processing Unit

this is the heart of the computer system. Consist of three main components: **Control Unit**, **Arithmetic/Logic Unit** and **Primary Memory** (Random Access Memory)

Control Unit directs operations taking place in the CPU (reads and interprets instruction)

ALU carries out calculations required (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division) carries out logical operations (comparison of two numbers or sequences of text)

Memory also known as primary storage, internal storage, main memory or Random Access Memory, and it holds:

- stores data awaiting processing
- stores instructions

stores results of processing
this is temporary storage

Output devices

devices used to transmit information out of the Central Processing Unit (CPU) to the user. They include:

Video Display Unit (Monitor)
Printers (Dot matrix, Inkjet, Laser printers,)
Speakers (voice and speech)

Secondary storage Devices

secondary storage is permanent while RAM is temporary. Devices include:

hard disk housed in a sealed unit with the disk drive
speed of access of data is excellent

floppy disk made from magnetisable material and encased
in a rigid plastic cover for protection

Optical disks Compact Disks, Compact Disk Read Only Memory

Data

this has been discussed above

People

Computers are operated and used by various types of people and these included:

- Computer programmers
- Computer users
- Systems analysts
- Network administrators
- Database administrators
- Systems managers

Procedures

instructions and manuals relating to the use and operation of the computer system

7.3 Computer Software

Computer software is a set of instructions that a computer uses to manipulate and process data. Without software, the computer is a useless collection of hardware. Software is generally divided into two categories:

System software : runs the basic operations of the computer; tells hardware what to do and how and when to do it

Examples: Microsoft Disk Operation System (MS-DOS), Windows 95, UNIX, OS/2, MacOS, etc

Application Software: individual instructions or a set of related instructions designed to be carried out by a computer to satisfy a user's specific needs

Examples: WordPerfect, Ms-Word, Micro CDS/ISIS software which is used in libraries for bibliographic database management, etc

7.4 Computer Configuration

Computer configuration is the combination and specifications of the various parts of a computer system. In a configuration, the following is indicated:

Type of computer required

Microcomputer, laptop, minicomputer, palmtop, etc

Type of Casing

Tower, mid-tower or desktop

Input Devices

Keyboard (standard or enhanced (104 keys) with extra keys)

Windows 95 Keyboard

Mouse (two or three buttons)

Central Processing Unit

Processor and type (Intel 486, Intel Pentium, Intel Pentium II)

Main Memory RAM in bytes, up-gradable

System Clock speed (instructions performed within a given amount of time) measured in Megahertz (MHz)

Output Devices

Monitor - size in inches, colour or monochrome

Storage Devices

Floppy disk drive (1.44MB)

Hard disk capacity (in Gigabytes from 1 to 3 GB)

Optional

Printer - dot matrix, Inkjet, LaserJet

CD-ROM drives (include the speed - 8 to 40X)

7.5 Y2K Problem

The Y2K computer problem basically has to do with the way computers store the date information, and it can be traced way back to the early days of mainframe computers in the 1960s and 1970s. In the early days of huge mainframe computers, memory was quite expensive and due to memory restrictions on computers, programmers decided to save space by programming computer systems to store the date in the format: **dd/mm/yy**. This format allows 2 digits for the day (dd), 2 digits for the month (mm) and 2 digits for the year (yy). For example, information on a person born on 1st July 1980 would be stored as 010780. The general assumption was that the date belongs to the 20th Century and thus computers have been programmed, for example, to assume that 010590 means 1st May 1990 (or 01/05/1990) and 07/07/90 would be 7th July 1990 (or 07/071910).

Using a six digit format to store the date information became the computer industry standard and later in the early 1980s, this was designed into the personal computers's CMOS Real Time Clock chip, a hardware component normally located on the machine's motherboard that stores time, date and system information. The format was also introduced into many software applications. The implication of this standard is that when the century turns, most computer systems will not be able to recognise the new dates. For example, how will 1st January 2000 be stored? According to the prevailing standard, as "010100" and this will make the computer to assume that the date is 1st January 1900 or 01/01/1900. In general, computers will think that all dates past 31st December 1999 are 100 years in the past.

The Y2K computer problem might also affect computerised library systems since calculations using the date information are also widely done in many computerised library activities. A large number of different computer systems (both hardware and software) have been installed in various types of libraries around the world. Some of the library application software were developed in the early days of computing and would require to be examined for Y2K conformity

7.6 Comments, Questions and Answers

Mr Engitu: Is Pentium a categorisation within Intel processors?

Mr. Chisenga: Yes it is. There have been other Intel processors in the past, such as 286, then came the 386, 486, Pentium MMX, Pentium I, Pentium II and now there is Pentium III processor.

Mr Brown: What is measured by giga bytes?

Mr. Chisenga: Computer memory and hard disk storage capacity are measured in bits, bytes, kilobytes, megabytes and gigabytes.

Computers process information in bits and bytes. A bit is the smallest component of data that a computer process. Eight (8) bits make up one byte, and you need 1024 bytes to have one kilo byte. Although in this sense whenever you talk of a kilo, it is 1000, not so? But the exact number is 1024 bytes. So from there then you go to mega bytes and giga bytes.

Mr Engitu: What is the difference between mega hertz and bits per second?

Mr. Chisenga: Bits per second have to do with the way computers transfer information or data. This can be data transfer using a modem, like when using electronic mail. . You will find a modem with a date transfer rate of 9600 bits per second, which means it can transfer data at that rate. As for mega hertz, it has to do with the speed and which the computer processor process instructions. That is why every time you buy a computer with a certain processor, the speed of the processor will also be indicated. For example - Pentium II 166Mhz

8. MARKETING AND PROMOTION OF PARLIAMENTARY INFORMATION SERVICES

Prof. Kingo Mchombu
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In the world today we are moving towards the so-called information society, which means that through out the world information is being used very intensively. But on the other hand when you look at the practises in Africa and other developing countries, you find that information has really not been used very intensively at all. So these are societies which are not yet moving towards the concept of information society. The information revolution has not yet taken firm root. There are a number of reasons for that, which unfortunately, are not the subject of this discussion. However, it is important for us to look at the use of information and see how we can increase this use of information, if we are able to make the decisions, if we are able to provide our users and customers with the capacity to make the right decisions at the right time when there is so much pressure and competition that is going on between continents and between countries. Marketing can be used to try to increase the level of information use by library users.

Marketing is a concept which is slowly being accepted in libraries and information services. Previously it was not really very well accepted. There are a number of reasons again, one being that it was believed that if you accept marketing, you are really equating yourself to the practises of the door to door salesman who come at your door selling all sorts of items and puts one foot in the door and is not prepared to go until you have bought something. Marketing in my view is first of all to find the need of your users and their behaviours. What do they require from you on the one hand. And then create products and services which reflects these needs. And communicate and distribute and motivate your customers and your users to use your services and your products. I therefore have broken it down into three steps. One is that you find the needs and the behaviours and the habits of your customers and your users. Secondly is that you create information products and services which are based on what you have found. And thirdly you communicate and distribute your products and services and also motivate your customers to use your services. It is a customer driven process. It is a realisation that is one thing to make good products, but if you are not able to communicate this to your users, these good products will just remain good but no one will use them.

Within parliament libraries and information centres the perception that I have so far is that the level of use is variable. In some instances it appears there is very high use, and on the other hand we have situation where my understanding is that we have very low use of the information services and products which we are offering. We could in fact ask ourselves what is our market share in terms of

giving information to our users. Market share means that if we took our users as a group, if we have 200 or 300 in total, what percentage of their information requirements are satisfied by other people, other than ourselves. So what is your share of the market? In other words if they get all the information or 75% of the information requirements are met from outside, it means that your market share is 25%. In other words it means that is very low because you are not the dominant provider of the information services which they require to sustain and meet their needs there. So it is important for us to be aware of this picture in terms of how important, how significant are we in terms of their information requirements - what is our market share in terms of satisfying the information requirements. We can differentiate between internal marketing and external marketing. Internal marketing is when you market whatever you are doing to your own staff so that they are aware of what you are doing, they support it.

It is usual to divide the marketing process into what is called the marketing mix, which is a number of ingredients which if they are all brought together will give us the required results. They are called a mix because if one of them is missing it will be difficult to get success in what you are doing. The marketing mix contains the following elements: product, place, price, promotion, people, physical evidence and process. The old marketing approach only looked at product, place, price and promotion.

8.1 Product

In our situation, this refers to the information that we provide - the information services and products. The range that we provide to our customers, to our users, to meet their needs, their demands. We have to realise that the reason that our parliamentarians and other users come to our information centre is because they have a need for information, they want information. So our products and our services must reflect what they want. The product must meet these needs and we must do our best to customise it. A simple example is when we get a member of parliament who wants a report on a specific subject but this is in English and he does not understand English very well. Now to add value to this type of document, it means that you have to take the trouble to convert it to a language that he or she understands. We must make sure we make the products which are appropriate for our customers. We must constantly cross check these products with our customers to see whether the products we are making are still relevant. Because information requirements of users are not static, they are changing all the time.

8.2 Price

Price was much more important when marketing was linked to profit making. But in terms of situation where it is not profit making, price is still important because there is a visible price where you pay for a service on delivery. That is you exchange money for a service. In most instances information operates in a

different way. But we must bear in mind that this does not mean that information is free. Information is never free, it is a very costly resource. There are various types of cost. Cost of production is one of them. But there is also the hidden costs. For example if it is very difficult for people to access our information centre and get the information, these are hidden costs. Convenience, that is another element. So we have to be aware of the cost dimension. Even when we are not charging we have to have a rough idea of how much it cost to produce a particular product. Because this can make us to become cost conscious. This is an age where we are under great pressure to cut down on costs, to make optimum use, to make the best use of our resources. So if we are not aware of how much it cost to produce a particular service, we are not in a position to cut down costs because we do not know how much it costs. In some instances a service can be abused if we are not aware of the costs. This is why there is great pressure on many information centres to charge for services on what they call sometimes a cost recovery basis. Things like photocopying and on-line searches.

8.3 Place

Place is where the information is made available to customers and the channels we use to make this information available to our customers. Location is significant because of the researches which have been done so far seem to point to the fact that people will use information which is close at hand. Even when it is not the best information available. They will not go very far away in search of information unless it is a very critical issue. Otherwise the normal behaviour of most users is that they will use the information which is easily available and which is close at hand. So location, where we are located becomes very important. Whether it is easy and convenient for our users and other customers to use the information. Convenience is not only in terms of location, it is also in terms of time. When are we open? When are we closed? Take the example of public libraries. They are mainly open when people who are supposed to use their services are at work. Which means that effectively they are making it impossible for a large group of people who would like to use their services to do so.

What delivery methods have you put in place. The usual borrowing of items, access to photocopying machines, what other delivery mechanisms are there. The idea is that the delivery mechanism should be determined by the habits and behaviours of our users. They want the information to be delivered in a way that they are constantly kept informed of developments, then that is how we should develop our delivery mechanisms. If they are very fond of certain channels, we should find out these channels and give them the information. If they want information to be displayed in the bars, because this is where discussions take place, then we should put up this information there, display it for them to see it. We must create delivery mechanisms which mimic or which copy these behaviours. That is how to fit our delivery information strategies to the behaviour of our users.

8.4 Promotion

Promotion is the last of the old concept in the marketing mix. And this is basically to do with communication. How we communicate messages to inform customers of what we have that could be useful to them. The assumption here is that we already know of the requirements, what are their needs. We already know how they look for information. So we are communicating messages using channels which we are aware of, that these are the channels which they are likely to use. Language which is at the level where they are able to comprehend it. And of course we are not only conveying that we are offering you this information, needs which you have now or are likely to arise in a few days time, but also we address perceptions which we think they have. Many of these perceptions will either be positive or negative. Communication is a continuous process.

Marketing is a very strategic process. You do not do things for their own sake. There has to be a reason why you are doing something and this has to fit in your overall marketing plan. Normally there are various forms of promotion which are often encountered. One is public relations or publicity. The other is selling, and of course, advertising. *Promotion* is an attempt on our part to create favourable relations with our public. To keep this relation with our public alive and well we have to target all of them. Sometimes we may even write to them individually in our attempt to target them. *Publicity* is general awareness creation of what is going on. You are publicising whatever is going on there. And this may include displaying documents, displaying information materials, putting content pages of newly received materials somewhere where it is conspicuous where they can all see, the bar, the dining room, the tea room. *Advertising* is not always feasible because you have to pay of course radio, television or newspapers like this. It is quite costly and cannot be a long term thing. Unless it is just a one-off or a short term thing where you can advertise a particular report or a particular item.

When communicating we seek to make sure that the message we are sending across is received. We seek to use appropriate channels and we also seek to influence our audience. We also seek to receive their communication. It is not a one way process, it is a two way process. In the communication process we have the communicator, the channel or medium. The audience, to whom, and the feedback. Communication is not just about communicating messages outwards, but also listening to what people are saying. Sometimes this is the most difficult part of communication, listening and getting feedback. Especially if the feedback is negative. We sometimes shut it off. We should not only sensitise ourselves to give messages but also to receive them. Things like suggestion boxes. Listening to people, what they are saying.

Sometimes what they are not saying is also important. So we have to have a total control of communication because sometimes people do not say anything when you expect them to say something. That may also be significant. We need to take

the communication and promotion of marketing in terms of information use as very critical as creating awareness for the user of information.

8.5 People

This concept was added because it was realised that the element of people has been pushed to the background. But if you do not really concentrate on people as a concept of the marketing mix, you tend to forget that all this is done for the purpose of satisfying the requirements of your customer. So you have to know what are their needs already mentioned because this will guide you on what products to provide. What are their perceptions about you and your work. This is also important for you to find out. How do they use information to make decisions, to participate in debates? This is also very important. Do they consult those who they feel are much more informed than themselves? Do they read about this? Do they listen to radio? What are the information seeking behaviours? What are their perceptions about the information centre. Are these negative perceptions? Are they positive perceptions? Do they regard this as an important aspect in their work? And who are they? What is your target, what are your segment, target population that you are serving? Are they only grown-ups? What are their characteristics, education levels?

It is important to have a clear understanding of the nature of the information users. This can be done using various methods and one of them is market research . This means that you carry out a research, a study of those you are serving, their characteristics and habits, their requirements. It sounds complicated but it doesn't have to be. Sometimes it can be done in very simple terms. A simple list of questions can give you a lot of information. It doesn't have to be very complex. Market research like this has to be followed up by some analysis to determine your marketing requirements, how you should market your services and of course create a sort of plan to approach this. This should be tied up to your strategic plan, if you have one, whether it is written or it is one which is conceptual in the minds of those who are working there.

8.6 Physical evidence

The best way to explain physical evidence is to say “what do you feel when you walk into an airline office as opposed to a rundown government department? What is the difference?” You see the best equipment in front of you, you see people who are neatly dressed, who look very knowledgeable about what they are doing. Information professionals should emulate this.

8.7 Processes

Process refer to the systems put in place to support our work. These are not up front, they are behind the scenes. What are the systems to speed up, for instance, high in demand materials? What is the system put in place to make sure that the

performance that our customers require will be met because we have already designed systems which are capable of doing this. So we have to put in place a process that is able to deliver, for us to be able to be credible in terms of meeting the time constraints of our customers. This is an invisible aspect of marketing, it is not seen, it is behind the scenes, but it is equally important in terms of enabling us to meet our obligations to our customers. Our performance at the front desk depends on the support we are able to get from those who are operating the systems behind the scene. So all of these have to work together – the product, the place, the price, the promotion, communication, the people, the physical evidence and the process. They have to work together and this is why they are called a mix. If you put them together like this, we are able to react to the requirements that we have detected and we are able to come up with a marketing strategy and marketing plan that will help us meet the expectations of our users.

8.8 Discussions, Questions and Answers

Mr Brown: You didn't seem to go into market segmentation.

Prof Mchombu: Market segmentation is a marketing concept which means that you look at the various groups you are serving and attempt to answer the question: *What are their expectations and needs and how can you create products which are able to satisfy these various groups you are serving?* Sometimes you may make deliberate attempts to go for one market segment as a way of marketing strategy. Market segmentation is useful because it enables us to have a clear picture of the groups we are serving, the various groups we are serving and what are their characteristics, what are their requirements, so that we can target them with services and products which are based on what we know of their characteristics, requirements and other needs that they may have.

Sometimes you may have conflicts between the segments and pressure on resources will be there. Of course, this has to be decided in relation to what you see your mandate and mission is and, of course, also your philosophy. One of the philosophies of information centres for Parliament now is the freedom of access of information to all, and you may find that if you deny other groups access, this may be cause for major complaints against you, because now all over the place the discussion is how to give freedom of access and right to information. This is now becoming one of the rights, one of the basic rights and this particular type of information which is coming out of Parliaments is the one that is very highly demanded because it is powerful information that everybody has a right to access.

9. NETWORKED INFORMATION SOURCES

Paivikki Karhula
Parliament of Finland

The Internet as a tool offers qualities which will have an essential impact to our daily life at work and at home. Our experience of time and place is likely to change when Internet allows developing of such services which have a possibility to take a full geographic and time scale into use. Services may be developed for international or global use and they may be available 24 hours in a day. International, national, regional and local cooperation will be easier but it will also become as a requirement. The impact of these qualities is likely to have profound impacts on a working life since it will be possible for organisations and for the individual employees to move their physical location easily, support remote work and serve a chosen client base without geographic restrictions.

The language of Internet is English. In this situation where most of you come from countries where English is the official language this is not going to be a problem for you, I believe, but this is not the situation in many other countries. 80% of all our Internet pages are produced in English at the moment. In Finland we tend to create our services and Internet pages originally in Finnish or in Swedish which is our second official language. But we rely on the English language because we really cannot rely on such services which are available in our language, because it will limit our possibilities, the information retrieval. Furthermore, the documents required for installation and maintenance of systems are mainly written in English. Learning the technologies needs to be coupled with the improvement of language skills and English in the first place.

Competition is also such a new concept for libraries which will be faced with Internet and the network services. This means that there will be other information institutions which serve as a channel to information searching and which also may give end-users direct access to information resources. These organisations may take the place of the library in the sense that they may organise and deliver network information. So the library as an institution needs to define itself, its mandate and its mission, as we heard this morning.

Although libraries wouldn't apply all these possibilities which these tools will offer, all these new qualities still exist and recall all organisations to reinvent their strategies and missions. In the library of Parliament in Finland we have already experienced that we need to consider more carefully the possible international users, the languages we use in our services, especially right now when Finland holds the presidency of the European Union and their language base will be much wider. We only have our services now in Finnish, Swedish and English, but translations are required in practice. We also need to coordinate our efforts to competitive or related network services. It is not useful to develop such services

or use a lot of resources to such efforts which already exist and are well maintained if there is not a special reason to do that.

The speed of the technological change, coupled with the impacts of globalisation, is challenging our ability to adapt many ways. We are living in a period of transition when the economic, technological, cultural, environmental and political changes are all taking place so rapidly that even experts find it very difficult to predict what the future will bring within the next 10 or 20 years' time.

New type of dependencies will emerge due to Internet and globalisation. The globalised economy has already reduced the opportunities of nation states and taken more and more power to an international level, especially for the international companies. Dependencies of the international decision-making will certainly grow due to economic reasons but this is also caused by the global problems which do not respect the borders of the nations. As globalisation advances, it will be essential to ensure that the national level democracy and possibilities of parliamentary work is strengthened to enable the society to function and solve efficiently the increasingly complicated problems. This is something we can do in our libraries with services and information resources. The speed and scale of the changes also address such challenges that no one person or organisation can manage by individual efforts without cooperation or networking. But this is something we have heard here already during these two days, many times.

For the libraries the opportunities to act lie in cooperation and networking. We also need to follow up the technology development, invest on information technology and strengthen our skills in utilising the information resources. Information technologies, coupled with the skills in the use of electronic and printed information resources as well as good understanding of the role of interpersonal communication, will play a key role especially for Parliament libraries to support the parliamentary work and democratic development on a national level. Finally, to have success in our efforts, we will be more and more dependent on our ability to create a culture of fruitful cooperation. APLESA seems, to me, to do this extremely well.

Rapid development of technologies will challenge the strategic planning, selection of products and management of systems which will become a more complicated effort. Although the new generations of the library systems have taken several years to develop, the general development cycle of new hardware and software versions seem to be measured in months. The same concerns, unfortunately, the life cycle of our Internet links and services, especially if they are maintained and developed by a private person and do not have a reliable organisation in the background. The whole figure gets even more complicated due to company mergers among vendors and publishers and their continuous staff changes. So it is not surprising that the most worrying problems named by the system managers in libraries covered management of complex installations, choosing a new system,

assessing new technologies and supplier stability. These all refer to the speed of the change which is really unmanageable even for the professionals.

While it is an unrealistic requirement to learn and manage a wide range of products on a detailed level, the periodical follow-up of the technology trends and development directions will be very important, especially for the managers and technical staff. Technical staff should support management and complement their understanding with the functional details and inter-operability issues of the products when necessary.

The future prospect seemingly looks like we cannot live and work without a network. However, there are meaningful restrictions in these means. Crucial processes like decision-making may often take place outside the Internet. Networked information can be used as a basis of work or it may indicate some results of the work processes. It will become important though to be conscious of the “live” processes and communication outside of the network. Personal communication seems even to play a very important role when people make decisions to select Internet services.

Electronic communication without face-to-face connection seems to suit best for the fast, efficient, formal and accurate communication. On the other hand, network may not be the best means to intuitive, explorative or in-depth communication, especially if the subject is uncertain or not yet well formulated.

It will also be important to understand how people tend to use the Net. Electronic information is not really used for reading on screen and it will not replace the printed information. Users tend to scan and gather pieces of information when navigating the Internet, but they seldom read through the pages. This type of use of information will set special requirements to the visual and structural design of the network service as well as for writing in the Net. I will not go into details here, but there are very good resources for Web page developments and some of them are listed at the end of my paper. Additionally, the users who want to concentrate on reading tend to copy or download their documents and print them.

Due to this, paperless society seems not to come closer. Indeed, complaints of “never having so much paperwork than we have today” are quite usual these days. Do you have any questions on this part?

9. 1 The Finnish Way to Information Society

Significant national level future scenarios and strategies related to information society have been compiled in Finland by government and by government supported projects. The strategies have had their emphasis on the growth on the information-intensive and high-technology fields. Practically Finland has invested both on information technology production and on the use of technologies. While Information Society strategies internationally have aimed at integrating the use of information technology on a broad basis of society to

support the stability and democratic development, the Finnish strategies and applications strongly support these views.

Finnish Information Society strategies have been reflected in practice in funding of research, development and education, wiring institutions to network and encouraging computer supported learning. From the perspective of libraries the Finnish Information Society strategies have given them political and administrative support by confirming their status as a crucial player in a future society. The role of the libraries has been strengthened as a public institution which is allowing a free access to Internet and giving training and guidance for the use of new technologies for all citizens. This support is especially valuable for those citizens who will not be able to afford personal computers and Internet connections to their households.

Finnish government programmes have emphasised strengthening of democracy and open decision-making. Accordingly, all ministries and agencies as well as the growing number of municipalities are connected to Internet. Their public network services may give access to official documents, projects and databases and possibly offer links to other related information resources.

The network services of the Parliament of Finland has often found recognition. Since 1995, the Finnish Parliament has provided an extensive public access to the process and documentation of parliamentary business as well as information on the political groups and individual members of the Parliament. The issues covered in Parliament sessions can be followed through the daily and future schedules and press releases. The minutes of the plenary sessions, bills and resolutions will also be available for the public. The process of the lawmaking is easy to follow up since the document has all this information attached. The special section for citizens has been compiled to give guidance to the process of lawmaking , committee procedures and cooperation in European Union. Our public Internet pages are, in the first place, in Finnish but we have selected translations to Swedish, English and French.

Several experimental projects have also been developed for special services in public administration. A Citizen's Guide was compiled to promote the awareness of the opportunities and services available for the citizen in different life situations, e.g. children, young people, employees, retired people. There are different types of directories and several government agencies have implemented public services which allow for filling in of forms and applications via Internet. These forms may be printed and sent by mail or via Internet back to this organisation. Also common directories of public services and databases of projects have been compiled. Nettiparlamentti project has also been gathering experiences of tele-democracy applications to encourage citizens to cooperate and participate in decision-making by allowing communication on the Internet, using real-time transmission of image and voice.

Concerning the information content of public services, the new law of the publicity of official documents will give way to more extensive access to official records and documents for the citizens. At the moment, documents for preparing the processes will not be available to the public, but in the future when this law will be accepted the situation will change and all these documents will be available to the public. This law covers such a wide range of documents that it may take time before all these documents are in the network. What we still would desire to see in the future are the common rules (Metadata) and systems (such as GILS in the USA) for the production and delivery of the official documents and publications to support their easier and coordinated access via Internet.

Schools, archives, museums and libraries are well included in the government programmes. Libraries and schools have an essential role in serving as public access points to Internet and promoting the learning of computer and network skills. All universities and academic libraries and 60% of all schools are already networked for this purpose. According to the government strategies, all public libraries will be networked by the year 2000.

The Ministry of Education has promoted academic libraries, especially in hardware and software purchases and by funding several projects related to network services. The most prestigious development efforts between the academic libraries have taken place around union database (LINNEA), library automation (LINNEA2) and the National Electronic library project which is aiming at gathering national databases of electronic materials and improving the information retrieval of networked resources. The project has also served as a consortium for purchasing of electronic publications.

The other important project is public libraries. The House of Knowledge Project, Finnish Library Society and Helsinki City Library have acted as a key role in supporting public libraries to use of new technologies. The project has also established a portal service which will allow an access to library catalogues, guides and learning resources for Internet information retrieval.

A wide variety of different types of network services have been developed by Finnish libraries and several network service projects are going on. To mention some of them, the national union databases cover bibliographic information of monographs, articles, music material. There are two different types of portals for library and information fields which have been developed by academic libraries and public libraries. We also have a range of virtual libraries, meaning databases which collect Internet links and organise them by subject or classification code. So these are very powerful tools to have in information retrieval and Parliament Library has developed this type of database and I can show you this database when you get Internet access. Digitizing efforts of Finnish libraries are touching textual documents, images and sound. Several international and national level projects have also been going on to develop cataloguing standards for Internet resources (Metadata) and communication standards for the library systems

(Z.39.59). We also have special applications, some of them are a 24 hour Internet service for public libraries. Helsinki City Library has taken this kind of services. I doubt that they answer all 24 hours. Anyway, they have one library which will be open until 12 at night and it is a special Internet library.

Many library systems support also functions which can be used through Internet and they may cover requests for materials, renewal of loans, browsing old loans and they may give some other types of possibilities to communicate with the libraries. These types of services are developing all the time. So, for a regular user of the library, the only reason to come to the library after these services, may be to get some books on loan. But we are not yet at this phase of the development.

9.2 The Library of Parliament

The Library of Parliament has been implementing various network services for several years. An in-house strategic working process has been established as a practice to set goals for any major efforts. Separate strategies have been written for the information service, information technology, reference services and network services. While strategies have been partly compiled as a teamwork, they also reflect broadly the experience and opinions of the staff.

We also have experiences of successful cooperation projects in cooperation with the libraries of government departments, academic libraries and some specific network service and development projects together with the students of two universities. Many of our services have been developed, we hire some external sources, either one consultant or we cooperate with some other organisations.

The transition phase for new technologies has been supported by giving the basic computer training and network training will start during this year for the whole staff. The special hardware and software training has been more selective and has been addressed for those who actively use these skills and for the technical support staff. Our staff has also been active to develop their skills and participate on training even on their private time. Library of Parliament is allowing an access via Internet to the collections and special databases. Additionally, an organised access to Internet resources will be available through a database of Internet links or a virtual library.

Additionally, we also have a service guide for users which was compiled as a multimedia CD-ROM product and this will be available also via touch screen public access interface in the library and we have some of these InfoKiosks also outside the library to support citizen information. The project to produce the subject field related user training material and learning resources to Internet has been going on in cooperation with the libraries of government departments. Intranet interface to allow staff access to the administrative documents, internal guides and documents via network has also been well under development this year.

In a flow of technological change, libraries are moving on from the use of separate programmes and integrated library systems towards an integrated library. Now we are not talking about integrated library systems, but about an integrated library which will allow under one interface the access to separate systems and services.

An Internet interface of the integrated library may gather under one interface information about library services, learning resources and guides for Internet information retrieval, access to bibliographic databases and digital collections, as well as guidance to printed resources. Document delivery, possible personalised or current awareness services and information agents may serve as complementary services. But this is something that we are not using in the library of Parliament. The Intranet interface at libraries will in the first place include internal documents, guides and policies, administrative systems and staff access to modules of the library system.

In this connection, network connectivity and inter operability of systems seems to become the most important factor. The integrated library system is still likely to play an important role but serve as a component. New generations of the library systems are already taking these requirements into account but also their internal structuring is following these lines. Library systems are more and more structured into components which can be developed and maintained easier. The separate parts of the library systems may be changed if you want to take some other system in yours.

At present the integrated library systems are “mature” in a sense that there are no major differences between their functionality. Accordingly, in a selection and purchase process of library technologies the emphasis will be on investing in such technologies which will support inter operability, cooperation and offer a stable foundation for the use of the system. This can be achieved in gaining reliable and up-to-date information of the development trends of technologies, by cooperating with the other libraries to learn from their experiences, investing in technologies on the major investment stream with a broad user base and support for widely accepted standards and financially stable vendor.

The impacts of new technologies will touch all areas of the library work. Library defined as a collection of books is changing to serve the information retrieval, production and learning. Library as an institution will no more be so dependent on the printed collections but the significance will be defined through the information content, services and expertise it can produce and deliver.

International, national, regional and/or local cooperation will be common. New means and standards will unify the working tools, methods and structure of documents. The amount of information, new material types and instability of networked information resources recalls also to new orientation in a library work.

Changes will as well concern the role and tasks of librarians. The new tasks of librarians are already reflected in new titles. For example, in the library of Parliament in Finland we have taken a position to this shift by recently replacing all our librarian titles with the title of knowledge specialist.

The position of administration and management will change due to the way of working in an organisation. We are moving towards networked information society in phases and step by step. Some of the steps are made possible by new technologies or standards, but practical steps will be taken in development projects. Since this is mainly projects requiring new types of working methods and settings, this recalls to closer and continuous internal and external cooperation between library directors, chief librarians, system managers as well as cooperation with consultants and experts of different application areas.

Concerning the cost structures, the experiences of networked libraries do not offer surprises. Increase is indicated in the costs of digitising, purchasing of electronic publications and printouts. On the other hand, decrease concerns personnel and storage space costs. The price structure development of technologies indicates contradictory views. Hardware costs have decreased in relation to their capacity but at the same time cost of information and software seems to be increasing.

In some views, Internet technologies seem to threaten the traditional library services. Especially the information technology experts often claim that the new search engines and information agents will give such means for the user that the work of librarians will become obsolete.

Paradoxically, the continuing growth of information and the growth and varying types of network services will rather indicate a move towards another direction.. We have more complicated information environment than ever. At present the promising new search engines and agents still require considerable manual efforts to configure them usefully and the results require tedious manual filtering to reach out the valuable information.

The present experiences of libraries which have moved on towards network services and digital collections indicate as well growth in the use of library services. The same concerns the number of reference questions as well as the need for guidance to improve the quality of search results. The library as a physical place seems not less valuable in Finland although we have been globally leaders in the statistics of Internet penetration. Libraries allow free access to network for the citizens who cannot afford the computer with a network connection and also give guidance and training in information searching. Guidance and training is still crucial for Internet information retrieval. Special services and tools are also valued by users to select and organise the information and thus improve the quality of the results in Internet searching. This is exactly to add value as we have been hearing in earlier presentations. Even private companies which produce

network services have been missing information specialists – or librarians – to help in organising the information. So we are very useful with our skills at the moment. The development of databases of networked information is a desired effort, especially for the publications and documents of public administration.

Electronic services, electronic publishing and documents will have impacts on acquisition methods. Libraries have formed joint efforts and consortiums to make the work and price structures more reasonable for purchasers. The policies of publishers as well as pricing seem to be still quite unstable – at least in USA and Europe. New material types and services with the unstable naming practices and short age of resources will require new orientation. New standards and formats, cataloguing rules and practices are already under development concerning cataloguing and indexing.

How is the network service or product practically produced? The basis for the products and services lay on their usefulness for the users. All efforts require strategic working and setting of goals. Strategies may define the goals, address development directions and give support for planning by naming and scheduling the necessary phases of the projects. As public documents these strategies may also form a basis for the common understanding among the library staff.

The practical organisation and coordination will require continuous daily work and need to be assigned to a coordinator. He or she will take responsibility of scheduling, work flows, contacts, reporting and follow-up of the project. However, proceeding of the efforts also needs periodical follow-up by the project group and management.

The development process of the network service most often takes place as an individual or cooperation project. The project proceeds as teamwork between the library staff or possibly in cooperation with the technical experts or other institutions. Cooperation is also at the moment encourage between the public service and big institutions in public administration. Cooperation certainly has apparent advantages such as shared workload, minimising of risks and just allowing resources for such broader efforts which are out of the scope for an individual or small library. The experiences of other institutions let us learn of the success and mistakes of the other projects and save much of our valuable time and resources. International and national level cooperation projects gain such advantages as credibility and visibility as well as develop positive pressure to make success.

Outsourcing or utilising external consultants or experts for specific phases of the project may often be more advantageous than trying to train these skills for the permanent library staff too fast. This is not to underestimate the skills of the staff but to keep the projects on schedule and manage the workload of the permanent staff. We have very good experiences of outsourcing.

All services need to aim at useful, easy services with a quality information and continuous maintenance which are named as the most valued features of the network services among the users. Accordingly, the user needs and availability of related services should be studied before the project to support realistic planning. It will be reasonable to coordinate and avoid duplicate efforts if such competing services exist which are likely to remain and stay well maintained.

The production of the core network service requires selection, purchase and installation of the hardware and software applications. The before mentioned guidelines for the technology selection and purchase will also concern the network services.

The content of the network service will consist of the information content which is linked to the structure and layout of the interface. The selection of the information content will be defined by the purpose but concerning digitizing projects the copyright issues will play a key role. The general design principle for writing, structuring and visual design of the network services is their adjustment to quick and easy readability and scanning. The practical usability of the services will be defined by the copyrights, user rights and the update and maintenance practice of the data and the system.

Contracts between the vendors and producers often require careful studying and legal assistance before acceptance to make sure that the responsibilities of both sides will be reasonable. In digitizing projects, solving the copyright related issues and process of making agreements have turned out to become tedious and time consuming efforts.

The carefully designed network service also requires an active maintenance plan. User rights and responsibilities, as well as the work flows need to be agreed. To avoid damages and support, the adequate use of the system data security need to be guaranteed and user rights defined. Data protection also covers organisation and scheduling of backup procedures and considered preservation methods of data.

The fall-backs of network services are surprisingly often caused by simple human errors or lack of organisation in the daily work. For example, staff changes, lost files and poor or missing documentation all represent issues which could be managed without special expertise or education, but they continuously cause tedious problems for us. The network service may also rise and fall due to the poor update and maintenance. Users are quite sensitive in making judgments of the quality of the service and it will be hard to persuade them back after a disappointment.

Any and all network services are naturally available provided that they physical network will stay up and running. This basic condition surprisingly often does not seem to work well even in organisations which have highly developed

network services. Until the reliability and stability of the network will be achieved, there is useful to have some kind of backup procedures to guarantee that the basic services will work without the network.

Preservation of data is another major pitfall. Electronic devices for data storage have turned out to be considerable limited due to their age and the fast development of formats and devices. Even if the data could be stored without damages for decades, it may be hard to find such a hardware or software which could be used to read this data by then. Required data conversions must be considered when making archival plans for the data. Hard drive crashes or unexpected accidental damages are quite common. Regular backups are elementary and the functionality of the recovery process and backup processes is useful to test.

Finally, when the network service is carefully designed and ready for opening, it is important to give training for staff and users for the use of the new services. New service may also require marketing to gain visibility, persuade users to try the service and the convince the user to come back. The accessibility can be improved by linking the service to relevant portals, subject gateways and indexes as well as by guaranteeing that it will get indexed by the major search engines. The new service may also be introduced for selected target groups via e-mail, press releases or in conferences, fairs and through personal contacts.

Usefulness of the network service should also be studied when the service is ready. The real measure of the usefulness of the service will be received in a form of user behaviour and their opinions. The functions and the interface of the service certainly require testing and feedback. For the continuous follow-up of the usage of the service we have also good programmes, such as web service maintenance programmes, link checking and statistical programmes.

The future of the libraries is no more what it used to be in the light of the rapid changes. Information highway of the Information Society as an image refers to a wide road with a given destination. This does not really match with the complicated reality. If any images come close, they will rather refer to an ocean of information with the constantly moving targets and destinations. What will stay though is the desire of the user for the useful, easy services with a quality information and continuous maintenance.

Future change seldom happen on their own, we will make them happen. Prediction, preparation and initiative generation will strengthen our opportunities to face the future challenges. By improving our skills and following up the development directions, our way will become much more secure and if we choose good company to our trip, our efforts may become much more enjoyable. Thank you for your patience.

9.3 Discussions, Questions and Answers

Ms Donnelly: Was there a plan about the projects that you are implementing? Did you have a plan which said by the next five years we are going to do it or how did it work?

Ms Karhula: The project for public libraries is already going on. This has been going on ever since 1995. So nearly all public libraries are already networked, have Internet. The goal is to get them networked by the year 2000. But the supporting project called The House of Knowledge has done a lot of work around these network services in Finland. They have a very good home page, we can call it portal because it gives access to library catalogues, it also gives learning resources and different types of useful information relating to libraries and information fields in general. It is kind of a network service which has been developed to support libraries on many levels. The project has also established a cooperation network together with the regional network coordinators to support libraries in every region and they also give technical support concerning technology training, shared cataloguing, technical problem solving and content production. So they serve as a kind of access point where you can get information if you want to develop an Internet service for your library.

Ms Whittle: You said that you have been digitising since 1995. Are there plans or do you already retrospectively convert materials prior to 1995?

Mr Karhula: Retrospectively it has been done until 1991. We have done retrospective cataloguing for all our collections, but digitising will be later. It is probably not so important for the library but concerning parliament documents.

Mr Brown: This was an excellent description of the situation in Finland which is an advanced country by every standard. The cost element I think can be enormous. Is there a way that we in the developing countries can selectively implement some of these issues?

Ms Karhula: I believe that it would be a good approach to proceed selectively and start with material which is most important. But concerning the costs, it is impossible for me to define what kind of costs would be included, because it depends what kind of hardware will be bought, what kind of software, what kind of approach, if you will have bibliographic information in there, if you are going to have full text services. It depends what type of services you are going to develop. It will also depend on who is doing this work, are you working through a commercial vendor or are you doing this work in your own library and how many staff members and staff efforts can be included in this process. But if the digitising process is going on with the own staff, it needs to be a permanent process and you probably need to assign it to one or several persons.

10. INTRODUCTION TO INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Professor Kingo J. Mchombu
Department of Information and Communication Studies

Information management basically means, among other things how to plan, implement and facilitate the use of information resources within our organisations. It is an umbrella term. It has come to the forefront in recent years, partly because of the role information is playing in the competitive environment. Information has suddenly become a critical resource. I can just give you a few examples to illustrate and highlight this role of information as a critical resource. In fact, it has become so critical that it is now regularly referred to in exactly the same way that we think of land, capital, labour in the old classical economics. Information now is becoming to be regarded as the fourth or fifth, depending on how you look at the old factors of production, as a factor of production in its own right. Information, as you know, does not exist in a natural state, it is something that we have to organise and facilitate in terms of its flow. It is not cheap either, it is expensive. It is an expensive resource, so we have to make maximum use of this expensive resource so that we get returns out of this resource.

Let me give you two examples. Airlines, some of the most successful airlines in the world are using information as a strategic resource. The British Airways is one that has been often cited, but others are also being cited in the way they use information. Now how do they use information? They use information in terms of when you go to book, they keep this information, they track down what you like, what you do not like, how often have you travelled with them. They follow you up to make sure that you go back to them. Sometimes they give you privileges, the frequent traveller schemes. Each time you travel with them you gain what they call mileage, so that when you reach a certain level they give you a free ticket equivalent to what you have gained. They also frequently circulate questionnaires to customers to find out what their customers would like, what they do not like, what else they would like to have and this information is quickly ploughed back into the system to constantly improve it.

The most successful retail stores are now using information in a very innovative way. Originally when you passed through the till to pay, they simply gave you a receipt and you left, but now they are going back to that information, analysing it and seeing what type of products are moving very fast, which type of products are not moving, how much can they keep in their backup stores to cut down on the storage cost. They have now a concept they call “just on time”, meaning that you keep a very minimum stock because you are already well informed of the consumption patterns of your customers. So, information is being used in many innovative ways. The Japanese of course are in the forefront of using information now. Many of their companies are able to collect, analyse and use this information to reach their strategic goals. This has made information extremely important and vital in organisations. It is not only those which are in the profit

and competitive sector, but also public organisations. They use information on how they can react to the needs of their customers quickly, how they can respond in a way which reflects the customer requirements.

When we talk about information management we have to separate two aspects. One is external information which comes from outside the organisation. We are very well aware of this. I think most libraries' information so to speak is information from outside their organisations. That is books, periodicals, newspapers, research reports and all the other types of information. This is external information. But now there is a strong move that this external information should not work in isolation, it must be combined with the internal information that comes from within the organisation. A lot of organisations create a lot of information. I think yesterday we had many examples how a lot of information is also created within the parliamentary system. Some of the legislation, some of the reports which are written, some of the commissions that have been set up to do some work and this is internal information. In organisations that are in business there is of course a lot more of that type of information. It is sometimes called information management. It is to track down the whole process of how the organisation is managed – budgeting, planning, performance and all the other aspects that generate information, and to combine this internal information with external information, to make sure that decisions that are taken are the best decisions that the organisation can take. This means that instead of referring only to the archives, the organisation is able to evaluate its internally held information against all the information which is available externally, so that the decision they make is not only historical, but is also forward looking in nature. The problem with archives is that it takes you back to decisions which were made in the past, you are using your history. It could easily be the case that the environment has changed drastically since those decisions were taken a few years back. It means that if you make decisions based on what the lawyers call precedents, quite often you miss out on opportunities which have emerged as a result of the changes which have taken place in your environment. There is a strength in that of course, you have to be aware of how you decided in this case in the past to be consistent and to be seen to be fair, and this is what the lawyers do, they want to cite cases because this is their authority. But in a rapidly changing world we have to realise that there could be very useful information which has been generated by other actors in the environment which can help in reaching quality decisions other than those we would reach if we were only referred back to historical information. So it is better to merge these two systems, the knowledge that is already held in the organisation as well the one coming from outside, the internal and the external, to merge them and combine them with the experience that has been built up in the organisation.

Experience is very valuable, it is mobile knowledge, it resides in the heads of the individuals in the organizations. It is now also sometimes called intellectual capital. If you lose a few of your key people, it is a major loss, it is like probably burning half of your library sometimes because the experience and the knowledge

that they carry in their heads are very critical to the success of the organisation. So, it is combining a variety of information sources, so as to give you as decision-makers the best access to a wider range of information, to help them to take the most important decisions, the best decisions for the organisation. It is a much more volatile area and fast paced than you would find in a traditional library. It is much more volatile and much more fast paced because you have to be the coordinator and the facilitator in the flow of information. Your job goes beyond document management, and in fact here we can differentiate between document management and information management. Document management is a fairly straightforward process, as many of us know. You process them, you give them whatever address you decide, you probably do a bit of indexing, but then that's it, you do not have to dig into the knowledge and customise it each time an individual comes to you because this is a rather labour intensive activity, although this is what value adding is basically all about, to dig out the information and customise it to reflect the requirements of a particular individual. Or you create products which reflect the various segments which you are trying to serve. You do this in advance. What we have to think about in libraries, as far as I am concerned, is how we can make this transition from document management to information management, because I think it is very critical and important for our survival. It is a thing that we need to quickly master and grasp.

When I use the term information I use it in the widest sense. It includes data that is processed and usable, it includes ideas that sometimes are in the heads of people and not recorded anywhere. It includes what we in Africa call wisdom, where you go to some of the elder statesmen who have experience of many of the things you are doing and you want to tap into their minds: "We have a problem like this, what shall we do with this problem?" In other words, it is a wide range of things. It is an abstract concept and the information need arises when what we know is inadequate to face the situation that is confronting us. We can say here we have an information gap or an information need. But to tap information, to harness information as a source, we have to cast our net as wide as possible to bring together this variety of ideas, concepts, data, regardless of what format. This can be oral, this can be in published format, this can be electronic, this can be in the newspaper. Sometimes it can also be in a non-factual format, sometimes it can even be in a novel. You get a lot of information from novel, learning from the experience of others, what they did. It includes emotions sometimes.

When we look at information management within the context of organisations – and I really want to emphasise organisations because I want us to see whether this fits into the parliamentary set-up or not, and this is again open to discussion. We have to also realise that in any organisation, information management is a very poorly defined role. There are many actors who are all in a sense doing what they claim to be information management roles and I will spend a bit of time to look at these actors. There are those who are obvious. Librarians are obvious, they deal with information only most of the time, but there are others who, apart from dealing with information, also have other things they are doing. But a significant

component of their work includes managing information. Let us briefly look at this, because I think it is important for us to know how to ally ourselves with and how to work with these individuals in our organisations.

Let us start with the librarian. Our role – and this is again open to a variety of definitions – is the identification, acquisition and classification and storage of information, mainly externally generated information which is being tapped over time so that you can access a very wide base of information and knowledge. There are many criticisms which have been levelled against us. I must stress “us” because I am also a librarian. One is that to be able to manage information there has to be a very high level of interaction between the various players in the organisation. Quite often one of the criticisms levelled against us is that we are marginalised in organisations, we do not interact very much, we are much more interested in managing our documents and safeguarding them against possible theft and damage and abuse, than interacting with people and encouraging them to come and destroy our documents. So you find there is a problem of marginalisation. Quite often many libraries contain extremely valuable information and knowledge, but because of the marginalisation there is a problem in terms of our perception as to how our potential clients want our information. We want to give them in the way we got it, rather like the retailer does. The retailer goes to manufacturing companies and wholesalers and buys items and when you come there he says, “this is what I have” and he gives you whatever he has on his shelves. If you want it to be broken into half he might say, “no, you cannot break this can into half.” The retailer lacks flexibility and quite often in library we also lack flexibility in that manner because when we play this role of retailers we are in a sense held hostage by those who supply us with materials and documents. Our output in terms of the requirements of our customers is sometimes lacking in customisation, in our targeting. We do not bring it down to whatever level our customers want. They want certain levels of quality, they want timeliness, they want accuracy, they want relevance, they want appropriateness and tailoring to their specific problems. Sometimes this is difficult to do because all of these jobs require us to get into those documents and also into the mind of the individual we are serving so that we merge these two. This is fairly labour intensive activity and quite often this is difficult. In the past libraries also had major problems in terms of the levels of education of people who were serving the libraries. In many organisations you find that they were seen mainly as a storehouse for documents and keeping old newspapers. This has created a perception that this is not a vital place, and of course this has become a vicious circle now, where you have a series of libraries manned by under-qualified people. This now becomes what is called a self-fulfilling prophecy. People like this will not do any work, they are obviously not extremely intelligent to begin with and therefore they do not want to do any significant work. Those who are outside are not looking at these variables, they are simply saying “there isn’t much you can get from a library”.

So, the levels of education are important, the levels of training are important to lift, for people to see what they are dealing with is not documents, but is actually information. The problem is that this is a labour intensive process, it requires a high level of intelligence and many libraries to not have enough staff to begin with. There is one person and how can one person do all these tasks?

Chairperson: Do you put more emphasis on information at the expense of documents? I am just reading something from what you have said.

Prof. Mchombu: The challenge we have to manage information is how we can build it from a variety of sources and how we can develop the skills to go and get this information wherever it is. What has become very useful is the use of on-line searching, computers and the Internet. This has become a very useful tool for many libraries to uplift the team of librarians and the perception of what they can do. In many libraries one finds that the first place after the director's office to get a computer is the library and the computer is actually being used properly, other than a typewriter, because in many secretaries' offices the computer is simply a typewriter. In the library they know what they are doing with it and they can offer leadership in terms of the use of information communication technology. This has helped very much in showing people that there are other skills, there are other things that librarians can do, and in places where the training has been up to date it has lifted the esteem and the perception of librarians in many organisations. This is why we have to take information communication technology as very useful in terms of how it projects our own image. One of the things that we forget many times in libraries is that people, wherever they are, including parliamentarians, prefer colleagues and other people as a source of information. Quite often they find it very difficult to go and dig out information and read ten, fifteen pages when they can get that in one or two minutes at the same time as they are enjoying a cup of tea. Many studies done, even of scientists, have clearly shown that a major source of information for scientists is actually other scientists and this is delivered orally through conferences, through meetings, through direct telephoning. These days we can include e-mail, although e-mail now has many problems because it has opened up an easy, cheap communication tool, so people get too much information through e-mail. Examples of people who get 200 messages of e-mail have been given. What do you do with 200 messages? You cannot read them all, that will take you the whole day. So your job will be to read e-mail messages rather than to do the work you are employed to do. Our job as librarians in relation to information management means that we have to look at information from a broader angle. Our job is to know these channels and see how we can load our information onto these channels. Our job is to manage the process of information flow into our organisation rather than manage documents. Documents are very important, one should never underestimate the role of documents, the role of archival documents, but they have to be supplemented with this fast paced, fast moving information which reflects the changes which are taking place around us, because documents take time to produce and by the time they come out they are already out of date

in many instances. So we need to see how we can update documents through tapping into other sources of information which can address the weaknesses which you find in documentary information.

We do have other information professionals or other people who claim to be information professionals. One is the information systems people. Essentially we are talking about people who are looking after computers. When you talk to them they will tell you that we are dealing with information. What you find is that they do have very good and in-depth knowledge of the technology and new programmes. They can maintain computers, and from this point of view they are extremely good and they can also, of course, manipulate databases so that you get data, and get analysis of data from databases. They can also produce information products and services, a variety of them. What they are weak at is the area of user needs. In many instances they have no clue about the user needs, they are very system driven. Essentially they are technicians at heart. They also lack a clear knowledge of distribution channels, how to manage these distribution channels and how to disseminate information in a variety of formats. Repackaging of information is also a major problem with them. They are, however, very powerful because they come with the symbol of modernity. They may not know much, but they are the ones who are on top of this symbol. A useful suggestion that has been made and, of course, proven in many instances is where librarians and systems people join together, or where librarians are trained dually as both systems people and as librarians. In fact, you have many universities now which are offering dual programmes, training librarians as well as information systems management, so that you come out dually qualified. These are people who have a bright future ahead of them. In our case what I think we tend to do is to try to bring these two together. There are already many examples of departments of information, library and documentation which are the ones which control the computer systems in the organisations. Doing this is very useful, you give the systems people a sense of direction.

In terms of strategic information delivery it can be improved tremendously if we and the information systems people are able to come together and work together. There can be a major improvement in what is going on, especially if we give them a sense of direction in terms of customisation and in terms of what the users are looking for, because they do not have much knowledge, they need to be told what to do. That is what a technician is, he needs to be told what to do, otherwise they do what they think is right and quite often this is not what the customers are looking for. There are other people in organisations who from time to time play the role of information knowledge workers. We have the examples of market researchers who are assigned to do a specific task. We have the examples of consultants in general, we have examples of research and development people who are researching a particular area, planners, strategic managers, and planning managers of various descriptions. They from time to time also actually disseminate information, and look at management of information. What they normally do, is to study a particular area and create information in that area

which addresses problems which are felt by certain individuals and this becomes the basis upon which reports are written and upon which decisions are made. They are looking for information which – as I think one of our colleagues described here – data but also qualitative information. They are good analysts of this information. They analyse it and they are able to give specific recommendations in terms of a particular situation. They can make projections and say that in a few years' time this is likely to happen, so that if you are working along these lines, when these actions do take place about three or four years down the line, you will be able to have already prepared the ground for tackling these problems. Sometimes they are right, sometimes they are not right, but of course this is the nature of the business that the environment is changing so fast that we make mistakes because some of the projections are not based on a future which is sometimes unpredictable. They are very good, those who are professionals in this area in terms of creating their own networks of information providers, so that when they want something in a hurry, they know who to call quickly. Sometimes their networks extend beyond the borders of their own country and this is their role. If they get a problem in one country, they call upon a network which sometimes goes across countries to just address a particular problem they are faced with. Included here are information brokers of various descriptions who are also in the business of selling their services in terms of their information. They look for information on behalf of a client and repackage this information. These are also useful people because some of their methodologies we can easily adopt. In fact, there are many examples of librarians who have become very successful information brokers. Because they are paid per piece of work, they are able to do the labour intensive and intellectual work that we are not able to do because of scarcity of staff and scarcity of time. But some of their methodologies are very useful for us. Again there is something we can learn from them. We have the background and we can easily train ourselves to fill up the gap where we are lacking. Another category are executive assistants to high-ranking officials, general managers, directors, ministers and so on. They are sometimes called personal assistants. Their role is to assist top management to carry on with their day to day functions and this role has also a very large information component, to provide information, to look for information. Quite often you see the executive assistants of ministers scurrying around libraries, scurrying around information centres, looking for particular pieces of information, sometimes to write speeches, but sometimes to take decisions. So they are very influential.

The conclusion here is that the nature of information management is a very fragmented one. The whole process is very fragmented. On one hand, one needs to identify information needs and requirements to be able to manage information. One also needs to be aware of contents of information, and ensure that the content matches the needs, and this is where librarians are required because they can match needs with contents. Also in terms of information categorisation, storage, repackaging in different formats. Librarians again have good training here in terms of how to categorise information. Our classification systems, our cataloguing systems, the various indexing systems are all attempts to categorise

information. Those of you who have studied how databases are made will know that some of the databases are basically made on systems developed by librarians. The Internet now is in a fairly chaotic state and they claim that one of the problems that the Internet has is that there is no one who can picture its structure in terms of the knowledge that is put in there in the way that libraries are able to do. The most successful Internet sites are those which have been created by libraries.

Discussion, Questions and Answers

Ms Bulale: Under the role of librarians, one of our tasks in information management is the acquisition of information resources and my question here would be, in acquiring these resources, should I be concentrating on books, on journals or any other information sources? I am saying this because Members of Parliament, for example, they do not have time to read a book. It might be a very useful book, but because of their tight schedules they seem to be running up and down and looking at journals and maybe newspapers. The tendency is to pick up a newspaper, go through it quickly and he will put it away and go and do some other things. So, I am trying to imagine how my library collection would look like. Would it be more books or periodicals?

Mr Brown: I think the first thing is to find out their information needs. If the view is that they need information from books, then that would lead into acquiring books. If they think that the information they need is from journals, then it would be logical to acquire more journals than books. If it is in any other format that they want this information, then the acquisition will largely concentrate on that format.

Ms Karhula: According to our experience, our patrons need books and journals but also access to the Internet services and internal documents. So all these materials are needed, not only certain types of formats.

Ms Donnelly: A question like that is going to be guided by your budget, the funds you have available, because I would say that any parliamentary library needs some basic, standard books to build up a basic collection and from which you can answer your almost historical basic legislative questions. But to update that, you probably need to update journals and you need access to the Internet. All that will be determined by the funds available to the library.

Dr Gabriel: I think another important facet of this is the issue of partnerships and network. You have to look at what you can fit into your financial resources and balance that with what you can gain from other libraries, other information centres that are accessible to you. It is foolish and wasteful to duplicate services that are available elsewhere if they are accessible to you.

Ms Shauri: When we talk about information management, I have noticed that some of us cannot work on that field properly because we have so many problems

which hinder our efforts to manage our information. Most of our libraries are not computerised, we have shortage of staff, unqualified personnel in our libraries. How are we going to tackle these problems? We cannot manage the information in that case. Maybe we need to analyse all these problems seriously and if possible, APLESA can write a report to every Clerk of the National Assembly and list those problems which have been hindering the management of information in our libraries, because we cannot talk of CD-ROM or microfilm if our libraries are not yet computerised.

11. INFORMATION AND RESEARCH NEEDS OF PARLIAMENTARIANS

Presentations from South Africa, United Kingdom and Namibia

11.1 Dr Leon Gabriel - South Africa

Very often in our Parliaments we operate more on this level of perceptions regarding the information and research needs of parliamentarians because we do not have a mechanism in place to find out what are the actual needs of the Members of Parliament in terms of research. We must start with what are the real needs of the clients that we are serving. If we look at perceived needs and talk about the type of product we design to address those needs, if we have a product, how much does that product address in terms of, for instance subject area? Then we look at what the real needs may be and very often the real needs may not matter, and if we find that the service we are currently giving is really only addressing a small portion, this might not always be the case. So from this we can see it is a critical process to go through and find out what are the real needs of our clientele. What I would like to start in this forum is for us to come up with some mechanisms of determining what the real needs are.

In our experience we have used questionnaires, for instance, which were not very successful. Members often don't take the time to fill out the questionnaires. So what type of situation should we be gearing for? One step forward would be to try to address all the types of products that our clients need. That is one step forward because our resources are scarce and where we cannot employ a whole lot of staff, we are often not able to fully address the extent of the process, but we can offer all the types of products. Should we go for a situation where they are completely matched? In my opinion not, because this is where we have no room for improvement. We are saying they are doing everything that is required and should we assume that the need is not going to change, we will continue for the next 20 years. We should look at a situation where this is what we are providing, our efforts are concentrated to address most of the needs within our resources.

Here there is room for expansion and this also takes into account that there are always actually greater needs, bigger needs and it could expand in all directions. If we are providing and services that are not required, perhaps we need to shift our resources and not waste them here. But that is not the only thing. There are other issues. Perhaps here we need to talk about what we would call information literacy of our clients. Do they fully understand what they need information on.

Do they fully understand what their research needs are, do they fully understand how they can use the research and information provided. Perhaps not and this is why this is going to be an extra service because at the time it wasn't identified as a need. So we can educate them. From our experience this need will arise in future. So this fits nicely into our discussion yesterday and this morning, whether to introduce new products. We need to market those things and then educate the

Members of Parliament how to use it. So, this is the model that I use and let us talk how we can fully refine it and fully address the needs.

How about value added services and customising information. We talk about this in terms of accessibility. If we are producing fact sheets, legislative analysis, the fact that the physical product is there, does that mean accessibility. In our point of view it does not mean accessibility. When we look at our clients, and particularly in our Parliament, we have a very wide range of educational backgrounds. We have lawyers, doctors and professors like everybody else has, but we also have the ordinary man or woman on the street type, people that come from rural areas that haven't been involved in managing information, that haven't been involved, except on grassroots level, with interrogating the health policy, for instance. They have not been involved in having to design legislation. So it impacts on how we look at research and research provision and in our view research, within a parliamentary context, is very different from research within an academic context. So, we should not view research as lengthy academic papers that are loaded with statistics and graphs and projections. Often that is not what the members need. In our experience it is very rarely what the members need. So we have to customise our products so that they become accessible to them. Fair enough, there would be a percentage of your Members of Parliament that would require that high level of information. So, one needs to broaden the range of products not only vertically but also horizontally. In other words, do we look at providing services like personal consultations? It is a direction that we are moving into. It is a potential nightmare if we look at the number of staff that we have and the number of members that we have. We have 490 Members of Parliament and at the moment we have ten researchers. Our information service section has about 52 to 56 staff together. But even with that large staff we feel we would be unable to address the need totally, but we are introducing the new service. Should we translate documents to a more accessible language, should we concentrate on training our staff in English, where English is often a second or third language to our Members of Parliament. So that is in terms of accessibility of services.

Also, when one is looking at the research needs of Members of Parliament, it is very important to determine exactly what your client requires. A client would often come in and say "I need information on termination of pregnancy". We are dealing with a new Bill. But it is as broad as that. Often the member himself or herself knows exactly the specific area of that subject that they want you to actually research on. So, determine exactly what your client requires, determine for what purpose your client requires information. Does your client require the information for a speech, does he require the information to address a public gathering or is it required for deliberations on a Bill? Then most importantly, contract with your client, by when do you need the information? Information which is required five minutes too late is useless, it is too late. If it is five minutes after the member has stood up in the Assembly to debate on a Bill, the information is useless. You have wasted resources, you have wasted time.

Then the other thing that we are moving towards is being more pro-active in terms of the research that you provide. It works in our favour. We use the experience that we have to determine through the parliamentary cycles what are the types of information requests that are going to come up. Look at your parliamentary programmes, how much of legislation are committees going to deal with at which times of the year and be pro-active in terms of concentrating your resources and your efforts and your time to address the peaks of the different types of need. And there are cycles, Parliaments work on cycles and we can design our information. The needs tend to be cyclical around the programmes of Parliament. We are talking about not only a reactive service but more so, in our experience, a pro-active service. I think that is all that I have to say. Thank you.

11.2 Ms Felicity Whittle - United Kingdom

Information needs to be readily available. This is something which has an impact on the sort of information but also on some of the things we have already discussed. This is also to do with anticipating the sort of topics that are likely to be discussed in debates, having the research paper, the briefing papers ready in time for the Second Reading. It is a tradition that has been established in the UK Parliament Library for each of the Second Reading debates on a particular piece of legislation. Readily available also has to do with making information accessible. Our briefing papers are now available across the Parliamentary Internet, so members don't have to come physically to the library in order to access them. They can actually print them out on their machines. They also have the possibility of dialling into the Parliamentary network from their constituencies and this is something which we have found in terms of changing requirements of members. At the last election there was a very large majority for the Labour Party that became the government, much larger than any previous parliamentary majority had been, which means that they do not really need all their members to be actually in the parliament building at the time. So they have developed this process of members staying in their constituencies, so therefore they are not always on site to come and see information. We have to find ways of delivering information to them remotely.

The second point is that information needs to be easily digestible. We did produce research papers of 30, 40 papers long and sometimes that is exactly what the member needs, but our feedback from those, and each of those research papers have a questionnaire at the end of it – I do not think we get many of them back, but there is always a possibility of receiving some feedback as to how useful that particular paper was. We have a large number of subject specialists who are part of the library staff and they do information processing and the distilling of information gathered from the journals, so that the member can present information from a combination of different sources.

One other thing is that members do like to be able to find information themselves. This is something that has, I think, changed for us quite a lot, particularly since the last election when we had a lot of new members who have never been Members of Parliament before. There were a lot of members that retired in 1997 but there was also the situation that a lot of members lost their seats who didn't expect to. So, we have in the library actually seen a changing culture, partly because dealing with new members who didn't have quite the expectation that the longer serving parliamentarians have. There has been a tradition within the UK Parliament that we are there to serve members on more or less whatever they ask of us and we will in some way accommodate their needs, and I think that is actually changing because of the expectations of our clients. Most of them are coming from situations where they have had access to information, they either had to go and search for it themselves in their previous employment and they were expected to find things for themselves. So they want to continue their information seeking in exactly the same way. They want to be able to go and do their own research rather than simply being presented with what we think they should read on the subject. The technology has helped us to try and meet those needs by making materials available across the parliamentary Intranet. Information technology is a very current topic in the UK Parliament, it has actually come quite late. We have only had our Parliament networked for five years. It is something that we are still currently feeling our way as to exactly how it is going to be used.

Another important issue is direct contact between members and particularly the research service, the subject specialists. People often want to talk to somebody rather than simply reading and reading. The way that our set-up operates is that it is always possible for us to take enquiries from members, take down the details of what they want and when they want it and how they wish us to send it to them. But we have found that it is often much better if the members themselves satisfy their information needs. It is more easily digestible for them and much more to their satisfaction if they can have a direct contact with the person that will actually be providing that articulation. So there is still a role for those of us who work at the front desk. Where possible it is always desirable to actually have a direct contact with the person who requires that information. In connection with this, we actually have a very useful publication called "Who does what in Research", which is actually listing the subject specialists for the whole range of subjects that will come up. We are very lucky that we have them. I think it is about 60 subject specialists that cover the whole range of topics.

The next one is confidentiality. This is obviously something very important in terms of providing information to the clients, that they need to be secure in the knowledge that the information they are requiring from us, or be it the information needs that they express to us, we are not passing on to others of their colleagues. Another thing is what sort of information do members want. It is partly, what do the members have? We often have people coming in, saying "I have seen so and so in the tea-break having coffee with such and such." I think

the way that we deal with that partly goes back to the fact that we anticipate the sort of things that they are going to ask for. Sometimes it may be material we actually do not provide but just knowing where people can actually get it. It may be parliamentary publications which we do not hand out, the publications section will do that. So it is knowing exactly what they are referring to, saying “go down to the publications section, they will provide it.” In terms of recording the enquiries we have, this is again another useful mechanism for knowing what other members have been asking about. We record the requests or we have a system of lobbying the more detailed research enquiries so that if somebody asked for it previously, we actually have a record we can go back and look at. Not only what the individual asks for, but that is also useful in knowing for a particular Member of Parliament exactly what sort of subjects they are interested in. I think this again comes back to the anticipating thing, of actually getting to know your clientele, knowing the sort of information they may be seeking. But again it is the repackaging by having the record of the questions we have been asked, a record of the responses that were given. You can actually use that and recycle it for the next member who wants to research work that has already been done.

11.3 Ms Ellen Namhila - Namibia

In the Namibian Parliament we have a division called Parliamentary Research, Information and Library Services. This division is made up of the library section, the research, the liaison, the computer services and the publications and publicity sections. The unit came into being at the end of 1995 and until then we did not really have a library for Parliament. We had a kind of storeroom where everybody dumped anything they did not want, from a not functioning refrigerator to a typewriter, newspapers and all sorts of things.

When the division was established we actually did not even know where to start, because at that point there was one sentence which mentioned the reason for our existence. So when we came on board, no one said “this is your job description or this is the objective with which your division was set up.” Basically what we did was to teamwork ourselves and find out what we thought we are there for. We came up with a document which highlights our reason for existence which three months later, after visiting the South African Parliament in Cape Town in 1996, we tore into pieces and tried to establish what we now have as the same division but with modified objectives after our eye-opener in Cape Town.

When we started our research unit we faced two serious problems. One, we had outlined that one of our objections was to ensure that the principles of democracy get rooted in the country. Then we realised that one of the problems of the lawmaking process is that it can only work if those who are making the law work together with the members of the public, so that the law becomes ours. We do not wait for the impact to be on the citizens before something can be done. So we were going into public education. We were gearing our research towards producing educational materials for the public and the members at the same time. The second

problem was that of accountability. We realised that some of the members did not think they were accountable to somebody, they just thought they were members, they were “honourables”. So, without trying to create a situation like we were steering the public against them, because that was actually the intention, that unless the public realise that they have the right to say “we want to know”, unless a parliamentarian realises that “I am voted here to do a specific job”, then there is no accountability in that sense. Our third problem was that we realised that there was no reading culture among parliamentarians. In most cases we had to make some effort to make members of parliament feel the need for information. What we did then was that we established two research papers, not really research papers in the academic sense, but let us refer to them as research papers. One is published once a week, the other is bi-annual. The weekly bulletin intends to inform members of the public, members of staff, and the parliamentarians about the activities of Parliament. So, if there is a certain Bill which will be discussed the following week we put it on the bulletin so that other people know. That was also intended for staff members at Parliament, because sometimes someone calls, “I want to see the agenda for the Chamber this afternoon or tomorrow” and any staff member of Parliament who answers the phone should be able to get that information across telephonically, because then we make sure that it is on the desk of everybody and those who have e-mail facilities, we also send it via e-mail. The second paper which is a little bit more in depth, which comes out twice a year, is intended to kind of recap. That one reflects the activities of Parliament in the past six months, so that when the members are coming back in August, it reminds them of what they have discussed previously and it also has a timetable for what is coming and other articles. Maybe a member travelled to a specific conference and we want to highlight that, maybe a certain member has achieved in some area, these things we also put in there. If there were public hearings on some legislation which generated a lot of public discussions, we also mention that.

The clients of our research are Members of Parliament, staff members and members of the public. In the research activities that are basically rendered to members, we also have laws and policy news. Sometimes it is just a repackaging of information from the newspapers, the Internet, articles from certain journals that we cut and paste and photocopy and distribute for general use. Say for example, they have an Abortion Bill coming up in Parliament, we try to collect articles, any policy related articles or any legislative related articles from the Internet or wherever and distribute it to all the members, whether they ask for it or not. We also have something called “News Highlights” which is just a list of articles and books and whatever we get from all sources. We give members a list and then the members can tick what they want and return the list and then we photocopy and distribute.

When we started, our members were also concerned about confidentiality. Some political parties did not trust us very much in the beginning. When we started they thought we were pro-the ruling party or pro-the main opposition or pro- a certain category of users. We are supposed to be non-partisan, we are supposed to be objective and serve all the members. I think everyone of us really tried to do that,

but somehow at the beginning it did not pass down very well. But now I think there is an improvement, they have learned to trust us that we are really there to serve them.

11.4 Discussions, Questions and Answers

Mr Ralile: Is it possible for one to draw a borderline between the research question and the reference question?

Dr Gabriel: What we have done in our system is that we looked at the level of analysis that is required, and if you look at the level of analysis, try to match what your products and services are in terms of the level of analysis that is required. Research requires a very high level of analysis. So your research product will be on this end and your library products, your traditional library products that require low levels of analysis will be on this end. Here we are looking at, for instance, legislative analysis, in-depth analysis of policies and here a lot of quick reference material. A member might want a fact for his speech, a member might want a spelling of a word, they phone the library, those are quick references. They can be handled telephonically most of the time from the desk. And then here where you get a fair amount of library duties, as well as some analysis, it is where we combine these two functions. This is done in trying to map our products and services that we provide on the level of analysis or processing.

Ms Samdodien: To me the main difference would be the interpretation of information coming on the side of the research. We tap the sources, as was said, we collate basically and the research would then interpret that information and analyse it in order to provide it in a more usable package to the MP or whoever needs the information.

Ms Whittle: Ours very much depends on the person that is making the enquiry, as to whether what they are looking for is something they want to use in a speech, quote a figure in a speech or whether what they are looking for is something in the grey area or something that requires a great deal of analysis. This is what was mentioned earlier on about finding out the reason for the enquiry. This we actually find very important in terms of determining the level of the response that you give.

Ms Namhila: When a Member of Parliament asks for a report to be prepared, the idea is that he or she wants confidentiality in the sense that it should not be public that he asked for it to be prepared. Can the library later keep it as a public document without having a name on it, that it was written for member X?

Ms Whittle: Yes, we do keep them. Confidentiality comes in two ways, partly from other Members of Parliament not knowing what that particular member has asked about, but also when we are seeking information from outside organisations, particularly from government departments, not telling them the request is on behalf of a particular member. That is probably the more important aspect of

confidentiality, that the request is made to the library but we do not tell whoever we are seeking information from who it actually comes from. Yes, we re-use them, we have a system that we call top-and-tailing, so you keep the report or you keep the letter that was sent, but when you photocopy it you simply blank out the name and the address at the top, so that the information can still be re-used, but whoever re-uses it has no idea who it was originally compiled for. It is valuable work and it makes sense to re-use it if we can

Mr Rugambwa: Our experience of research in the Uganda Parliament is that with our new Department of Library and Information Services we have research staff of about thirteen and we have assigned each standing committee a research officer. Now there is a clear liaison between the research wing and the parliamentary committee. When a research issue comes up, it so happens that the library points to the correct one. Before you get to the research section you pass through the library. So some of them end up in the hands of the librarian. If this is a research issue, you lead the concerned enquirer or the user to the research unit and then he gets in touch with the responsible researcher. These researchers are recruited along specialised lines. We have two legal research officers, who are lawyers. We also have a statistician, political researchers, and agricultural specialists.

12. INFORMATION USE BEHAVIOUR OF PARLIAMENTARIANS

Open Discussion

12.1 Background by Prof Mchombu

The issue of knowing the information use behaviour of our users or customers is an important one because it gives us an indication of where we are likely to establish contact with them if we load our information on the channels or sources which they prefer or like to use. It is one way of making our information services customer driven rather than information centre driven, as often happens if one is cut away from the knowledge of how your users like to get their information. There are a number of components and variables that can help us establish the use behaviour for customers. I feel at one stage or another you will be required to make a simple data gathering form or questionnaire of some sort to help you have a clearer picture of this, or you can even talk to them. Talking to them, as far as I am concerned, is better because they can tell you things they cannot fit into the questionnaire. But failure to do that, one can develop a simple instrument for collecting this type of information.

You need to get a bit of background on the individuals you are dealing with, as part of the process of understanding why they behave the way they do. What parliament work they are doing, what demands does it put on the members? How hard do they work during this time, what time do they have to seek information, do they come and seek it and read it in the information centre or do they want to take it home? These are things that help us to get an inkling into the nature of this work and the demand that this work puts on the parliamentarians and other members of staff who are serving them.

Of course, education and experience plays an influential role. Those who are more experienced know what to expect, know what channels to use, whereas those who are new may not know what channels to use and may not even know what to anticipate, what to expect from the information centre, simply bringing in their background to guide them in how they deal with the information there. The issue of roles is also very important. Members of Parliament may see their roles differently. The successful management of the roles means that this may have an implication on how they use information. Some of them see themselves as leaders, either current or potential. Others see themselves as spokespersons of parties or groups. We do not have good examples of Green Parties in Africa, as far as I am concerned, but we do have other examples of those who see themselves as spokespersons of particular groups in society – gender, ethnic groups, interest groups such as business and so on. Others see themselves as radical. They stand up and want to make sure that they present certain projections into the media. Others see themselves as conservative and they have to preserve the status quo. Others see themselves as future leaders with future ambitions, maybe as ministers,

as key-players in the political game. Others see themselves as problem solvers and I think it would be interesting to know what sort of roles the various parliamentarians want to be seen to be playing, because this does have an implication in terms of what type of information they may want.

What sources, what channels are used most often by members, where do they find it easy to access information. We have of course a tradition of oral or electronic, but between that we have a lot of possibilities there. We have the library, either the one in Parliament or other libraries where members in the past got the information they were looking for. We have also documents in general, whether they like to use documents to get the information or not and how do they like these documents. Would they like it to be digested or value added, processed so that they get the smallest but still the information or would they like a bit of meat in their reports? These are the things we need to know. Published media, newspapers, what is the information use habits with newspapers? Do they just read where their name is likely to have appeared? We have journals and periodicals and it has already been pointed out that there is a perception that Members of Parliament don't like to read scholarly journals. This could very well be right, but we need to find this out with certainty, whether this is actually true or not, whether it is all journals or not. What about their own collections? Do they have any and do they use it? Quite often some of them have built up substantial collections of their own. These are some of the issues we need to find the answers to.

Within the oral channels, the use of colleagues, the use of experts, the use of advisors, personal assistants, how much are these used as a way of getting the information they are looking for and why are they used? Meetings and conferences, how much are these used as sources of information? What about their own constituencies? In Africa, we unfortunately, do not have constituencies who are people who are very well organised and very vocal. People still become vocal once in five years, once in four years, depending on the cycle of the election system there. When the elections are near the people become very vocal. After that they leave the MP to do his own work. But I presume that there would be situations where MPs can get very useful information from their own constituencies. For instance, what is the impact of government policies? Is it having the desired impact or is it having a negative impact? These are very useful sources of information. Do they use it?

Lobbies and organised groups – these are very important concepts because I think this is governing the whole process of democratisation which many of the Parliaments are involved in, and of course, the whole concept of civil society is that the people down there will be sufficiently vocal to guide the control and make the MPs accountable. It will be interesting to know what trends and how much our MPs are actually using this as a source of information.

We have talked a lot about the Internet, but of course we should not forget the old media like radio which is said to be the queen of all media because it gets to so

many people. It doesn't get obstructed by so many of the problems you see in the other media. How much do they use this as a source of information? How much do they use TV? Videos, for instance –there are groups who can get their points across much more powerfully using video. Radio stations are coming up now all over the place and this is an effort to support the civil society concept, that people must have mediums which they control other than the national radio stations. How much are they using these mediums? In some countries it is still difficult to have these mediums in place, but I think it is a question of time before they all become part of the political game which is to influence politicians and let them work in your favour. It will be useful to know how much these channels are used. We also need to find out why they are looking for information, what are their motives, whether they have been told that this can guide them very well in terms of how to present the information and what angles to take. If you know the motivation, it can also tell you how quickly it is required. This is important for us to learn when we want to look for information behaviours of our users. What methods are they using to keep informed of what is going on around? What are they interested to keep informed about? There are many issues here. Are they interested in all those issues or are they only interested in local issues? There has always been a debate whether MPs are interested in national, international issues or local issues. Is there a pattern that they are interested in one set of issues, but as elections approach this focus changes as they become desperate and aware that their bread is on the line and then they focus attention on local issues, in which case this may have an influence on what information they want to be kept aware of.

It will also be interesting and useful for us to know and learn about factors which are used to determine usefulness of information. What criteria do they use to determine whether information is useful or not? Is it when it is simple and small in quantity or is it when it is in detail, is it when it is offered timely and accurately? Is it when it is made accessible by simplifying the language? One of the issues that never came up here is the issue of language. I know that in southern Africa, even in East Africa as far as I know, English is often not the first language, sometimes not even the second language. So you may find many MPs where language is a major problem and it is probably the reason why many of them do not use our information sources, simply because they do not have the language capability to understand things which are written in English.

I think we should be interested to see what criteria they are using to determine the usefulness of information, what barriers are they facing in accessing information, and this will help us to decide whether to produce our Hansard in English and Setswana or only in English. I think in looking at information behaviours we should also see how our systems are influencing these behaviours. Behaviour can be changed, that is a good thing about human beings. We claim that the reason why we are such a successful species is because one has to change and learn quickly and that is why we have survived whereas the other animals have not survived so successfully. Behaviour is sometimes influenced by what is on the table. There are learned reactions to what is offered to people. They can be influenced, they can be

changed and this is where marketing comes in, this is where user education comes in. I think it is useful for us, therefore, to look at what are the perceptions in terms of strength and in terms of weaknesses of the information services we are offering to our parliamentarians and other users.

Mr Masawi: What do you in a situation where you have Members of Parliament who might be pursuing certain degree courses or even their own children are pursuing certain degree courses and then they feel that it is part of their privilege to use the parliamentary library for these activities?

Ms Donnelly: Possibly all the parliament librarians have that problem in common, and of course, we do not want the librarians to want to do that. It is mainly a big problem when one has to do work for children of parliamentarians. In our case, we have a form which has to be completed before we start anything and apart from name and everything else – and it is treated with the greatest confidentiality – we ask on the form when is the deadline, by which date do they want the information and for which purpose do they need the information. The way we explain why is because so that we can respond with the necessary depth of information. If it is something simple that they just want to respond in the debate and how long do they have, then we know how much research to do and if it is something that they have to present a paper in a conference, we would need to spend more time. We have in writing that the library resources are only available for their official function. So it does help, it does cut some of it out but it is a problem.

Dr Gabriel: We mentioned when we were discussing marketing that one needs to make members aware of what you will not provide as well as what you will provide, and then as managers also empower your staff to be able to say no, because it is not just a right of information. But there is another facet that comes from and where we are talking of under-utilisation or under-usage of services, one should also promote usage and it is okay to accept a request that is out of order, but make the member be aware of it: “We will do this for you although it is something that we will not ordinarily do, but we are doing it for you as a favour this time and this time only.” Empower your staff to be able to say that to Mps.

Mr Brown: I think the question is making members aware about what you can do for them and what you cannot do for them. That is crucial. The second thing is that, if for any reason you have to look for it, let the member know in clear terms that is just a privilege, not a right. As soon as you make him aware of this situation he may not come back.

Ms Namhila: If a particular member is interested in a particular issue, like he/she is a trade unionist, he/she is interested in anything that has to do with trade unions, it has nothing to do with his/her work at Parliament. If we come across information relating to this activity and he/she wants it, we will make it available with pleasure, because he/she is serving a purpose, he/she is fulfilling a national duty and he/she is satisfying his/her clients. Studying is also another thing. If a member is studying, it empowers that member to be able to be a more active user

of information and to be able to spread the message that if you go to the library, they are so fast, they will be able to assist you. Give him/her the information he/she wants and maybe in the process he/she can develop the need for other things that he actually never knew.

Ms Whittle: We have a list of the things that we won't do, but this links to the management structures in place. We have an information committee which consists of Members of Parliament who actually oversee the work that the library and the communication director do. They agree what would be on the list, so it is a way of empowering your staff, that if a member is actually arguing with you about this, then you actually have a higher form of authority, higher even than the librarian herself to say it was your fellow members on the Information Committee who agreed that this is what we would restrict our activities to.

Dr Gabriel: I think one needs to go back to the library's mandate and mission and perhaps one needs to categorise the services as primary and secondary services. It might be a secondary service to attend to members' private information needs.

Ms Karhula: We really give extensive services, we want to promote the use of the library whatever it is used for and there is some misuse, but it is not a problem. It hasn't become a serious problem at all. We really give a luxurious service in the sense that if a Member of Parliament wants a book which we do not have, we go to the stores the same day and get the book. If they want some information within 24 hours, we are doing our best to bring it. I know that many people are working all the time to fulfil these requests. This may sound funny, but that is how we work.

Prof Mchombu I am of two minds here, that we shouldn't allow them but at the same time I feel we should allow them. The reason I feel this – in some cases Members of Parliament do not have proper education and in most cases when they enrol for studies, they do so in areas where they will probably be enhancing their skills, doing a better job when they graduate. We have the other issue that people are still learning how to use information in many instances, and here we are saying to them “no, don't come here for this.” What are the needs that we are prepared to serve, what are our priorities and what are the primary, secondary and tertiary areas?

We should think of problem solving approaches, creativity. They are not related to legislation but in fact they do help members to become better. We are also these days talking about learning organisations, that people should not stop to learn, they should learn continuously because we are in an environment where change is permanent and therefore learning is a prerequisite for one to survive in this ever-changing learning intensive environment. So, how do we fit ourselves into this scenario? It seems to me that our resource base is weak and that limits us in terms of what we can offer. But we also need to have a vision which helps us to direct our

thinking in terms of which direction to take. It is not easy at all to decide. It is easier to refuse than to accept.

13. DEVELOPMENTS IN INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

Justin Chisenga

Department of Information and Communication Studies

The latest should be the new thing, the one that is very new. However, nowadays, due to globalisation, we get to know things just as they develop and within a day or so we are aware of what developments are there in information technology, although sometimes we may not have an opportunity to have access to that type of technology. The technology that we are going to look at is not new, in the sense that most of it has been developing over a long period of time and is implemented in many organizations.

When you talk about information communication technology, the major components of that are basically computer technology and telecommunications. Today the emphasis may likely be much more on the telecommunication part of the technology, especially on electronic networking and information communication technologies.

This presentation will cover a general overview of the various information communication technologies that have emerged and are having an impact on information management. Most of these technologies have practical applications to the library environment and, and librarians should take advantage of this. The emphasis will be on communication technologies and these are the Internet, intranet, extranet, digital satellite television, extensible markup language (XML) and cellular phones.

13.1 The Internet

The Internet is a global network of computers and electronic networks. It has become the major information communication and publishing tool around the world. It is being used by various organizations, including political parties, and even members of parliament to access information, publish information and communicate with colleagues, etc.

13.1.1 *Library Environment Applications*

The Internet has provided library and information professionals with an infrastructure to:

- Provide electronic related services such as electronic reference services, electronic document delivery
- Make it possible for electronic networking and resource sharing

- Publish information on the Web and make it accessible to a wider community
- Provide access to digital collections via the Web
- Provide Web based access library electronic catalogues (OPAC) and other databases

13.2 The Intranet

An Intranet can be described as an in-house Web-based network. It usually resides within a firewall (access is limited to those inside the firewall). The same Internet technology, such as communication protocols, Web servers, browsers, and standards, is used by Intranets. Intranets are being used for publishing and sharing information within organizations. You need to have a local area network in place in order to setup an Intranet.

13.2.1 Library Environment Application

Library can use the Intranet to provide services targeting their clients within the organization. i.e. Request for ILL documents can only be accessed by those within the Intranet. Information materials deemed not to be for public consumption, can be published on the Intranet, i.e internal reports and memos.

13.3. The Extranet

An extranet is a shared network that uses Internet technology and enables organisations to securely connect with business partners and clients. An extranet can be: a part of an organization's intranet that is made accessible to other organizations or as a collaborative Internet connection with other companies.

13.3.1 Library Environment Application

An Extranet can be used for a number of activities such as resource sharing among a group of libraries. For example, resources can be made available only to APLESA library members.

13.4 Satellite Digital Television

In August 1995, Multichoice Africa (cable television subscription company) launched the Digital Satellite Television (DSTV) system. The system requires a satellite dish and a satellite decoder. DSTV provides access to around 50 television channels, some of which could be useful sources of information

Now it is possible to connect to the Internet using the DSTV infrastructure and the services are being provided by M-Web. This may appear to be expensive, but taking into account the various problems experienced with terrestrial Internet connections, satellite connection may appear to be appealing.

13.4.1 Library Environment Application

In countries where telephone and data lines are quite difficult to obtain, funds available, libraries could use DSTV infrastructure to get access to the Internet. In addition, in parliament libraries, access to DSTV news channels such as CNN, BBC, Sk News, SABC Africa, etc may also be a useful source of information.

13.5 Extensible Markup Language (XML)

Most Internet content is being created using the hypertext markup language. Documents created in hypertext markup language (HTML) are coded using pre-defined tags and are difficult to be manipulated. Searching Web documents is also quite difficult unless meta tags, like the Dublin Core Metadata is used

XML is the latest Web publishing and information storage technology available on the market. It enables users to define their own tags, and thus make it easy to manipulate and retrieve information. Unfortunately, at the moment only Internet Explorer 5 is capable of displaying XML documents

13.5.1 Library Environment Application

Electronic publishing and information storage using XML in libraries will ensure that information is easily retrieved and manipulated.

13.6. Cellular Phone

Developments relating to cellular technology, regarding the information work area, favours media personnel, the journalists. If you take it from where we were way back, every time there was a news conference, they had to write their stories and start rushing to telex machines to go and send the telexes. Then came the fax. You can write your story and send it by fax without re-typing the document. Then of course came in electronic mail, which was excellent. Immediately after the meeting you get into a computer and you send e-mail. Since the article is in electronic format, it can be edited and manipulated in any way. Now, in fact it has become very common at large conferences to provide a room for journalists with Internet access to enable them send their stories. That technology has been appropriate for as long as you are within the city. If you are within Windhoek it is okay, but assuming the President has gone to the North, the Epupa Hydro-electricity project, assuming it has become a reality and the President has gone there to inaugurate the project, the journalists are in place and they now want to send their stories. Either, under the circumstances, they have to phone or they may have to move to the next town to send their messages. But now cell phones are incorporating features that enable them to access the Internet and provide access to electronic mail facilities.

This means that even if journalists are in the bush, even when they are in the remotest places, as long as their batteries are running on the cell phone and the

battery is running on the laptop, they can still send their stories and connect to the Internet. Of course, in the library environment we may not have any application for it, but it is important that we are aware of the various means of communication that are coming up. One day our members of parliament may have access to this technology and would therefore use it to access our services, even when they are in the rural areas visiting their constituencies .

13.7 Discussions, Questions and Answers

Mr Engitu: I expected you to say something on what is called Java. What is it?

Mr Chisenga: Java is an object oriented computer programming language. It was developed by Sun Microsystems. It is being used in the development of Internet-based applications.

Dr Gabriel: Could you give us some insight into something that is emerging quite a lot in our country and that is video conferencing and what type of facilities and network does one require for that?

Mr Chisenga: For video conferencing you need to have access to a television set, a data receiver, and data communication lines, like ISDN (Integrated Digital Service Network) or satellite facilities. Video conference enables people to talk to each other while seeing each other on the TV screen. It is now largely being used in interviews, discussions, etc when it is difficult to bring people together in one room.

Ms Whittle: One of the ways video conferencing has been used within the UK, it is not very heavily used, but especially for members if they have to vote, to actually have their constituencies linked up and give a speech to a local school, that scenario.

Mr Brown: What is listserv?

Mr Chisenga: First and foremost it is a computer programme. We have a computer programme and a computer on which the listserv programme will be running. Listserv programmes allows for the setting up of electronic discussion groups. This arrangement enables electronic mail users to join electronic discussion groups and thus be able to send messages to all the members of the group at the same time.

Mr Masawi: People always talk of putting either the Hansard or whatever on the Internet. Are we all sure that we know what that involves?

Mr Chisenga: Yes, in fact that goes back to the concept of publishing content on the Internet. Basically what it means is that the copies of the Hansard that are right now in print format, you could make them available in electronic format and accessed over the Internet. If they have to be accessed over the Internet in electronic format, then you have to use the coding system, HTML, so that you make

them look like Web page documents? The other way you can do it is by digitising them. The concept is not different from the electronic newspapers we are reading on the Internet.

14. SUPPORT AND COOPERATION POSSIBILITIES: APLESA VS FINNISH PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARY

**Ms. Paivikki Karhula
Library of Parliament of Finland**

I came here as an observer because our library would like to cooperate with your libraries. We are trying to find out what kind of cooperation possibilities there would be which would be useful to you and which would make sense to us. As much as I have heard the presentations and discussions, I believe that the basis for all kinds of information technology projects would be in funding, in the first place, for smaller libraries and for the libraries which do not have devices or Internet connections right now. I am not sure how much and what we can do with the funding, but I see it as a prerequisite for anything else, because without money and without hardware we probably cannot do a lot. A question which has arisen during the last presentation was about the phases, how to proceed with Internet and what it really means and what kind of services should be taken into use and in which order. I am quite convinced it would be useful to establish Internet connections using these facilities first before doing any other thing. There are many reasons for that. At first it would give you a possibility to get used to the communication channels through Internet, like e-mail and discussion groups. Secondly it would give you a possibility to get used to Internet information retrieval and when you get used to different kinds of search methods, when you see existing services, it will give you much more possibilities to develop your own services.

When you get to the level where you want to develop your own network services, I feel that small libraries need cooperation either on a national level with some other type of libraries, like government libraries or government information centres or big Parliament Libraries or some other type of networking or cooperation centres. This may proceed as projects or you may want to develop the same type of services or test versions at the same time. So you can support each other in this process and maybe get some support outside. Maybe you can afford to get a consultant outside to give you training or whatever you want to do in this phase, technical support of training, installation help, whatever you decide.

What I value a lot is the point of view that has been taken here into account concerning user needs, because if you develop your systems from the early beginning so that you try to fit them to your user needs and analyse what your users really require and also take into account how they behave, these two things mean different things. According to our experience when we made user studies, our Members of Parliament and our staff of Parliament could say that they needed certain services, then we would develop those services for them but they still did not use them. So the real use of our services needs to be taken into account also, not only what they seem to wish.

Ms Samsodien: What I can think of as a possibility for our library and it has been discussed but I do not think there is money for it, is this whole process of digitisation, photographing and putting these other old records and things in digital form and then sort of saving the space for it and also preserving it in a different manner.

Ms Namhila: One of the problems that APLESA Executive has is that it does not have funds of its own. It does not even provide for a treasurer or something like that. I am sure if we have some annual commitment from some organisations, at least to be able to fly in the chairperson or the secretary, especially the secretary. I think these kinds of things could also be helpful. I think this will be a continuous battle, because I hear some Parliaments are now saying, “you went last year, you cannot go this year” and for portfolio holders it is quite crucial that they keep coming, because you cannot hold a meeting without a vice-chairperson, or without the secretary.

Ms Karhula: It is important to define that if you want funds, in the first place, what is the purpose for these funds? Is it for hardware or is it for software, or is it for people or is it for training? And also there may be a possibility to serve as a kind of support centre or give support to discussion groups around certain themes or with some technical expertise on certain projects. I am just trying to figure out what type of things would be useful.

Ms Bulale: Maybe technical expertise on issues such as automation for those of us who are now thinking of automating some of our systems, like the cataloguing system and maybe the acquisition system, some kind of technical guidance.

Mr Masawi: What could probably be done on the issue of technical support, is to choose a library among the many countries that are here to act as a prototype of thing, so that if that one is made really functional, then others could be attached to that.

Ms Namhila: It would be quite useful if we can build in some kind of attachment, so that maybe our librarian can go to Finland and visit the Library of parliament.

Mr Brown: As Zimbabwe has suggested, it is possible to choose a library here and support that library to grow to the extent that all others will come and learn from that library. The reason I support that is, for us to travel out to the already developed libraries, we go back and we find that we are so far behind that it will demoralise us. But I think that if there is a Southern African library that has developed by our standards, if either that one or another one is chosen, it will have more meaning to go there to see the automation process. I will ask questions that are relevant, we will have issues that are common that I will find the answers to, rather than maybe going to Finland.

Ms Karhula: I am completely behind that kind of idea that we need to develop something that will work for us and which also has possibilities for the development and maintenance here, so that it won't be bound to external resources.

15. INFORMATION SOURCES, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION SERVICES

Open Discussion
Coordinated by Prof. Kingo J. Mchombu

15.1 Background by Prof Mchombu

Our information resources go well beyond collections, and we need to think and always bear in mind that the dominance of printed items is not the only way. We have other ways, other options, and we need to look at all our options. So we need to look in the context of what we have discussed so far from day 1. We need to bear in mind that these resources we are building up have to reflect the mission and mandates which we have determined will guide our actions. And of course they have also to reflect the stakeholder requirements. So before we decide on resources, we first of all have to be clear on our mandates and our mission and our stakeholder requirements to fulfil their goals. I think so far what we have seen here in my view is that the parliament libraries define themselves and their role slightly differently. We see those who take a broader definition of their role. I suppose in a sense based on fulfilling the concept of the right of access to information for everybody. And in this sense therefore they are trying to offer information, which is within their own jurisdiction to whoever requires this information. We have also found others who look at this from a fairly narrow and specific point of view. The reasoning being that because resources are limited, one has to limit one's target groups to those who you can satisfy, rather than become all-inclusive. Now these are issues which we have not debated much. But I think that when we talk about services, about information resources creation as well as how to manage these resources, we have to be aware of these underlying philosophies and currents. From there we also had occasions to discuss information products and services which are determined by the requirements of our users and of course of our own capabilities. What again seems to me clear is that we should not take information services and products as life long products. These have to change as our clients are changing. Each product in marketing has got what they call a life cycle. You stay with it up to a point and then it has sometimes fulfilled its usefulness. Quite often however because we do not have mechanisms for evaluation feedback which allows us to think of other possibilities, you often find that, one of the things that libraries have been accused of is to keep offering the same thing even when it is even no longer required. They get stuck. So we need to think dynamically, we need to change with the stakeholders we are serving. We need to look at what we are offering. And sometimes even change it for the sake of making people aware that we are there, these things are not just being done by people who are doing them automatically in a formalistic manner, but we are trying to respond to their need as we see them. We discussed many, many products. And I think what we can do usefully here now is to systematically approach this subject. First of all

starting with the management of information resources. How do we manage this information resources which include how to acquire them, how to process them, how to position them in such a way that we can quickly get the information we are looking for. Because we have already seen that one of the guiding characteristics of our primary users is that they do not have a lot of time. Not like students in a college or university who have time because they are there simply to do one thing, which is to learn and therefore they can wait for things, they can go deeper into things and this is part of the process of the acquisition of knowledge. But here we are dealing with people who have to get the information in a hurry. So this has to determine how we acquire, how we process our information. To allow us to be able to provide the services which are required by our primary target groups. This has got also implications in terms of the other services which we provide. People mention many times the constraint of trained human resources. You can only provide exciting information services and products if you have got people with the capacity to do so. So I feel that as we discuss these things we should not only discuss them from a point of the ideal, we should also discuss them from a point of barriers. What are the barriers and what can we do to address the barriers. Strategic planning which I think should be the guiding principle here is that it is not only that you want to do something. First of all you have to say this is what I want to achieve. To be able to achieve this you look downstream and say what are the likely obstacles, and what can I do to deal with these obstacles.

Ms Whittle: I think because we have been going for such a long time we do have quite well established processes and we have an acquisition policy that governs the sources of materials that we purchase for the different parts of the library, the level of material that is bought for the research section is a much deeper, much more academic level than the material that is bought for loan to members. There are guidelines about the acquisition and purchase of the material. We also have a large number of periodical titles that we actually subscribe to as well. Although that is something that is constantly kept under review. That is an area which in the last few years we have actually cut back on the number of journals that we take. Because it was felt that we did take a lot of them, and that really they were not actually being used, either by parliamentary staff in their provision of service for members or by members themselves. I think in all our acquisition there is always an understanding that the stock that we are buying and the materials that we are buying are not purely for members themselves to actually make use of, but also often for the staff to use on behalf of members. There is always that kind of dual route for doing it. We do use various stock acquisition computer software to help us actually control, keep track of the material that is actually on order, and at what point that actually gets into the catalogue. Then again we have also been able to establish relationships with a local bookshop with various organisations around central London where we are based. That if we do need materials quickly, the infrastructure is there to actually be able to send a messenger out to go and collect it. And then again in terms of the kind of physical acquisition of stock we are also

fortunate that there is an established kind of messenger service that operates between different government departments. And we do quite a lot of borrowing of material from other libraries, other institutions that are based in London. We do not lend much to anybody, but we borrow quite a lot. And it seems to work. I think there is a certain cache that is given to the House of Commons library. People are surprisingly willing to actually let us make use of their facilities. There are a number of university libraries that are based in London too, and we have arrangements with them. And again we have the kind of messenger service. We organise between ourselves and various government departments that have the infrastructure in place for somebody to physically go out and borrow this stuff. I think in terms of the speed, by which people need things, it is a constant pressure. Members always want things yesterday. And particularly this time of year actually when they run up to a parliamentary recess, that pressure becomes particularly acute as members want things before they disappear for the summer.

Ms Kahrula: We have quite a complicated acquisition policy in a sense because we are a depository library. And we are getting a lot of material, which is related to social sciences and law. And we also have several exchange programs. So I would say that probably 10% of our collection is exchanges. And basically we are purchasing which members of the parliament want. If there are special requests we go to the bookstore on the same day if these books are not in our collection. And concerning the different types of materials, we have in our collection, monographs and journals. And we are just in the process of giving up quite a lot of subscriptions. Because we have joint co-operation between Finnish academic libraries which have a kind of consortium to purchase electronic journals and (indistinct) databases. And we have joined to these and want to give up some part of our printed material. And concerning electronic material we have quite a large (indistinct) database of our internal material. And then we have this co-operation with academic libraries and co-operation with government departments. And through this co-operation we have access to different kinds of statistical databases and some newspapers online. Before I left we were just in the process of ordering the electronic archive of the second biggest newspaper in Finland. But I am not exactly sure if we got the contract for that, because it involves very complicated negotiations, and it is quite expensive. But it will be very useful. Because just finding newspaper clippings effectively is a big problem for us and it is very expensive. If we get the contract it would solve many of our problems. And we are cataloguing basically this material for our internal databases but also for the national union database, I mean monographs and serials. But articles are only processed for our internal databases. So this is the way we work.

Ms Donnelly: It is interesting listening to the UK and Finland where they have relatively stable governments. Because we have found in South Africa coming out of the history of 48 years of apartheid that it very much affected our collection building policy. And because we now at last have a change of management in the

library, we are in the process currently of changing our collection development policy. And the criterion that was previously used to select books and to add on to what we had is under review at the moment. You know I have mentioned and I am sure that you are all familiar with the fact that we are a legal deposit library. But under the law because we are the fifth one, we are under no obligation to keep all the material that we receive under the legal deposit act. So from that we select. In the past it used to be that, the librarians were the only who sat and decided according to the selection policy what we were going to keep. That is changing in that the new book selection will not be done by librarians, we will have input naturally from research, members of parliament, and hopefully from other staff as well and they will be guided by a book selection policy which we never previously had. Our collection is a very large collection but it is a very loose collection. In that it developed over the years over a question of 150 years with no guidelines as such. At the moment we are actually trying to secure funding so that we can appoint a specialist to come and work on a collection building policy for us. And it will be a contract of say a period of about four or five months to come up with ideas for us on guidelines on how to deal with this. I would like to say that its similar to what the UK has in that we do not only arrive or solely rely on our own collection. We also have very strong links. We are very fortunate in that we have the South African library right next door to us. And we have this marvellous arrangement with them where we phone them and they open their gate, we open ours and we sort of walk and hand each other books across the fence. It is a marvellous arrangement. It is the quickest way to do it. Then of course with the different universities we have a shuttle service with the University of Cape Town. Our law collection is a pretty strong collection. It has many gaps, again because of South Africa's isolation over the years. You know South Africa thought of itself as very self-sufficient. As long as it had the laws of South Africa and the laws of the UK, which it was based on because we are a Roman-Dutch law country, we were okay. So that is the collection that is expanding because we need to build on to that. I think that is all I need to say at this stage. Thanks very much.

Ms Samsodien: Can I add on to that? I think a lot of our collection evolved in the way that it has because it was (indistinct). We were given things. And because of the cultural boycott as well, we did not receive any of the publications on South Africa that were written outside South Africa. And most of them were banned. So there are huge gaps there. Although it is old literature in a sense we do not have them and they do form part of our history. So that will also be built into the collection development policy to try and retrieve all that other old literature, old history books and whatever was written outside the country during the apartheid era.

Mr Rugambwa I am addressing the issue of book collection for collection building. There is a situation whereby as you place orders for new books you realise that hard cover bound books are very expensive. The same title that has

been bound in a soft cover you realise it is quite cheaper compared to the other. Maybe thrice as much, at times even four times cheaper than the hard cover bound books. And I am also aware that given the lack of use of our library collection, the hardbound book is more durable compared to these soft covers. But here is a situation where we are trying to save the funds here and there. Instead of going in for hard covered books, which would cost us maybe 150 pounds, whereas the soft cover of the same title would have cost us maybe 50 pounds. I find it quite cheaper if I went in for a soft covered one. And maybe at the end of the year depending on the lack of use, I go in for binding. It is still cheaper that way than buying a hard covered book. May I share the experience with others and see how they are going about it. But that is part of the policy that I am developing for my library. And another area I would love to address is the issue of second-hand books on the market now. According to well-developed countries, if I may put it like that, they see the old books and they discard them. Whereas when you charge them by our standards, they look like new books. So there is also a possibility of libraries now going in for some of these second-hand books as long as they can (indistinct). And maybe some of our libraries like the UK and Finland experience you could have reached that stage of discarding some of your books which some other disadvantaged libraries could take advantage of. Please may set the ball rolling as to where you can assist?

Ms Whittle: To comment on both of the points you raised. We in terms of hard cover or soft cover, we tend to buy hard cover for those subject areas. Or if it is a monograph, which we think, will be of enduring interest then we would buy the hard cover. If it is something we know that perhaps in five years there may be a new edition of it or it is a topic which we feel we would not necessarily need to keep that material, then we would buy a soft cover. Because we are a large library we often buy more than one copy of a book, and in that situation would buy one hard cover and the others soft cover so that there is at least one copy that is kept. In terms of discarding books, we do have a constant policy of weeding the collection. And all our material goes to book batch and I am not quite sure who they distribute the material to. But my understanding is that it then goes on to be offered to other countries, other parliamentary libraries or whoever. I do not know whether anybody else knows any more about this.

Mr Masawi: I want to add something to what South Africa have said if I got them right. There is this issue of literature pertaining to probably what we would call the colonial era if you want to say it. In Zimbabwe there was quite a lot of frenzy immediately after independence for library to discard materials on Rhodesia. But a lot of libraries tended to become just like librarians are, they did not want to discard those materials. We still have quite a collection of Rhodesiana, Zimbabweana collection that is heavily used. You cannot believe it. Some of it is used much more than the material we have in our own collection. So you have to take care of that.

Ms Donnelly: I am sorry I have to respond to that. In a weeding process and a collection building process, one would never be irresponsible. And certainly if that is part of your history, history will be represented. I am not for a minute suggesting we will throw out everything prior to 1994 or anything like that. It is as Ms. Samsodien has pointed out we unfortunately in South Africa have a very badly balanced representation of the era prior to 1994. We are probably the largest library in the world that has the most limited collection of books on Nelson Mandela. We have nothing on him. Remember like nothing published prior to 1994. Where as I am sure you can walk into the UK Commons and you can get 100 publications on Nelson Mandela. But we would not be responsible. Don't for a minute worry about that. Thanks.

Prof. Mchombu I would like to ask a couple of questions from all our discussions so far and of course in the light of the submissions we have had. One of these would be how good are we in getting hold of government publications and the so-called grey literature emanating from ministries and parastatals and other government agencies in our countries? Because I feel that from what we have heard so far this appears to me to be a very significant aspect of our collection building. I can also perhaps ask about a concept that I heard one or two people mention the other day, this is the concept of the basic core collection conception. But what I think will be useful for us to discuss a bit is, is it possible to think in terms of having a core collection that each one must have, or is it not possible?

Ms Namhila: To respond on the question of government publications. We also have a problem in Namibia in the sense that there is no central place that controls the distribution of government publications. In addition, ministries do not coordinate properly the distribution of their publications. For example, publications are sent to the Speaker's office, from the Speakers Office to the Permanent Secretary, and in the final analysis, the document does not get to the library. So it is to obtain government publications.

Ms Samsodien: We are a little bit more fortunate. If anything is published in the ministries or in the departments and they are tabled in parliament, then the library is likely to get a copy of it. Because we are building an index to the master set of all the documents tabled in parliament. There are however certain things that are published within the departments that are not tabled. And those are the things that we sometimes battle to get hold of. We do have a clerk of documents who receives most of those things. But I think there is a little bit of confusion with the distribution of it that the library always has to phone and ask and find out if there is a copy. But we do have the liberty to phone the departments and ask them. And they very often quickly give you the publication. You can virtually just send someone to collect it. So we often hear on the news in the morning for example that so-and-so was launched or published and before you go to work along the passages

somebody would already ask you for it. But then you can pick up the phone and phone the various departments and ask them to provide with copies or a copy. So it is not too bad in that sense I think.

Ms Namhila: We have no problems with materials produced by parliament, whether it is a speech, motion or anything that is tabled in parliament; we do get a copy. However we do have a problem with the acquisition of government publications sectoral policy papers and others that are sent to the National Planning Commission and basically also ministerial material. Because most of government publications like ministerial research are not necessarily tabled in parliament, unless if they have to do with a set policy, i.e. on education.

Ms Kamau: In Kenya, we have a situation, which is similar to what the South Africans have. We receive all government publications, most of them. But for the cabinet meeting, we never get the minutes. But once they have been made public documents they are available in the library. Our cabinet has a library and we are in close contact with the librarian in the cabinet. And we can always get something that is once it has been declared a public document. As for those committee and sectional committee papers we open box files for them.

Ms Nxumalo: In Swaziland, we also do have problems with the collection of government publications, although within ministries we have contact persons from who we check whatever materials have been published by the ministries.

Mr Rugambwa: I wish to be reminded whether Namibia parliamentary library has attained the legal deposit status. And if so why not punish the culprits because by legislature and the law this has to be enforced. There has to be a mechanism to track down the defaulters.

Ms Namhila: There is a legal deposit act of 1948 which gave the legal deposits status to the Parliament Library. In addition, there is a new library law which is coming and this one gives legal deposit status to more than one library.

Prof Mchombu: It seems to me that a number of issues are coming out. One is that we need to be pro-active and rather aggressive in looking for the resources we feel will satisfy the needs of our clients. Differences in levels of collection of government publications are mainly due to how well structured is the government publication system. For instance in some countries it is well structured, it is easier to get the publications. In other countries it does not seem to be easy. What I would like us perhaps to look at briefly as we move towards the services area, is what role has technology played, what role can technology play in making us much more efficient and effective in building up these information resources. I think we have hard databases which have been created which are accessible. We also have had electronic journals. We have had also ordering systems that can be created to

speed up the ordering process which is particular useful in the one or two person libraries that I think some countries still have. But those who have well-developed technologies in place at this time, what do you actually use them for and how useful have you found them? In fact one resource which now we cannot ignore, and can only ignore it at our peril is the Internet. There is a considerable amount of information you can get from there. So I would like us to share ideas a little bit here, about the broad role of technology and how we can use it to make ourselves more effective and more efficient.

15.2 Information Technology

Ms Kahrula: There are so many different kinds of ways how we use information technology. In our library at the moment I believe that we could not longer live without our automated library system . We are really doing everything through our library system, information retrieval through our databases, cataloguing, acquisitions, serial sorting, serial check-in. So all library processes are dependent on technology. It is the main tool we use in our library. The Internet is another useful part of information technology infrastructure in our library. We use electronic mail daily and also use the Internet to access our databases for information retrieval purposes. We have six different databases for monographs, serials, articles, and government publications.

Ms Namhila: The Internet offers various facilities that can be useful in our work environment. For example, Web sites provide useful information; E-mail is a useful tool for communication; and listservs are useful in exchanging information and discussing a number of issues.

Prof Mchombu: So it seems to me that we all agree about the usefulness of information technology and the Internet in our work. I would like to make a suggestion. I am sure that it would be very helpful if APLESA created its own Web site and set up an electronic discussion group. These could be used in exchange and publishing of information.

15.3 Information Services and Products

Prof Mchombu: Let us now talk about services and products – what services are you offering, how satisfactory do you think these are? Do you have mechanisms for evaluating them? We have looked at databases. I am not sure whether we have databases, which are able to help us create services and products that MPs require. We have a very good model here of products and services from Dr. Gabriel. Let us focus on that a bit and see whether we can learn anything from each other.

Ms Kahrula: We provide personal service and every single member of parliament has been assigned his/her own librarian. The member of parliament may call any

time and ask any questions or leave any type of information request. WE HAVE 58 librarians who attend to information needs of members of parliament.

Ms Suuya: In Zambia we do provide a newspaper index service to members of parliament. Each member has a file and that file will contain articles or documents or anything that concerns them that comes out in any paper, newspaper or magazine that we get hold of.

Ms Shauri: In our library we do not have researchers, so we do conduct research for members of parliament. In addition, members of parliament expect us to know each and every thing. As far as the information is concerned, we do compile statistics on various subjects which we feel could be useful to members of parliament, for example statistics on the death rate maybe from malaria or from cholera, the statistics for five years or three.

Prof Mchombu: It seems that we differ in terms of how we offer services. Some are offering a wide range and some a narrower range. And this is determined partly by the compliment of staff who are available. We have not mentioned the other element in the services we offer and the products we offer which is what needs and requirements are we trying to satisfy. I think we have to bear in mind as we said before since the beginning that this really should also be an important indicator as to what we should offer and what we should not offer. It seems to me that the circumstances under which we work also determine what we can do or what we cannot do. In some instances where there is a good infrastructure there is a possibility of specialisation. Where there is not good infrastructure and support staff then you have to be a person of all trades.

16. HOUSE OF COMMONS LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES

**Ms Felicity Whittle
United Kingdom House of Commons Library**

16. 1 Introduction

I would like to start by thanking you for inviting me to give this presentation. First a brief history on myself. I have been working at the House of Commons Library now for 11 years. I started in the House of Commons service as a cataloguer and catalogued for 2 years and then I moved into a training role, providing training courses for POLIS, which is the parliament on-line indexing services, a collection of databases to parliamentary proceedings and the Commons library catalogue. Implementing POLIS It was really our first move into information technology at the Commons library. It was our first development in terms of using electronic sources, an electronic method of indexing proceedings of parliament. The move came about because the number, the quantity of those proceedings was becoming unmanageable. The manual indexes that were produced were simply becoming too large and taking too long to compile, so we moved over to creating an electronic database, in effect a database of those parliamentary index and the POLIS system has just grown from there.

Each member of the UK Parliament has an allowance which allows them to employ their own secretarial and research staff. And most of them employ one person, sometimes more than one person. So that we as well as the House of Commons library as well as providing services to members, a big part of our service is also to members' staff on the basis that members need a certain amount of information and providing services for members own staff. It is a way of getting through that loop to get the information to the members themselves. And it was fairly obvious that there was a need for training on the use of electronic sources, the fact that members wanted to be able to search for these things themselves, they wanted their staff to be able to search for information themselves was a growing area. There have been other IT developments within parliament itself, and my job as the library's IT trainer has expanded to include providing training on the network information services. Since the library was the prime provider of information on particularly electronic source information throughout the parliament. Providing training again for library staff but also for members and their staff on how to use those electronic sources.

In my presentation, there are three main areas that I am going to talk about. I am going to start talking about Internet sites that we within the UK, the House of Commons library find particularly useful, starting with the UK's own parliamentary web site, the source of information that is put out on that. I will talk

then of other electronic sources of information that we use in the library. Some of them are commercial web sites which we pay some sort of subscription. And also information that is available on CD-ROM. And then a brief non technical, because I am not a technical person, description of the way that the parliamentary Intranets has been put together and the sort of information sources that are available on that, the way that is organised. Use of the intranet has certainly been a very exciting development for us. We have only had a parliamentary network for five years. So it is still an area in which we are learning how to deal with it, how the information should be made available across the network. The sources of information that people find useful, how it should be packaged, repackaged. How it should be kept up to date. How the sites themselves should actually be maintained which is always an important consideration.

16.2 UK Parliament Web Site

Located at <http://www.parliament.uk>, the United Kingdom Parliamentary web site was set up in 1996. The site came about largely as there was an awareness that people expected to see a web site for the UK Parliament and also that it was a useful way of actually disseminating information about ourselves. The main page, has been kept deliberately plain with very few graphics. I am sure that you are aware that not too much graphics make a page much quicker to load. The main parliament page itself contains links to separate pages for the House of Commons and the House of Lords Web sites.

Within the building of the UK Parliament the areas that form the House of Commons tend to use green as a colour for their furnishing, so that the chairs have green leather on them, the carpets are basically green patterned, etc. Our publications all come out with green covers on them. Whereas in the House of Lords part of the building, they tend to use reds. So that colour coding has been followed on the web sites too as a way of helping people to orient themselves as to exactly where they are. Other links on the main page are to things like information for visitors, a brief guide to the House of Commons, information about the parliamentary bookshop, kind of related services which people may also find useful, and to announcements. The announcement link allows us to give a kind of news flash to announce things like the date of the recesses once though are actually announced in each house, to alert people to new pages of new information that has been added to the site.

From the House of Commons home page, the source of information that is included on the rest of the web site is basically three categories of information that are on the parliament web site. The proceedings of parliament itself, information about those proceedings and also information about parliament. From the home page links to various different publications, public bills before parliament, the Web pages of Hansards up here and also the summary agendas and orders of business that we

tend to call the vote bundle or part of the vote bundle. And these are all HTML pages of text converted into HTML, which within them have links. You can see that the Hansard first page is actually a series of links to other pages of text that acts as a kind of contents list for that days Hansard. The different categories of the House of Commons publications that actually appear on the web site under the kind of parliament business heading are the Fisher Report, Hansard both for the chamber and for standing committees, bills, papers from select committees and other parliamentary papers, business papers, the vote bundle, the Lords minutes which is just a kind of House of Lords equivalent to their agenda. Plus also a database of early day motions, the House of Lords judgements, legislation for copyright reasons (not parliamentary copyrights), so that is provided as links to full text of acts and such instruments on other sites, the early day motions database.

We also have a link to database. It was initially created as an internal database, partly as an administrative way of dealing with tabling of motions and the adding of signatures to them and taking into account the various different rules of parliamentary procedure that governs both of those processes. Which is something that was dealt with by the clerks department. This was one of the first kind of co-operative projects between the clerk's department and the library. So the clerk's department actually adds the motions and the signatures. The library then actually indexes them to make them easier to search for by subject. And we also host the computers that actually hold the information. The development of a web browser interface allowed us to make this available on the parliamentary web sites because it was therefore much easier for people maybe not used to database searching to actually use it. There are also various guides to proceedings, guides to the committee system, different standing orders for the different houses, the library research papers which I have already mentioned the briefing papers that subject specialists create are also available on the web site. And fact sheets which are again another series of publications produced by the library which really explains the work of parliament. Again aimed at the general public. This is again another example of repackaging of information, to use the knowledge of parliamentary procedure within the house just within the library. Producing a brief fact sheet of four to six pages which explain what parliamentary questions are, the progress of legislation, how that actually works, and works through parliament, etc. as well as that there are information digest. Links to information from select committees which includes schedules of their meetings, press notices from the select committees, giving their committee membership and the terms of reference and also the full text of their report has also been added to the web site since 1996 or 1997.

The library research papers and fact sheets are made available as portable document format (PDF) files which are read using Adobe Acrobat reader. PDF file is a way of making the documents available in an electronic format that closely resembles the printed version. Documents are accessed with a browser. There is

also a link included to Adobe web site where the acrobat reader can be downloaded free of charge. The next category of information that is included, includes fact sheets again. There is also an electronic guide to the UK Parliament which basically tells you how parliament works. Information about members of parliament, again a lot of this is information which was produced in hard copy.

The various bits of visitor information, how people can actually come and visit the UK Parliament and the sort of services that are available to the public. Part of the library's work is to run what is called a House of Commons Information Office. It used to be called the public information office. It provides information about parliament, about the members of parliament and the work of the members of parliament to the general public. And they do that by answering letters, e-mails. There is always a link from the UK Parliament sites to an E-mail form which goes directly back to the information office. They also run a telephone bureau which takes thousands of enquiries a year from members of the public, from journalists, from all sorts of organisations that want to know what is actually happening within the UK Parliament. One of the frequently asked questions is who is my MP. And one of the developments that happened in the run up to the last election was that information on postal codes for the whole of the UK was actually put together with the constituency maps. The House of Commons information office has always had a set of maps of all of the constituencies in the UK. It was a fairly labourious process but you could always look it up on the street index to find out exactly which constituency a particular address was located. And this information has actually now been put together for the first time so that you can actually do an electronic search on a postal code. All addresses in the UK do have a postcode, and from that the system itself actually works out within which constituency that address lies. This is obviously useful for members of the public for constituents to find out who their MP is. It is also something which we do use in the library for members. They do sometimes get letters from people, they are not sure if this is one of the constituents. And obviously there is the general rule that you do not deal with correspondence which is not from people of your constituency. So we also use it within the library to answer those questions from members about whether this is actually their constituency. Or if somebody is writing because they know the member has an interest on a particular subject. It is again the kind of usual rule that the member may well reply to the person but will copy the letter to that constituency member of parliament so that each individual member of parliament knows if their constituency is communicating with another member. So it is useful for those kind of purposes too. This is a commercial service. The house actually pays a subscription to this. It also pays for the development of the work. And it is a publicly available web site. It is probably most used from the UK Parliament site. But it is an information source which the company concerned, a company called InforNet can actually sell to other organisations if they wish to link to it. So there is all this information on the site itself. Members of Parliament are all given an e-mail address within parliament. Not all of them actually choose to use those.

Some of them do set up their own e-mail, some of them have their own web sites within their constituencies. And if they provide an e-mail address then once you have looked up a member's name either on the constituency list or on any of the other kind of lists of members, a link is provided to that e-mail address. At the moment we do that not by giving address itself, but simply providing an e-mail form which is then directed to the e-mail address so that the address unless the member wishes to make it public, and individual constituent would not actually know the e-mail address from the web site. This is something which we have within the last two weeks actually had a query about whether we should be making members E-mail addresses publicly available.

We have provided a search engine on the web site is an important way of helping people to actually find their way around the web site for search of the UK Parliament pages. There are different ways of putting the search together, you can restrict or expand your search through the search form that is provided. The results are listed according to relevance. Some fairly complicated algorithm that is used to actually list them according to elements and you can actually look through the first two and mark them, and it will take them away and do another search based on the important rating that you have given. There is also an alphabetic index to the site as well. Again another way of helping people find their way around.

There is also a page of links to other external sites which are felt to be of use or of interest to those that stumble on to the UK Parliament site. The first of these is one related to the devolved assemblies. This is something of a new departure for us. That within the last couple of months the constituent countries of the United Kingdom, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have all elected their own parliaments or assemblies. And it has been interesting to see how each of those organisations have actually dealt with the issue of making information about themselves and about their proceedings available to their public as it were. The Northern Ireland site is very plain. The Welsh one looks like a kind of public relations site with pictures and links and whatever. So it is quite interesting to see how the different assemblies and parliaments actually not only make their information available, they had all taken the view that they needed to have a web site even before the parliament was actually elected, before they really knew how they would be working and what sort of information sources they would actually have in terms of how their proceedings were going to be produced. They had all established a kind of presence on the web so that their web information could be correct from the beginning. And it is also obviously a very useful source of information for us within the Westminster Parliament to find out exactly what has been happening if members do come in and say there was a debate in the Scottish Parliament. That is often a very direct source of information for us as to exactly what was said. And obviously our relationships with the developed assemblies will develop as they can become more established themselves. The text of legislation is again another of the links that is available from the UK Parliament's

sites. For copyright reasons, parliament does not actually have the copyright of legislation. They are all actually crown copyrights. Her Majesty stationery office which used to be the kind of parliament publisher, the body that actually published all of the parliamentary proceedings was actually privatised, was actually split up and there is only a residual part of it left which has a web site, makes available the text of acts and retains the kind of copyrights on behalf of the crown. So again there is a link to this site. The other one is the stationery office which in many ways is the other part of what used to be HMSO. So those two sites are again provided as links from the parliament's site as a way of providing access to the full text of prime legislation and also the delegated legislation, the statutory instruments. And again they have been added as of about 1996. The coverage from 1996 tends to be fairly patchy but that is usually the earliest date. The other web sites which we do find useful with links from the parliament site are government department web sites. There are various directories of government department web sites available on the Internet.

16.3 Other Electronic Information Sources

Other useful sites are the public sites, ones which are freely available, which anybody could actually search for. But ones which are not provided as a link from the public site but as I say just ones that we do find that we tend to use. The first of these are the news related sites, sites from the press association or BBC news are very useful particularly for news stories that break during the day. If there are new stories that break during the day then the BBC site and the press association site are very useful sources of finding out what has been happening. They provide useful digests of information about current events. The UK political parties have their own web site. Again, we find those useful as sources of finding out information about the parties themselves. Particularly if there has been a change amongst the spokespersons. Each of the opposition parties have different spokesperson for different kind of subject areas and the political parties own web sites will provide that information particularly as the spokespersons change. And also details of the party's own press releases and their own publications is again a useful way of finding those. The different political parties sites are actually provided as links of useful world-wide web sites within the parliamentary Intranets. And for other useful public sites that we make use of, there is a book related site, **amazon.com**, on-line bookshop of which we use both the UK and the US versions, and also the library stock unit uses them as a stock ordering facility. Political bookstore, this is actually a local bookstore in the Westminster area which again has its own stock particularly of interest to politicians and parliamentarians and again has an on-line ordering facility and a very good E-mail service alerting us to new titles. The bulletin board for libraries, the bubble sites is kind of a more portal site. It is a gateway to other library-related information and similarly the British Library site as well. The British Library has a public site, they also have a private part if interested which is available for subscriptions. I think that is something we are

trying out as to whether that is a useful way for us to actually order publications through the material that actually comes through their on-line catalogue instead of actually going through the hard copy of it. Travel and weather is always useful information, as well as railway timetables. And of course in the UK we always want to know about the weather. There are various weather sites that we use. But that is the kind of information that we do find useful to have access to. Outside our country, sites of other parliaments and government, and sites of IPU, the European Parliament and particularly the Europa site is one that we find particularly useful. Europa is one which brings together various different institutions of the European communities, European parliaments, council ministers, etc. It is actually one which is often a very useful access point of finding your way around the different sites connected to the European Union. For the sites belonging to other parliaments and governments, those are useful not only for the information they contain but also as a way of seeing how other parliaments present themselves, a source of information that they include. It is always useful and interesting to see what other institutions similar to ourselves are actually doing on the web.

The facility which we provide access to is **www.parliamentarycompanion**, which is basically a database of members of parliament and peers. Actually it is a CD-ROM, but the way that it is networked, it appears as a web site. And it includes various information about members of parliament including pictures. This is again a publication which has been available in hard copy for years going back to the last century. But it is now very useful as an electronic source and obviously much easy to search as an electronic source too. Of the other categories of electronic data, various legal sources particularly the CDs produced by a company called Context which produces quite a lot of CD-ROMs. They actually produce a CD-ROM version of POLIS. But they are also commercial publishers of the European Parliament, Salex and also different types of legislation, European legislation, official journal of the European Parliament and also of statutory instruments. So that again is quite a useful source for us for that kind of material. For the general information again we have an electronic version of different biographical sources about members of parliament. The electronic version of the Oxford Dictionary is also another source which is quite useful. I know some colleagues who have that open all the time on their PCs. We also have access to daily newspapers and weeklies on CD-ROMs and these are a particularly useful way of searching for information a very low costs. There is a commercial database called FT Profile. It contains a collection of databases containing company information, company reports and also the full text of all of the UK daily newspapers and some regional newspapers too. So it is a very useful and powerful way of actually searching across a whole range of the text of different newspapers. But it is expensive. You do not only pay an annual subscription, you also pay each time you search, and then you pay again for each line of downloaded text. So it is something which is available across the network but only to library staff.

There are other bibliographic sources as well that we have access to. EBSCO on-line gives access to the text of periodical articles for journal articles to which we subscribe. This is something which has only been up and running since the beginning of 1999. It is a way of us trying to work out whether this is a more useful way of actually having access to journals where we do not necessarily want to keep the whole thing, but would simply extract the articles from it, this is a more cost effective way of doing than paying a subscription to the hard copy of the journal itself. Another source is the UK Official Publications which is the major source of publications of government departments and various other official bodies. Again a subscription service which we can use for on-line ordering of publications too.

16.4 House of Commons Intranet

The Parliamentary Intranet is basically everything that is on the internal sites. Our fire wall is effectively around here. So that there is only one access out to the www-sites. And in fact all of the information that is on the external www-sites is actually duplicated on the intranet which is actually a mirror of the public sites. The Parliament site gets quite a lot of hits, so it can become quite busy, and therefore it is actually quite quicker to search on the internal files for the same information than actually on the external one. The external site is actually hosted for us by one of the Colleges of the University of London and that is actually totally off the parliamentary estate. So the source of information that is on as well as being able to see the duplicate of the parliamentary web site, there is also on the parliamentary Intranet other information which is deemed either not to be of interest to the public, it is purely internal information. Or sometimes it is the kind of copyright or technical reasons that it is actually not possible to make publicly available.

The internal information includes things like the telephone directory which is not a public document. Things like what the refreshment department is serving in the cafeterias today. And also things like the members handbook. Again, that is a publication that started off as a hard copy. That just explains what the different departments of the parliamentary service do and what service members can expect from them. There is also some information sources which are again only available within the Intranet including POLIS. Within the Intranet we also have access to Hansard, ComHansard their own internal version. Which means that the Hansard is actually available from 7:30 in the morning, whereas on the public site it is not available until 12:30. They also produce various listings of members contributions. Listings of points of orders for a particular day etc., so that there are other parts of Hansard in the system which we have access to. And then subject based Internet links. This is something which has been particularly useful having the ability to pull together different pages of links. Either based around the research services within the library and the different subject areas that they cover, but also being able

to include the kind of more general stuff like the kind of weather, travel, and a list of Internet search engines. A way of actually providing a whole list of links, kind of making it easy for people working within parliament, making it easy for them to have access to different services on the Internet. Obviously one consideration with that is the maintenance of those links, because links do change. And I think this is somewhere that there is room for improvement certainly that we are not always as good as we could in actually maintaining those links. Quite a lot of pages were set up really without very much thought being given to how they would actually be maintained, whose responsibility it was to make sure those links were still active and were still accurate. So that is an important consideration. It is something which ideally when one was setting these up one would actually take that into account at the beginning. And then finally the other kind of part is the departmental pages. It is our first move towards some kind of knowledge management providing pages which are only of interest to a particular department within the house. So that on the library pages we have things like copies of the librarian circular, our weekly information sheet which just alerts us to what is happening within the library each particular week. There are links to web sites which we have subscriptions but are only available to library staff, usually because of cost issues too. And the way again that we are helping people to find their way around things is that they all have a different kind of background. It is a kind of minor point, but it does mean that if you get to a point that has a kind of pale blue background you know that is one of the library pages. And therefore if you are directing people and directing enquiries to information sources on the Intranet they would not be able to access it if they know the address but they cannot actually link it. It is only people from within the library that are actually provided with a link to the staff pages. Other departments of the house have to a lesser extent had similar pages too of information that is only of use to them. I hope that has been useful. As I said that is a fairly brief description of the sort of material that is actually on the parliamentary Intranet and the web site. Both are sources which anybody has access to, we find them useful within the UK Parliament.

16.5 Discussions, Questions and Answers

Prof Mchombu: From the presentation, it does show us that there are many, many things we can do with the Internet and that there is a lot of information we can draw out of it to supplement and enrich our resources. It basically to me means that having the capacity to access information in this way is a basic necessity if you are to function effectively in your own parliament libraries. In cases where one doesn't have access to this type of information, I think we should take it as a priority to develop these resources because they do build up our capacity. The question I have is regarding newspapers which are stored in CD-ROMS. Do you store everything in the newspapers or this is done selectively?

Ms Whittle: As far as I am aware, everything in the newspaper is stored, not the advertisements, but the text and sometimes even pictures of the news stories, but they are complete, because they are produced by the newspapers themselves, it is something that actually comes from the newspaper publisher on CD-ROM. Within the library we always cut newspapers that the subject specialists have collections of newspapers on their subjects. We have started a project this year of converting those collections of cutting, or rather not converting existing collections, but instead of actually physically cutting the newspaper, producing the same kind of collection but in an electronic format, creating a database of press cuttings which is done partly by using the profile database of daily newspapers so that the physical copying of the newspaper itself is actually scanned for cuttings and then those cuttings are searched for and downloaded from the profile. But obviously there is a cost. I would say that the major drawback about it is that actually the staff that use them don't like going to the electronic source, they like to see the newspaper.

The people are an important consideration. In many ways the IT solution would be brilliant but the people who use it do not really like it.

Mr Brown: Members of Parliament have the right to privacy and on the other hand we talk about freedom of information. How much information do you include in the members' database?

Ms Whittle: We do not include anything that is not already in the public domain. I think that really covers most of the information the library deals with. We are dealing with information that is already publicly available. I suppose it is the repackaging that we do. We do actually have internal statistics, what is called the MPs database which lists things like the country they were born in, where they were educated, whether they went to university or not, their age, that kind of thing, which they use for statistical analysis depending on what enquiries they receive. But all of that is information which is already published, we do not actually keep any information that isn't public. We keep it all in one place rather than to search through several different sources to find it.

Mr Brown: Is it possible for you to contact the member to say "this is information about you that is in the public domain which we want to include in a database, is it sufficient or would you like us to add anything?"

Ms Whittle: No, we don't ask them, we don't seek their permission, not at all.

Dr Gabriel: Could you tell us to what extent your library staff is involved with the maintenance of your Web site and how that is managed?

Ms Whittle: The basic maintenance is done within the IT Unit within the library which does all the care-taking of the electronic services, and there is the Network Service Manager who has a kind of overall management of the internal parts of the

network. The things like the list of subject links, the library research papers, the list of members are all actually distributed amongst the different library staff, partly as a way of reducing the burden on one staff member of actually keeping things up to date. People who have an interest in doing it tend to be the ones that actually take on that responsibility and that is certainly the way it has grown, rather than saying this job should include this, it tends to be that the person in that job actually likes doing it. From the public side of the site there is actually a management committee which consists of four people, two from the library, one from the Clerk's Department. We are the people that put the information onto the external site and somebody from the Communications Directorate who again looks after the infrastructure of the parliamentary network as a whole and they are responsible for sending the newly created or updated pages out to our external host and they are the people that really look after the source of information and the way it appears on the external side. It does tend to be people who are interested in it. It is the enthusiasts and I think that is something that we are all working towards, to have it kind of regularised. It should actually be written, become an essential scale for different posts within the library.

Mr Masawi: Is the library side only on the part of retrieval of information from the Internet and handing it over to the researchers to analyse it and give it to the members? How does it differ between the services of the librarians and the services of the researchers within your institution pertaining to what you have presented?

Ms Whittle: I think there is an expectation that the librarians should be more familiar with the Internet, but it isn't always the case. It is actually the subject specialists because that is their subjects and they actually do become very familiar with the Internet.

Ms Namhila: How many Parliaments do you have?

Ms Whittle: The UK Parliament consists of the Lower House which is the House of Commons and the Upper House which is the House of Lords and even though they are in the same building, they operate as two separate institutions. I actually work in the House of Commons Library and there is a separate library for the House of Lords, but that has a much smaller staff. You are probably aware that our Upper Chamber is a non-elected chamber, so therefore the requirements of the members of the House of Lords are quite different because they do not have constituencies. The House of Commons is a much bigger establishment in terms of the way it works and it certainly has a bigger library. There are about 200 staff in the House of Commons Library. Since the election in 1997 we have gone through a process of devolution whereby the different countries of the United Kingdom – Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland - have actually elected their own Parliaments or Assemblies. Scotland has a Scottish Parliament, Wales calls itself an Assembly and Northern Ireland calls itself an Assembly as well. Each of these have their own

legislature for dealing with matters of interest to those particular parts of the country and then the UK, the Westminster Parliament, will still continue to debate matters which are of interest to England and other parts of the United Kingdom.

But also certain things like defence and security issues, like foreign policy which are reserved matters because they concern the country as a whole. They will deal with their own health policies, their education systems, etc.

Ms Namhila: But is your library then linked to those others?

Ms Whittle: Yes, it is. These were set up on 1st July this year. It is a kind of developing relationship to see how we will actually interact with them and how we are going to divide up, how much information we supply to Scotch members of the UK Parliament and how much the Scottish Parliament provides information to Scottish members of the UK Parliament.

17. WORKSHOP RESOLUTIONS

The workshop resulted by passing three resolutions as follows:

- 17.1 To rigorously market APLESA by coming up with a directory of Parliamentary Libraries of Eastern and Southern Africa which would be placed on the APLESA website before the 2000 conference and to promote networking within APLESA member countries.
- 17.2 To facilitate capacity building through attachments and study visits and to promote exchange arrangements between member countries.
- 17.3 To ensure that all the knowledge produced in the country is made accessible to parliamentarians. Each parliament should have legal deposit status.

18. NEXT HOST FOR APLESA CONFERENCE

At the APLESA conference in Lusaka, Zambia in 1998, it was agreed that Namibia should host the 1999 meeting, followed by Lesotho or Swaziland and then Botswana. Unfortunately, Kenya could not immediately confirm the hosting of APLESA in 2000, since a decision was being awaited from the Clerk of the National Assembly of Kenya. After a lengthy discussion, the Kenyan delegation was given until 1st September 1999 to confirm the hosting of APLESA 2000 while Lesotho was requested to be on stand-by, in case Kenya failed to host the conference.

19. INTERNET AND WEB FACILITIES - PRACTICALS

Summary of Activities

Justin Chisenga

Department of Information and Communication Studies

On Friday, 23rd July 1999, the workshop activities moved from the Safari Court and Conference Centre to the Computer Laboratory of the Department of Information and Communication Studies of the University of Namibia. The session concentrated on basic Internet training and access to the World Wide Web (WWW) facilities . The Internet session included:

- Introduction to Netscape Navigator and Netscape Messenger
- Electronic mail
- Discussion groups
- The World Wide Web and web-based information sources
- United Kingdom Parliament Web site
- Finnish Parliament web site

Participants were guided through each of the above by Mr. Justin Chisenga, Ms Felicity Whittle and Ms Paivikki Karhula.

APLESA

**Management Workshop for Parliament Librarians
19 - 23 July 1999
Safari Hotel
Windhoek**

WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

Sunday, 18th July 1999 - Parliament Building (C1)

16:00 - 17:00hrs	:	Registration
17:00 - 17:20hrs	:	Welcoming Remarks - Director: Legal Council National Assembly
17:20 - 17:40hrs	:	Remarks from sponsors - The Finnish Ambassador
17:40 - 18:00hrs	:	Introduction and articulation of training needs - UNAM
18:00 - 18:25hrs	:	Official Opening by the Secretary to the National Assembly
18:25 - 18:30hrs	:	Vote of Thanks (Tanzania)
18:30hrs	:	Official Opening Reception

Monday, 19th July 1999 - Safari Hotel

08:30 - 10:00hrs	:	Self introduction and presentations from participants
10:00 - 11:00hrs	:	Participants expectations from the workshop - Discussions
11:00 - 11:30hrs	:	Tea/Coffee Break
11:30 - 12:30hrs	:	Canadian Parliament Centre
12:30 - 13:00hrs	:	Discussion
13:00 - 14:30hrs	:	LUNCH BREAK
14:30 - 15:30hrs	:	Parliamentary information resources, networking and resource sharing
15:30 - 16:00hrs	:	Discussion
16:00 - 16:15hrs	:	Tea/Coffee Break
16:15 - 17:00hrs	:	SABINET Presentation

Tuesday, 20th July 1999 - Safari Hotel

08:30 - 09:30hrs	:	Management principles and practices
09:30 - 10:00hrs	:	Discussion
10:00 - 10:30hrs	:	Tea/Coffee Break

Appendix 1

10:30 - 11:30hrs	:	Strategic planning
11:30 - 12:00hrs	:	Discussion
12:00 - 13:00hrs	:	Marketing and promotion of parliamentary information services
13:00 - 14:30hrs	:	LUNCH BREAK
14:30 - 15:30hrs	:	Introduction to Information Technology
15:30 - 16:00hrs	:	Discussion
16:00 - 16:15hrs	:	Tea/Coffee Break
16:15 - 17:00hrs	:	Library Information Technology

Wednesday, 21st July 1999 - Safari Hotel

08:30 - 09:30hrs	:	Introduction to information management
09:30 - 10:00hrs	:	Discussion
10:00 - 10:30hrs	:	Tea/Coffee Break
10:30 - 11:30hrs	:	Information and research needs of parliamentarians
11:30 - 12:00hrs	:	Discussion
12:00 - 13:00hrs	:	Information use behaviour of parliamentarians
13:00 - 14:30hrs	:	LUNCH BREAK
14:30 - 15:30hrs	:	Latest developments in information communication technologies
15:30 - 16:00hrs	:	Discussion
16:00 - 16:15hrs	:	Tea/Coffee Break
16:15 - 17:00hrs	:	Support and Cooperation possibilities: APLESA vs Finnish Parliament Library
18:00 - 20:00hrs	:	Cocktail reception at the Finnish Ambassador Residence

Thursday, 22nd July 1999 - Safari Hotel

08:30 - 09:30hrs	:	Acquisition and processing of information sources
09:30 - 10:00hrs	:	Discussion
10:00 - 10:30hrs	:	Tea/Coffee Break
10:30 - 11:30hrs	:	Strategic management of information sources
11:30 - 12:00hrs	:	Discussion
12:00 - 13:00hrs	:	Information services for parliamentarians
13:00 - 14:30hrs	:	LUNCH BREAK
14:30 - 15:30hrs	:	Parliamentary electronic information sources
15:30 - 16:00hrs	:	Discussion
16:00 - 16:15hrs	:	Tea/Coffee Break
16:15 - 17:00hrs	:	Parliamentary electronic information sources - continue

Appendix 1

Friday, 23rd July 1999 - University of Namibia, Room Y230

09:00 - 11:00hrs	:	Practicals on using electronic mail and discussions groups: new dimensions in information communication and management
11:00 - 11:30hrs	:	Tea/Coffee Break
11:30 - 13:00hrs	:	Electronic mail and discussion groups - continue
13:00 - 14:30hrs	:	LUNCH BREAK
14:30 - 16:00hrs	:	Web-based information sources
16:00 - 16:15hrs	:	Tea/Coffee
16:15 - 16:30hrs	:	Departure for Safari Hotel
16:30 - 17:00hrs	:	Discussions and Conclusion of Workshop
18:00hrs	:	Closing Cocktail Reception

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