



## **Action for Development through Libraries Programme Core Activity (ALP)**

### **2004 ANNUAL REPORT**

By Gunilla Natvig, Administrative Officer

#### **BACKGROUND**

According to a decision of IFLA Governing Board ALP has now a new name – Action for development through Libraries Programme – which means that the acronym can be kept. The new name is more action oriented and describes what the programme aims to do.

The Governing Board selected new members of the ALP Advisory Board. Dr Peter Lor, Department of Information Science, University of Pretoria was appointed chair of the Board. The other members are: Jacinta Were, Chair of Div. 8 and member of the Governing Board; Winnie Vitzansky, Secretary General, Danish Library Association; Ulf Göranson, Chief Librarian, Uppsala University; Gunnar Sahlin, National Librarian, the Royal Library of Sweden; Gary Gorman, Chair IFLA RSCAO, Professor of Library and Information Management, Victoria University of Wellington; Adolfo Rodríguez, Researcher, Centro Universitario de Investigaciones Bibliotecológicas UNAM, Mexico.

#### **Mission**

Libraries constitute the basis for all citizens' free access to information. Thereby everyone is given the opportunity to participate in the democratic processes of the society and improve their lives. By furthering library and information services in Africa, Asia and Oceania, and Latin America and the Caribbean, ALP aims at supporting main human development issues: literacy, lifelong learning, bridging the digital divide and sustainable development.

ALP is mission oriented and not subject oriented like other core programmes. Therefore, co-operation with relevant IFLA professional bodies as well as with regional and international organisations is essential to carry out the programme.

ALP achieves its mission through a carefully planned programme of activities in close co-operation between the International Focal Point of ALP and IFLA's Regional Offices, IFLA's Regional Division and its three sections, and other partners. This co-operation includes fundraising, scholarships and attachment programmes, conferences, seminars and workshops, publications and databases.

#### **STAFF AND FINANCE**

IFLA, Uppsala University and 17 Nordic library associations and institutions fund the International Focal Point (IFP) for ALP at Uppsala University Library. Sida (Swedish International Development

Cooperation Agency) funds are also used for the secretariat. To this should be added contributions in kind from Uppsala University Library.

The ALP IFP is staffed by: Birgitta Sandell, Director of the Programme, and Gunilla Natvig, Administrative Officer (part-time, 80%).

### **PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES**

The sponsors in 2004 were Sida, the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Swedish Library Association and IFLA. In addition, those responsible for projects in the regions contributed with their own resources and raised considerable funds from external sources.

### **ALP Meetings and Seminars**

With funding from Sida the following meetings and seminars were carried out.

A workshop on *Managing Digital Libraries (proj. 150)* was held from 23-27 February 2004 in Gaborone, Botswana. The workshop was conducted by Dr Dale Peters, The Digital Imaging South Africa (DISA) project. Twenty candidates were selected to represent ten African countries. Candidates were required to demonstrate their interest and their personal commitment by submitting a proposal outlining a digital library project for their own institution. A further level of accountability was added by the requirement of regular progress reports from each delegate. The presentations encompassed the management of both human resources and technological functions specific to the African region. Practical exercises were aimed at building capacity in technical areas of expertise, ranging from digital conversion to the delivery of Web-based library services, to bridge the digital divide. Information management topics included an introduction to various metadata schemes, the use of XML and open source software options, with a practical demonstration of Greenstone digital library software.

A workshop on *Networking of library and information educators in the Eastern Central and Southern Africa Region (proj. 158)* was held 3-4 July 2004 in Uganda in connection with the SCECSAL conference. There were 35 participants, all involved in LIS Education and training at varying levels. The objectives were to establish a network of LIS schools, assess the curricula of existing LIS schools, determine the training needs of LIS educators to enhance teaching, learning and research and to exploit the collective expertise of LIS education institutions. It was unanimously agreed to establish a network called LISNET-ECSA and an interim committee was set up. The Proceedings have been published.

An *International symposium on the research and utilisation of Chinese local chronicles (proj. 271)* was held 12 to 14 October in Beijing. This project focused on resource sharing and preserving the local heritage. Professionals from libraries and museums in Singapore, Malaysia, India, Thailand, Vietnam, Mongolia and China participated. Theory and practice of digitisation of local documents were covered as well as collecting and management, the use of modern technology and the role of local documents in the social development. With money from Sida ALP paid for the travels of ten delegates from abroad to participate in the meeting.

*Empowering Library Associations (proj. 275)*. This workshop held 5 to 7 October 2004 was organized by the Nepal Library Association and Tribhuvan University Library in co-operation with Professor Russell Bowden. Representatives of library associations in Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka plus around 25 Nepalese librarians attended. The objectives were to strengthen the quality, management and efficiency of services provided by library associations and to assist library associations to encourage the adoption of internationally recognized standards of service and provision for library and information services. One of the greatest achievements from the workshop was the Resolution and subsequent actions to establish the REFSALA (Regional Federation of South Asian Library Associations). After the meeting the Mission Statement, Objectives, Constitution and next Actions were drafted, and these have been forwarded to the library associations of the relevant countries for approval by their members.

The workshop on *Information Skills for Learning* (proj. 276) held 1-5 November, 2004 in Sri Lanka was organized by NILIS (The National Institute of Library & Information Sciences) and Professor Russell Bowden. Educators, librarians and university academics from ten countries in South Asia and South East Asia participated. This international workshop was aimed at promoting the new 21<sup>st</sup> century role of the school/teacher librarian, which emphasises the inculcation of information literacy skills among school children. The objectives were to:

- Provide evidence of the manner in which School Libraries can effectively support teaching and learning.
- Re-orient teacher – pupil relationships from “teachers teaching” to “guides for learners”.
- Assist teachers to an improved understanding of teaching information literacy as an integral part of subject teaching using the library/resource centre as the base.

Unesco/IFLA School Library Manifesto and IFLA/Unesco School Library Guidelines were also made known.

*Creation of a federation of library associations in Central America* (proj. 361). The first meeting of Central American Library Associations was held in San Salvador in March, 2004. The main objective was to strengthen the relation among the associations in the area. Altogether 26 representatives from Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama and El Salvador participated in the meeting. The thirteen members of the Regional Standing Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean who attended, delivered speeches and participated actively in group work and discussions. Convinced that unity makes strength, the participants agreed to create the Central American Federation of Library Associations, FECEAB. The proceedings of the meeting have been published in the IFLA ALP Project Report Series (No 23).

## **The World Library and Information Congress in Buenos Aires**

### *Speakers Grants*

With money from Sida, ALP supported six people who had been selected to present papers at the Congress: Zhang Hongxia, China, “Serious challenge, historic opportunity: Information Literacy education in China”; Leena Shah, India “Information Literacy mission in digital environment: Prospects and plans for developing society in India”; Patricia Mamvoto “The library as a tool for development: the case of Zimbabwe”; Margaret Makenzi, “Reaching the unreached through mobile libraries: the use of mobile reading tents in Kenya”; Dania Vázquez, Cuba, “Historia de la primera Biblioteca Pública de Cuba: La Biblioteca de la Sociedad Patriótica de la Habana”; Paula Cadenas, Venezuela “Books to heal, books to build”.

IFLA had allocated a sum of 30.000 EUR for a travel grant to enable librarians from developing countries to attend the Congress. The sponsorship covered registration, travel, accommodation and a daily allowance. 16 candidates were selected for support.

Sida made funds available to cover registration fees for 37 participants from the Mercosur countries. The Organising Committee in Argentina made the selection of candidates in co-laboration with the Regional Office in Brazil.

The purpose of the Harry Campbell Travel Grant is to support a delegate from a developing country which has not had IFLA Congress participants in the last few years. The grant covers the travel costs and was this year awarded to a librarian from Sierra Leone.

Birgitta Sandell and Gunilla Natvig participated in the Congress in Buenos Aires, took part in the Regional Standing Committee meetings and presented a poster session.

A Strategic Workshop under the chairmanship of Dr Peter Lor was held during the Congress. The goal was to obtain inputs for a review of ALP’s current strategic plan, with emphasis on the mission

and visions statements, and on achieving a more focussed programme from which explicit criteria for the evaluation and selection of projects can be derived. A subsidiary goal was to clarify the role of the Advisory Board.

### **IFLA Regional Standing Committee Meetings**

The annual meeting of the Regional Standing Committees in their own regions are most important for the development of ALP.

Birgitta Sandell participated in the Africa Section meeting in Gaborone, Botswana. Gunilla Natvig attended the meeting of the Section for Asia and Oceania in Singapore and the Latin American and the Caribbean Section meeting in El Salvador.

### **Scholarships and attachments**

#### *In Service Training, Attachments, for Middle or Senior Staff*

Three persons were selected for attachments in 2004 at institutions in the region:

Ms Khin Zae Win, Myanmar, Ms C N K Alahakoon, Sri Lanka and Ms Afsheen Karim, Pakistan. The Swedish Library Association funds this project.

#### *Scholarships in Information Technology*

Four scholarships were awarded in 2004 to attend the four-week course on Information Technology and Information Services at Victoria University of Wellington. The scholarships were awarded to Ms C Mendoza Mangalal-Lan, Philippines; Ms P Gamage, Sri Lanka; Le Thuy Duong, Vietnam; and Ms Luna Shree Upadhyay, Nepal. Sida funds these scholarships.

One candidate was selected for the Bart Nwafor Staff Development Programme in Africa in 2004, with funding from Norad.

The scholarships and attachments have been considered very successful. Apart from the enhancement of professional skills, the projects have developed platforms for networking of professionals, both at individual and institutional levels.

### **Other projects**

*IFLA ALP stand at the SCECSAL 2004 Exhibition (proj. 159).* Uganda hosted the 16<sup>th</sup> Standing Conference of Eastern, Central and Southern Africa Library and Information Associations (SCECSAL XVI) in July 2004. In connection with the conference there was an exhibition. The IFLA ALP stand featured promotional materials, project reports, IFLA publications, IFLA policy documents etc.

*SCECSAL XVI Conference Publications (proj. 160).* With money from Sida, ALP paid for the publication of 350 books containing the papers presented at the SCECSAL conference 5-9 July 2004. The conference attracted 286 participants from 20 countries. The 473 page book is entitled "Toward a Knowledge Society for African Development" and has ISBN 9970-879-00-6.

*IBBY World Congress, September 2004 in South Africa (proj.162).* With money from Sida, ALP was able to assist one delegate from Swaziland, one from Malawi and one from South Africa to participate in the World Congress on children's literature with the emphasis on Africa.

*Journal of librarianship and information science in Africa/Revue de bibliothéconomie et science de l'information en Afrique (proj. 24).* The project was conceived to improve the sharing of information on Library and Information practices among librarians and information workers in Africa. So far, four issues have been published and the editorial committee is working on the 5th. The aim is to increase subscriptions to cover the costs of printing the journal. Sida funds the project.

*Attention to indigenous communities through library service in the Latin American region – Training programme for library personnel (proj. 365).* There are approximately 48 million people with an indigenous background in Latin America. For various reasons, most of them are excluded from library services and information. Thanks to an increasing understanding of the problem, this situation is gradually being addressed through the organization in each country of libraries in agreement with the linguistic and cultural characteristics of the indigenous communities. In 2000 Sida funded a workshop in Mexico which concluded in a declaration with proposed guidelines for library service to indigenous communities in Latin America. It included an agreement to develop a training program for those who give library and information service to these communities. Centro Universitario de Investigaciones Bibliotecológicas (CUIB) in Mexico is now designing a training model in collaboration with institutions in other Latin American countries. Sida funds the project.

*Book-lending points at local fairs and markets in Latin America (proj. 364).* In Chile there is a well-established project - book-lending points in local market places - which are known as “Caseros del Libro” (Bookstalls). The aim is to make use of public spaces wherever local people get together informally on a daily or weekly basis to bring culture, knowledge and entertainment into their everyday lives, in the belief that if people will not or cannot come to the public library, then the public library must go out and meet people in their own environment. At a Sida financed seminar held in Santiago de Chile in December 2002 on the theme “Working together towards promoting the public libraries in Latin America,” delegates from the neighbouring countries expressed their interest in starting projects based on the same idea. Local authorities would be responsible for the management, which would constitute a common source of experience in promoting literacy, whose final result would benefit public library systems in all the countries involved in the project. The Chilean Department of Libraries, Archives and Museums (DIBAM) is responsible for the planning and implementation of the project and co-ordination with public library systems in the participating countries; Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil and Peru. The Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs funds this project.

*Minor Field Studies (MFS).* Sida has a Co-operation programme with Swedish universities, Minor Field Studies (MFS), and the ALP secretariat is administering this programme within the information field. The programme aims at giving Swedish students the opportunity to carry out a two months study in a developing country. In 2004 two students carried out a study “Study of public librarians’ user goals in Tanzania - a public library user development perspective” in Tanzania.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

### **ALP Project Report Series (ISSN 1023-8212)**

The following issue was published in 2004:

23. *Acceso a los servicios bibliotecarios y de información en los pueblos indígenas de América Latina.* Memorias del seminario en San Salvador. Editado por César Castro y Manuel Cornejo. Lima, 2004. 221 pp. ISBN 992-608-17-4

 **ALP:** <http://www.ifla.org/VI/1/alp.htm>