IFLA—the global voice of libraries

IFLA: portavoz mundial de las bibliotecas

IFLA : la voix des bibliothèques dans le monde

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国际图联——全球图书馆的声音

الإفلا – الصوت الدولي للمكتبات
PARLIAMENTARY INFORMATION SERVICES:

THE ROLE OF THE LIBRARY AND RESEARCH DEPARTMENTS IN THE ZAMBIAN PARLIAMENT IN HELPING MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT MAKE BETTER LAWS

TO BE PRESENTED BY:

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PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS
This paper gives an overview of the Role of the Library and Research Departments in providing information and research services to help Members of Parliament make better laws.
The Library Department

Background

• The Library department was established in 1953.
• Provide up-to-date information on all aspects of Zambian political, social, economic and developmental areas.
• Parliamentary papers include Debates, Bills and Acts of Parliament, budget speeches, Annual reports of government ministries, Roll of Honour and departments and papers laid on the table.
Helping Members of Parliament make better laws

Measures put in place to ensure that decision making process is based on factual and up to date information:

• Indexes and Abstracts
• Databases
• Training for members of staff
• Digitisation
• Capacity building programmes for MPs
Participation at international conferences

• Member of the Zambia Library Association,
• Association of Parliamentary Libraries in Eastern, and Southern Africa (APLESA).
• By participating at international level such as IFLA and INASP, our understanding of library services is expanded from the small environment of our libraries to a global view of best practices.
Cooperation with other departments

• The constituency office Library project
• Indexes and Abstracts
• Databases
• Training for members of staff
• Participation at international conferences
• Digitisation
• Cooperation with other Departments
  – The constituency office Library project
• Capacity building programmes for Members Of Parliament
The Research, Public & International Relations Department

Background

• Officially established on 15th May, 1971;
• Staff drawn from various fields;
• Provide Members of Parliament with readily processed and factual information to enable them carry out their duties effectively; and
• Provide MPs with oral or written information on matters or subjects that come before the House.
Main Responsibilities

- To prepare background papers;
- To provide research services to parliamentary committees;
- To carry out anticipatory research on topical issues;
- To broadcast live parliamentary debates & committee proceedings on Parliament Radio; and
- To provide research services and act as Secretariat to parliamentary caucuses.
Legislative Oversight

The contribution of the research department in the legislative process is through the mechanisms and tools of oversight available in the National Assembly. These include:

• Parliamentary committees;
• Questions to Ministers and Vice-President Question Time;
• Motions;
• Public hearings; and
• Budget oversight
Conclusion

Although Parliaments differ in their form and practice to suit their countries’ political system, they have one aim in common, namely; to make Parliaments as effective as possible in order to meet the demands of the people who they represent. Thus, Parliaments worldwide play a vital role in the governance of their countries through their core functions of representation, legislation and oversight. Through their oversight functions, Parliaments ensure a balance of power, transparency and openness of Executive activities.
THANK YOU