



# BELLAGIO PUBLISHING NETWORK NEWSLETTER

An occasional publication concerning publishing and book development

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*The Bellagio Publishing Network is an informal association of organisations dedicated to strengthening indigenous publishing and book development in Africa. The group includes publishers, donor organisations from both government and private voluntary sectors, and others who are concerned with books and publishing. This newsletter covers news of the Network and perspectives on publishing and book development.*

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# Caribbean publishers form CAPNET

Katherine Salahí

*Katherine Salahí is Co-ordinator, Bellagio Publishing Network*

When Ian Randle wrote to the Bellagio Publishing Network, sometime in the mid-90s, asking whether the Caribbean could be included in terms of support for indigenous publishing, the response was guarded. The principle of support for all southern publishing industries had been established right at the beginning of the Network's existence, and continued in the Newsletter. But the Bellagio Group of donors were unequivocal about limiting their support to Africa and the knowhow in the Network was largely African. APNET was still finding its feet as a pan-African association of African publishers. We invited Randle to attend the Bellagio Publishing Network meeting in Accra in 1996, and he began to build his contacts.

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By mid-1999 UNESCO were willing to include publishing as a separate agenda item at a meeting in Jamaica on regional book policies. Various Caribbean publishers attended, as did an APNET delegation. At the end of 1999, at the Bellagio Publishing Network annual meeting held in New York, Randle reported that there was now enough interest in the Caribbean to think of setting up a Caribbean Publishing Network, emulating APNET's example. Conditions were, in many cases, similar: an industry dominated by northern multinationals, a few weak local publishers, inexperienced and under-resourced, in need of professional and financial support to help them up the rungs of the industry. The audience listened interestedly, nodded sympathetically, and went home. The Secretariat was under instructions to wind down operations, now that APNET's partnership with its funders was up and running. There would be no funding for a similar support network for Caribbean publishing.

Undeterred, a small group of Caribbean publishers began making plans to call a regional meeting of Caribbean publishers. They aimed to bring together publishers from all the four language groups in the region. This was no

small task, given the highly fragmented nature of the region, not to mention the industry. It was hard enough to find out which publishers existed in the English-speaking islands; what about Haiti? St Maarten? Puerto Rico?

The Bellagio secretariat meanwhile sought ways to continue supporting the Network once core funding ended. It was clear that much work remained to be done to strengthen southern publishing industries, and that closing down the Bellagio Publishing Network would send a negative signal to southern publishers. The secretariat staff decided, therefore, to set up a separate company to work alongside the Bellagio Publishing Network secretariat. The company would provide a framework for the staff to undertake project work beyond the brief of the Bellagio Group of donors; it would also help to sustain the Bellagio secretariat work once the donor funding came to an end. In June 2000 Interculture was formally registered in England as a not-for-profit limited company.

Interculture's first assignment was to help with the logistics of a consultative meeting called by the Ford Foundation in Trinidad. The Foundation wanted to find out more about the range of cultural enterprises existing in the Caribbean region, with a view to funding regional cultural initiatives in the future. Ian Randle was invited to speak on publishing. It was too good an opportunity to miss. The Ford Foundation agreed to include funding for several publishers to attend the consultative meeting, with the proviso that representation from the region should be as wide as possible. Some publishers came under their own steam, Trinidadian publishers joined in, separate meetings were organised with the help of Interculture, and by the time it was Ian Randle's turn to speak at the Ford consultative meeting he was able to announce the formation of a Caribbean Publishers Network, to be called CAPNET in obvious recognition of the debt owed to the example of APNET.

The first CAPNET Council consisted of six officers: Ian Randle (Jamaica) as President, Alfredo Torres (Puerto Rico) as Vice-President, Ken Jaikaransingh and Jeremy Taylor (both Trinidad) as Treasurer and Secretary, and Montserrat Duran (Belize) and Ilona Armand (Haiti) as Council members; Alex Richards from St Martin, a librarian with legal training, became ex-officio member responsible for legal matters. Press releases, e-news and personal contacts spread the word quickly around the world. APNET expressed their delight at the existence of this new network and their sense of pride in the inspirational role they had played. Messages of support poured in.

The CAPNET Council were keenly aware of the challenges they faced. So little was known about the publishing that exists in the Caribbean, so little contact takes place between islands, especially between the different language groups. In parallel with APNET, they saw their mission as the development of publishing as a tool for the region in the face of globalisation. And they recognised the importance, in spite of the difficulties and the expense, of arranging to meet again as soon as possible.

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Less than five months later, from 13 to 17 November, with the support of the Rockefeller Foundation, eight publishers met for an intensive planning week at the Rockefeller Conference and Study Center in Bellagio, northern Italy. In addition to the six original Council members were Dorothy Noel from Carlong Publishers, a textbook publishing house in Jamaica, and Jorge Luna Mendoza from the Cuban Book Chamber. In recognition of APNET's pioneering role, the APNET Board were invited to send two of their members to join the meeting. APNET Vice-President James Tumusiime (Uganda) and Mamadou Aliou Sow (Guinea), Chair of the African Publishing Institute, APNET's training wing, provided invaluable guidance and support. Katherine Salahi of the Bellagio Publishing Network secretariat and Interculture, which had helped set up the meeting in Bellagio, acted as minute-taker and, together with Bellagio Publishing Network members Carew Treffgarne of DFID and Carol Priestley of INASP, who joined the group for the second part of the meeting, offered advice and suggestions on possible funding sources for CAPNET.

The group reconfirmed their common vision for CAPNET: 'To contribute to the socio-economic and cultural development of the Caribbean by building and nurturing a professional indigenous publishing industry in the region.' Membership is open to publishers throughout the Caribbean, both individual publishers and, where they exist, publishers' organisations. Supportive organisations and individuals within and outside the Caribbean can join as associate members. Currently there are 18 members; by the end of the year the number is expected to rise to around 30. The proceeds of membership fees, currently set at \$100 annually, will go towards funding the secretariat, which is run on a voluntary basis.

Throughout the discussions in Italy the group looked at the challenges of working in the four language groups of the region. The largest language group by many millions is the Spanish-speaking Caribbean, whose publishing conditions differ markedly from the rest, and also from each other: publishing in Cuba is radically different from publishing in Puerto Rico (although the countries consider themselves 'two wings of the same bird'), and both are different from the Dominican Republic. Similarly Haiti, with its thriving indigenous publishing industry, can not be compared with Martinique and Guadeloupe, whose intimate links with France are reflected in their French-dominated book publishing. In comparison the British islands, diverse as they are, look like one homogeneous market. The decision to expand the CAPNET Council to 12, to include two representatives of each of the four language groups, each from a different island, reflects the team's concern to accommodate all its diverse potential membership.

As a result, the challenge CAPNET faces to build a pan-Caribbean network working in four languages is every bit as daunting as APNET's (some would say more so). Almost none of the publishers round the table had met before last June's meeting in Trinidad. In fact, they confessed, for the most part they did not even know of each other's existence. One thing became clear: the opportunity CAPNET offers to get to know each other excites and pleases them all, in business, personal and Caribbean regional terms. As with APNET, even if CAPNET were to fail tomorrow, it will leave an industry made stronger by the regional links it has fostered.

CAPNET aims to be self-sufficient. The Council recognises, none the less, that support is needed at least in the early stages to get the organisation up and running. In the current political climate it is unlikely that they will find the kind of initial support given to APNET, a network of funders willing to work together and with NGOs. That said, besides the support they have already received from the Ford Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation, there is interest and even commitment in principle in the future from other sources. Meanwhile the publishers themselves are contributing huge chunks of their own personal and business time and resources to building up CAPNET. Each Council member left Italy with a long list of tasks to be done within the next three to six months. The message was clear: inspired by the example of APNET and, even more, by their commitment to the socio-economic and cultural development of the Caribbean region, as publishers, they plan to work together to bring about a vibrant, flourishing, pan-Caribbean book industry.

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## Editorial

This bumper double issue of the Newsletter comes with our apologies for the long gap since the last issue. Our silence is not due to lack of good material; as the range of articles demonstrates. We are delighted to report that the Rockefeller Foundation has recently agreed to continue support for the newsletter for the next two years, and is also funding long overdue improvements to our website. You will notice the difference early in the New Year.

The Newsletter has always concerned itself with matters of publishing and book development in what is broadly known as the south, i.e. beyond the narrower Africa focus of the Network's activities. News of south-south connections is particularly welcome, as a sign of disengagement from the former north-south, teacher to taught relations that are still far too prevalent. In this issue we celebrate the formation of a Caribbean Publishing Network, directly inspired by APNET and happy to learn from its experiences. While conditions in the Caribbean differ from those on the African continent, their experiences in trying to build thriving indigenous publishing industries bear many striking similarities. It is, then, gratifying to see the two organisations working closely together from the start.

In the next issue we hope to bring you information about another new publishing network, formed very recently in the Pacific region. APNET and CAPNET have already expressed an interest in joining forces with their Pacific colleagues for the purposes of advocacy. Just as the pan-African network of publishers has given strength to many a national industry on the continent, so undoubtedly a southern grouping of publishing networks will give greater voice internationally to the concerns of their constituencies.

Copyright remains one of the key issues for publishers the world over, with the weak losing out time and again. Piracy and ignorance feed off each other, as Jimmi Makotsi's piece on Kenya demonstrates. Copyright laws that lag behind current developments also do the industry a disservice (Pustun Pradhan on Nepal, Ajibola Maxwell Oyinloye on Nigera). The next issue will report on APNET's new copyright initiative, led by Monica Seeber.

Publishing in local languages has for the most part been the poor relation of book publishing in Africa. Issues of cost-effectiveness have hampered too many publishers. The Against All Odds conference held in Asmara in January 2000 looked at ways of overcoming the barriers, as did the APNET-organised workshop on publishing in local languages. Questions of translation from one African language to another came up at the African arts and humanities publishing meeting in Florence last year, as an educational and cultural priority for the continent.

The need to encourage reading, on local, national and pan-African levels, receives some of the urgent attention it

deserves in Elinor Sisulu's article on children's reading based on discussions at the all Africa conference on children's reading in South Africa. Richard Mammah writes about new initiatives to encourage reading in Nigeria, while Akoss Afori-Mensah describes in graphic detail the efforts needed to get books into basic schools in Ghana.

Book prizes, book fairs, national book policies, and book procurement policies all have the potential to support indigenous publishing. Some prove more effective than others. The Noma Award continues to celebrate the best of African publishing year on year, unlike the new Caine Prize for African writing, which concentrates on short story writing by writers of African origin, published anywhere. But we welcome any initiative to do with publishing and books whose ultimate goal is to contribute to genuine development in the south.



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## Zimbabwe International Book Fair 2000

Dede Amanor-Wilks

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Despite the political uncertainty following the June general elections in Zimbabwe, this year's Zimbabwe International Book Fair (ZIBF) attracted a large number of exhibitors and several big names in the field of African publishing, including renowned scholars Ali Mazrui, Kole Omotoso, Terence Ranger and Eldred Jones, publisher Kassahun Checole and poets Atukwei Okai and Lade Wosornu. Also there were celebrated Zimbabwean writers, Yvonne Vera, Chenjerai Hove and Shimmer Chinodya and various personalities from non-African countries including Malaysia, Japan, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the UK and the US.

After a slow set-up, the first trading day was hit by a national stayaway called by the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions and backed by the new opposition Movement for Democratic Change to protest continuing government support for the violent occupation of white-owned farms by war veterans and the alleged intimidation of opposition supporters in urban areas. Adding to the uncertainty came a hefty devaluation of the local dollar on the eve of the stayaway. But business picked up after the stayaway was reduced from three days to one and many traders expressed satisfaction at the volume of trade conducted and contacts made. A total of 317 exhibitors turned out, slightly up on last year.

The two big events of ZIBF, the weekend *Indaba* and the five-day Writers Workshop were well attended,

safeguarding ZIBF's reputation as the premier book event in Africa. The two events are designed to provide a forum for South-South and South-North communication about publishing and access to information. The country of focus this year was Ghana.

A highlight of this year's ZIBF was the presentation of the first Caine Prize for African Writing (see report on page ??) to Sudanese writer Leila Aboulela for her short story *The Museum*, which was published in a 1999 anthology of contemporary African women's writing called *Opening Spaces*. The anthology was edited by award-winning Zimbabwean writer Yvonne Vera and published jointly by Heinemann's African Writers Series and Baobab Books of Zimbabwe.

*Opening Spaces* was one of the top-selling books at the fair, along with titles by the other Zimbabwean writers shortlisted for the prize. Among non-fiction writers, visiting scholar and honorary ZIBF trustee Terence Ranger's history of Matebeleland, *Voices from the Rocks* appeared to be a top seller. A new title that sparked interest was *The Pan-Africanists*, published by the Harare-based Southern African Research and Documentation Centre. This profile of 17 black leaders from Africa and the diaspora, with a foreword by Kofi Annan, the UN secretary-general, was launched during the official opening of the Ghana Pavilion, showcasing publications from that country.

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*Ghana's Minister of Education recommended that countries invest in mass literacy programmes, explore the possibility of book development councils networking and producing literature in shared languages, and pool natural resources for the production of inputs to minimise the cost of book production in Africa.*

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Another highlight of ZIBF 2000 was the launch of the Africa 100 Best Books project. The idea for the project was mooted two years ago by Kenyan scholar, Ali Mazrui, to commemorate African writers of the past 100 years. Nominations are being sought for three categories of creative writing - scholarship and children's writing in any language - and a final list of the best 100 will be announced in 2002. The aim of the project is to expose African writing and publishing to a wider audience. Ideas being explored include reproducing books no longer in print as collectors' series with translation. The project, said ZIBF trustee, Alois Mlambo 'will help to celebrate our own creative genius and market African writing'.

Unlike previous book fairs organised around specific issues - last year the theme was gender - this year's tenth anniversary event had the general theme 'Celebrating

African Books' while the *Indaba*, the annual curtain-raiser bringing together renowned writers, publishers, librarians and distributors, was dubbed the 'Millennium Marketplace'.

Speaking to the theme of the book fair, Ekwow Spio-Garbrah, Ghana's Minister of Education, and a published poet, said: 'Celebrating African books involves lauding and applauding our writers, supporting publishers, assisting our book distributors and retailers and taking all measures to promote literacy and the reading culture among our people'.

Spio-Garbrah noted the high illiteracy rates, particularly among women, the lack of clear-cut policies on language use, the high cost of paper and ink for African countries. He recommended that countries invest in mass literacy programmes, explore the possibility of book development councils networking and producing literature in shared languages, and pool natural resources for the production of inputs to minimise the cost of book production in Africa. The minister led a delegation of 25 Ghanaian publishers, writers and distributors.

This year's *Indaba* attracted 400 participants. The two-day conference focused on marketing African books. In a keynote address on market trends in the African book industry, Richard Crabbe, the chair of the African Publishers Network, noted that the trend towards the provision of basic education for all children had increased the number of potential readers and economic liberalisation had created opportunities for publishers, but economic reforms had sapped the purchasing power of parents and potential readers. As a result, he said, publishers were under pressure to produce books more affordably, but in the face of low print runs and the rising cost of imported paper and printing equipment, the onus was on governments to reduce tariffs on such inputs to encourage the local production of books.

On an optimistic note, he said that the recent declaration on the establishment of an African Union by OAU heads of states and governments was a step toward creating a potential market of more than 300 million readers - more than in the European Union or US. 'African publishers need to think beyond their borders and seek to develop the alliances and mergers that we now see in the airline industry in Europe and North America,' Crabbe said.

The challenge to traditional book publishing posed by the new information and communication technologies was keenly debated by book fair participants. On a positive note Thelma Tate, a US librarian, noted in a writers' workshop session that these technologies brought rapid communication worldwide, better interactive teaching and instruction methods, ease of searching and finding information, improved reserves such as the ability to scan documents and upload to the internet, improved storage and preservation of materials, continuous access to information, improved business services through e-commerce, distance learning and the expansion of jobs.

Mads Liland, of Norway, noted that the US-based company Amazon now claims 17 million customers in 160 countries following its successful 1995 launch of book sales via the internet. With minimal investments in warehousing, internet booksellers can offer books at highly competitive prices. Electronic buying also offers the customer a fast, simple and reliable means of selecting a book from a seemingly infinite list of titles and having it delivered to the door.

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*There is a widespread awareness of the importance of indigenous languages as an 'embodiment of a people's culture', and the obligation of the writer to raise their status, but they have a low status compared to foreign languages associated with technological progress and scientific advances.*

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With the digitisation of the book becoming inevitable, Ghana's education minister asked, 'Where does Africa stand with such low per-capita income and such low per-capita knowledge?' Spio-Garbrah acknowledged the problems posed by poor telecommunications in Africa, the high cost of computers, limited access to electricity and the fact that few people use credit cards (the most common form of payment on the internet), but he recommended that the new technology be explored to Africa's advantage. He noted that while it was unrealistic to expect a primary producer such as Ghana to achieve rapid economic growth, it was possible to develop its human potential to the extent that 'gross national knowledge' should become as important as gross national product.

Picking up on this theme during his traditional summing up of the two-day *Indaba*, Terence Ranger asked participants to consider what kind of knowledge Africa needs in the new millennium. 'What kind of knowledge can Africa particularly produce?' Ranger asked, noting that while most Africans would for long remain 'digiprived', (the expression coined by Ali Mazrui to describe those deprived of information in the digital age) even the 'digiprivileged' could end up merely consuming the vast amounts of information made available through the electronic revolution rather than producing their own. Backing up this point, Keiko Kusenesi, the president of Japan's African Literature Association, noted that even in a hi-tech country such as Japan, the overwhelmingly English content of information on the internet meant that Japanese users did not access it widely.

Ranger praised the new forms of knowledge embodied in Yvonne Vera's portrayals of 'human dignity and human agency', while Kole Omotoso suggested that knowledge

must be 'available, repeatable, enduring and improvable'. But linking the theme of African knowledge to the problem of censorship, Chenjerai Hove said that some governments were not keen for everybody to read and write 'in case we know too much', hence the lack of commitment to literacy campaigns. 'Censorship is like closing the tap on knowledge and illiteracy is a form of censorship,' Hove said.

Other keenly debated themes were the marginalisation of African literature in northern markets and the language dilemma of African writers. Zimbabwean writer Pathisa Nyathi noted there was a widespread awareness of the importance of indigenous languages as an 'embodiment of a people's culture', and the obligation of the writer to raise their status, but they had a low status compared to foreign languages associated with technological progress and scientific advances. 'Nobel prize laureates in Africa have written in these languages. Writers in indigenous languages have not enjoyed similar recognition,' Nyathi noted. 'The death of a language is the death of a people. Indigenous knowledge can no longer be accessed. The people are like a rudderless ship in the dark and stormy seas. They lack confidence to face challenges. They can't enter the global village as equal partners. Rather, they are dragged in as unwilling hewers of wood and drawers of water.'

Other activities of the ZIBF week included a 'North Meets South' exchange between African and Swedish writers, live literature readings, workshops on copyrighting and marketing African scholarship, a World Bank workshop on marketing, and the *Amabhuku* exhibition in the National Art Gallery adjacent to the book fair grounds. The exhibition is a collection of illustrations from African children's books, first shown in at the 1998 Bologna Children's Book Fair in Italy.

The idea of a country focus was introduced in 1998 with Kenya as the first country of focus, followed by South Africa in 1999. This year Ghana was chosen to represent the West African region. 'This is good exposure for books from Ghana and it gives us the opportunity not only to come and sell our books but also to learn how to sell,' said Akoss Ofori-Mensah, the honorary secretary of the Ghana Book Publishers Association. Next year's focus will be on francophone Africa.

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# Partnership with APNET: from donors to strategic partners

Rachel Wiggans

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Over the last 40 years the words used to discuss relationships between the north and the south have changed. 'Technical assistance' was superseded by the less paternalistic 'co-operation'. But, despite the word change and all the worthwhile thinking that accompanied it, the money, materials and expertise that were being shifted southwards still came with conditions which did not always seem co-operative. Expenditure was strictly defined and had to be justified, often in great and time-consuming detail. After a while there was more thinking about north-south relations and the term 'partnership' was born.

Whatever underlying inequalities between nations remain, the word changes do at least signal, then reflect, changes of intention and sometimes practice. So what does 'partnership' mean? The theory is straightforward: dictionary definitions include phrases like 'playing on the same side', 'being an ally', 'each incurring liability for losses and the right to share in the benefits' even 'symbiosis'. Practice, as ever, is more complex. The reality of 'partnership' for APNET meant, for many years, reporting to donors on money spent at times that fitted the donors' timescales (often different times of year for different donors), in formats that fitted the donors' systems, and according to the strict rules that had been put in place at the outset for how the money could be spent. As APNET grew and tried to win funding for an increasing number of activities - running this training course, promoting books at that book fair - the number of donors and the variety of their requirements also grew. At one stage APNET's executive secretary reported spending three to four months of the year meeting donor reporting requirements.

Not only was far too much time being spent on bureaucracy, APNET, in common with thousands of other organisations who are funded in a similar way, was also not able to decide its own priorities. If funding was turned down for a part of the programme that APNET considered essential, but money was received for something less important, it had to be the less important work that was done and accounted for. And done before the end of the donor's financial year, even if that was not the best timing for the end recipients. The system meant that APNET could not operate strategically, was prevented from being as effective as it could be.

Donors face their own constraints. Government donors are accountable to their electors, who are often all too keen to hint at 'mis-spent taxes'; foundations are bound by the

trusts that set them up, voluntary organisations risk a collapse of income if they get publicity saying that things might not be quite as expected, and all are subject to legal requirements in their own countries. Even so, several donors to APNET recognised that things needed changing.

The Bellagio Publishing Network, set up to encourage open discussion between donors, African publishers and other concerned with African publishing, was the appropriate forum to raise some of these difficulties.

Three years ago at a Bellagio Publishing Network meeting in Oxford, the secretariat staff suggested that the funds it received to facilitate meetings between APNET and the donors, and to handle some aspects of communication with the book trade in Africa, should be transferred to APNET. Sida meanwhile offered to share its planned evaluation of APNET with the other donors, so that APNET did not have to undergo a series of separate evaluations. The donors agreed, and Sida offered to co-ordinate, with the help of the Bellagio secretariat, terms of reference for the evaluation that would satisfy Danida, NORAD, and other donors who wanted to participate. The Danish consultancy firm COWI was commissioned to undertake the evaluation.

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*One of the evaluation report's main recommendations was for the donors to co-operate with each other and APNET in building a formal strategic partnership - providing funding in such a way that APNET could decide its own priorities. This meant giving core funding - money to pay for the basics that keep an organisation alive. An organisation struggling to pay its rent and its staff cannot focus effectively on what it is trying to achieve.*

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At the Bellagio Publishing Network meeting in Copenhagen two years ago the evaluation report was presented. It too pointed out how much could be gained by making 'partnership' more genuine: one of its main recommendations was for the donors to co-operate with each other and APNET in building a formal strategic partnership - providing funding in such a way that APNET could decide its own priorities. This meant giving core funding - money to pay for the basics that keep an organisation alive. An organisation struggling to pay its rent and its staff cannot focus effectively on what it is trying to achieve. And it meant the donors providing money which APNET's board could spend as it decided. These demands were a true test of partnership and the trust that should be a part of it. Everyone in the room was uncertain what the long-term consequences of such a big step would be, but

several of the donors agreed in principle. APNET and these donors began working to agree a framework within which strategic partnership could operate effectively.

APNET staff drafted a five-year plan. The board discussed it, consulted and made amendments. The timings were crucial and tight. APNET is governed by a constitution that ensures it is democratic, and the plan had to be agreed by the General Council, which was meeting in Kampala in November 1999. At that meeting Richard Crabbe, APNET's chair, outlined what a significant development strategic partnership would mean for APNET, 'At the first meeting of the strategic partners, APNET received pledges covering at least 80 per cent of our funding needs over the five-year period 1999-2004. This is an achievement we should all be proud of. It comes with a challenge: to work harder to achieve the targets we have set ourselves.' The Council discussed the five-year plan in detail, then endorsed the board's continuing work on it.

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*Everyone was elated that the commitment and co-operation of the early years, and the hard work of the preceding twelve months had resulted in what promised to be a practical partnership.*

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Meanwhile the donor representatives were drafting, discussing and redrafting legal agreements which could both meet APNET's needs and comply with their own organisations' requirements. A year ago, only one month after their General Council meeting, and immediately prior to the annual Bellagio Publishing Network meeting, held in New York and hosted by the Ford Foundation, APNET met with their core donors. Sida brought what everyone hoped were the final drafts of the strategic partners agreements. They were discussed again, minor changes were made and final versions were produced for each of the donors. A long table was set up with four legal agreements, between APNET and each of Danida, NORAD, Sida, and the Ford Foundation. A fifth went to the absent Netherlands

The signing could have been a formal and stiff occasion, but it wasn't. Everyone was elated that the commitment and co-operation of the early years, and the hard work of the preceding twelve months had resulted in what promised to be a practical partnership.

In the year since there have been some setbacks, such as donor finance departments which, despite the agreement, find they cannot disburse money without certain documents being in place. But they are outweighed by the advantages. APNET can plan more efficiently and avoid cash flow crises. And the donor funding is being spent on making a difference.

## The Asmara declaration on African languages and literatures

*The Against All Odds Conference on African Languages and Literatures into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century was held in Asmara, Eritrea early in January 2000. Participants from Africa and beyond spent a stimulating week at workshops, meetings and performances, and ended the week issuing a declaration, whose full text is below:*

We writers and scholars from all regions of Africa gathered in Asmara, Eritrea from January 11 to 17, 2000 at the conference titled *Against All Odds: African Languages and Literatures into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. This was the first conference on African languages and literatures ever to be held on African soil, with participants from East, West, North, Southern Africa and from the diaspora and by writers and scholars from around the world. We examined the state of African languages in literature, scholarship, publishing, education and administration in Africa and throughout the world. We celebrated the vitality of African languages and literatures and affirmed their potential. We noted with pride that despite all the odds against them, African languages as vehicles of communication and knowledge survive and have a written continuity of thousands of years. Colonialism created some of the most serious obstacles against African languages and literatures. We noted with concern the fact that these colonial obstacles still haunt independent Africa and continue to block the mind of the continent. We identified a profound incongruity in colonial languages speaking for the continent. At the start of a new century and millennium, Africa must firmly reject this incongruity and affirm a new beginning by returning to its languages and heritage.

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*We call upon all African states, the OAU, the UN and all international organizations that serve Africa to join this effort of recognition and support for African languages*

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At this historic conference, we writers and scholars from all regions of Africa gathered in Asmara, Eritrea declare that:

1. African languages must take on the duty, the responsibility and the challenge of speaking for the continent.
2. The vitality and equality of African languages must be recognized as a basis for the future empowerment of African peoples.



3. The diversity of African languages reflects the rich cultural heritage of Africa and must be used as an instrument of African unity.
4. Dialogue among African languages is essential: African languages must use the instrument of translation to advance communication among all people, including the disabled.
5. All African children have the inalienable right to attend school and learn in their mother tongues. Every effort should be made to develop African languages at all levels of education.
6. Promoting research on African languages is vital for their development, while the advancement of African research and documentation will be best served by the use of African languages.
7. The effective and rapid development of science and technology in Africa depends on the use of African languages and modern technology must be used for the development of African languages.
8. Democracy is essential for the equal development of African languages, and African languages are vital for the development of democracy based on equality and social justice.
9. African languages like all languages contain gender bias. The role of African languages in development must overcome this gender bias and achieve gender equality.
10. African languages are essential for the decolonization of African minds and for the African Renaissance.

The initiative which has materialized in the *Against All Odds* conference must be continued through biennial conferences in different parts of Africa. In order to organize future conferences in different parts of Africa, create a forum of dialogue and co-operation and advance the principles of this declaration, a permanent secretariat will be established, which will be initially based in Asmara, Eritrea.

Translated into as many African languages as possible and based on these principles, the Asmara Declaration is affirmed by all participants in *Against All Odds*. We call upon all African states, the OAU, the UN and all international organizations that serve Africa to join this effort of recognition and support for African languages, with this declaration as a basis for new policies.

While we acknowledge with pride the retention of African languages in some parts of Africa and the diaspora and the role of African languages in the formation of new languages, we urge all people in Africa and the diaspora to join in the spirit of this declaration and become part of the efforts to realize its goals.

*Asmara, 17th January 2000*

## Publishing in local languages workshop in Asmara, January 2000

Akin Fasemore

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African publishing, like several activities and industries on the continent, survives in the face of multi-faceted challenges through a natural resilience which often defies classification within the usual western developmental parameters. Thus, with no formal skills training or capital base, many indigenous African publishing outfits have evolved from low beginnings into modern enterprises now adapting to new technologies in book production and information dissemination. This is even more true of local language publishing, which can be said to have begun from the papyrus writings of the early Egyptians through the Amharic and Tigrinya texts of the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. In West Africa, the first literary effect of European presence was, besides the local translation of the Bible, the production of a newspaper in Yoruba in south-west Nigeria in the 1870s.

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*Although publishing in local language materials has not been as lucrative as textbook production, it has nevertheless resisted whatever death threats the combination of elitist disregard and western-oriented textbook publishing might have posed to its adherents.*

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Although publishing in local language materials has not been as lucrative as textbook production, it has nevertheless resisted whatever death threats the combination of elitist disregard and western-oriented textbook publishing might have posed to its adherents.

In encouraging and nurturing African publishing, APNET has devoted attention to local language publishing through conducting research into African language publishing; participating in an ADEA (Association for the Development of Education in Africa) study on the economics of African language publishing; co-organising a seminar at ZIBF 1996 on African language publishing; and publishing several articles on African languages in its *African Publishing Review*. APNET's current strategic plan includes production of a catalogue of African languages books published in Africa.

The Against All Odds Conference in Asmara provided a unique opportunity for APNET to bring publishers of African language books together to share ideas with each



other and with scholars and writers, to acquire skills and to examine the constraints and potentials of African publishers as strategic allies in the development of African languages and literatures. The participants and presenters came from Cameroon, Eritrea, Lesotho, Nigeria, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The objectives of the workshop organised by APNET were to develop and improve publishing skills in local languages; to acquire skills in African language publishing using modern technology; and to give visibility to African language publishers. Sessions included multilingualism and multilingual publishing; government policy and local language development; marketing and distributing local language publications; desktop publishing and African language publishing; the impact of missionary and colonial activities on African languages; the state of local languages and the constraints facing publishers of local language materials in production, marketing, distribution and

acceptability within education and official programmes.

A visit to one of the biggest printing presses in Eastern Africa, Sabur Printing Services, complemented the session on editorial/production processes applicable to language publishing.

The workshop led to an increased awareness of the importance, potential and challenges of publishing in local languages, and participants identified skills and software in this relatively unexplored area of African language publishing.

A further outcome was the collation of ideas on a new training module on local language publishing for API (African Publishing Institute), APNET's training programme.

*At the Against All Odds conference, APNET organised a four-day workshop on publishing in local languages. This article is an abbreviated report of the workshop.*



# Children's Reading

## all-Africa conference, August 1999

Elinor Sisulu

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'Kader Asmal was a boer man. He died in the Anglo Boer War that took place in Bloemfontein in 1968.' Many teachers would guess that this horrendously inaccurate statement was a response to an examination question. This level of ignorance would even not surprise some. After all, how many school children know that Kader Asmal is our Minister of Education and is very much alive, and that the Anglo Boer War was fought a hundred years ago? What should shock teachers is that this response came not from a primary school child but from a second year library science student!

The Kader Asmal response was quoted by Dr Lulu Makhubela in her presentation to the all-Africa conference on children's reading held in Pretoria in August 1999. Naturally the anecdote evoked much laughter among the delegates to the conference, but underlying the laughter was a grave concern that many teachers and librarians do not read enough to acquire even the most basic general knowledge. If professional educators, who are expected to promote reading, do not read themselves, how can they teach children to love reading? This concern was echoed throughout the conference, which brought together teachers, teacher-trainers, librarians, researchers, writers, publishers, book activists, literacy experts and policy-makers from all over Africa and other parts of the world.

The all-Africa conference on children's reading, the first of its kind, was organised by the South African Department of Education, the South African National Commission for UNESCO, READ Educational Trust, the International Reading Association and UNESCO. Sponsors included the governments of New Zealand and the United Kingdom, the World Bank, the International Reading Association, UNESCO as well as some publishers and companies in the private sector.

In his opening address the Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal, emphasised the importance of reading when he said millions of African children have been denied the right to basic education, of which literacy is the core. 'The lack of access to education robs these children of their chances to develop their natural abilities of reasoning, problem solving and creative thinking, and thus lift themselves out of poverty so ensuring a better life for their own children in the future.' The minister pointed to the need to re-design and upgrade teacher-training programmes 'so that teachers can transform their classrooms

and schools into sites of genuine intellectual exploration and creativity'.

The importance of training teachers to teach children how to read was a key concern of the delegates. The presentations and subsequent discussions revealed that throughout Africa not enough emphasis is placed on teacher preparation. Far too often, teachers in Africa are ill motivated and ill equipped to teach reading. Discussions pointed to the need for more research on teacher preparation in reading and the need for information on research regarding reading which should be available to all teachers. Teachers need to know more about the literature of their countries and the continent as a whole and courses in children's literature should be included in teacher-training college curricula.

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*Most of all children need teachers who are passionate. The conference demonstrated that there is no shortage of people who are passionate in their commitment to the enormous task of achieving literacy for all in Africa and turning African children into independent lifelong readers.*

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'Every teacher is a story-teller', declared one of the delegates. The significance of storytelling and oral traditions was another recurring theme of the conference. Mzingizi Manzezulu, a subject adviser in the Western Cape Education Department, demonstrated ways to use storytelling to teach science. Australian writer Mem Fox delighted conference participants with her stories. She argued that when learning to read children need teachers who understand deeply what reading really is, who will tell stories and read aloud often, teachers who will make connections between learning to write and learning to read. Most of all children need teachers who are passionate. The conference demonstrated that there is no shortage of people who are passionate in their commitment to the enormous task of achieving literacy for all in Africa and turning African children into independent lifelong readers.

'The book sector in Zimbabwe is like a dog chasing its own tail: people don't read books because books are so expensive; books are so expensive because people don't read.' This observation by Miriam Bamhare, Executive Director of the Zimbabwe Book Development Council, could apply to any other African country including South Africa.

Structural adjustment programmes throughout the continent have entailed cuts in government education budgets. Consequently libraries have no money to spend on books. This is a disaster for the education of African

children because the inability to read is often the root cause of failure to progress in school. Without stimulating reading material children do not learn to read for pleasure and are less likely to read outside the school curriculum. The great divide between home and school, the failure of education systems to recognise the oral cultures of communities, especially folklore and storytelling traditions, and the lack of culturally relevant materials in indigenous languages are all factors which contribute towards the lack of a reading culture in many African communities.

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*The greatest success of the all-Africa conference was bringing together the major players in the field of children's literacy. The conference showed that there is no need for each of us to try to reinvent the wheel. There are groups of people across the continent working in concrete and creative ways to address the problems of literacy and reading in an environment of shrinking resources and material deprivation.*

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The greatest success of the all-Africa conference was bringing together the major players in the field of children's literacy. The conference showed that there is no need for each of us to try to reinvent the wheel. There are groups of people across the continent working in concrete and creative ways to address the problems of literacy and reading in an environment of shrinking resources and material deprivation.

The most prominent literacy organisation in South Africa is the READ Educational Trust. Founded by Cynthia Hugo in 1979, READ addresses the problems of low levels of literacy and lack of libraries. READ's countrywide language and literacy programme involves training teachers and providing materials to schools in disadvantaged communities.

Conference discussions emphasised the importance of mother tongue and oral language traditions as a source of literacy. In 1995 the first Zambian National Reading Forum report indicated overwhelming consensus that initial literacy should be achieved as quickly as possible in a local language. The report recommended the adoption of an existing programme developed by the Molteno Project and implemented successfully in South Africa, Botswana and Namibia. Molteno's reading and writing programme is based on students' knowledge of the spoken form of their own language.

In Tanzania, the Children's Book Project (CBP) addresses the shortage of books and reading materials. The project aims to encourage and promote writing, publication

and readership of children's books as well as to support and improve indigenous writers, illustrators, publishers, booksellers and printers. As a result of CBP efforts, more than 150 titles, mostly in Swahili, have been published and disseminated to more than 600 primary schools throughout Tanzania. The project turns some of its titles into Braille books and audiotapes for the visually impaired. Its training programmes for illustrators have been so successful that CBP has carried out training for Zimbabwean and Kenyan illustrators. CBP aims to strengthen the skills of primary school teachers and it has launched a pilot programme using the READ method of 'language to literacy'.

Another project involved in the creation of new materials is the aptly named Association for Creative Teaching in Cameroon (ACT). ACT has produced learning materials based on the histories, folklore and customs of local communities in parts of Cameroon. Among other things, ACT trains teachers in research methods and teaches them how to collect materials for ACT supplementary readers. Since 1981 ACT has trained about 2,500 teachers. It has also encouraged children to write and produce their own books.

There is a lot that can be and has been done to inculcate and sustain a reading culture in African countries. The first all-Africa conference on children's reading provided a valuable forum for the exchange of ideas. Delegates suggested that the conference should be seen as a starting point, the beginning of a network and dialogue and the first in a series of conferences at a national, regional and continental level.

*This is a shortened version of an article that originally appeared in The Teacher in South Africa, (a sister publication to the Mail and Guardian), which is distributed every month to all schools in South Africa*



## Marketing and selling books in Africa

seminars at the London Book Fair, March 2000

Rachel Wiggans

*Rachel Wiggans is Assistant Co-ordinator, Bellagio Publishing Network*

At the London Book Fair in March 2000 the Southern African Book Development Education Trust (SABDET) in association with the Zimbabwe International Book Fair organised two seminars on marketing and selling books in Africa. The first, on 'Changes in Government Procurement - Policy and Practice', chaired by Richard Crabbe, presented case studies from Zambia, Tanzania and

Gambia where state control and centralisation of textbook provision is being dismantled. The speakers described the intention of the policy change in each country and some of the successes and problems in implementation.

#### *Changes in Procurement*

Shadreck Hakalima of Zambia's Procurement and Supplies Unit described the move from the centralised policy immediately after independence in 1963, through the gradual introduction of limited competition in publishing, to increasing liberalisation. Despite the advantages of competition, Shadreck Hakalima drew attention to some of the problems that have come from donor policies. In 1997 a scheme was set up by co-operating partners giving schools money to purchase books in proportion to the numbers of children in the school. As a result 80 per cent of schools were visited by publishers. Although staff appreciated the visits, they undermined booksellers, and schools had a narrower range of books from which to select. Donors' tendering processes can also lead to difficulties. Books, unlike cars or desks, should be perceived as a special category of purchase with the user being involved in making the final decision. International competitive bidding criteria mean that bids are often evaluated by price when in practice quality of paper, binding and content are the most important.

Bengt Lindahl, from Graphium Consult, Sweden, who has worked with Tanzania's Book Management Unit, described Tanzania's experience. At independence, education for all was a priority. By the early 1970s the prohibitive cost of imported textbooks resulted in the government taking over textbook publishing supported by UNESCO and UNICEF, who supplied printing machinery, and by Sida, who supplied paper. The intention was to make textbooks cheaper and give local control over content. In practice, publishing costs were not adequately controlled, and books were often produced by curriculum developers without recent classroom experience and teachers who lacked writing ability. Absence of professional publishing expertise meant that books were less pedagogically effective, and books with errors were reprinted year after year.

In 1991, the government decided that textbooks should be published and distributed commercially. Publishing training was carried out, covering all aspects from development to distribution, and publishers were contracted to produce books written in support of a new curriculum. In the tendering process the quality of production and content was taken into account as well as cost. To strengthen their financial capacity, publishers received cash on delivery when the first print run of each title was delivered to the Ministry of Education. Profits from the first printing were re-invested in reprints and the development of new titles. The lack of local printing capacity and paper shortage have forced publishers to use printers from abroad, but by 1999

a total of 90 titles had been published covering the full range of subjects.

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*In 1992 a 'textbook revolving fund' was set up in the Ministry of Education. The aims were to make more books available in core subjects at primary and middle level, to make textbooks more affordable to students, to improve textbook quality, and to ensure a sustainable supply of funds to replace and update books.*

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Theo George of Macmillan Education described Gambia's Textbook Revolving Fund Scheme (TRF). In the 1970s and 1980s Gambian schools were suffering a serious shortage of textbooks. The first National Education Conference in 1987 decided on changes to book supply and in 1992 a 'textbook revolving fund' was set up in the Ministry of Education. The aims were to make more books available in core subjects at primary and middle level, to make textbooks more affordable to students, to improve textbook quality, and to ensure a sustainable supply of funds to replace and update books. Textbooks are written by staff at the Curriculum Research and Development Division to support new education syllabuses. The pupils' books are printed in Hong Kong by Macmillan Education whilst the teachers' manuals are printed by the Book Production and Material Resources Unit in Kanifing. It is hoped that all books will eventually be printed in Gambia.

By the end of year three, 400,000 pupils' and teachers' books had been published and distributed to schools, at a cost of US\$900,000 loaned by the World Bank. The scheme has been generally welcomed as a solution to textbook provision in Gambia. The initial success was mainly due to the support given by parents and teachers. Students pay an annual fee of between US\$2 and US\$15 to use the books. The fees fund replacement copies as well as the extra books needed as pupil numbers increase.

The TRF is administered at three levels. At national level the Ministry of Education distributes books to the six regions and manages the fee income. Regional officers distribute the books on to schools in their areas, collect fees and monitor the use of books in each school. Schools distribute books to pupils and collect their fees which can either be paid in instalments or shared with another pupil. A few exemptions have been set aside in each region for families who cannot afford any fee. Fee income is increasing yearly but the scheme's ultimate success will depend on whether it can be effectively sustained.

Not everything has gone smoothly: information flow between schools and managers has proved hugely

inadequate; the Textbook Fund administrators saw the new tasks as an added burden with no benefits to themselves; some have had to travel long distances from the regions to bank large sums of money without adequate protection or support. Some parents are unwilling or unable to pay fees, and in some cases books arrived so late that fee refunds had to be made. These problems highlight the need for much closer co-operation between all parties involved in the scheme.

After the presentations a range of issues were raised from the floor.

- state to commercial monopoly - there was concern at the predominance of Macmillan Education in Gambian textbook provision. Theo George put the lack of a local publishing and bookselling industry down to the country's small population (1.2 million).
- school choice - how much has really changed, from a school's perspective, with the same people still involved both on state and donor side?
- booksellers tend to be marginalised in donor-funded schemes. Donors need to understand the book trade better, to realise the importance of external funding in the development of bookselling, and be more willing to support commercial entities. Booksellers should be provided with greater opportunities to become involved in the book tendering process.
- external competition - local publishers need to be able to compete fairly in processes that are transparent. In some cases domestic preference clauses should be introduced.

#### *Enterprise and Success*

The second seminar, 'Bookselling and Booksellers - Enterprise and Success', chaired by Ruth Makotsi, looked at some of the challenges booksellers face and how they are being met. Lily Nyariki, from Moi University Bookshop, presented the situation faced by Kenyan booksellers.

Kenya has over 1000 booksellers in two main categories: those mainly selling textbooks - local and imported - and those selling university material. Each of the five public universities has its own shop. Only 45 booksellers are members of Kenya's Booksellers and Stationers Association (KBSA) but, despite the low membership, KBSA is effective. It was involved in a dialogue with the government during a recent Dutch funded textbook project to enable booksellers to bid, successfully, for tenders to get books into the school system (see p21).

Most booksellers travel to Nairobi to obtain their stock, although some publishers do distribute to regional centres. No taxes are levied on books in Kenya. Discount margins of around 25 per cent are fairly well agreed within the book trade and for established booksellers publishers normally give 60 days to pay. New businesses, however, tend to encounter mistrust. The book business peaks between

November and March, which creates difficulties during the rest of the year.

Unfortunately the bibliographical sources booksellers require, such as publishers' catalogues and bibliographies (particularly for books ordered from overseas) are not easy to come by. Only one edition of *Kenya Books in Print* has been published by the Kenya Publishers Association, and the Kenya National Library Service (KNLS), which is the national ISBN agency, has been having problems producing the *Kenya National Bibliography*. The last one to appear was in 1996.

No formal bookselling training exists in Kenya though there is now a demand for a regular training programme to induct staff in bookshop skills. The Pan African Booksellers Association (PABA), recently established to give booksellers a greater voice and to act as a lobby, has made training an essential component of its capacity building programme. With the support of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) Working Group on Books and Learning Materials, PABA has recently run workshops in Ethiopia, Ghana and Malawi.

Boifang von Rudloff of the Botswana Book Centre agreed that although the effects of the technological revolution are beginning to filter through, booksellers are still dependent on published sources of information about books, which are scarce.

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*Simple techniques can be effective: leafleting schools, sending catalogues with relevant titles marked, providing sample copies and following up with a visit. Book exhibitions, television and radio promotions, and even sales vans strategically parked in the market place can also work.*

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Botswana faces particular challenges, being a large country with a population sometimes deemed too small (1.5 million) to support a book industry. Vast distances between publishers and their end users make book distribution difficult. The Ministry of Education is the largest contributor to the book trade, both by increasing literacy rates which thereby raise demand for a wider range of publications, and in book purchase. But, although middle level schools are allowed to select books and order through booksellers, textbooks at primary and junior levels are distributed by publishers direct to schools. Cutting out the bookshops undermines the important role they have to play

Gibrin Adam, of EPP Books Services, Ghana, told the meeting that bookselling began in Ghana through church missions developing publishing and bookselling in support of their educational programmes. The later introduction of

a free textbook policy practically killed the book trade, and when the government took over distribution to schools, books arrived either late or not at all. In the late 1980s and early 1990s a new environment was created giving booksellers the opportunity to solve the book famine.

Although booksellers continue to face problems with the weak economy, the daily depreciation of the Ghanaian currency, and credit at interest rates of 40 to 45 per cent, there are ways to overcome the problems.

EPP Books Services set about finding out what the customer might want, rather than guessing as in the past, so as to provide as wide a range of books as possible to meet public demand whilst avoiding the problem of unwanted stock left on the shelves. Children do want to read but sadly they have not been provided with the books they want to read. The philosophy of 'this is what we want to sell' needs to be replaced by 'what is it that people wish to read'.

Prices are important. Booksellers push for higher discounts from publishers not as a request for charity, but because reduced prices would increase sales to everyone's advantage.

Promotion and publicity are essential to bookselling. The best books should be selected and they should be displayed well. EPP takes a proactive approach with schools, collecting syllabuses, identifying books in use and suggesting alternative new suitable titles. Simple techniques can be effective: leafleting schools, sending catalogues with relevant titles marked, providing sample copies and following up with a visit. Book exhibitions, television and radio promotions, and even sales vans strategically parked in the market place can also work.

Bookselling belongs as an equal partner with publishing within the book trade, and if booksellers are to succeed they must be brought into the broader picture, especially in programmes financed by the government or external donors.

## Encouraging reading in Nigeria - the Synergy story

Richard Mammah

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It may no longer be news that Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation, produces the bulk of literatures from the continent. It may also not be news that Nigerian writers both at home and in the diaspora have won some of the most significant prizes in the continent and beyond: Nigerian writers Wole Soyinka, Chinua Achebe, Ben Okri and Buchi Emecheta are household names across the globe. However, in more recent years Nigerians have been fast ignoring, even abandoning books - that same item that has earned the nation so much fame.

A little story will illustrate this point. Recently this writer, in the company of a visiting German publisher, made a trip to Onitsha, the south eastern town famous for its prime location on the banks of the River Niger, for its status as a commercial nerve centre, and for the impact of its book publishing industry - the same that inaugurated the world-famous Onitsha Market Literature.

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*The writers, journalists, publishers, readers, parents and students that make up Synergy had heard a lot of talk about the low and declining reading levels in Nigeria and we decided not only to investigate this claim but also to initiate practical responses.*

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In the course of this trip, we discovered that Onitsha was still the geographical frontier it had always been and that it was still commercially important - indeed it had even grown into a gargantuan Nigerian trade centre - but that Onitsha's third flank, its book status, had been almost completely eroded. The bookshops, printing presses, publishers, authors and itinerant book vendors are now few and far between, and Onitsha's schools, which used to be status symbols, now rely on coercion to compel parents to send their children there. Whatever happened to the land that had inspired texts as vivid and diverse as *Veronica My Daughter*, *When Love Whispers* and *Chike and the River*, and nurtured and encouraged authors and such book people as Ogali Ogali, Cyprian Ekwensi, Chinua Achebe and Emmanuel Obiechina?

Analysts of the Nigerian book scene have several explanations for the reading drought presently afflicting the land. Absence of a coherent government book



development policy and the associated lack of political will to redress the crisis frequently recurs in discussions of the problem. The nation's underdeveloped publishing infrastructure is another problem, and the overall decline in Nigeria's economic fortunes with its negative impact on the purchasing power of the average Nigerian is a third culprit.

Looking beyond these, however, there is yet another hindrance: the inability of book people themselves to respond to the crisis; as we say in Synergy, 'blending our own energies that our people would read'. This is the origin of Synergy Educational.

Synergy began as a child of necessity. The writers, journalists, publishers, readers, parents and students who make up Synergy had heard a lot of talk about the low and declining reading levels in Nigeria and we decided not only to investigate this claim but also to initiate practical responses should they prove to be true.

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*Building on the belief that the memorable books of a nation rank among its most enduring cultural legacies, and that the written word of a people is often its most effective ambassador, Synergy Educational in April 1999 conceived the 100 years of the Nigerian book international exhibit, conference and road tour*

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After putting together a small flexible working team, we began with a feasibility survey of reading habits in the Lagos area. Some 200 respondents, drawn from urban and semi-urban Lagos, who represented a spectrum of gender and occupational categories, were polled. The majority were already familiar with the book, appreciated its real value to them and to society and had favourite subject areas. But, more often than not, they could not find the books that they would have loved to read, nor did they have the time either to go and look for the books or to read them.

Building on this survey, we undertook a pilot six-week reading promotion activity in July/August 1998 at the Amen Nursery and Primary School in the semi-urban district of Magodo in Lagos State. This programme had in attendance 33 pupils from Abia, Delta and Lagos State Schools and the results were most interesting: many of the pupils were already captive readers, a few of them were already potential authors and every one agreed to sign on to a bookclub if they could find one.

Synergy's nationwide 'twelve schools reading project', which is being supported in its pilot phase by the Heinrich Böll Foundation, is built upon this experience. It incorporates monthly sessions with writers and facilitators talking to student audiences about reading and making books

come alive; the establishment of reading clubs; and participation in Synergy's annual primary and secondary schools' story writing competitions, which result in the publication of an annual anthology.

To reach the post-school segment of the population, Synergy Educational designed a programme to persuade them that the book was as important as many of the other concerns to which they presently gave time and attention, if not more so.

Building on the belief that the memorable books of a nation rank among its most enduring cultural legacies, and that the written word of a people is often its most effective ambassador, Synergy Educational in April 1999 conceived the 100 years of the Nigerian book international exhibit, conference and road tour (the Century Book Project) as a means of highlighting and celebrating the Nigerian book as a foremost cultural property of the nation and her peoples.

The exhibit, which in its first phase is a year-long national and international road tour, was flagged off on 16 November 1999 at the National Assembly Complex, Lagos. It is designed to impact on such diverse areas of the Nigerian book as readership promotion, documentation, evaluation, celebration and cultural exchange. It has since made stops at Ibadan, Ilorin and Makurdi in Nigeria, and Harare during the 2000 Zimbabwe International Book Fair. Support for the exhibit has come from a variety of individual and corporate patrons including the Ford Foundation, Educare Trust, CSS Limited, West African Book Publishers Limited, the Association of Nigerian Authors and the Benue State University.

Synergy's star event for the year is the Lagos 2000 Bookfair in November 2000, the week of Professor Chinua Achebe's 70th birthday celebrations. November 16, the exact date of Achebe's birth, is marked at the fair as Chinua Achebe Day, featuring readings from Achebe's works, a critical review session, an exhibition of his works and writings and a dramatisation of *Things Fall Apart*. This is Synergy's own way of celebrating this cherished icon of our times.

The Achebe birthday celebration is complemented with another inspiring book event, built around Professor Wole Soyinka's *Ake: The Years of Childhood*. This pioneer 'African train tourism reading promotion' involves writers, public functionaries, visitors, and others commuting in 'reading coaches' from Lagos to Abeokuta to Lagos, reading all the way and visiting historical sights mentioned in that book.





# Awards to African books

## The Nigerian Book Foundation Award

The Nigerian Book Foundation's 1999 Outstanding Achievement Award in Book Development was made to Chief Victor Uzoma Nwankwo, Managing Director and Chief Executive of Fourth Dimension Publishing Company Ltd.

*Reproduced below are extracts from the citation made at the award ceremony.*

The preoccupation of the typical chief executive of a Nigerian publishing company is to maximise his company's annual turnover and profit margin. The broader issues of national, African, and international book development are of minimal concern to him. Chief Nwankwo is, naturally, concerned with the progress of his publishing company. Under him, Fourth Dimension Publishing Company Ltd has built up an impressive list of titles, particularly on scholarly works and children's literature. His company set up the first in-house desktop publishing unit in a Nigerian publishing house. The company won the 1994 Legal Deposit award conferred by the National Library of Nigeria.

The significant difference between Chief Nwankwo and his fellow Nigerian publishers lies in his breadth of vision. He looked beyond his nose, and saw that the healthy growth of Fourth Dimension is inextricably linked with the state of national and international book development. Chief Nwankwo is also well known as a man of action, imbued with the philosophy to 'always make a difference'.

In 1989, after only five years as a full-time publisher (from a 13-year civil/structural engineering background), Chief Nwankwo was probably the first head of a publishing company located East of the Niger and away from the Ibadan/Lagos axis to become President of the Nigerian Publishers Association (NPA), a position he held from 1989 to 1991. While NPA President, he founded the Nigerian Book League, bringing together the major professional associations in the book sector, and served as its President from 1989 to 1992. He was appointed to the Board of the Nigerian Educational Research & Development Council (NERDC), representing the Nigerian book industry, from 1989 to 1993, at a time when a national book policy was in the making. He became an active contributor to the founding in 1991 of the Nigerian Book Foundation, Nigeria's non-profit, non-governmental, national book development organization. The Distinguished Publisher Award conferred by the NPA on Chief Nwankwo in 1995 bears eloquent testimony to the high rating he enjoys from his Nigerian peers.

In 1986 Chief Nwankwo became a member of the Council of Management of the African Books Collective

Ltd (ABC), Oxford, UK. ABC is a successful initiative which is helping African publishers to market their books overseas, particularly in Europe and the USA. Because of the quality of his contributions, Chief Nwankwo has remained on the Council ever since.

Chief Nwankwo's election in 1992 as the Founding Chairman of the Board of the African Publishers Network (APNET) launched him firmly into international book publishing and development. The impressive achievements of APNET in its first five years of existence, particularly in establishing a mutually rewarding relationship between African publishers, in grappling with some of the key impediments to book publishing in Africa, and in speaking as one respected voice for African publishing with such international bodies as the World Bank, UNESCO, and the Bellagio group, can be ascribed to Chief Nwankwo's astute and charismatic leadership. And his integrity. Uncharacteristic of 20th century African leaders, Chief Nwankwo pegged the maximum term of any APNET Chairman to four years, and set a shining example by successfully resisting all attempts to waive the regulation in his own case. Little wonder that APNET conferred on him its Merit Award for distinguished service to publishing development in Africa at the end of his tenure.

## Ghana Publisher of the Year Award 1999

In December 1999 Africa Christian Press received Ghana's Publisher of the Year award in recognition of the Company's 'immense contribution to book development in Ghana'.

## Caine Prize 2000

The first Caine Prize for African Writing was presented at ZIBF 2000 to Sudanese writer Leila Aboulela, for her short story 'The Museum', in *Opening Spaces*. Published in 1999 jointly by Heinemann's African Writers Series and Baobab Books of Zimbabwe, *Opening Spaces* is an anthology of African women's writing edited by award-winning Zimbabwean writer Yvonne Vera.

Four other writers shortlisted for the prize included three Zimbabweans, Charles Mungoshi for 'Walking Still', Shimmer Chinodya for 'Can We Talk?', and Rory Kilalela for 'Whine of a Dog' in *The New Writer*. Also shortlisted was Djibouti writer Abdourahman Waberi, for his story 'The Gallery of the Insane' in *XciTes*. The judges commended four other writers, Funso Aiyejina of Nigeria, Ama Ata Aidoo of Ghana, and Farida Karodia and Peter Horn, both of South Africa.

Launched in the UK, the prize is named after Sir Michael Caine, the founder of the Booker Prize, who died in 1999, bequeathing funds for a foundation to support

African creative writing. The prize, worth US\$15,000, focuses on the short story or the narrative poem, as reflecting the contemporary development of the African story-telling tradition. The five-member international judging panel for the Caine award was chaired by Nigerian novelist and Booker prizewinner, Ben Okri.

## Noma Award

The 2000 Noma award has been won by *Ufundishaji wa Fasihi: Nadharia na Mbinu (The Teaching of Literature: Theory and Methods)* by Kimanu Njogu and Rocha Chimerah. The book, in Kiswahili, was published in Nairobi 1999 by the Jomo Kenyatta Foundation.

The jury, chaired by Walter Bgoya of Tanzania, described the book as 'an invaluable contribution to the understanding and teaching of Kiswahili literature...It is probably the first book of its kind to be written and published in an African language.' They commended the book 'for addressing the marginalisation of African indigenous languages, and the tendency, through globalisation, for African languages to be silenced'.

The authors present a survey of the development of Kiswahili literary genres and discuss the major concepts and theories of literature. They propose the most appropriate theory for teaching in secondary schools and colleges: that which recognises the social basis of all literary phenomena.

The jury once again stressed the importance of production standards and stated that however excellent its content, a book would not be considered for the award unless production was good.

The \$10,000 award will be presented at the Cairo International Book Fair, 24 January-6 February 2001.

Ahundred titles were submitted for the 2000 award from 50 African publishers, seven fewer titles and 17 fewer publishers than in 1999.

The 1999 Noma award was presented in November of that year in Australia during the Annual & International Conference of the African Studies Association of Australasia and the Pacific. The prize went to *L'interprétation des rêves dans la région Sénégalienne, suivi de la clef des songes de la Sénégambie, de l'Égypte pharaonique et de la tradition islamique* (The interpretation of dreams in the Senegambian region, with a key to dreams from Senegambia, Pharaonic Egypt and the Islamic tradition) by Djibril Samb, Les Nouvelles Editions Africaines du Sénégal, Dakar, 1998. This work is a study of the structure of ideas and symbolic significance associated with the dream. Focusing on dreams in Ségambian culture, the study is set in the context of the ideas held by the ancient Egyptians, by writers and thinkers of classical Greece, and by the Judaeo-Christian and Islamic traditions.

## Book scheme for basic schools in Ghana

Akoss Ofori-Mensah

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Of late, the falling standards in education in Ghana have become a headache for all concerned. Parents are disturbed because their wards fare poorly in final examinations; government is upset because it is blamed, teachers too are blamed for the failure of students; pupils and students themselves are worried because their future is in jeopardy; publishers and booksellers blame the government as well as parents for not buying enough books for the pupils and students. A matter of serious concern is the fact that young people graduating from junior and senior secondary schools do not speak and write good English these days.

One of the things Ghana could not possibly give up after independence was the English language - standard English, the Queen's English, or BBC English. Ghanaians were, until recently, used to good English: even middle-school leavers could speak and write impeccable English. Then, as if struck by a thunderbolt, the standard of English in Ghana started to deteriorate together with education in general. Many school-leavers these days can hardly read, write or speak good English.

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*Ghanaian publishers have never been happier in their careers. They even had the option of being paid in sterling or local currency. Those who had to print or import their books from abroad were also spared the trouble of having to clear consignments from the port.*

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Children graduating from the basic-school level can hardly be called literate. This fall in the standard of education at the basic level is also being reflected in secondary and tertiary levels. So alarming is the problem that in 1998, when the British Government gave a grant of £53 million to the Ghana Ministry of Education to rehabilitate the basic education system, the Ministry decided to use £8.5 million to buy supplementary readers for the primary schools to revamp reading habits among children.

In May 1998, the Ministry announced an invitation to submit titles for selection and purchase for the primary schools. Consultants were appointed to do a pre-selection and organise workshops in regional capitals for teachers to make their selections of the books. Both local and foreign

publishers like Macmillan, Heinemann, and Longman submitted titles for consideration. In December orders were placed, and publishers were asked to deliver their supplies by the end of March 1999. The publishers really rose to the occasion and delivered their orders on time.

Some four million books were purchased including one million local language books. Sixty per cent of the books came from British publishers and 40 per cent from local publishers. Never before had the Ministry purchased such a variety of books, in such volume, and from so diverse publishers. Twenty-five publishers benefited from this programme.

In view of the brevity of the period within which the books had to be ordered and delivered, Linda Fox, Deputy Director of the British Council, who actually placed the orders, says she could not haggle much with publishers over prices. All the same she got value for money. She refused to negotiate with the Ghana Book Publishers Association as a body: she dealt with publishers on an individual basis; and in their eagerness to get big orders publishers gave big discounts: some even gave discount on freight charges! I must underscore the point that Ghanaian publishers have never been happier in their careers. They even had the option of being paid in sterling or local currency. Those who had to print or import their books from abroad were also spared the trouble of having to clear consignments from the port. All they had to do was to hand over the shipping documents to DFID (British Department for International Development) and the latter organised the port work. Payment for supplies was absolutely brilliant; publishers received their cheques just a few days after submission of their invoices.

### *Distribution - going the extra mile*

Originally, publishers were told that they would have to deliver their books to the schools before they could get paid. The Ghana Book Publishers Association therefore started to put in place a machinery for the distribution: they decided to float a distribution company. Later on in December 1998, the Ministry of Education, DFID, and The British Council decided they could not allow publishers to deliver books themselves, so took away the distribution aspect of the scheme. The contract went to the Ghana Education Service (GES), and to May and Glisby, a haulage company in Tema, under the supervision of the British Council and DFID.

Linda Fox deserves a gold medal for doing a good job with the distribution; from the acquisition of the warehouse, to the receipt of the consignments of books; the fabrication of book boxes, sorting and packing the books into the boxes, she was incredibly meticulous. She would insist that big boxes were put under smaller boxes for fear some people might get hurt from a falling box. She got some ex-servicemen to handle the warehouse work with a team of

expert secretarial staff. These people, under the leadership of Colonel Yartel, arranged and packed the books into book boxes, labelled them according to school, circuit, district, and region. They had to ensure that the consignment for each district reached its destination before the distribution team got there. She also had to organise transportation allowances for every teacher who come to the district capital to collect the books for his or her school. The envelopes were labelled by school, circuit, district and region. And there are at least 11,000 public primary schools in Ghana. It was a very tough assignment.

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*Children will always be children: there is no doubt that they will soil some of the books, tear some, lose some or even steal some. In fact, because of fear of this happening, some teachers tend to keep the books under lock and key and do not allow the children to handle them. This habit defeats the purpose of supplying the books in the first place.*

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On 25 October I set off at 7am with Linda and Lite Otoo, a student, for Kibi and Begoro in the Eastern Region. On arrival at the Kibi District Education office, the books were already there, arranged according to circuits. The headteachers, circuit supervisors, and the District Director of Education were all there. After the launching ceremony, the headteachers and circuit supervisors were paid allowances to enable them to transport the book boxes to their respective schools.

#### *Upper West Region*

What actually makes the distribution work difficult is the long distances of travel and the bad roads in some areas. On 31 October, I left Accra with Evelyn Addo of GES for Wa, to join Linda and her team for the distribution in that region. We left Accra at 7.30am and by 4pm we were in Tamale. At 4am next day we set off for Wa via Damango. The road from Buipe to Sawla is a rough, lonely, country dirt road. You could drive for miles without meeting a single vehicle. Often the road was occupied by cattle, goats, sheep, ducks and guinea fowls who seemed oblivious of the approaching vehicle. We had to stop and wait for them to move at their own leisure; the sound of the horn made little difference. We went through Larabinga, Damongo, and Sawla before we finally hit tarred road to Wa.

The distribution in Wa was not without incident; the truck with the books got held up on the Bole road because another cargo truck had overturned on it thereby blocking all traffic. Finally it arrived late and the distribution ceremony began. After a welcome address by the Regional Minister, Mr David Osei-Wusu, the representative from

DFID, Mr Howard Horsely, presented the books to the minister on behalf of the British Government. The minister in turn handed them over to Mr Alex Tetey-Enyo, the Deputy Director General of the Ghana Education Service. The Deputy Director General handed the books to the Regional Education Officer and then to the District Education Officer, who eventually handed them to the headteachers. The book boxes were then distributed.

That same afternoon we continued to Nadowli to distribute the books for that district and returned to Wa for the night. The following day took us to Jirapa and Lawra. On Wednesday, we continued to Tumu, after which we travelled to Bolgatanga through Navrongo, for the night. By the time we reached Accra on Friday we had covered a distance of 2000 kilometres.

Headteachers and their pupils braved the scorching sun to come from all parts of the region to collect their books at the relevant districts. There was no doubt that they were very happy to have the books. In this region the commonest means of transport is bicycle or motorbike and many of the teachers used these to transport their book boxes to their various destinations.

On Wednesday morning, on the road to Tumu, we came across a headteacher who had collected his books in Jirapa the previous morning and was still hustling to get to his village. He had had to spend the previous night in a nearby village. He had also had to hire a cyclist to carry his book boxes while he escorted him on another bike with a rifle.

Well, on that Jirapa-Tumu road he could easily be attacked by thieves or wild animals. It is a really jungle dirt road with narrow wobbly bridges, hardly visible. We were really impressed by the foresight and diligence of this teacher; he did the profession proud.

#### *Sustainability*

The children are expected to handle the books with care; that is fair enough. However, children will always be children: there is no doubt that they will soil some of the books, tear some, lose some or even steal some. In fact, because of fear of this happening, some teachers tend to keep the books under lock and key and do not allow the children to handle them. This habit defeats the purpose of supplying the books in the first place. The solution to the problem is an annual purchase of a few new readers for each school as replacement for lost or damaged ones. Of course, parents could be made to pay for books stolen or damaged by their wards.

Unfortunately, it is not the children who are the problem but the adults. Even before the distribution exercise was completed, some of the books had already found their way on to the central markets in Kumasi and Bawku.

If the children are to develop the reading habit, then their teachers should themselves also love reading. They should read the books and help the children to read them

also. Reading should be encouraged in the teacher-training colleges and their libraries should be well stocked.

Parents, especially the literate ones, should also find time to read to their children or help them to read. Revamping the literacy skills of the pupils is a communal responsibility and should not be left to teachers alone.

Sporadic visits to the schools by inspectors, education officers, and even publishers, could go a long way to enhance the reading habits of the children. Publishers, for instance, would know whether they are producing the right books for the children or not. Publishers must also do right by their authors. It was most embarrassing to be told by the co-ordinator of the scheme, Paul Krampah, that some publishers had reneged on their responsibility to pay their authors the royalty due them. Such authors have had to find out the print-runs of their titles from the British Council. Failure to pay authors their due is in bad taste and disgraces the publishers concerned. They should remember that there can be no books without authors.

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*Reading prizes could be instituted...to be awarded to children at school, district, regional and even national levels. Such prizes would encourage children to read for pleasure rather than just to pass examinations.*

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Finally, reading prizes could be instituted by all stakeholders, i.e. booksellers, publishers, FM radio stations, the Ghana Education Service, and the Children's Literature Foundation, to be awarded to children at school, district, regional and even national levels. Such prizes would encourage children to read for pleasure rather than just to pass examinations.

Both the Ghana and the British Governments have gone to considerable expense and effort to make the book scheme a success. The scheme was launched in March 1999 by no less personages than the Minister of Education, Honorable Ekow Spio-Garbrah and the British High Commissioner, His Excellency Mr I.W. Mackley. Deputy Ministers of Education Mr Kwabena Kyere and Dr Ibn Chambas, together with the Director General of the Ghana Education Service, have travelled the length and breadth of Ghana whenever possible to launch the scheme in the various regional capitals, with the support of the regional ministers and traditional authorities.

Even Her Royal Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, during her visit to Ghana in November 1999, took time off her busy schedule to visit the La Cluster of Schools to see that the pupils were indeed benefiting from the scheme. The government has laid the foundation for a literate Ghana and the onus is on all and sundry to build on it.

## Towards a unified textbook system in Kenya

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*In Bellagio Publishing Network Newsletter 23, David Muita of the Kenya Publishers Association reported on the introduction of Kenya's new textbook policy. Here, we report on progress.*

Kenya, with the support of donor partners, is moving towards a unified system of textbook provision with accountable systems which involve key stakeholders at all levels. The system will serve to further liberalise the Kenyan book trade.

The supply of textbooks to Kenyan schools over the last 20 years has been affected by national policy changes and the social and economic situation. Until 1988 all textbooks in Kenya were supplied to schools through the National School Equipment Scheme. However, in the late 1980s, when structural adjustment programmes were introduced instituting cost-sharing across all government departments, parents and communities became responsible for providing all school textbooks. The increasing difficulty they faced in raising money even for school fees led to a low primary school enrolment and high dropout rates.

In order to address this negative trend the government introduced the Social Dimensions Development Project in 1991, whereby the government, through the Ministry of Education, provided textbooks to primary schools. All aspects of textbook provision, such as the choice of regions to target and the selection, purchase and distribution of textbooks were controlled by the Ministry. However, this central control generated its own problems:

- books did not always reach the schools due to lack of co-ordination
- schools often received books inappropriate to their needs
- some regional districts benefited more than others
- key stakeholders were not involved in the procurement process
- textbooks were purchased only from government parastatal publishing firms
- there was no system for monitoring and evaluation
- there was no training for key stakeholders



A Royal Netherlands Embassy (RNE) pilot textbook project sought to address some of the logistical problems. Fundamental to the project design were the key elements of book trade liberalisation, equitability of textbook allocation and active participation of all stakeholders in the textbook procurement process. Evaluation of the RNE project highlighted how Kenya had the 'capacity to effectively service school-based purchasing power and decision making even in rural and remote areas' (Read, 1998). It was now the responsibility of the Ministry of Education to ensure that key stakeholders, such as schools, communities, zonal and district officers, the Kenya Booksellers Association (KBA) and Kenya Publishing Association (KPA), were able to contribute to realising this capacity.

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*Once the level of funding to a district was determined it could be shared fairly amongst all schools in the district, using the ranking allocated to each school through the questionnaire. The development of a funding methodology was a key step towards a co-ordinated and equitable provision of textbooks to schools.*

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The success of the RNE pilot project led to the Ministry of Education introducing a national policy on textbook publication and procurement in 1999. This emphasised the key principles piloted in the RNE project and was greeted with enthusiasm by booksellers and publishers (Muita, 1998). The policy allows schools to select any book from the ministry's approved list of textbooks, all of which have been professionally vetted by the Kenya Institute of Education. It includes books published by commercial as well as parastatal publishers. Until this time the 'flourishing educational publishing infrastructure', noted by Cohen in 1998, had been hindered from development by the ministry's reliance on parastatal published books.

The Strengthening Primary Education Project (SPRED) wanted to build on the strengths of the RNE project and further support the move towards a unified textbook system. The first step was to invite booksellers and publishers to a workshop to discuss key issues and make suggestions on the way forward. Lessons learnt from the RNE pilot project were discussed, and the participants stressed the importance of ensuring that schools selected and ordered books according to need. Shortly after this workshop, another was held for the district education officers (DEOs) of the 70+ districts in Kenya, where the discussion focused on the issue of an equitable system for book provision, at both district and school level. Participants felt that equitable distribution

required the involvement and collaboration of all funding agencies. The DEOs suggested that schools' relative needs were best identified at local level by Ministry officers and the community. The workshop generated social, economic, and educational criteria to provide the basis for a Ministry of Education textbook questionnaire which would provide comparative information on every state school in each district. Guidelines compiled for the zonal and district officers ensured that the questionnaires were completed in a fair and transparent way.

The questionnaire and the data it generated came to be described as the 'micro' level element of the funding methodology. It was developed in parallel with a 'macro' level strategy which drew on national poverty and population data. This meant that any amount of funding could be fairly apportioned amongst any number of districts (Opondo, 1998). Once the level of funding to a district was determined it could be shared fairly amongst all schools in the district, using the ranking allocated to each school through the questionnaire. The development of a funding methodology was a key step towards a co-ordinated and equitable provision of textbooks to schools.

The Ministry Textbook Unit next addressed the issue of fleshing out the policy in relation to textbook procurement at school level. It produced a *Primary School Textbook Management Handbook* detailing all aspects of the process, which was distributed to all state schools. The unit also developed administrative documents and forms such as the 'Stock/Issue Register' and the 'School Textbook Order Form'. Key stakeholders needed training. To ensure consistent quality the Ministry Textbook Unit developed a Trainers' Manual, used both by the central team to train the district and zonal officers, and by the officers themselves to train the school Selection Textbook Committees. Another important step towards a unified and fair system was updating the Ministry's approved list of textbooks, with publishers verifying prices and other information about all their listed books. The process has been monitored and evaluated at all levels and the feedback is encouraging. Schools, publishers and booksellers are doing their best to make the system work.

However, although we have made a lot of progress towards putting in place a unified system of textbook provision, there is still much to be done. Existing Ministry mechanisms for distributing funds to schools need to be developed, strengthened or modified. The Textbook Unit needs the capacity to be able to play a central role in all aspects of the process. One way forward has been the development by the Unit of a 'Textbook Policy Framework' identifying strategic areas which should be operating efficiently in order to support a unified approach. The next step is for the textbook team to ensure that the Unit is appropriately staffed and to develop each of these strategic

areas so that they become functional and effective systems. The Ministry officers in the field need to constantly monitor and evaluate the textbook procurement process. Communities and parents must ensure that they are actively involved in the whole process through the school textbook selection committees and the parent teacher associations.

Although funding support from development partners remains crucial, the Ministry of Education must be able to control and co-ordinate the allocation of funds. It must have the confidence to insist that donors work within the Ministry system, leaving the Ministry to take decisions about the provision of textbooks to Kenyan schools. This means that donors too have a responsibility not only to work within Ministry systems, but also to support and strengthen them. Finally, the publishers and booksellers, who have welcomed the liberalisation of the book trade, have a key role to play in ensuring that schools are able to order and receive the books they select.

The Kenyan national system of textbook procurement is underpinned by key principles of book trade liberalisation, school selection, accountability, equity and participation. The Ministry of Education has developed a funding methodology, school level support and administrative material and has trained key cadres in the school-focused procurement system. With the ongoing support of all the key stakeholders, Kenya will be well on the way to achieving a unified approach to the provision of textbooks in its primary schools.

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## Piracy and ignorance in Kenya

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Several meetings have been held in Nairobi lately to discuss the worrying phenomenon of book piracy in the country and the region. According to David Muita, chairman of the Kenya Publishers Association (KPA), 'piracy cases in the country have become so rampant that the publishing industry is losing Ksh 3000m (US\$4.1m) annually'.

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*It came as a real shock to discover that publishers themselves are reproducing one another's materials, using excerpts as quotations, without seeking permission.*

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Indeed the matter is so grave that it brought all the publishers together for the first time ever, and saw them speak with one voice, strongly condemning the unscrupulous pirates who reprinted their books without permission, 'reaping from where they never sowed'. It came out at this meeting that the problem is at three levels:

1. There are cases where quick-selling titles, usually set books, are reprinted without the publisher's permission and sold to bookshops and to schools by the 'entrepreneurs' at lower trade discounts than the publishers offer. This, of course, is criminal.
2. Photocopying of textbooks is so rife that many institutions, including universities, schools and colleges, have installed photocopiers in their premises as it is more economical to acquire a book through this photographic 'wonder' than to purchase a copy.
3. It came as a real shock to discover that publishers themselves are reproducing one another's materials, using excerpts as quotations, without seeking permission.

Since it is always easier to deal with those problems which we can easily blame on someone else, the KPA decided to tackle the first part of this problem and revisit the other two at a later stage.

#### *The shocking lanes of book piracy*

In most instances, books are reprinted by merchants or moneyed individuals who understand the value of the particular books they choose. Usually such books are the fast sellers; what the Nairobi meeting described as the 'milk cows' within various houses. Such set books are quietly, and illegally, photographed and reprinted within small presses, bound in the night and transported to the provinces



from where they are sold both to bookshops and directly to schools – usually at discounts that go as high as 50 per cent. Publishers in Kenya usually offer 25 to 30 per cent discount to trade.


- Booksellers will collude with the merchants to reprint these fast-selling titles and will quickly supply school orders and pocket their booty before the peak selling period (January to March) is over.
- Printers will overrun publishers' orders and channel the extra copies into the market via 'willing' booksellers and at attractive discounts. Printers will even 'loan' films or plates belonging to publishers to the enterprising merchants for a fee, and without any qualms.
- In one case that was reported, it appeared that publishing staff were even involved in this racket, colluding with their own printers to steal from their employers.

Whichever method is used in this game, the bottom line is that piracy denies the two rightful owners of the book their remuneration: the author, who wrote the book and whose intellectual property it is, loses on royalties, and the publisher, who is the manufacturer and whose physical property it is, loses on the investment.

But crying about the 'thieves and scoundrels' will not help the Kenyan situation. What is needed is a concerted effort of education and sensitisation – to make every citizen aware of the sanctity of intellectual property and to respect it.

- The KPA needs to work more closely with the office of the Attorney General to streamline regulations relating to paper usage by printers, and ensure that printers abide by the legal requirement of keeping records on paper use.
- The Publishers Association has to work closely with the Printers Association to ensure that a code of conduct is set up and that ethical behaviour is both encouraged and practised.
- The Publishers Association has to establish closer working relations with the Booksellers Association, to foster good business practice and to discourage sourcing of stocks from non bona fide sources.
- Publishers themselves should introduce systems in their operations to ensure the security of their publications and to make it difficult for them to be reproduced without permission. Safe storage of pre-press and press materials, use of identification marks in their editions, insistence upon proper security at printers' presses, and regular repeated education of the general public are necessary in protecting authors' rights.

The Nairobi meeting resolved to boycott selling to any booksellers suspected to be abetting piracy, to boycott printing with any printer dealing in this racket, and to sue anybody found to be involved in the racket. Whereas we acknowledge that the law should take its course where a

crime has been committed, we urge the publishing fraternity in Kenya to recognise the importance of educating the public, and to embark on programmes that will make everyone recognise and respect intellectual property. Boycotting and ostracising some players only makes them irascible and, in this particular case, will only make them vengeful pirates. 

## Reprography and copyright in Nigeria

Ajibola Maxwell Oyinloye

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There is a shortage of the books needed in Nigeria to establish and sustain literacy. Indigenous publishers cannot meet the growing demand for books, and 80 per cent of books in tertiary institutions are imported from overseas. Nigeria's economic downturn and the inflationary pressure resulting from currency devaluation have made the situation worse. The soaring cost of paper and printing means that a locally-produced book is likely to cost the equivalent of a month's take-home pay for a lecturer.

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*There is a growing culture of students and lecturers relying on photocopies, with lecturers selling handouts as a substitute for books. Thousands of pages of authors' works are photocopied daily without being paid for.*

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Booksellers are finding it difficult to sell their wares. In the universities, many students cannot afford to buy books. They rely heavily on the libraries in their institutions, but the libraries' stock of books and journals is inadequate and non-current. Lack of foreign exchange for imported books and insufficient local production have resulted in a shortage of essential reading materials in educational institutions. The result is unbridled use of photocopying.

There is a growing culture of students and lecturers relying on photocopies, with lecturers selling handouts as a substitute for books. Thousands of pages of authors' works are photocopied daily without being paid for. This unauthorised photocopying of intellectual works is an infringement of copyright regulations – authors of books and other literary materials should not be made to suffer



from the impact of modern technologies. Writing is slow, cerebral, strenuous and can be risky. Authors deserve to reap the fruits of their labour.

A workshop in reprography held in Ibadan in 1995 observed 'that the emergence of new technologies poses a threat to the economic rights of authors and publishers in Africa'. One of the recommendations of the workshop was that 'appropriate levies should be imposed on equipment and materials capable of being used for reprographic infringements and that reproduction centres and mass users should be licensed'. This is an appropriate position to take. Nigeria is a signatory to the Berne Convention for the protection of literary and artistic works, and, as a member of the UN, to the Universal Convention.

The Nigerian Copyright Council (NCC), established in 1989, is the statutory body charged with the administration of all copyright matters in Nigeria. The Nigerian Copyright Act of 1988, amended in 1992, provides for the effective protection of copyright works. The NCC runs seminars and workshops to educate not only the populace on copyright but also the authors themselves. The launching of the national anti-piracy campaign in 1991 was commendable, but the flagrant abuse of copyright through unauthorised photocopying by students and lecturers clearly shows that rights owners and academics do not demonstrate full understanding of the law.

The NCC should find a way of enforcing copyright on photocopies, and could borrow a leaf from Kopinor, the Norwegian agency that licenses and collects rights from photocopy vendors in Norway. But the issue of copyright cannot be decided by the NCC alone; a form of co-operation and engagement with other bodies involved in the book trade – publishers, booksellers, librarians, student bodies, university administration etc – is absolutely necessary. Copyright should be introduced into the country's educational curriculum. Government must endeavour to develop local publishing and create an enabling environment for book production. A book policy for the country should be put in place. This may be the solution to the problem.

## Copyright in Nepal

Pustun Pradhan

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Nepal's Copyright Act dates from 1965 and was updated in 1997. The 1965 Copyright Act came at a time when the infrastructural and other institutional supports and facilities needed for the development and promotion of creative works were virtually non-existent; the few that existed were poorly equipped and their impact was negligible. Sound broadcasting began in Nepal in 1951 with short-wave broadcasts by Radio Nepal from Kathmandu. A radio was then a luxury. Television was a distant phenomenon. There was no recording industry as such. The film industry was yet to make its appearance.

The printing industry was in the early stages of development. Off-set lithography printing technology was introduced only towards the mid-seventies. Book printing was mostly carried out in Varanasi, on the Indian border. The book industry was dominated by foreign imports, and national authorship had not yet taken root. All that existed in the name of a publishing industry were a handful of government and private publishing houses which operated on a small scale. Publication of newspapers, periodicals and magazines was limited, and much of the domestic need for such publications was provided by foreign imports.

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*With new technologies offering different ways of creating, reproducing and disseminating protected works, the prospect for exploiting these works for various commercial purposes has broadened immensely.*

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It is obvious that a Copyright Act framed against such a landscape can barely meet the needs of the present developments in various sectors of the copyright industry. With new technologies offering different ways of creating, reproducing and disseminating protected works, the prospect for exploiting these works for various commercial purposes has broadened immensely. As a result, intellectual property containing protected works has now become a subject of foremost importance in the world of trade and commerce.

Unfortunately, the 1997 Amendment of the 1965 Copyright Act failed to consider the range of new developments and their implications in a national and global perspective. It made only a few alterations on matters of immediate concern relating to coverage and punishment.



Coverage was extended to include computer programmes and research works, and the punishment for infringement of copyright (unauthorised publication), hitherto negligible, was made more severe with a first-offence fine of up to Rs 100,000 (approx. US\$1,500), or six months' imprisonment, or both, and for each offence thereafter RS 200,000, or one year's imprisonment, or both.

#### *Enforcement*

Copyright in Nepal is administered by the Nepal National Library (NNL). The first amendment to the Copyright Act in 1997 handed this responsibility to the Department of Archaeology but it is still being administered through the NNL. Despite the existence of copyright law since 1965, there was little evidence of its implementation until copyright rules were formulated and brought into effect from December 1989. Neither the Copyright Act nor the copyright rules contain procedures for legal action to be instituted against infringement. In such circumstances, the scope of copyright administration is confined to being a mere instrument for copyright registration. As of August 1999, works of various description being brought to copyright registration at the NNL included 250 books, 325 audio cassettes, 60 paintings and five video films. To date, only three complaints have been lodged with the NNL against copyright violation - one relates to a book, one to a video film, and one to an audio cassette. Such complaints, however, do not receive the necessary investigation or legal redress because of the lack of adequate and well-defined authority on the part of the copyright registrar. The law has recognised copyright infringement as a criminal offence for which both criminal and civil remedies have been provided. Yet at the operational level these provisions have no meaning for want of enforcement procedure. There exists not a single case of copyright litigation in Nepal.

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Another important element missing in Nepalese copyright law is the absence of provision for a copyright collecting society. Without the existence of such a society, authors can hardly exercise their rights, for it is virtually impossible for them to keep track of the various uses made of their works in this digital environment.

#### *Publishing industry*

In the publishing sector, one of the major concerns of copyright, many new entrepreneurs have come into view over the last few years. With the development that is now taking place in various sectors, especially education, demand for books of all kinds is growing at an ever-increasing rate. In the absence of a reliable database, it is still not known exactly how many new titles a year are published from Nepal: estimates vary in the range of 600 to 700 titles. Nepalese copyright law makes no provision for a compulsory library deposit and there is no other mechanism to find out the titles of books produced in the country every year. Besides, there exist no official statistics indicating the annual consumption of books, nor the volume of imports and exports. According to one estimate, 40-60 per cent of the demand is met by domestic production while the rest is fulfilled by the foreign imports. Although the lack of detailed information makes it difficult to describe the present status of the publishing industry, the growth in the number of publishing houses, printing set-ups, bookstalls, reading materials and such other factors, definitely indicates that the market for the publishing industry is growing, as has the investment in this sector over the last few years. But it is not clear, in the absence of any reliable study, to what extent this growth has been able to develop and promote the national authorship needed to strengthen the domestic publishing industry and achieve self-sufficiency in book production.

The existence of an effective copyright regime is largely a reflection of a well-developed and well-established indigenous copyright industry. Whether we talk of music, publishing or any other sector of the copyright industry, people tend to see more harm than benefit in copyright compliance at the earlier stage of development, when the scope for their products generally remains inelastic due to limited market size. But once they see the market for their products growing viable and more stable and lucrative, they are inclined to look for strong copyright protection. The reason perhaps is that with the steady growth of the market more investment is required to exploit the increasing opportunities. However, such investment may be highly insecure and negative in relation to market potentiality if there exists no effective mechanism to deter the large-scale piracy and other counterfeiting acts that usually take place along with market growth, depriving the legitimate producers from exploiting their due share of market. It is at this level of market development that producers of copyright goods begin to see copyright adherence as in their best interest and start putting pressure on the government for the enactment and effective enforcement of copyright laws.

A case in point is the recent development of the music industry in Nepal. Until a decade ago, neither the

government nor those in the copyright profession ever articulated any concern for the enforcement of copyright laws in Nepal. But a few years back the issue of copyright abruptly came into the light when some artistes and music producers put pressure on the government for the revision and enforcement of the existing copyright law. It is interesting to discover why only music and other audio cassette producers are so concerned about copyright enforcement, while the responses of the majority of those in other sectors of the copyright industry, like publishing, are still lukewarm. The reason perhaps is simple. Over the last few years, the market for music cassettes has picked up dramatically whereas no such fast growth for other sectors of copyright industry could be detected. But, much to the distress of the producers, almost half this market is flooded with counterfeit copies of cassettes. Copyright infringement not only means loss of revenue to the government exchequer but, more important, will pose a major setback to the flow of investment needed for growth and innovation in the copyright industry of the country.



## Book publishing liberalisation in Zambia

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The state of publishing in Zambia is changing albeit rather slowly. Barely ten years ago Zambia was regularly quoted as one of the few countries in Africa where state publishing had, with negative consequences, taken root. The publishing industry is now passing through its third phase. The first was the pre-independence period when an open-door policy - with various publishers - operated in Zambia. The second phase was the post-independence era after 1964, when the nationalisation of book publishing and distribution was in place in 1966 and a statutory organisation was established to fulfil these two roles.

The third phase started on 15 November 1991 when, less than one month after taking over the reins of power, the newly-elected government of the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) proclaimed the liberalisation of the production and supply of educational materials in Zambia.

The government proclamation opened the gates for other educational publishers and suppliers to enter an arena which hitherto had been the exclusive preserve of the Zambia Educational Publishing House (ZEPH).

ZEPH had been founded in 1966 (as the Kenneth Kaunda Foundation), with a board of directors composed almost entirely of government ministers, and with the Republican President as the chairman and patron. When the MMD government came to power in 1991, however, the board of directors was reconstituted. The permanent secretaries of the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Finance and Economic Development became chairman and vice-chairman, respectively.

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*Apart from ZEPH, there are now at least ten other publishers involved in publishing books for the primary and secondary school sector, thereby heightening the level of competition in terms of editorial content and aesthetic production.*

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Up to then ZEPH, a statutory organisation, was responsible for publishing all educational materials developed by the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) of the Ministry of Education, printing, marketing and distributing the published materials via 11 outlets throughout Zambia. ZEPH was joined, on a limited scale, by two other parastatal companies, Zambia Printing Company and Times-Printpak Zambia Limited, which also published and printed educational materials.

The 1991 proclamation was generally perceived as an indication that sooner or later ZEPH, Times-Printpak Zambia Limited and Zambia Printing Company would be privatised, since the privatisation programme for various state-owned companies had already started in earnest.

More than nine years down the line, none of the three companies has been privatised and prospects of their being privatised are almost nil.

During these years Zambia has witnessed the emergence of a number of privately-owned book publishers and booksellers of varying sizes. Among these are Longman Zambia Limited and Oxford University Press (who had closed their Zambian offices in the mid-seventies because of dwindling business in the primary school market) and Macmillan Publishers Limited (who, through their parent UK-based holding company, were previously represented by National Educational Company of Zambia Limited, a subsidiary of the Kenneth Kaunda Foundation, ZEPH's predecessor). Notable among the privately-owned Zambian companies which publish primary and secondary books are School and College Press, Insaka Press Limited, Maiden Publishing House, Bookworld Publishers, P M Matondo Publishers and Multimedia Zambia. As with most publishing houses at the beginning, the majority of these Zambian

publishers are very small with between one and five staff - clearly small is beautiful! Some of the editorial and graphic design services are hired on a freelance basis. With their gradual increase in business operations one envisages recruitment of additional full-time staff. The culture of publishing company mergers, as experienced in Europe and North America in order to maximise economies of scale, has not spread to Zambia yet. During this period a number of publishing companies have ceased operating for one reason or another.

Apart from ZEPH, there are now at least ten other publishers, including the CDC, involved in publishing books for the primary and secondary school sector, thereby heightening the level of competition in terms of editorial content and aesthetic production.

In order to consolidate the liberalisation of the production and supply of educational materials, the Ministry of Education, after a series of seminars, workshops and exhaustive consultations with various stakeholders, prepared a comprehensive document on 'Policy guidelines and strategies for the provision and utilisation of instructional materials for schools and colleges under a liberalised set-up in Zambia'. The document provides a detailed situation analysis, a problem analysis, sections on the evaluation policy of the CDC, and guidelines for writers of educational materials.

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*Judging from the working culture brought about by liberalisation, competition is the name of the game in the book industry in Zambia today. And so ZEPH is not basking in its old glory as the publisher, but fighting hard to retain its image alongside other Zambian publishers competing to perform well and successfully in spite of all the odds.*

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With policies and systems on development, production and supply in place, the Ministry has also, for the guidance of publishers, set long-term targets of textbook requirements. For instance, under the Basic Education Sub-Sector Investment Programme (BESSIP), the Ministry of Education would like to improve the supply of educational materials, in particular to attain a pupil/textbook ratio of 2:1 by the year 2005. (Currently the ratio varies from subject to subject and from one geographical location of school to another - urban or rural - with the rural area having an average ratio of 6:1.) This objective logically means publishers bracing themselves to meet the challenge by producing enough books, and the Ministry allocating sufficient funds to meet the resultant increased bill.

To this end the CDC is rapidly taking on its role of revising and developing syllabuses, evaluating scripts intended for use in schools, and the general quality control of teaching and learning materials, rather than engaging in book publishing. Accordingly the CDC is now able to compile and publish a list of officially approved and recommended books for use in Zambian schools to which suppliers and publishers can refer.

Whereas the Zambia Printing Company and Times-Printpak Zambia, as parastatal companies, operate under the Companies Act, ZEPH, as a statutory organisation established under an act of parliament, is exempt from paying corporate tax and customs duty on imported goods. The 1991 liberalisation of educational materials production and supply was therefore seen by the book industry as the Zambian government's first step towards levelling the playing ground. When parliament passed the Privatisation Act and the Zambia Privatisation Agency was established in 1992, it was widely believed that ZEPH, then the largest educational book publisher and supplier of educational materials, would be included in the privatisation programme of various state-owned companies.

From 1982 to 1993 ZEPH had benefited a great deal from various donor-funded projects including the Zambia Educational Materials Project (ZEMP), which initially helped ZEPH with training, reprinting of out-of-stock educational titles, upgrading the printing infrastructure, supplying a fleet of vehicles for the distribution of educational materials and generally improving management systems. Later, ZEMP veered its main thrust from supporting ZEPH as an institution to improving the book publishing industry in Zambia as a whole.

The government, in its declared commitment to placing all business in the hands of the private sector, made two attempts, in 1996 and 1997, to privatise ZEPH. Major local daily newspapers carried advertisements by the Zambia Privatisation Agency (ZPA) for the sale of ZEPH. A total of six serious local and international bidders were shortlisted for detailed negotiations. Although two finalists - first and second best bidders - were alternately offered ZEPH, the bid fell through for some reason in 1998. Between 1992 and January 2000, 240 state-owned companies had been privatised, but ZEPH is not amongst them.

It is now understood that the Ministry of Education has retracted its plans for privatising ZEPH; the status quo will have to be maintained and a new board of directors appointed to safeguard government interest in the organisation.

The latest development obviously goes against the original spirit and principle of true liberalisation and ensuring an even playing ground because ZEPH may continue to have an edge over other educational book

publishers and suppliers. And while various privately-owned publishers - Zambian-owned, locally incorporated foreign publishers, and multinationals - will give ZEPH stiff competition and a hard run for its money, state publishing, albeit on a reduced scale, will continue in Zambia. More so because its historical background means that ZEPH commands a huge backlist of educational titles developed by the CDC, and has suitably trained and experienced personnel, an appropriate infrastructure, and printing equipment. If substantial working capital (which is desperately needed as ZEPH operations are at less than 50 per cent capacity) were provided by the shareholders (that is, the government) ZEPH would quickly awaken from its current operational slumber because, with its large number of educational materials in stock, it could put in place a massive reprint programme and grab a larger share of the school market than any other publisher, making those who have not developed as much as ZEPH face unfair competition.

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*Things are changing fast with the emergence of many more privately-owned publishers and booksellers, the organisational changes being made to ZEPH, the daunting but exciting challenge of producing sufficient quantities of textbooks to meet the increasing school population by the year 2005 and beyond, the imminent approval of the National Book Policy, and the establishment of the Book Development Council of Zambia to address various book industry-related issues.*

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Whether the Zambia Educational Publishing House (Amendment 1992) Act will undergo further amendments to remove ZEPH's advantages over other publishers and printers is yet to be seen. It would be useful to know whether ZEPH might revert to the pre-1986 structure, whereby two distinct companies operated - one purely to publish and the other to purchase, market and distribute educational materials nation-wide - except that this time a separate printing company may have to be hived off as well. Such a 'new' set-up may help improve the management and operations of the new-look ZEPH. Judging from the working culture brought about by liberalisation, competition is the name of the game in the book industry in Zambia today. And so ZEPH is not basking in its old glory as *the* publisher, but fighting hard to retain its image alongside other Zambian publishers competing to perform well and successfully in spite of all the odds.

Since 1994 various stakeholders in the book industry in Zambia (including authors, librarians, printers, booksellers, publishers, and representatives of most government ministries associated with the book development) have, through workshops, round-table discussions and a symposium, progressively undertaken extensive groundwork to formulate a National Book Policy and draft a bill for a proposed Book Development Council of Zambia (BDCZ). After what appeared endless work, these two key documents were finalised, and are now under consideration by the government before the bill is further reviewed and tabled before parliament. This will give the BDCZ firm legal backing, facilitating both its operation and the implementation of the National Book Policy.

The government's vision for the development of a strong and competitive book industry in Zambia is also underscored by the National Policy on Education 'Educating Our Future'.

As well as almost all official documents emphasising the provision of suitable and sufficient quantities of textbooks for various levels, strategies to promote the culture of reading for pleasure have also been developed to improve literacy levels and the quality of public libraries. This should support trade publishing in the country, and probably persuade more publishers to find reason for general publishing instead of concentrating on educational textbook publishing, as is the situation now.

At the moment things are changing fast with the emergence of many more privately-owned publishers and booksellers, the organisational changes being made to ZEPH, the daunting but exciting challenge of producing sufficient quantities of textbooks to meet the increasing school population by the year 2005 and beyond, the imminent approval of the National Book Policy, and the establishment of the Book Development Council of Zambia to address various book industry-related issues. The future of book publishing in Zambia appears set for a major leap forward.



## Bellagio Publishing Network secretariat report

For the last three or so years, in addition to our regular work in support of African publishing and in particular APNET, the Bellagio Publishing Network secretariat in Oxford has pursued a strategy of handling projects and activities which are not paid for from the core funding we receive from Danida, NORAD and Sida. The aim is to take on work that can be of benefit to African publishing by making contacts and connections; also to involve African publishers in some of those cultural activities to which international agencies are increasingly devoting attention and money, such as the 1998 UNESCO Stockholm conference on cultural policies marking the end of the World Decade for Culture (see *Newsletter 22*).

Out of discussions in Stockholm, for example, emerged the idea of finding ways to support African arts and humanities publishing, and in September 1999, with the help of the Rockefeller Foundation, the secretariat organised a brainstorming meeting in the Italian village of Pratolino, near Florence, to explore and develop ideas on this theme. We arranged the meeting to coincide with a major World Bank conference on culture co-organised with the Italian government in Florence, so that participants in the arts and humanities publishing meeting could also contribute to the World Bank conference. The publishing meeting participants included African book and magazine publishers; publishers from the Caribbean, the USA and Britain with a track record of co-publishing with African publishers; writers, distributors, booksellers and librarians. A wide range of ideas emerged, some of which we hope to take forward at a seminar on African cultural publishing linked to the 2000 Bellagio Publishing Network meeting, being held in Maputo in December.

Also in the cultural arena, in 1999 we were called upon to support international activities of the Ubuntu cultural network for Africa and the diaspora. After detailed discussions at meetings in January and May 2000, Ubuntu decided to spend its funds on cultural programmes that were already up and running, notably Casa Via Magia in Brazil, and not to pursue a more formal structure at this stage.

The secretariat has been closely involved with the development of the strategic partnership agreement between APNET and its core funders (see p7). At the Bellagio Publishing Network meeting in New York in December 1999, when the partnership agreements were signed, some thought that the Bellagio secretariat had achieved its goals and reached the end of its useful life. Most, however, recognised that there is still plenty to work for in African publishing and book development, and were keen that the network should continue. Secretariat funding from the Nordic donors continues at a reduced rate until June 2001,

specifically for the handover to APNET of our co-ordinating work for their funding. Meanwhile the secretariat staff have been looking for ways to keep the other aspects of secretariat work going for as long as it is needed. In June 2000 we established Interculture, a not-for-profit company aiming to provide a range of services for cultural and scholarly projects, particularly those facilitating south-south connections. We plan to run Interculture side by side with the Bellagio Publishing Network secretariat.

In July 2000 Interculture helped organise a Ford Foundation meeting in Trinidad on Cultural Enterprises in the Caribbean, which became an opportunity for a group of Caribbean publishers to meet and take forward plans to form a Caribbean Publishers Network. CAPNET was born at that meeting. We were then able to support their successful application to the Rockefeller Study and Conference Center in Bellagio, northern Italy which, nearly a decade ago, acted as midwife for both the Bellagio Publishing Network and APNET (see p2).

A year ago Philip Altbach, who has been involved with the Bellagio Publishing Network from before its first day, who started this newsletter, published the Bellagio Studies in Publishing series, and ran the Network's Research and Information Center in the US (see p31), announced at the Network's annual meeting that his other commitments meant he was no longer able to continue his Bellagio work. Philip's quiet dedication to the Bellagio Publishing Network has been essential to its continuity through the years, and whenever the secretariat in Oxford has needed help and advice he has offered it willingly. He remains in touch with and supportive of our work, but the Bellagio Studies in Publishing will no longer be produced from Boston. We have been working with Philip to ensure that the series continues, and hope that in future it will be published from Africa.

In addition, we have continued with our regular tasks of collecting and providing information, building the mailing list, acting as a bridge between partners and potential partners, looking for new opportunities that can help strengthen southern publishing, organising meetings and facilitating contacts. At last year's annual meeting we invited North American publishers and booksellers to contribute to a discussion on marketing African-publishing books in the US. At this year's meeting in Maputo we will have the chance to hear from CAPNET, the new Caribbean Publishers Network, PABA, the new Pan-African Booksellers Association, and the new director of the Zimbabwe International Book Fair.

In October we moved offices in Oxford to larger premises which are more convenient for the wider range of activities we are now doing. (The Jam Factory continues to house the African Books Collective and INASP.) See the new secretariat contact details on page 40.

## Bellagio Publishing Network Research and Information Center

*Below is a summary of the report given to the Bellagio Publishing Network meeting in December 1999 by Philip Altbach, head of the Bellagio Publishing Network Research and Information Center, Boston, USA 1992-2000.*

The Bellagio Group and the RIC were established around the same time. The impetus came from the first Bellagio conference on publishing and development, held in February 1991 at the Rockefeller Foundation's Bellagio Study Center in Italy. This meeting brought together 26 experts on publishing, publishers from developing countries, and officers of several donor groups for several days of intensive discussions. Ivan Kats of the Obor Foundation and Alberta Arthurs of the Rockefeller Foundation provided key support for the meeting, and the Rockefeller Foundation provided the sole financial support for the RIC throughout its existence. From that highly successful meeting came the Bellagio Group, some of the ideas that led to the establishment of the African Publishers' Network (APNET), the Bellagio Secretariat and the Research and Information Center.

The RIC was responsible for the first 19 issues of the Bellagio Publishing Network Newsletter between January 1992 and March 1997, distributing it to around 900 people and making it available in full text on the World Wide Web from 1995. In that time it grew from eight to 28 pages, and became recognized as one of the key sources for information and discussion on publishing issues as they affect developing countries. In 1997, responsibility for the newsletter was transferred to the Secretariat in Oxford.

The Bellagio Studies in Publishing, a monograph series focusing on publishing in Africa and developing countries, has been the RIC's most important lasting contribution. The first of eleven books was published in April 1993. They were published extremely inexpensively, using the support of many experts, publishers and others in Africa, in other developing areas and in the industrialized nations. It is fair to say that the book series has added significantly to the literature on publishing as it relates to development. Typically 200 to 250 copies of each title have been mailed free to publishers, libraries and other institutions in Africa and developing countries elsewhere and to selected donor groups, with later free copies provided on request. Since 1997 commercial sales to libraries and others in the north have been handled by the African Books Collective (ABC) in England.

The RIC has been responsible for two other important benchmark volumes that have contributed to an understanding of publishing and development: *Publishing and Development in the Third World*, Philip G. Altbach,

ed., (Oxford: Hans Zell Publishers, 1992; New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1992; and Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1992) and *International Book Publishing: An Encyclopedia*, Philip G. Altbach and Edith Hoshino, eds., (New York and London: Garland Publishers, 1995). With the permission of Garland Publishers, the RIC published a special edition of this encyclopedia that was made available free to publishers and others in Africa through Book Aid International.

The RIC provided information, research advice, and coordination on an informal basis for scholars, publishers, and others; also articles on publishing and development related to Bellagio work in such journals as *Logos*, *Publishing Research Quarterly*, *Unesco Copyright Bulletin* and *The Bookseller*. These articles focused attention on publishing issues and spread information concerning Bellagio concerns.

The RIC functioned on very limited funding. Core funding came from the Rockefeller Foundation, and funding in kind came from institutions. The State University of New York, from 1992 to 1995, and Boston College from 1995 permitted Philip Altbach to spend some of his research time on Bellagio activities, and Boston College was especially generous in supporting part of the salary of one graduate assistant. Access to extraordinarily inexpensive printing, and authors who were willing to accept modest or no payment for their work have also resulted in low costs.

In all cases when selecting book topics, choosing authors, and seeking advice on individual chapters, the RIC has been able to count on colleagues in Africa and Asia. While it is impossible to mention everyone who has helped, I must single out Henry Chakava, Walter Bgoya, Urvashi Butalia, Tejeshwar Singh, and Victor Nwankwo. Hans Zell deserves special thanks, not only as the publisher of the first book, but also for writing a number of articles and providing endless advice. ABC helped improve the quality and appearance of the books. On several occasions advice from APNET officers and staff concerning proposed titles and authors has been invaluable. We have valued several co-publishers: two titles were co-published by Sage Publications in India and East African Educational Publishers in Kenya. One was co-sponsored by the Obor Foundation.

From the outset, it was decided the 'operational' part of the Bellagio Publishing Network would be the responsibility of the Oxford Secretariat. The RIC enjoyed the support and collegueship of Katherine Salahi throughout and was able to count on her insights, advice, and guidance. The RIC also provided an important support for the Secretariat. The RIC and the secretariat staff made a good team.

The work accomplished by the Research and Information Center (RIC) has proved extremely valuable - providing a benchmark for knowledge about publishing and

development issues generally and about African publishing in particular. It has focused attention on such issues as copyright, the role of African languages, the emergence of the market, women and publishing, and other central topics including, in all publications, analysis by African and third world authors. An indication of what others think of this work is found in the following comment from John Feather, who reviewed a Bellagio book in the Spring 1999 issue of *Publishing Research Quarterly*, 'Philip Altbach's contribution to the developed world's understanding of the book trade in the third world is immense and without parallel.'



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## African impact - a celebration of Africa's 100 best books

In celebration of African writing, publishing and research the Zimbabwe International Book Fair (ZIBF) is inviting nominations for Africa's 100 best books. The final list will be announced and celebrated at ZIBF 2002.

Africa's 100 Best Books project aims to direct the spotlight of the world on to the achievements of African writers and those who have published their works throughout the past century, in order to stimulate the future writing, reading and publishing of African literature, to deepen and broaden the knowledge of Africa's best books, and to celebrate African writing and scholarship.

The project is the most ambitious, high-profile promotion exercise that the African book industry has ever undertaken and will involve a high degree of international and inter-African networking and co-operation. Authors and publishers will reap immeasurable direct benefits from the production and publication of Africa's 100 Best Books list - in both the short- and long-term.

The list should become a highly respected resource - a widely publicised media issue and an indispensable marketing tool for all those involved in the promotion of African publishing.

The nomination criteria are:

- (a) Titles must have been published in the 20th century;
- (b) Titles must have been written by an African, defined for the purpose of the project as someone who was either born in Africa or who became a citizen of an African country;
- (c) Any individual may make a nomination;
- (d) Any individual may make more than one nomination;
- (e) Each nomination must be accompanied by a 50-word rationale;
- (f) Books can be nominated in three categories - creative writing, scholarship, children;
- (g) Nominations will be accepted from any individual anywhere in the world until the close of nominations on 30

September 2001. Such nominations may be submitted by email or fax to ZIBF in Harare and through the regional offices.

By August 2000 some 400 nominations covering 350 titles by 250 authors had already been received from writers, academics, researchers, teachers, professionals in the book trade and interested individuals throughout Africa. A committee of respected African authors, publishers and academics is in place to oversee the project. The final list will be decided by an international panel of jurors working on individual nominations from readers around the world.

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## Africa Journals Online - AJOL 2000

In *Bellagio Publishing Network Newsletter 25*, Diana Rosenberg, who manages Africa Journals Online on behalf of the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP), wrote about the Africa Journals Online project. In August 2000 the service was expanded. The aims remain the same: to use the internet to create a better awareness and promote greater use of scholarly journals published in Africa. Around 50 titles are now on offer, in agricultural sciences, science and technology, health and social sciences. Abstracts are now included as well as tables of contents. There are links to full texts and a keyword search facility. For more information and to use the service go to <http://www.inasp.org.uk/ajol/>

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## Colonial and Post-Colonial Cultures of the Book - a conference

An international conference is planned for 6-8 August 2001, at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa. It will address a wide range of issues relating to 'the history of the book' in colonial and post-colonial contexts, with special emphasis on southern Africa. Topics include: national and international communities of letters, censorship, the history of reading and reading theories, authorship, library history, literacy, oral cultures, orality and print, printing and publishing history, book marketing and distribution, electronic text, and the future of the book. A preliminary programme will be announced in January



2001. The organisers plan to publish - or ideally co-publish - papers in a volume intended to promote the study of book history in southern Africa and Africa generally.

Further details from: Professor John Gouws, Department of English, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, 6140, South Africa [j.gouws@ru.ac.za](mailto:j.gouws@ru.ac.za).



## BOOK REVIEWS

### *The African Writers' Handbook*

ISBN 0952126966 432pp 1999 The African Books Collective Ltd, 27 Park End Street, Oxford, OX1 1HU, England in association with the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, Ovre Slottsgatan 2, S-753 10 Uppsala, Sweden. \$41.95, £24.95

**T***he African Writers' Handbook* is much more than a handbook. It is a good read and an entry into the world of African literature today. A world full of hopes and disappointments, successes and failures, but a world which is on the move and where there is no turning back.

The publishers, the African Books Collective Ltd. and the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, believe in the necessity of an autonomous publishing industry in Africa if the continent is to achieve true development. In this sense, the role of literature must be enhanced and autonomous African publishing strengthened. For the editors, James Gibbs and Jack Mapanje, the volume itself is a successor to *A Handbook for African Writers* published by Hans Zell Publishers in 1986. But it is a much enlarged and wider-ranging version than the previous one.

And this is what makes its strength. The great variety of the contributors allows us to look at literature and publishing in Africa from different angles.

In the first part of the handbook, Paul Tiyambe Zeleza's brilliant essay sets the tone by stating from the outset that 'books are not a luxury in so far as the development process is underpinned by human thought, visions, planning and organisation, all of which require material and intellectual resources'. It may sound obvious to you but it is a message which has to be repeated over and over until everybody, our leaders included, understands that it is vital for Africa to enter 'the political economy of knowledge production, dissemination, and consumption.' Indeed, too often, African governments have chosen to make economic and social development their priority. The aim is to feed the body. But what about the mind? One could argue that the appalling state many African nations find themselves in reflects this choice.

Niyi Osundare and Femi Osofisan remind us how difficult being an African writer can be. They do not paint a rosy picture of the situation and we must thank them for

their honesty. The aim of the handbook is to strike a 'new deal' between author and publisher. This is a laudable enterprise as the relationship between the two is often tarred by conflicting expectations, misunderstandings and a good amount of frustration. Something needs to be done urgently if the brain drain is to stop. Foreign publishing is an almost impossible option to resist for it means international recognition and regular royalty statements. But Femi Osofisan asks: 'How would a local readership develop unless there was an indigenous publishing industry to nurture and encourage it?' Not only are the books produced abroad not easily accessible in Africa but when they finally find their way to the bookshops they are far too expensive for the majority of the people.

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*African women writers are gaining strength as more and more of their voices are being heard. Many want to integrate their experiences into the mainstream of literature and to produce a kind of writing 'that suggests transformation and a challenge to taboo, that invents a language to banish women's silences'.*

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Yvonne Vera's commitment to writing inside the continent and being published in Zimbabwe first, brings an optimistic approach to the issue. The good relationship that she shares with her publisher, Baobab Books, demonstrates that a satisfactory balance can be reached. Her creativity has no doubt been encouraged by the knowledge that she is dealing with a publisher she can trust on an intellectual as well as material level.

African women writers are gaining strength as more and more of their voices are being heard. Like Yvonne Vera, many want to integrate their experiences into the mainstream of literature and to produce a kind of writing 'that suggests transformation and a challenge to taboo, that invents a language to banish women's silences'.

On the publishers' side Walter Bgoya, from Tanzania, gives us a very informative analysis of publishing on the continent, including the francophone region. But the handbook would have benefited from more coverage of francophone Africa, even though efforts have clearly been made to include information about what is happening there.

Henry Chakava's piece on publishing Ngugi is very moving in the sense that it is another example of real collaboration between a publisher and an author. It also raises the language issue and the challenge of writing and publishing books in African languages with the subsequent translations it requires.

The late Ken Saro-Wiwa's testimony on what self-publishing involves is an important contribution. He talks

of the difficulties and rewards of such an enterprise and points out how he used his books in his struggles for the rights of the oppressed minorities in Nigeria. This theme is taken on later by Regina Jere-Malanda's article on censorship, and in an interview with Niyi Osundare on writing against oppression. We are thus rightly reminded of how dangerous writing can be in countries without a good record on human rights.

Part two of the handbook puts the emphasis on the practical aspects of writing and publishing.

It starts with the statement, 'A new deal between African writers and publishers', issued by the participants at the African Writers-Publishers seminar, known as Arusha III, which took place in Tanzania in 1998. The statement is an attempt to define the respective roles of the writer and the publisher and what they can reasonably expect of each other. It gives practical advice and makes propositions towards better collaboration. The Arusha report chapter which follows is of particular interest and could even be extracted and circulated as widely as possible. It tells you everything you always wanted to know as a writer: how to choose the right publisher for your work, how to approach such a person, how to negotiate a contract and what the costs of producing a typical paperback can be. This is very valuable information and I am sure it will do a lot to improve understanding between writers and publishers. With the report and the statement, a 'new deal' could indeed be possible. But will publishers stick to these resolutions? Will young writers start on the right foot? Will there be good will on both sides?

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*This handbook is the result of a fruitful collaboration. The contributors have put their heads together to produce a work that is honest in its approach and helpful in its desire to reach a 'new deal' between writers and publishers for the good of African literature.*

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This handbook is a wealth of information on prizes, awards and contests. It provides directories of writers' organisations, publishers and agents. It also gives you advice on co-publishing and self-publishing and tells you what to do should you encounter the law. A list of book fairs in Africa and those abroad which deal with African books is included, together with the names of magazines to which you can send your work. And there is much more, with topics on internet resources available for African writers, demonstrating that Africa also wants to be part of the electronic revolution.

This handbook is the result of a fruitful collaboration. The contributors have put their heads together to produce a

work that is honest in its approach and helpful in its desire to reach a 'new deal' between writers and publishers for the good of African literature.

The question of distribution immediately comes to mind. How can this book reach as many people as possible in the writing and publishing trade in Africa? Will it get translated into French? Will African writers and especially the young ones be able to afford it?

The fact that it is in the hands of the African Books Collective allows us to imagine that everything will be done to find the appropriate answers and to make this publishing venture a success.

### **Review by Véronique Tadjo**

*Véronique Tadjo is an author and illustrator, +44 20 7792 9495 (fax), tadjokotch@aol.com*



## *An Introduction To Publishing Management* Ian Montagnes

ISBN 1 901830 06 3 124pp 1998 Association for the Development of Education in Africa, \$21.50, £11.95, distributed by African Books Collective Ltd  
Also available in French ISBN 1 901830 07 1

*An Introduction To Publishing Management* deals with the nitty-gritty of publishing, e.g. exactly what makes a publishing house tick; how to run publishing as a business. Chapter 1 analyses the various functions that together constitute publishing; editorial, production, sales and marketing, distribution, finance and administration, and distinguishes between publishing and printing, which is just one of the processes of publishing. It also looks at the need for training and where to go.

A crucial issue, which is discussed in great detail in Chapter 2, is the development of school textbooks. The writer meticulously describes the nature of textbooks and the benefits and risks involved in publishing them. Publishers entering the textbook market need to ask and find answers to questions on pupil enrolment; projected pupil population by class for at least two years; government budget for textbooks currently and for how long; government policies on textbooks; textbook-pupil ratio; the life-span of a textbook. Does the Ministry make multiple approval and allow for competition, which also ensures better textbooks, or does the Ministry approve one book per subject area? Who owns the copyright of textbooks; the Ministry or the publisher/author? Is publishing impeded by customs duties on raw materials? All these issues need to be carefully considered before embarking on textbook publishing.

Furthermore, would-be textbook publishers should examine their resources, both financial and human, and decide whether they can put up the required investment.

The constraints involved are listed. The book gives guidelines on choosing subjects, manuscript development and even possible adaptations, design and illustrations, editing and pre-testing.

Given the current donor funding for many book schemes in Africa, especially textbooks, any publisher would find this book a very useful companion. It is highly recommended for prospective publishers in that field, and already-established publishers would find the book a useful revision exercise.

So many publishers are preoccupied with getting their books from the press that they tend to forget about the balance sheet. They are thus bedevilled by inefficient finance and administration. *An Introduction To Publishing Management* shows how to make a title budget, including how to calculate the break-even point and keeping proper accounting records for the publishing house.

I would strongly recommend the book as a textbook for university students pursuing courses in the book industry; and for all publishers, especially African publishers. I am definitely happy to have a copy.

#### **Review by Akoss Ofori-Mensah**

*Akoss Ofori-Mensah is the Managing Director of Sub Saharan Publishers; PO Box 358 Legon, Accra, Ghana. Tel +233 21 233371, fax +233 21 233371, e-mail: sub-saharan@ighmail.com*



## ***Educational Publishing in Global Perspective: Capacity Building and Trends*** Shobhana Sosale, ed.

ISBN 0821342541 229 pp. 1998 Washington, DC: World Bank Publications PO Box 960, Herndon, VA 20172-0960; Email: books@worldbank.org \$35.00 pb.

This important volume contains the proceedings and reflects the thinking and the deliberations that emerged from a seminar on 'Understanding the Educational Book Industry', which was organized by the World Bank in Washington DC in September 1997. Participants included representatives of publishing houses and book trade associations from both industrial and developing countries, as well as donor representatives with a strong interest in strengthening publishing capacity in Africa and in other parts of the world. The objective of the seminar was to offer World Bank Group staff from education, finance, and private sector development networks, a better understanding of the nature of educational publishing, including the linkages between government textbook policies, the publishing industry, and World Bank-financed textbook operations. It also provided an opportunity for some participants to voice their current grievances about the

World Bank's textbook procurement procedures and bidding systems.

The book contains over 30 papers which are grouped under four major themes: 'Policies for the Long-Term Provision of Educational Materials', 'Finance and Book Trade Issues', 'Procurement, Protection, and Copyright', and 'The Role of Publishing Partnerships'. An additional section on 'The Publishing Industry in the Twenty-First Century' includes a useful paper by James Smith in which he sets out the place and role of educational content in electronic publishing (CD-ROM and the Internet) in developing countries, analysing the advantages and drawbacks of the new electronic media.

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Contributions include papers reporting on the publishing industries in various countries of Africa, in Central and South America and the Caribbean, as well as in Eastern Europe. Each section is followed by a record of the discussions that took place.

The first section starts with a paper by Diana Newton in which she seeks to convince all those involved in designing, supporting, financing or implementing publishing projects and programmes in developing countries for the need and usefulness of national book sector policies. She defines the objectives of a national book policy and its prerequisites, the components of a national book policy, the areas of responsibility for policy formulation and policy implementation, and the avenues for the promotion of national book policies. Also in this section is a contribution by Ingrid Jung (of the Deutsche Stiftung für Internationale Entwicklung) on publishing educational materials in African languages, in which she argues that the development of societies depends crucially on the access to, and the written processing of, information, and discusses what this means for local-language publishing. Maria Stridsman of Swedish Sida reviews the new government of Tanzania policy, known as the Pilot Project for Publishing (PPP), for the production of school and college books, which aims to transform the current textbook system into a complete commercial system whereby the entire book provision process will be marshalled by commercial publishers. She looks at the achievements of PPP to date, the problems encountered in its implementation and the lessons learnt, and also identifies

the core issues to be considered for the future. Carew Treffgarne describes the activities of the Working Group on Books and Learning Materials of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) and its role in sustainable book development. Richard Crabbe, current Chair of the African Publishers' Network (APNET), in a paper focusing on some of the issues involved in the transition from state-controlled to private sector publishing (drawing on the experience in Ghana) examines how publishers have adapted to these changes, and outlines the components which he believes are integral parts in the growth of a thriving indigenous publishing industry. There are also contributions on publishing in the Côte d'Ivoire, including a paper by Amédée Couassi-Ble, Director of CEDA in Abidjan, in which he describes the government's textbook publishing policies, and their partnerships with French publishing houses.

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*Among contributions is one by Victor Nwankwo in which he argues for the need to enhance the role of indigenous publishers in World Bank book-provision schemes. He identifies the key stakeholders in World Bank procurement schemes, the issues involved, and the bidding process. He says that 'the time has come to take a definite and definitive decision to put the local African publisher in the equation of book procurement' and cites the reasons for doing so.*

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In a paper in the second section, Marc Moingeon reports about partnerships between the French publisher Hachette Livre and local publishers in the Côte d'Ivoire (notably Nouvelles Editions Ivoiriennes), and how Hachette came to invest in the publishing industry in the country. Laurent Loric examines the question of aid for book imports in the francophone region of Africa, and takes a critical look at some current strategies for aid schemes in terms of their effectiveness and cost-efficiency. Donor support for textbook provision, primarily at the school level, is also the topic of a paper by Brigid O'Connor of the British Council in which she analyses the impact of donor support for book purchases on both the education systems and the domestic publishing industry. She identifies a number of positive impacts of textbook donation programmes, and suggests ways of improving the delivery of such donor provision in future by taking the process down to communities and away from central government. In a short paper on cross-border book trade in East Africa, James Tumusiime, of Fountain Publishers in Kampala, draws attention to some of the requirements which are conducive for active cross-border or intra-African book trade in books,

and some of the factors which currently impede it.

Among contributions included under the third section's theme (Procurement, Protection, and Copyright) is one by Victor Nwankwo, 'Enhancing the Role of Local African Publishers in Book Procurement Schemes', in which he argues for the need to enhance the role of indigenous publishers in World Bank book-provision schemes, using the Nigerian situation as an example. He identifies the key stakeholders in World Bank procurement schemes, the issues involved, and the bidding process. He says that 'the time has come to take a definite and definitive decision to put the local African publisher in the equation of book procurement' and cites the reasons for doing so. There has indeed been some new thinking by the World Bank on this topic, and recognition that there is a need for some changes in its procurement rules, regulations, and processes. Some of these changes are described in a short paper by Sverrir Sigurdsson, a long-time senior operations officer at the Bank (and who was one of the prime movers for convening the seminar), who has been pushing for a measure of change in the Bank's rules. There would now appear to be a consensus within the Bank that procurement policies should be given a thorough overhaul.

Some aspects of copyright issues are addressed in a paper by Ian Taylor, Director of the British Publishers' Association, in which he stresses that copyright is a crucial incentive for indigenous publishers and authors alike, that in a copyright environment monopolized by the government there is little incentive for publishers and authors to thrive, and that it is not in the interest of any publisher to see copyright protection set aside for short-term gain.

Also in the third part of the proceedings (though perhaps somewhat oddly placed), are short presentations by Ian Johnstone, Special Projects Manager at Macmillan Education in the UK, 'Supporting National Publishers: Macmillan experience' and 'Supporting National Publishers: Macmillan Kenya Publishers' by David Muita. These provide an overview of Macmillan's role in educational book publishing in Africa and elsewhere, and the perspective of one of its African sister or 'local' companies in Kenya. Johnstone sets out Macmillan's approach to its presence in Africa and in other developing countries, and makes a spirited defence of their contribution to strengthening local publishing industries and helping to develop regional materials. 'If international trade refers to multinational publishing companies such as Macmillan, Hachette, and others,' he says, 'I would like to disagree with this surmise and show why there is no reason the two cannot be understood and treated in a similar light with a view to strengthening indigenous publishing'. He goes on to state 'I feel that we should not spend too much time on this issue of what constitutes a national publisher and what does not constitute a national publisher, and that we should focus on the fundamental goals of supporting local writers and making

available to students and teachers the best and most appropriate learning materials’—but which might beg the question, who decides what is ‘best’ and what is ‘most appropriate’?

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*Johnstone sets out Macmillan’s approach to its presence in Africa and in other developing countries, and makes a spirited defence of their contribution to strengthening local publishing industries and helping to develop regional materials...But in view of some of the multinationals’ less-than-savoury role in the past in setting up so-called ‘partnerships’ in Africa, indigenous publishers might be forgiven if they take multinationals’ pronouncements of noble intentions to support local publishing with a pinch of salt.*

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The issue of the multinational publisher’s role in Africa, and that of ‘levelling the playing field’ comes up repeatedly in some of the discussions that followed the various presentations. ‘Unfortunately, what most people are really seeking’ says Philip Cohen in one of the discussions, ‘is a playing field that slopes towards their opponents’ goal’, and anything that is considered fair by one may be considered unfair by another. It is difficult to disagree with some of the perfectly rational arguments put forward by representatives of multinational firms: for example, what it takes to succeed in African publishing, such as the need to make a serious financial commitment and a willingness to take a risk. But in view of some of the multinationals’ less-than-savoury role in the past in setting up so-called ‘partnerships’ in Africa, indigenous publishers might be forgiven if they take multinationals’ pronouncements of noble intentions to support local publishing with a pinch of salt.

The issue of publishing partnerships is also the focus of the final section in the book: Diana Newton succinctly defines the characteristics of genuine and sustainable partnerships, identifies criteria for the success of such partnerships, outlines the benefits to be derived, presents the rationale for their promotion, and proposes avenues and policy measures to encourage their emergence and growth. Practical examples of successful publishing partnerships are described by Ian Randle, between the Canadian publisher Irwin Publisher and Ian Randle Publishers in Jamaica; by Robert Sulley, between Heinemann Educational Publishers in the UK and New Namibia Books; Hamidou Konaté, between his company Jamana Publishing House in Mali and the French publisher Fraternité Matin; and by Laurent Loric, between EDICEF (the French-language branch of the Hachette Publishing

Group in France) and Editions Clé in Yaoundé. In summarizing some of these presentations, Carew Treffgarne of the Department for International Development (DFID) - and convenor for the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) Working Group on Books and Learning Materials, for which DFID is the lead agency - emphasises the vital need for effective national book policies ‘as a framework, not a strait-jacket’, and, equally, the need for systematic data collection on all aspects of the book sector, and on the book situation in relation to the education sector.

This is something of a benchmark volume on the subject of publishing and book development in Africa, and should be acquired by all African studies libraries, and other academic libraries with collections on the media, or on education and educational publishing in developing countries. It is hoped that the book will also find wide distribution throughout Africa, and will be easily accessible to the African book professions.

#### **Review by Hans M Zell**

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*This review first appeared in the African Book Publishing Record Vol XXV number 3 1999*



## **BELLAGIO PUBLICATION**

*Book and Publishing Assistance Programs: A Review and Inventory*, Carol Priestley, ISBN 0964607867 168pp 2000 Bellagio Studies in Publishing 11) \$19.95/£11.95

This is a revised edition of the second book in the Bellagio Series in Publishing, originally published in 1993. Divided into two sections, the first is subdivided into a short review of the context of donor activity in support of indigenous publishing, followed by an overview of some types of donor support. The pages on context look briefly at key issues such as language, capital, equipment, authorship, copyright. The overview describes types of support such as paper provision, training, the organising of loan schemes, and subsidising translation. The second, longer, section of the book, gives details of organisations involved in support to indigenous publishing with full contact details. The book serves as a reference detailing which organisations are undertaking what sort of work in support of publishing; it is also an introductory text to those new to the field.



## NEW PUBLICATIONS

compiled by Rachel Wiggans

*Publishing Information and Training Resources. Books Periodicals, Training Materials for the year 2000.* (4<sup>th</sup> ed) Book Aid International 56pp available free of charge from Book Aid International, 39/41 Coldharbour Lane, London SE5 9NR England +44 20 7733 3577(tel), +44 20 7978 8006(fax) info@bookaid.org <http://www.bookaid.org>

The fourth edition of this useful catalogue includes many new entries about books, journals and reference resources relevant to publishers in Africa and in other parts of the developing world. Detailed information about titles is given under broad headings such as publishing management, editorial functions and procedures, design and production, desk top publishing, marketing, distribution.



*African Books Collective Publishing, Book Trade and Writing Resources catalogue*, May 2000, African Books Collective Ltd, The Jam Factory, 27 Park End Street, Oxford OX1 1HU, England. +44 1865726686(tel), +44 1865 793298(fax), abc@dial.pipex.com, on-line ordering: <http://www.africanbookscollective.com>

The African Books Collective's first unified catalogue of resources on African publishing, the book trade and writing resources lists 36 titles including texts by leading voices in African book development, country specific books in print, handbooks and reference resources. Included are titles from member publishers in Africa, titles published by ABC itself, and titles from leading organisations in book development in Africa which ABC distributes: APNET, ADEA (Working Group on Books and Learning Materials), and the Bellagio Publishing Network. Selected titles are also distributed from the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications, the International African Institute, and Hans Zell Publishers.



*African Publishers Networking Directory 1999/2000 (3<sup>rd</sup> ed)*, ISBN 0952126931 72pp 1999 African Books Collective, details below, \$30/£18pb

The third edition of this useful guide lists full contact details for over 300 African publishers and includes lists of the languages in which they publish. Listings are alphabetical within country order. For 45 book trade organisations, principal objectives, the training programmes they offer and current officers are listed. Eighteen book trade journals are also included.



*African books in print/Livres Africains Disponibles*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. ISBN 1873836961 2v 2314pp 2000 Bowker Saur, East Grinstead, England £450/\$750

The new 5th edition of African Books in Print (ABIP) contains full bibliographic and acquisitions data on over 38,000 titles published in 43 African countries, by more than 1,100 publishers and research institutions with publishing programmes. Also included are publications from professional associations, learned societies, NGOs university departments, and many more. Significantly updated since the last edition, ABIP cumulates all titles listed in the quarterly African Book Publishing Record (ABPR) between 1992 and 1999 along with a substantial number of new records not previously listed either in ABIP or ABPR. This is an easy to use reference, with a detailed introduction setting out the scope and arrangement. It includes: author indexes; title indexes; a subject index with approximately 1,500 subject headings/sub-headings, country and regional headings, language headings; and a directory of publishers with full names, addresses, telephone, fax, email and web contact details.



*Namibian Books in Print*, Werner Hillebrecht (comp.) 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. ISBN 9991672338 114 pp 1999/2000 Assoc of Namibian Publishers with the National Library of Namibia, PO Box 5934 Ausspannplatz, Windhoek, Namibia, +264 61 231496(fax) neprul@lianam.lia.net \$19.95/£11.95pb. Distributed outside Africa by the African Books Collective, details below.

Full bibliographic data is given for each title in this new edition, in which textbooks and scholarly books are listed separately from general books. For all titles in African languages the language is identified. Namibian Books in Print contains a Namibian publishers directory with full contact details; a directory of booksellers and distributors; and organisations active in the Namibian book and information sector.



*Book Marketing and Promotion: a practical handbook for publishers in developing countries*, Hans M. Zell (ed) ISBN 0952298996 416 pp 2000 INASP, Oxford, £40.00/\$75.00 (free to publishers in Africa and to selected recipients in other developing countries). Distributed by African Books Collective Ltd, details below.

This handbook is a compendium of practical advice on all aspects of marketing and promotion for publishers in Africa and other parts of the developing world. Part one deals with current practice in book marketing, including drawing up a marketing plan, tips for successful copywriting,

specialist promotion, direct mail, book fairs, and entering titles in bibliographic services. Part two deals with distribution including rights, licensing and co-publication. Part three includes case studies on current practice in book marketing in Africa, and provides comparisons with India and South Asia, South-East Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and North America. Part four lists resource materials including directories; review and publicity outlets; and book prizes and awards.



*The ABC of Book Publishing: a Training Manual for NGOs in Africa*, Janet Nyeko, ISBN 9970510012 106 pp 1999 JANyeko Publishing Centre Ltd, Kampala, Uganda, and CTA Wageningen. \$10.50. From JANyeko Publishing Centre Ltd, PO Box 25613, Kampala, Uganda, ayatnyeko@hotmail.com and CTA, Postbus 380, 6700 AJ Wageningen, The Netherlands

This attractively designed manual aims to show African NGOs, in a straightforward and practical way, how to publish their material. It introduces NGOs to the different aspects and tasks of the publishing process, discusses publisher-author relationships, contracts and copyright, and marketing, sales and distribution. There is much useful material in this book although it does contain some omissions and inaccuracies.



*The Politics of Publishing in South Africa*, eds. Nicholas Evans & Monica Seeber, ISBN 0953726215 ix, 300 pp 2000 Holger Ehling Publishing, \$42, £28. Order from Holger Ehling, International Publishing Monitor, News-Media-Consulting, 4FH Leroy House, 436 Essex Road, London N1 3QP, England. +44 20 7688 168(tel) +44 20 7688 1699(fax) www.ehling.com www.ipm-group.com

The first in-depth analysis of what drives one of the world's most important emerging publishing markets with contributions by the country's leading publishing experts. This book is the first analysis of the industry to provide a social and historical context as well as treating it as of strategic importance for the further development of society. Section one, 'Media against apartheid: books, journals, magazines, newspapers' includes an overview and contributions on alternative publishing in South Africa. Section two: 'Language, writing, identity, publishing' has chapters on writers and publishing, and on reading in African languages. Section three, 'Considerations for the future', examines academic publishing, schoolbooks and public education, professional development in book publishing, and digital technologies



*Public Libraries in Africa: A report and Annotated Bibliography*. Aissa Issak (ed.) ISBN 1902928008 199pp 2000 International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP), 27 Park End Street, Oxford, OX1 1HU, England, inasp@gn.apc.org £15.00+£3.60 postage (UK orders), £15.00+£4.55 postage (European orders), a limited number of copies are available for free distribution to developing country libraries.

Over the past ten years much has been written in the professional press about the state of and role for information services and public libraries in Africa. The Carnegie Corporation of New York invited INASP to commission a literature search and provide a short synthesis report outlining major findings, to assist them in developing a strategy for a new program of support. The lead researcher, Aissa Issak, Librarian, University of Eduardo Mondlane, Mozambique, worked with a team of country resource persons from Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.



*Apartheid in South African Libraries*, Kalley, Jacqueline A. ISBN 081083605X 280pp, 2000 Scarecrow, UK £47.95hb

Examines the effect of apartheid on library services in South Africa, and documents the past record and experiences of black libraries. Integrates historical, legal and resource concerns, and includes a historical introduction and context.



*The Mazruiana Collection: a comprehensive annotated bibliography of the published works of Ali A. Mazrui, 1962-1997*, compiled by Abdul Samed Bemath, ISBN 8120721195 xiii, 348pp 1998 Sterling Publishers, New Delhi, \$8.75. Co-published with The Foundation for Global Dialogue, Johannesburg, South Africa; AHA Publishing House, Jos, Nigeria; Fountain Publishers, Kampala, Uganda; East African Educational Publishers, Kenya; Africa World Press, USA, Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs, London, England.

Although this book is not directly concerned with publishing, we list it as an example of good co-publishing arrangements.



*Women's Voices: Gender, Books and Development*, Proceedings of the 1999 Indaba conference at the Zimbabwe International Book Fair. ISBN 0797420398 296pp 2000 Zimbabwe International Book Fair Trust. £10.95 pb Distributed outside Africa by the African Books Collective, details above.

This collection of 36 papers offers a rich and diverse array of views on gender, culture and development in Africa. Includes the addresses of the contributors.



*African Publishing Review*, published six times a year. ISSN 10297618 APNET, Harare. annual subscription inside Africa \$30/£20 (airmail(\$35/£25), outside Africa \$50/£35 (airmail \$60/£40) from APNET, PO Box 3773, Harare, Zimbabwe +263 4 705105/726405, +263 4 705106/706110(fax) apnet@mango.zw

Vol. 9 No. 1 contains articles on language policies and publishing in African languages

Vol. 9 No. 2 looks at Education for All, bookselling, and includes useful details of business opportunities



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<http://www.bc.edu/bellagio>

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Limited copies are available free of charge to African publishers and libraries. Contact the Bellagio Secretariat, 103 Walton Street, Oxford OX2 6EB, England, +44 1865 515315(fax) bpn@bpnsec.demon.co.uk

1. *Readings on Publishing in Africa and the Third World*, Philip G. Altbach (ed.) 212pp 1993 pb. OUT OF PRINT
2. *Book and Publishing Assistance Programs: A Review and Inventory*, Carol Priestley 122pp 1993 pb OUT OF PRINT. Replaced by 11.
3. *Bibliography on Publishing in the Third World: 1980-1993* Philip G. Altbach and Hyaewool Choi 152pp 1994. Available from Ablex Publishers, 355 Chestnut St., Norwood, NJ 07648, USA.
4. *Copyright and Development: Inequality in the Information Age*, Philip G. Altbach 109pp 1995 pb
5. *Making a Difference: Feminist Publishing in the South*, Urvashi Butalia and Ritu Menon 82pp 1995 pb
6. *Publishing in Africa: One Man's Perspective*, Henry Chakava 182pp 1996 pb. Co-published with East African Educational Publishers, Nairobi, Kenya.
7. *The Challenge of the Market: Privatization and Publishing in Africa*, Philip G. Altbach (ed.) 114pp 1996 pb
8. *Knowledge Dissemination in Africa: The Role of Scholarly Journals*, Philip G. Altbach and Damtew Teferra (eds.) 140pp 1997 pb
9. *Publishing and Development: A Book of Readings* Philip G. Altbach and Damtew Teferra (eds.) 192pp 1998 pb
10. *Publishing in African Languages: Challenges and Prospects*, Philip G. Altbach and Damtew Teferra (eds.) 163pp 1999 pb
11. *Book and Publishing Assistance Programs: A Review and Inventory*, 2nd edition, Carol Priestley, 168pp 2000 pb

*International Book Publishing: An Encyclopedia*, Philip G. Altbach and Edith Hoshino, (eds) 726 pp, New York: Garland 1995 \$95 (cloth). Available from Garland Publishing, Inc, 1000A Sherman Ave, Hamden, CT 06514, USA.