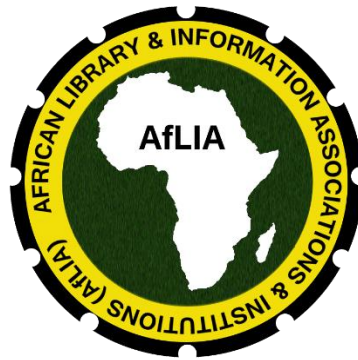


# **African Library and Information Associations and Institutions (AfLIA)**



**Report of the 3rd AfLIA Conference and 5th African Library Summit  
– AfLIACon 2019**

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## Introduction

The most anticipated library conference in Africa – AfLIACon 2019, the 5<sup>th</sup> African Library Summit and 3<sup>rd</sup> AfLIA Conference, a 4-day event was held from 21-24 May at the Weston Hotel, Nairobi-Kenya. It was a busy week of unending insight sharing, engaging discussions, thought-provoking presentations and fun-packed networking activities. This was an unforgettable occasion that brought together hundreds of delegates and exhibitors from across 23 countries globally – Botswana, Cameroon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Germany, Ghana, India, Israel, Kenya, Lithuania, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United States of America, Zambia and Zimbabwe to exchange data, ideas and share solutions to advance knowledge in the library and information science sector towards achieving AU 2063 and UN 2030 Agenda.

## Opening Ceremony

The opening ceremony was characterized by inspiring and heart-warming speeches. Beautifully clad delegates from across the globe filled the conference room of Weston Hotel, Nairobi for the commencement of AfLIACon2019. Without delay, the 3<sup>rd</sup> AfLIA Conference and 5<sup>th</sup> African Library Summit officially kicked off with the Executive Director of AfLIA, Dr. Helena Asamoah-Hassan welcoming all delegates and invited



guests among which included Hon. Hassan Noor Hassan, Deputy Minister for Sports, Culture and Heritage (Guest of Honour), Mr. Richard Atuti, Director of Kenya National Library Service (KNLS), Prof. Constantine Nyamboga, President of the Kenyan Library Association who was the Chairperson for the Opening Ceremony; Madam

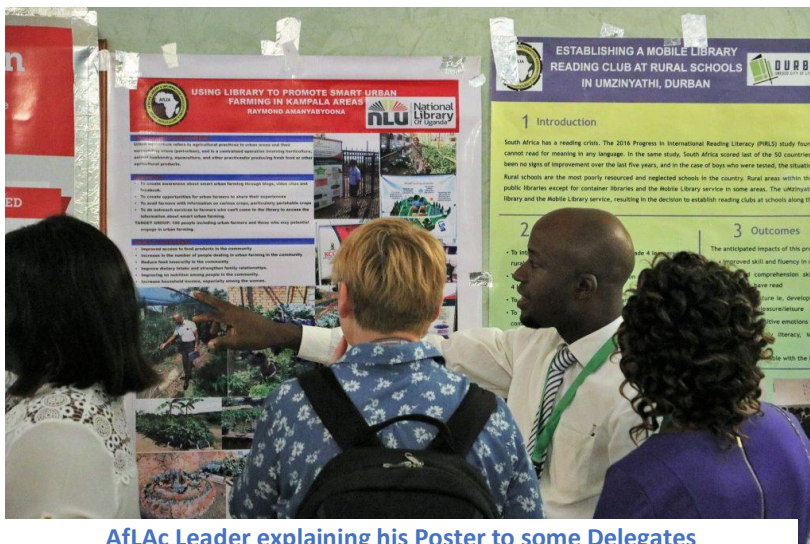
Harriette Chiggai, Vice President, Law Society of Kenya, who was the Guest Speaker; Mr. Neil Butcher, OER Strategist, OER Africa, the Keynote Speaker; and Mr. John Tsebe, President of AfLIA. Setting the tone for the conference, the Executive Director of AfLIA, stated that “this conference will commit to serious discussions about new developments in the LIS profession and how best these developments can be used to serve communities and users better by any type of library one belongs to”.

In his welcome address, Mr. Tsebe took the opportunity to officially welcome all delegates to the conference, stating “this conference is an important one which creates a significant platform for the exchange of ideas to develop the library and information science sector on the continent”. He underscored the pivotal role that librarians and libraries need to continue playing “more than ever before, in order to achieve the Africa We Want and the Sustainable Development Goals” and urged participants to use this “platform to brainstorm, learn and share current practices and new ideas in information management and use them to build a vibrant library and information sector for the benefit of community”. In a short supportive video address, the President of IFLA, Glòria Pérez-Salmerón, also sent best wishes from IFLA to all AfLIACon2019 delegates.

In her speech, the Guest Speaker, Madam Harriette Chiggai, pointed out that “the successful attainment of the AU Agenda 2063 Aspirations Goals and Sustainable Development Goals hinges on access to information and knowledge that provides access to opportunities and leads to socio-economic development”. She therefore called on development partners and governments to work closely with libraries in achieving these global goals. Neil Butcher, the Keynote Speaker for the conference, hit the ground running by engaging delegates on the need for librarians, especially African librarians, to be particularly concerned and interested in Open Educational Resources and Open Licensing. After this address, the Kenyan Deputy Minister for Sports, Culture, Sports & Heritage, Hon. Hassan Noor Hassan declared the 3<sup>rd</sup> AfLIA Conference and 5<sup>th</sup> African Library Summit officially open.

## Paper, Poster and Ignite talk presentations and Exhibitions

The 4-day conference was fully packed with a chain of paper, poster and ignite talk presentations cross-cutting a variety of sub-themes including; African Libraries Creating Awareness of AU 2063 and UN 2030, Library Digital Innovation



AfLAc Leader explaining his Poster to some Delegates

Competencies, Libraries as Drivers of Sustainable Economic Growth and Social Progress for The Africa We Want, Envisioning LIS Education and Access to Information for peace, conflict resolution and regional integration/library and information services promoting Good Governance, Human

Rights and Rule of Law, preservation and promotion of African cultural heritage and identity among others.

At the Exhibition Hall, exhibitors were fully represented and maximized their participation to showcase their products and services, make new contacts and strengthen existing networks. The exhibition hall was colourfully designed and filled



**Delegates at the Conference exhibition Center**

with stands/booths for Springer Nature, Eclat Engineering, AfLIA, Kenya National Library Service (KNLS), ProQuest, Universal Knowledge Software (UKS), EBSCO Information Services, John Wiley and Sons, Emerald Publishing, SABINET, Combined Systems AssetX and African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF). Exhibitors showcased their products and services to conference delegates.

Delegates also got lots of interesting souvenirs and gifts from the exhibitors as well. But it was much more fun as a few lucky ones also won big prizes from quick draws and raffles organized by some of the exhibitors.

## Cultural Night

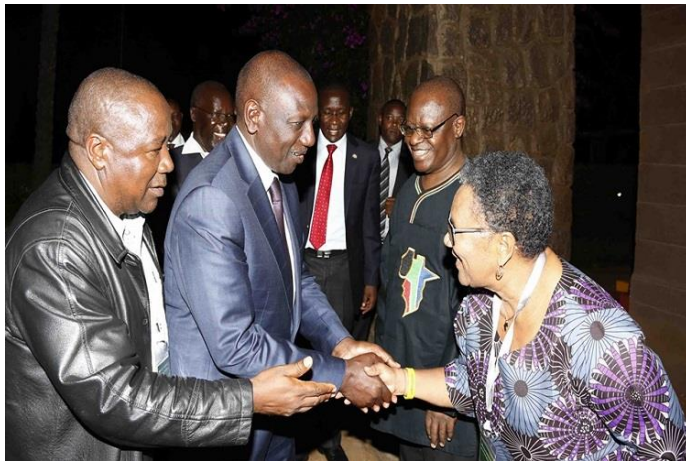


**Cultural Dancers entertaining the Conference Delegates at the Bomas of Kenya**

Aside the welcoming conference environment, delegates were treated to a memorable Cultural Night and Dinner at the Bomas of Kenya Restaurant (about 15-minute drive from the conference venue) on 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 2019. At this event, delegates were treated to a series of beautiful theatrical dance performances and authentic music performed by people representing the rich and diverse cultures of Kenya. Having the

Deputy President of Kenya, Mr. William Samui Ruto, grace the occasion as the Special Guest of Honour for the night was the icing on the cake.

Speaking on the relevance of libraries to national development, DP Ruto said,



**Executive Director of AfLIA welcoming the Deputy President of Kenya to the cultural Night**

“Libraries are repositories of knowledge and information and are critical Institutions for checking ignorance; eradicating poverty; inequality and building a knowledge economy. We must develop them to advance learning, research and innovation and promote access to relevant information. The value of information is priceless in democratic societies, a key ingredient of open governance and

a tool for empowering communities”. He also took the opportunity to acknowledge and congratulate the work of librarians in Kenya and Africa. The night was filled with excitement as some delegates seized rare moments to shake hands and take pictures with the Deputy President while others joined the cultural dance team on stage to display their joy through dancing.

## **Inauguration of AfLIA Governing Council 2019-2021**

The conference also saw the inauguration of a new AfLIA Governing Council to steer the affairs of the continental association from 2019 till 2021. The ceremony was conducted by Prof. Ismail Abdullahi, the first recipient of the AfLIA Lifetime Award for outstanding service to African Librarianship. Mr. Mandla Ntombela the new AfLIA



**Inaugurated 2019-2021 AfLIA Governing Council Members**

President, paid special tribute to Mr. John Tsebe, his predecessor, for the sterling performance during his tenure. He expressed gratitude for the warmth and friendliness that AfLIA members from all sides of the continent have accorded to the outgoing Council. The AfLIA President Mr. Ntombela, advocated for the elevation of librarians to the highest levels in their

Institutions. He called on librarians to embrace continuous individual learning to keep

their skills up to date and relevant so as to ably drive the implementation and impact of the SDGs and AU Agenda 2063 and all national development agenda.

He advised Librarians to use the Cape Town Declaration and Durban Communique to advocate for better placement of Libraries as we work towards achieving the development agendas. The President ended the speech with a request; “We will not even reach our destination without your active participation. I request all of you colleagues to come and join us on this journey. I am looking forward to the next two years of exciting times as we work together to do amazing things for AfLIA and Africa.

## **Closing dinner and AfLIA Awards 2019**

The closing ceremony was marked by a dinner and awards night. Delegates maximized their final chance to fraternize, interact, network among themselves and make merry during the closing dinner as they were treated to a mix of contemporary African music and dishes.

The conference could not have ended without acknowledging persons and bodies who have distinguished themselves in the LIS sector on the continent. During the closing ceremony on 24<sup>th</sup> May, 2019, the following honours and awards were conferred on selected persons and associations for their outstanding contributions and distinguished services delivery as library professionals.

### **AfLIA LIFETIME AWARD**



Professor Ismail Abdullahi, received the AfLIA Lifetime award for his outstanding service to African Librarianship and beyond especially as pertains to the integration of multicultural perspectives in information provision. Prof. Abdullahi, in appreciation, acknowledged the immense contribution and impact of AfLIA within its short period of establishment and stated that

though he is based in the United States, his connection to Africa was never compromised. He assured AfLIA of his continuous support and commitment in helping African Librarians achieve the SDGs and the “Africa We Want”.

Other awards given to deserving delegates include:

**The plaque for BEST VIDEO on Climate Change** – presented to Mrs. Folasade Adepoju, Principal Librarian, National Library of Nigeria.

**HIGHEST PARTICIPATING COUNTRY AWARD** – which went to Nigeria. President of the Nigerian Library Association, Dr. Umunna Opara, received the prestigious award on behalf of the Nigerians.

**The plaque for MY AFRICA YOUR AFRICA OUR AFRICA cultural display** – was presented to Dar es Salaam Public Library, Tanzania.

**The plaque for BEST POSTER for Climate Change** – was given to Moses Muendoh Munyao, Ednah Omare, Stephen Ario, Nyakundi James Nyambane. All of them work at United States International University, Africa (USIU-Africa) Library, Nairobi.

**EIFL Public Library Innovation Award for Public Library Services** to Kenya National Library Service/Meru Public Library was presented to Joan Njogu for changing young people's attitudes to farming by combining ICT, entrepreneurship and agricultural training.

## **Closing Ceremony**

The AfLIA President stated that the 5<sup>th</sup> African Library Summit & 3<sup>rd</sup> AfLIA Conference had been successful. He thanked the Local Organizing Committee for giving AfLIA its support for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Conference. He also thanked all Partners, Sponsors and Exhibitors of the Conference. He thanked the Management and Staff of Weston Hotel, Nairobi for their unflinching support in making the Conference successful and finally thanked the delegates for making time out of their busy schedules to attend the Conference. The President declared the 3<sup>rd</sup> AfLIA conference closed at exactly 3.48p.m on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2019.