

Building the National Memory: the Role of Legal Deposit Acts in Uganda*

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Abstract:

The paper presents the role of legal deposit acts in building the national memory in Uganda. It defines the concepts of legal deposit and national memory and how they relate to each other. The historical background of legal deposit is then outlined. This is followed by the development of legal deposit Acts in Uganda, namely the Makerere University College (Deposit Library) Act, 1964, the Deposit Library and Documentation Centre Act, 1969 and the National Library Act, 2003. Furthermore, the paper discusses the roles played by Makerere University Library, the Deposit Library and Documentation Centre and the National Library of Uganda in building national memory. The differences and similarities between the three legal depositories are analysed. Finally the challenges faced by these institutions in playing their roles are discussed and recommendations given.

1.Introduction

The concept of legal deposit is defined as “A government provision which compels producers of all types of publications to deposit a certain number of copies of each publication in a designated or similar institution” (Jasion, 1991, p.7). National memory can be referred to as the published material produced by a particular nation and is preserved for the posterity.

The aim of legal deposit as outlined by Jasion is to develop and preserve a national collection of published material. It was first implemented in 1537, when King François I of France issued the royal decree that forbade the sale of any book without first having deposited a copy

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in the library of his castle. The purpose of the decree was to collect and gather the current and the future production of all editions of the books “which deserved to be seen” in order to ensure that it would always be possible to refer to the original work as “first published and not modified.” Although the decree was not respected at that time, it was later used by other countries.

While the original objective of legal deposit legislation was to improve the development and the preservation of a “royal” or “national” collection, it gained other purposes over years, and became closely related to copyright during the 18th century, when deposit became a formality for obtaining the legal protection of copyright.

For quite a long period of time, the legal deposit requirements evolved and the legal texts were amended in order to adapt to the new types of documents such as the audio-visual materials and the increase of the number of copies requested. Furthermore, the responsibility for receiving, recording and making available the deposit collections was shifted to other institutions. From the original objective of legal deposit by Francois I in the 16th century, which was to preserve the books for future generations, new objectives were added during the 20th century. These included the production of a national bibliography and the availability for research purposes of a collection of the nation’s published material. Recently, many countries have revised their legal deposit legislation in order to address challenge of electronic publications due to incredible complexity in relation to their legal, organizational, technical and operational aspects.

2. Objectives

The legal deposit mainly involves the activities of collecting and preserving the archive of national publications as a whole. Sometimes it also includes collection and preservation of the literature related to or about a particular country. From the national memory point of view it also serves as a base for dissemination of national memory mainly from national bibliographies. These three aspects of the legal deposit will be addressed in this paper.

The objectives of this paper therefore are:

- First, to outline the historical background of the legal deposit Acts namely: the Makerere University College (Deposit Library) Act, 1964, the Deposit Library and Documentation Centre Act, 1969 and the National Library Act, 2003;
- Second, to find out roles played by Makerere University Library, the Deposit Library and Documentation Centre and the National Library of Uganda in the collection, preservation and dissemination of the national memory; and
- Lastly, to discuss and analyse the differences and similarities between the three institutions in the process of performing their roles of building the national memory and the challenges they face.

3. The Makerere University College (Deposit Library) Act, 1964

Historical background and legal deposit provisions

Makerere University was founded in 1922 as a Uganda Technical College. In August the same year, the name was changed to Makerere College to reflect the wider scope of courses which were to be immediately introduced in addition to carpentry, building and mechanics (MacPherson, 1964). In 1946 attempts were made to make Makerere College Library a deposit library for the whole of East Africa, but these attempts were opposed by Kenya and Tanganyika, because during the same period, both countries were about to have their own colleges and they felt that this function should be under their own jurisdiction (McPherson,

1964 p.138). Despite the opposition a good number of publications produced in these countries were deposited at Makerere College Library. In 1956, the library was made the official depository for documents from the United Nations and its agencies such as FAO, UNESCO and others.

The first legal deposit act in Uganda appeared in the Ordinance No. 26 of 1957 known as the University College of East Africa (Deposit Library) Act, which was passed by the then Governor F. Grawford, and was “to make provision for the deposit and preservation of copies of books printed and published in the Protectorate” (Ordinance, 1958 p. 176). In this Ordinance, the definition of a “book” includes every part or division of a book, newspaper, periodical, magazine, review, gazette, pamphlet, sheet of letterpress, sheet of music, map, plan, chart or table separately published, but did not include any second or subsequent edition of a book unless such edition contains additions or alternations either in the letterpress or in maps, prints or other illustrative material belonging to it. The publisher of every book published in the Protectorate within one month after the publication had to deliver, at his own expense, a copy of a book to the Librarian of the Deposit Section of the Library of the University College of East Africa, who was obliged to provide a receipt for it. The Act postulated that if any publisher failed to comply with any of the provisions of the Ordinance he was guilty of an offence and liable to pay a fine of Shs 100. The Ordinance came into effect in 1958.

The University College of East Africa (Deposit Library) Ordinance, 1958 was revised by an act of Parliament to become the Makerere University College (Deposit Library) Act, 1964. This Act did not represent a fundamental change as it is just a reproduction of the University College of East Africa (Deposit Library) Ordinance, 1958 word by word. The difference was the change of “University College of East Africa” to “Makerere University College,” “Ordinance” to “Act” and “Governor” to “Minister”. Otherwise the rest of the provisions in the Act remained unchanged. The aim of the Act was “to make provision for the deposit and preservation of copies of books printed and published in Uganda.” The Act made it a legal obligation for the publishers or authors of books in Uganda to deposit a copy of every publication at Makerere University College Library within one month after the date of publication. They also provided for the delivery of one copy of the book to the Minister concerned if a written demand was made within 3 months after the publication of the book. In case of failure on the part of the publisher to comply with the provisions of the Act, the publisher was made liable to conviction to a fine of Sh. 100 and /or delivery of the publication in respect of which the conviction was recorded or to pay to the librarian at Makerere University Library or both as the case may be the value of such book. The Act gave the power of exemption to the Minister who could exempt any publication from the provision of this Act. The “Book” was defined as every part or division of the book, newspaper, periodical, magazine, review, gazette, pamphlet, sheet or letter press, sheet of music, map, plan, chart or table separately published” (Laws of Uganda, 1965 p. 2561).

3.1 The collection

The East Africana and Special Collections Section were created due to the scope and quality of the deposits to the collection the library was receiving from the various sources. After the independence of the East African countries, the section was renamed “Africana/Special Collections Section”. It contains materials from the 1890s, government documents and some East African Community publications. The section also has private archives, and manuscripts in local languages and English. Makerere University College Library was made a legal depository and a national reference library because it was the oldest and largest institution of

higher learning in East Africa and it was lauded as having the “largest concentrated collection in East and Central Africa” its holdings “second only to Ibadan University Library in all of Black Africa” (Lwanga, 1972 p. 40).

The rich collections of the national memory found in Makerere University College Library, Africana/Special Collections Section include official government documents, micro cards and microfilms of newspapers, theses, archives and periodicals. The archives and manuscripts consist of A.G. Bageshawe dairies, George K. Baskerville journals 1890-1901, Church Missionary Society papers of the Upper Nile Mission 1926-1948, B.L. Jacobs official papers (including Uganda Independence celebrations office files), Ezra Kabali papers from 1900 onwards, Kagwa family (Mengo Buganda) papers 1899-1947, Apolo Kivebulaya papers, Ladbury H. Boulton Journal of missionary work in Uganda 1903-1950, Sir Maine Amar papers 1946 onwards, James Miti notebooks for history of Buganda 1940, Native Anglican Church (Uganda) archives of the Archbishop’s office from 1900 onwards (manuscript) (including minutes of meetings, books, ledgers, journals, miscellaneous documents, and correspondence). The university collection consists of theses and dissertations submitted to Makerere University, college and university archives, photographic collection which contains some of the rare photographs of events and scenes of Uganda history (Lwanga, 1971, pp. 137-138)

Recently, the library has added on a rich collection of works about music and music related materials, which were transferred from the Music Dance and Drama Department. These include archival sound recordings of folklore, oral histories, and performance history, materials that support teaching and research in music and a documentary record of culture. A well equipped listening centre is located on the ground floor of the new library building¹.

3.2 Preservation

The functions of Makerere University Library (MULIB) are not only to collect the national memory but also to preserve it for posterity and the library has endeavoured to do this in several ways. The Microfilming Unit which had stopped functioning in the 1980s was revived in 2000 with the assistance of the European Union. Eight members of staff were trained in the technique of microfilming and photography. The aim of the training was to establish, equip, staff and manage a microfilm/photographic unit (Training manual, 2000). Microfilming of theses and dissertation also started in 2000, although it is faced with technical breakdowns and lack of consumables. The digitization of theses and dissertations and the institutional repository play an important role in the preservation of the national memory.

3.3 Dissemination

There was no institution in the country that was mandated by law to produce a national bibliography. However, Bryan Langlands made an effort to compile a “Uganda Bibliography” in 1963. This bibliography was published in the *Uganda Journal*, but space would not allow comprehensive coverage. It ceased publication in 1976 when Langland left Uganda during the Amin’s regime. Makerere University Library started producing a “Uganda Bibliography” section in the *Makerere University Library Bulletin and Accessions List* in 1965, but it also ceased publication in the mid 1970s. During the African Standing Conference on Bibliographic Control (ASCOBIC), Nairobi, Kenya in 1986, the delegates were encouraged to publish national bibliographies in their respective countries. Consequently, in 1987, Makerere University Library published its first volume of the Uganda National Bibliography (Kigozi,

¹ <http://mulib.mak.ac.ug/sections/Africana.html>

1990, p.116). It started as a quarterly publication (Table 1), volume two bi-annual, volumes three and four annual, volumes five and six every three years, volume seven annual and eventually ceased publication in 1997 (Kawalya, 2000 p. 43). However, volumes 6 and 7 were included in volume one of the National Bibliography of Uganda of 2005.

| Year | Volume no. | Frequency | Status |
|-----------|---------------------|-----------|------------------------------|
| 1987 | Vol. 1, no. 1-4 | Quarterly | Published |
| 1988 | Vols.2,nos.1&2,&3&4 | Bi-annual | Published |
| 1989 | Vol. 3 nos.1-4 | Annual | Published |
| 1990 | Vol. 4 | Annual | Unpublished |
| 1991-1993 | Vol. 5 | 3 years | Unpublished |
| 1994-1997 | Vol. 6 | 3 years | Published in NBU vol.1, 2005 |
| 1997 | Vol. 7 | Annual | Published in NBU vol.1, 2005 |

Table: Frequency of the Uganda National Bibliography 1987-1997 of Makerere University Library (Kawalya, 2000, p. 43)

In 2003, MULIB in collaboration with the University of Bergen, Norway, launched the Uganda Science Digital Library (USDL) Project (Uganda Science Digital Library, 2004). One of its objectives was to create and digitize the institutional repository which can be accessed online². Similarly, in 2004, MULIB and other eleven African universities embarked on the Database of African Theses and Dissertations (DATAD) project³. This project was funded by Ford and Rockefeller Foundations in collaboration with the Association African Universities. The aim of the project among others was not only to create capacity in African universities for the collection, management, and dissemination of theses and dissertations electronically, but also to provide visibility and improve accessibility to the world of African scholars both within and outside the continent. While all the participating universities have agreed to upload the theses and dissertations in full text, MULIB uploads abstracts only, the reason being that the Makerere University authorities have not yet come up with the copyright policy regarding access to these documents.

4. The Deposit Library and Documentation Centre Act, 1969

The Institute of Public Administration (IPA) was founded in 1963 with the aim of conducting courses for the Uganda civil servants. In 1969, the Parliament of Uganda passed the Deposit Library and Documentation Centre Act. This is an Act:

“to make provision for the deposit and preservation of copies of books written or printed and published in Uganda” (Laws of Uganda, 1970, p. 350)

The Act provided for the establishment of a Deposit Library and Documentation Centre (DLDC) under the administration of the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) currently known as the Uganda Management Institute (UMI). This Act introduced a legal obligation for the publishers of the books published in Uganda or any other person ordinarily resident in Uganda who may be authors of books published outside the country, to deliver at their own expenses a copy of the books to the DLDC within one month of the release of the publication. The failure to comply with the provisions of this Act is regarded as an offence liable to conviction and a fine of Shs 100. The exemption of any publication by statutory order from

²<http://dspace.mak.ac.ug>; <http://www.ub.uib.no/avdeling/idok/visits/maklib/USDL>

³<http://www.aau.org/datad/>

the provisions of this Act is made the authority of the Minister responsible. The “Book” is defined as “every part of the division of the book, newspaper, periodical, magazine, review, gazette, pamphlet, sheet of letter press, sheet of music, map, plan, chart or table separately published” (Laws of Uganda, 1970, p.350).

The DLDC had to provide the decision makers in the government with relevant information. When introducing the Deposit Library and Documentation Centre Bill to Parliament, the Minister responsible indicated that “the DLDC will improve the knowledge and skills of the public officers. At that time, documents were lying in archives and districts without funding and trained personnel to organize them. Public officers and students wasted time in search for lost, scattered and misfiled documents. Many valuable documents were produced but had limited circulation. It was essential that a record was kept of Uganda’s historical and current developments (Hansard, 1969). The Minister then suggested that the centre would be responsible for centralizing all documents of historical and political importance particularly relating to the government service, process and store documents under correct conditions. The DLDC would also compile a bibliography, carry out research, encourage local authorities and other bodies to deposit their publications for safe keeping, create awareness of the general public about the history and activities of the government, and make efforts to collect documents on Uganda which will be made available to public officers (Hansard, 1969).

Abidi and Kiyimba, (1983) indicated that the DLDC had the advantages for being directly under government, because they could easily access international assistance to further development. They gave the example of the Commonwealth Secretariat, which provided a documentation expert, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) provided a documentation specialist, staff training, and a vehicle; and the German Foundation for International Development (DSE) and UNDP offered staff training.

4.1 Collections, preservation and dissemination

In 1975, the DLDC started collecting documents from government departments and convinced the district authorities to deposit their proceedings regularly. However, the UNDP assistance ended, the vehicle broke down and the collection of documents ceased. Thereafter, very few departments responded to depositing their publications. The government publications which used to be collected from the Government Printer at Entebbe could not be collected on regular basis. The collection is composed of books, government documents, District team and planning committee minutes, theses and dissertations and newspapers. There are no preservation activities in DLDC. Since 1993, the DLDC produces the Accessions List which is annual and regular. The majority of the publications listed in it are government documents.

5. The comparison of the MULIB and the DLDC in their role as legal depository

There are several differences between the MULIB and DLDC in terms of the Acts, the collections, dissemination and preservation of the national memory.

5.1 The differences

The MULIB collection is richer and has a variety of collections which dates as far back as the 1890s. They include books, newspapers, government documents, archives, theses and dissertations, manuscripts, photographs, micro cards and microfilms and music archives; while the DLDC has books, government documents, newspapers, theses and dissertations. MULIB has embarked on the preservation of the national memory through microfilming and digitization, while DLDC does not. The Accessions List of DLDC is current and regular while

the Uganda National Bibliography of MULIB was irregular and ceased publication in 1997. The composition of the Accessions List is mainly government documents while that of the NBU was composed mainly of theses and dissertations submitted by Makerere University.

5.2 Similarities

There are various similarities of the Makerere University College (Deposit Library) Act, 1964 and the Deposit Library and Documentation Centre Act, 1969. The Acts are weak and outdated in several ways. It is the responsibility of publisher to deposit and not the author or printer which is a disadvantage in the Ugandan situation where the author may be his/her own printer and publisher. They exclude grey literature and non-book materials such as audio-visuals. The penalties for defaulters are too lenient so that it is easily ignored by the publishers. For example, a publisher would rather pay the penalty of shs. 100 than deposit a copy of a book worth 30,000/=. There is lack of mechanisms to implement the Acts. The Minister is given a lot of powers of exempting from all or any of the provisions of this Act. Both institutions perform the dual roles of legal depository libraries as well as academic libraries, they are therefore unable to perform the activities of legal deposit efficiently and effectively since at the same time they have to serve staff, researchers and the ever increasing number of students.

6. The National Library Act, 2003

The development of the National Library Act, 2003 goes back to the legislation of the Public Libraries Act, 1964. This was an Act:

“to provide for the establishment of a Public Libraries Board (PLB) and for other purposes connected therewith. The functions of the Board were to establish, equip, manage and maintain libraries in Uganda and take all such steps as may be necessary to carry out its functions under this Act” (Laws of Uganda, 1965).

However, this Act was overruled by the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda. Chapter eleven:

“subject to article 178 (Regional governments), the system of local government in Uganda shall be based on the district as a unit under which there shall be such local governments and administrative units as Parliament may by law provide. The local government system among other principles shall be such as to ensure that functions, powers and responsibilities are devolved and transferred from the government to local government units in a coordinated manner” (Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995 p.138).

The Local Governments Act, 1997, is:

“an Act to amend, consolidate and streamline the existing law on Local Governments in line with the Constitution give effect to the decentralization and devolution of functions, powers and services; and to provide for decentralization at all levels of Local governments to ensure good governance and democratic participation in, and control of decision making by the people; and to provide for revenue and the political and administrative set-up of Local Governments; and to provide for election of Local Councils and any other matters connected to the above”.

The first objective of the Act was:

“to give full effect to the decentralization of functions, powers, responsibilities and services at all levels of Local Governments” (Local Government Act, 1997, p. 9).

The Local Government Act, 1997 led to the decentralization of all services including public libraries to the districts. This means that the districts are now responsible for establishing, equipping, managing and maintaining public libraries. This situation left the PLB headquarters with few functions of coordination and supervision of the public libraries. The PLB staff came up with the idea of establishing the National Library of Uganda (NLU) which led to the legislation of the National Library Act, 2003. This is an Act:

“to provide for the establishment of the National Library of Uganda, the depositing and preservation of publications, the setting up of an information referral service and library co-ordination and to provide for other related matters” (National Library Act, 2003, p.3).

The functions of the NLU which are related to the collection, preservation and dissemination of the national memory include the following clauses:

- 4l) to acquire and organise for use, a comprehensive collection of library material published in Uganda, by Ugandans, and on Uganda;
- 4m) to act as a depository for the national and foreign governments’ publications as well as for United Nations and other international organisations for purposes of promoting research and scholarship and for the preservation of published national culture and intellectual output;
- 4n) to compile and publish a national bibliography of books in Uganda as a means of promoting the awareness of the availability of these books and encouraging the sale of these books in the country and abroad (National Library Act, 2003, p. 6)
- 5. It is a requirement that every publisher of a book or document in Uganda at his or her cost to deposit three copies of the book or document or one copy of the videogram of film and ten copies in the case of any Government department with the National Library. (National Library Act, 2003, p.7).

6.1 Collection, preservation and dissemination

The Collection is composed mainly of books, and the NLU has not yet embarked on the *preservation* activities, such as microfilming or digitization. The NLU publishes the National Bibliography of Uganda (NBU). The first volume was published in 2005 with 31,000 titles deposited at the NLU from 28 publishers. They were deposited from January 2003 to June 2004. This volume also includes publications deposited at MULIB since 1987. The second volume of 2006 has 708 titles deposited by 55 publishers, while the third published in 2007 includes 562 titles deposited by 44 publishers (Table 2).

| Year | Volume no. | Frequency | No. of titles | No. of publishers |
|------|------------|-----------|---------------|-------------------|
| 2005 | 1 | Annual | 31,000 | 28 |
| 2006 | 2 | Annual | 708 | 55 |
| 2007 | 3 | Annual | 562 | 44 |

Table 2: Frequency of the National Bibliography of Uganda

7. Differences and similarities between MULIB, DLDC and NLU

7.1 Differences

There are some differences in playing these roles between the first two legal deposit libraries that is the MULIB and DLDC, on one hand, and the NLU, on the other (Table 3). The Acts of the former two institutions are outdated, with weak penalties and do not include the non-book materials while the NLU Act is up to date and includes non-book materials. The publishers have to deposit one copy at MULIB and one copy at DLDC while they are required to deposit three copies of books, ten copies of government documents and one copy of videogram or film at the NLU. The collections of the MULIB and DLDC include theses and dissertations the reasons being that they play the dual role of deposit library as well as being academic institutions, while the collection of the NLU is mainly books of general nature and government documents. One of the functions of NLU is to compile and publish a national bibliography, while in the first two Acts they are not obliged to do so.

MULIB has a rich collection of books, government documents, theses and dissertations, microfilms, microcards, photographs, archives, manuscripts and audio materials; while the DLDC has books, theses and dissertation and government documents and; the NLU has books, and government documents. MULIB compiled the Ugandan National Bibliography from 1987. It was irregular and ceased publication in 1997, while the Accessions List of the DLDC and the NBU are current and annual. MULIB microfilms, binds and digitizes some of its national memory, while DLDC and the NLU does binding, but so far nothing more.

| | MULIB | DLDC | NLU |
|----------------------------------|---|---|--|
| Act | Makerere University College (Deposit Library) Act, 1964 | Deposit Library and Documentation Centre Act, 1969 | National Library Act, 2003 |
| Functions | Deposit and preservation of books | Deposit and preservation of books | Acquire and organize for use, a comprehensive collection of library material published in Uganda, by Ugandans, and about Uganda. Compile and publish a Ugandan national bibliography. |
| Number of copies for the deposit | One | One | Three of books or documents, ten of government documents and one of videogram or film |
| Collections | Books, government documents, theses and dissertations, microfilms, micro cards, photographs, archives, manuscripts, audio materials | Books, government documents, theses and dissertations | Books, government documents |
| Dissemination | National Bibliography of Uganda, 1987-1997 (irregular) - DATAD, USDL | Accessions list 1993- annual | National Bibliography of Uganda 2005- Annual |
| Preservation/conservation | Microfilming, binding, digitization | Binding | Binding |

Table 3: Differences and similarities between Makerere University Library, Deposit Library and Documentation Centre and the National Library of Uganda

7.2 Similarities

The three legal deposit libraries namely MULIB, DLDC, and the NLU are playing the role of collecting, processing, preserving and disseminating of the national memory. The legal depository libraries share some similarities. There is no mechanism to put into force the three legal deposit laws, it is left to the will of the publishers whether to deposit or not. The publishers now find it expensive to deposit to the three deposit libraries putting into consideration that they are doing business and therefore aim to maximize profits. So, most of them avoid depositing. Furthermore, some publishers are unaware of the existence of these laws; this situation leads to the publication of incomprehensive national bibliographies. There is a lack of transport, funding, staffing and space to store the national memory. None of these institutions is archiving its national memory. This means taking one copy of each document deposited and storing it safely away for posterity in special environment with constant temperatures and light. Presently, this cannot be done since the legal deposit laws of MULIB and DLDC require to deposit only one copy of a book. On the other hand, although the NLU receives three copies it is still in its infant stage to venture into such an expensive project, putting into consideration that it has not yet got a home of its own. There are no vehicles to collect the documents from the publishers and funds are limited to run the activities of legal depository. There is lack of space for storage of the national imprint. The NBU and the Accessions list are not comprehensive enough, due to the ignorance of the publishers about the legal deposit acts and the impossibility to control the deposit situation by the institutions.

8. Conclusions

It is clear that the reasons for establishment of the three legal depositories were not focussed, due to the lack of library policy to guide the lawmakers during the process of their legislation. The Acts do not have the mechanism to ensure that the laws are adhered to by the publishers. There is duplication and wastage of the limited resources among the three institutions as they all collect the same documents. The DLDC and the NLU compile incomprehensive annual bibliographies. However it is advantageous because the documents are spread over three locations so that in case of fire or other natural disasters, there is a back-up. Additionally, MULIB and DLDC being academic institutions get free copies of books published in Uganda for their clientele. It is an asset that helps to build their collections on site rather than send the readers to another institution. The DLDC and the NLU compile incomprehensive annual national bibliographies.

9. Recommendations

There is a need to re-organise national library system in order to effectively and efficiently build national memory. It is difficult for one depository library to have all the legal deposit in the country. I, therefore, recommend, for example, for MULIB to collect newspapers, manuscripts, photographs, audio visual materials and international publications, theses and dissertations, since it has already got a rich collection of this nature and more space is available in the new library extension. DLDC may concentrate on collection of the governmental documents and the NLU may specialize in collection of the books of general nature. There is a need to revise the Makerere University College (Deposit Library) Act, 1964 and the Deposit Library and Documentation Centre 1969 to match the National Library Act, 2003, and address issue of non-book materials, increase the penalty and the number of publications to be deposited. The government should increase funding of the legal deposit libraries in order to enhance their activities of the collection, processing, storage, preservation

and conservation of the national memory. The funding should include the construction of the national library building and the purchasing of the vehicles. There is a need for training of the personnel working in the legal deposit libraries especially in the field of preservation, conservation and digitization of the national memory. This could be done by study tours to the national libraries of the developed world to learn the good practices.

The importance of building the national memory was emphasized during the launching of the first volume of the NBU, when the director of the NLU encouraged authors to make sure that their publications are deposited at the NLU:

“...a copy of your work is kept forever in an institution in Uganda. Your children’s children and your grandchildren’s children and beyond will be able to access what you have created...” (Mulindwa, 2005)

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