

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The year 2009 was a tumultuous one for all publishers and 2010 was even more difficult despite changes of key people after the Elections. The central issue has been the move by the MoEVT to want to introduce a single textbook and its devastating effect to the Publishing Industry. Still other problems existed prior to this and continue to torment the industry.

Most publishers are in serious cash flow problems or heavily indebted. There is a complete lack of funding for non-textbooks and serious misuse and lack of Textbook funds. Recently, it seems, the World Bank Funds have been released for Secondary Schools but details are still sketchy.

EMAC and the efficacy of the current approval system remains a troubling issue and all Publishers have serious misgivings on EMAC, mainly about chronic delays, transparency and few EMAC meetings for book approval resulting in a massive backlog of books awaiting approval.

PATA has to admit that last year we failed to continue with the significant progress initiatives made in some areas in 2009.

- ***PATA had developed a close working relationship with MOeVT and TAMISEMI (PMO-RALG) concluding with the formation of a joint task force which also included BSAT, and both the Chief Academic Officer and the PS had availed themselves for meetings. This was a significant development which should have ensured that PATA eventually becomes a key player in education policy matters. However the meetings could not take place as the MOEVT officials were too busy and eventually we were told this year the MOEVT is unable to commit to the task force as they have too many other issues to deal with.***
- ***The compromise East West divide of Books distribution and the contract between PATA and MOEVT has not taken***

place. A new System is being put in place for 2011 and might involve the GPSA(Government Procurement Services Agency).

- *The contract between PATA and BSAT was signed but was rendered meaningless without the MOEVT contract. Publishers are still owed substantial amounts by Booksellers and it has been resolved Publishers involved meet to discuss a joint action plan.*

- *The issue of the Single Textbook System seems to have taken a new turn with leaked unsubstantiated reports that MOEVT is prepared to select more than 2 books for Classes 6 and 7 and that a different selection process shall be used. Members requested that if there is a new process for selection than it should start from Pre-Primary(effectively negating the 2 title selected list) up to class 7, and at least 4 books be selected for each subject and class.(Let us recall that in the PATA/MOEVT meeting of 24th Feb 2010, the MOEVT had suggested that the 2 book scenario was interim and PATA should come up with proposals on the way forward). The proposed recommendation of at least 4 books is not just in line with the official PATA position in favour of Multi-Textbooks but also gives opportunity to Publishers of newly approved books to have their books vetted as well and steers us out of the single textbook system if successful. To this effect, a team from PATA met with the the Honourable new Minister of Education and Vocational Training on the 15th of March 2010 , and following the discussions a letter was written to the PS, copy to the Hon. Minister. The issue of PATA members who compromise EMAC members in any manner, including but not limited to offers of educational sponsorship in and outside the country for them or their family members has been raised and PATA shall take up this issue very seriously once the necessary evidence is presented. PATA recommendation for the time being is that all such beneficiaries' should not be involved with EMAC at all as there is a serious conflict of interest which breeds favoritism and unfairness in the entire book approval and selection process. The EMAC approval system has not evolved as yet to cater fully to the needs of the Industry but the EMAC Secretariat has been strengthened by recruitment of new members.*

- ***PATA is still following up in having the MoEVT concur to a specific fund allocation as a proportion of OC funds and other Book funds to cater specifically for procurement of Readers, Supplementary and Reference Books.***
- ***PATA is still incapable of raising sufficient funds to run its activities effectively including National Book Week. However, during the year, the salaries of its dedicated and overworked secretariat staff was raised to be commensurate with qualifications and workload. It is essential for members to pay their dues including voluntary contributions.***

Way Forward

PATA need to further strengthen its working relationship with MOEVT and PMO-RALG in order to ensure it is always involved and considered in strategic planning and decision making. The onus is on PATA to ensure that the Governments recognizes us as a valuable partner in Education and not otherwise.

One major challenge remains the curriculum and anticipated changes in the curriculum. This is a serious issue as we keep hearing of plans or rather the need to revise or change the curriculum soon. PATA needs to monitor this closely and Publishers have to keep their stocks in check. Other than Textbooks a key question remains what happens to EMAC approved non textbooks when the curriculum or syllabus changes?

PATA shall continue to step up efforts to ensure the survival of the Industry as a whole and not just the bigger Text Book Publishers which is the current hub of activity. Piracy appears to still torment the Industry and some Publishers are seriously affected (we hope to share experiences during the AGM).

The Harmonization of Curricula within EAC is another new challenge which can turn the Industry upside down and can kill indigenous Tanzanian Publishers. Individual Publishers ought to take up the challenge of being the bona-fide Publishers of Kiswahili books in the EAC Region.

The SEDP 2 has released funds into Secondary Schools. It has been established that hundreds of millions of dollars are going to be spent in the program including book provision. So far the schools are buying EMAC approved Textbooks only directly, though this may change with GPSA.

PATA has no news so far on the parallel program for the supply of computers in over 4,000 Secondary Schools and installation of internet services in all the schools to facilitate E-Learning by remote access. This is an ambitious program and there is no infrastructure to support such a program. However Publishers ought to start acting accordingly and PATA shall continue to monitor and inform on any developments.

The National Book Week Festival and the World Books Day are the most important book events which PATA members should attend and contribute to. Technological advances in the Book Industry are developing at a fast pace and the Secretariat as well as individual Publishers need to keep abreast of such developments by the occasional visit to other important Book Fairs and venues.

Finally many thanks to the PATA secretariat, members of the EC and all members and stakeholders who have contributed their time, effort, ideas, money and other support for the betterment of Education and provision of quality books in this country. In particular I wish to single out Ms Levina Oloo, Benitho Mtulo , Hobhokela Magale and Abdallah Hassan for the great sacrifices of time, effort and dedication on their part. PATA is indeed deeply indebted to them and shall continue to rely on their continued goodwill and support.

Ian Ben Moshi

PATA Chairman