



# ***AfLIA*** ***Annual Report*** **2020**

Connecting Africa's library and  
information communities

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## From the Executive Director



The African Library and Information Associations and Institutions (AfLIA) clocked seven years this year. The outbreak of Covid-19 affected the plans we had made for the year. All physical facilities that had a mandate to provide information were shut down for most part of the year. Most libraries were not prepared for such a situation and so did not know how to handle the situation.

AfLIA quickly changed its strategy and ensured that our members had the information relevant to how they could continue providing services when physical

libraries were shut. Additional information was also provided on how to prevent being infected by Covid-19 which libraries could pass on to their users and to which they did. All-together, the year was a quiet one since we could not have and face to face activities and programs.

We do appreciate the support of our active Governing Council, partners, loyal members and committed and hardworking staff in these trying times.

**Helena Asamoah-Hassan, PhD**  
**Executive Director**

## **Who We Are**

AfLIA is an independent international not-for-profit organization which pursues the interests of library and information associations, library and information services, librarians and information workers and the communities they serve in Africa.

## **Our Vision**

The trusted voice of the African library and information community in Africa's development.

## **Our Mission**

To lead, empower and be a platform for the library and information community to actively promote and drive development agenda through dynamic and innovative services to transform livelihoods in Africa.

## **Our Values**

AfLIA has the following as its core values:

- Professionalism and Inclusivity
- Integrity, Transparency & Accountability
- Innovation & Creativity
- User focused
- Information as a Human Right

## **Where we Work**

AfLIA is a pan-African association so its area of work is the whole geographic area known as Africa including its islands.

## **What We Do**

- Advocacy for freedom and equitable access to information through improved facilities and human capacity of libraries, for individual and national development in Africa.
- Support human, organizational and infrastructural development of the library and information profession and services by building capacity through training to offer relevant services to communities.
- Pursue partnerships and collaboration by forging and maintaining links with other relevant organizations and associations for mutual benefits and also for those of the African people through libraries.

- Advocacy with governments and agencies - favourable library policies to be included in National Development Policy.
- Position libraries as information centres and partners on the national and global development agenda.
- Mobilise resources to support library projects and membership services in Africa.
- Organise fora for knowledge sharing and networking for librarians in Africa to support improved library and information service delivery.

We do all these with the cooperation of National Governments, National Library Associations, the different types of Libraries in Africa and our partners.

## Summary of Objectives

- **Support and strengthen:**
  - Support the library and information profession that anticipates and responds to the needs of communities in Africa.
  - Drive high standards in library and information services and professional practices in Africa.
- **Visibility & advocacy:**
  - Promote libraries and information centres as vital institutions that enhance people's lives through equitable access to knowledge, information and innovative services
  - Put the library and information profession on the national and continental agendas.
- **Free access to information:**
  - Embrace the principles of freedom of access to information... enshrined in the Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 9 of the African Charter of People's Rights.

## Membership

Currently AfLIA has members in 37 out of the 54 countries of Africa. Membership drive is ongoing in earnest.

## Communication

Communication continues to play a vital role for AfLIA in reaching and interacting with its membership, prospecting new membership, disseminating news and information about the Association and its activities through established channels and tools, i.e. website, newsletters and social media. All activities by the Communications Office were geared towards establishing a top-notch, highly competitive and attractive AfLIA brand for a continental and worldwide audience.

## ***Website***

The AfLIA website (<https://web.aflia.net/>) remained the primary source of dissemination of news and information. It did not receive any major upgrades in 2020 because it was redesigned and launched in 2019. However, some few major changes were deployed in order to develop a more end-user-oriented environment. The Communications Office continuously monitored and regularly updated the website to provide relevant content for membership and the general public. Overall, 71 posts were published on the AfLIA website in 2020 including 43 news items, 11 blogs, 14 events (webinars, online training sessions, workshops etc.), two Event reports and one Statement.

As part of the African Librarians Week, which was introduced by AfLIA in partnership with the Wikimedia Foundation, a dedicated sub-domain (<https://web.aflia.net/aflibwk/>), hosted on the main website, was developed to serve as a central point to obtain all information and resources about the African Librarians Week.

## ***Newsletters and News Alerts***

*Newsletters* and *News Alerts* were key tools used to keep our membership, partners and other followers updated on all happenings in AfLIA as well as the LIS world. As is custom, the Newsletters were disseminated on a monthly basis whereas the News Alerts were sent out periodically to make urgent announcements and draw attention to recent and upcoming activities that could be of interest to our audience. By the end of the year, a total of 31 Newsletters and News Alerts had been disseminated.

On an ongoing basis, the Communications and Membership Offices collaborated to keep the contact details of all persons and institutions on our mailing list up to date. Besides the membership mailing list, AfLIA's General Mailing list had 765 subscribers as at the end of the year 2019. These subscribers are persons who have voluntarily subscribed to receive updates from AfLIA via email. Subscribers on this General Mailing list do not receive news updates and any other information exclusively meant for members. AfLIA continues to use this category of subscribers as critical pool to market the Association and attract new membership.

## ***Social Media - Facebook, Twitter and YouTube***

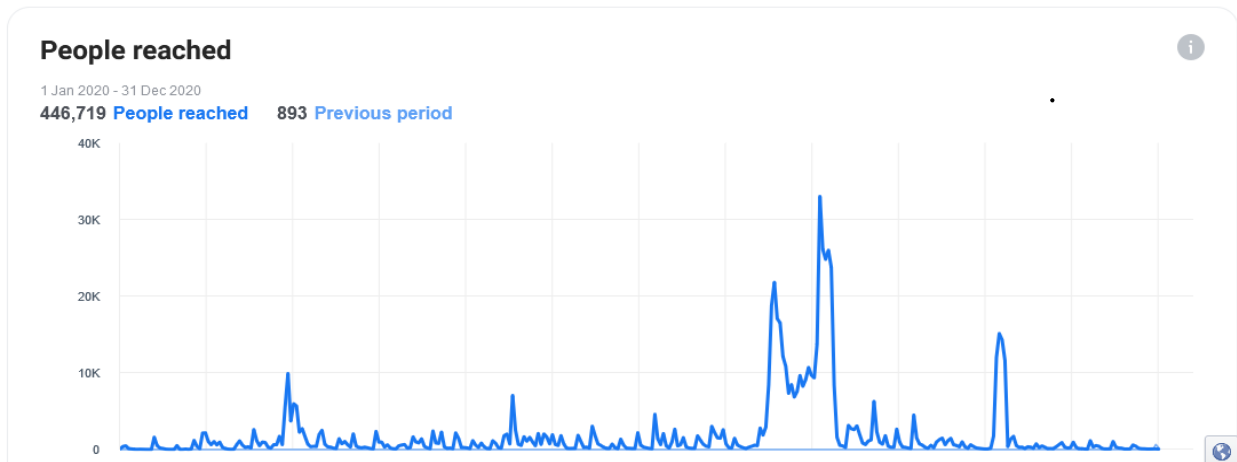
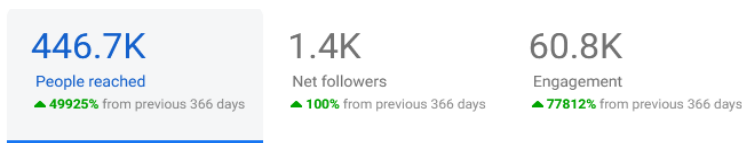
This year, social media served well as a convenient bridge between AfLIA and its audience. Facebook, Twitter and YouTube significantly enhanced the AfLIA brand. Our social media followers received real-time updates on happenings in AfLIA, Africa and the global LIS sector. AfLIA maintained a stronger social media presence throughout 2020 by promoting our news and events and constantly engaging our audiences. Every news item, blog post, official statement, report and event published on the website was announced on Facebook and cross-posted on Twitter.

AfLIA introduced a number of hashtags to facilitate information spread, and generate internet traffic towards our social media platforms. Among such included:

- #AfLibWk, which was introduced to help run the African Librarians Week campaign in May 2020.
- #AfLIAWebinars, which was introduced and used to help spread information about webinars organized by AfLIA.

- #WikiAfLibs, which was introduced and used to drive social media campaigns for the Wikipedia in African Libraries project.

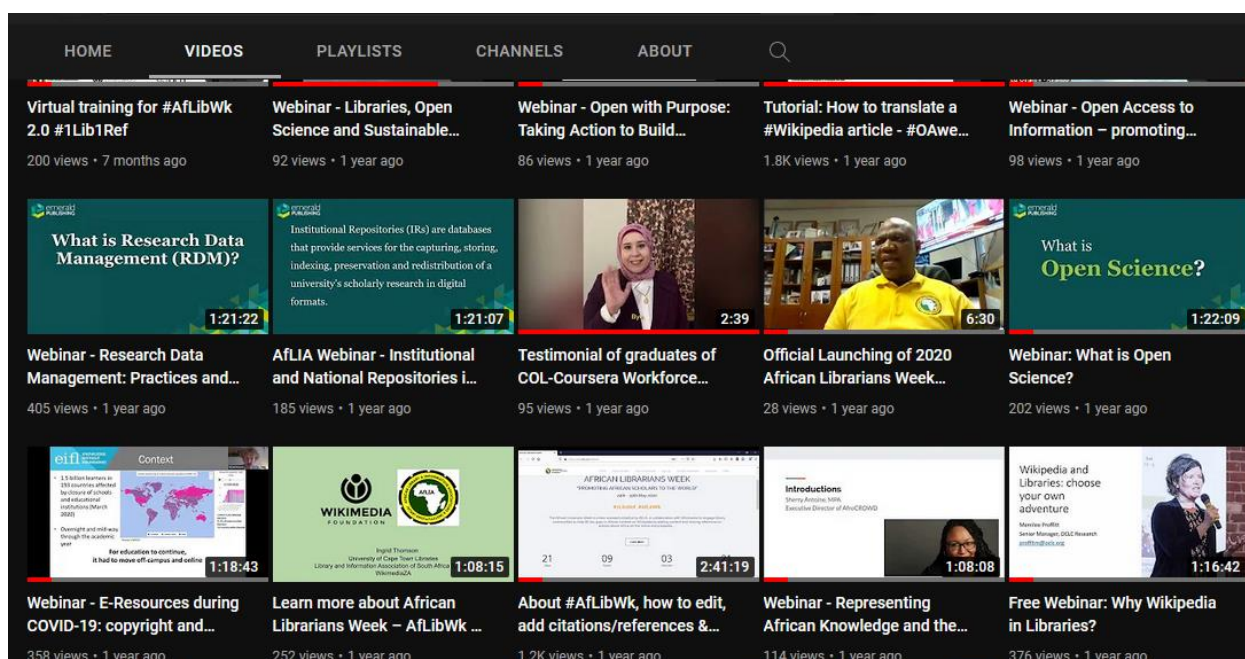
| 2020 Facebook Stats (@aflianetwork)    | 2020 Twitter Stats (@afliacon)        |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| ➤ 5101 likes and 5462 followers        | ➤ 230 tweets made                     |
| ➤ 446,719 people reached through posts | ➤ 2290 profile visits                 |
| ➤ 60,791 engagements on posts made     | ➤ 1841 total followers                |
| ➤ 2,138 posts shared by audience       | ➤ 391,891 total impressions on tweets |
| ➤ 35,255 reactions on posts            | ➤ 286 total mentions                  |



**Snapshot of AfLIA’s Facebook Account Analytics for 2020**

Similarly, the total number of subscribers on AfLIA’s YouTube Channel increased to 201, a 123% increase, from the level of subscription in 2019. This year, a total number of thirteen new videos were uploaded to the YouTube Channel comprising of recordings of AfLIA’s live webinars, official launch ceremony of the African Librarians Week and a testimonial from beneficiaries of AfLIA-COL-Course Workforce Programme.





Snapshot of AfLIA YouTube Channel

## Webinars

### List of webinars organized by AfLIA in 2020

| Sessions  | Dates  | URL  |
|---|--|--|
| Wikipedia Webinar Series for African Librarians (4 SESSIONS)  | 20th February, 2020<br>12th March, 2020<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> April, 2020<br>23 <sup>rd</sup> April, 2020         | <a href="https://web.aflia.net/wikipedia-webinar-series-for-african-librarians/">https://web.aflia.net/wikipedia-webinar-series-for-african-librarians/</a>  |
| Supporting Academic Libraries in the COVID-19 Era (1 SESSION)   | 19th May, 2020   | <a href="https://web.aflia.net/webinar-supporting-academic-libraries-in-the-covid-19-era/">https://web.aflia.net/webinar-supporting-academic-libraries-in-the-covid-19-era/</a>  |
| Emergency preparedness for African Librarians – COVID-19 survey results and the way forward (1 SESSION) | 16th June, 2020  | <a href="https://web.aflia.net/covid-19-survey-results-and-the-way-forward/">https://web.aflia.net/covid-19-survey-results-and-the-way-forward/</a>  |
| E-Resources during COVID-19: copyright and licensing issues (1 SESSION)                                 | 14th July 2020   | <a href="https://web.aflia.net/e-resources-during-covid-19-copyright-and-licensing-issues/">https://web.aflia.net/e-resources-during-covid-19-copyright-and-licensing-issues/</a>  |
| Webinar Series: Open Science and Libraries (3 SESSIONS)   | 25 <sup>th</sup> August, 2020<br>1st September, 2020<br>8th September, 2020<br>16 <sup>th</sup> September 2020 | <a href="https://web.aflia.net/webinar-open-science-and-libraries/">https://web.aflia.net/webinar-open-science-and-libraries/</a> ;<br><a href="https://web.aflia.net/webinar-libraries-open-science-and-sustainable-development/">https://web.aflia.net/webinar-libraries-open-science-and-sustainable-development/</a> |

|   |                               |   |
|---|-------------------------------|---|
| Open Access to Information – promoting innovation in Africa (1 SESSION)   | 28th September, 2020          | <a href="https://web.aflia.net/open-access-to-information-promoting-innovation-in-africa/">https://web.aflia.net/open-access-to-information-promoting-innovation-in-africa/</a> |
| Opening up Knowledge: Taking Action to Build Structural Equity and Inclusion - Virtual Training on Translating Articles on Wikipedia. (1 SESSION) | 19 <sup>th</sup> October 2020 | <a href="https://web.aflia.net/2020-open-access-week-aflia-unique-celebration/">https://web.aflia.net/2020-open-access-week-aflia-unique-celebration/</a>                       |

## The ALVA Project

This is a report of key activities that were embarked on in 2020 under the Advancing Library Visibility in Africa (ALVA) Project, a collaborative project being implemented by AFLIA and the Technology and Social Change Group (TASCHA) of the University of Washington (UW) in the USA with the support of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation’s Global Libraries initiative.

The ALVA Project seeks to make available relevant library data that will promote the development of the African public and community library sector and enhance opportunities of public and community libraries for partnership with other community-based or civil-society organizations (CSOs) through enhanced visibility.

COVID-19 pandemic caused a temporary pause on the work being done on Library Locations Data Collection Workstream of the ALVA project. That is because the Library Locations data collection exercise significantly involves movement (physical presence at library is a requirement) and in some cases person-to-person contact, if interviews are done. After receiving feedback from all participating countries about library closures and restrictions in movement, the Project Team decided to hold on till it was absolutely safe to continue with this Workstream to safeguard the health and safety of Champions and respondents. A few Libraries began collecting some data in December.

The same pandemic affected the start of the development stories (workstream two) pilot study in Ghana as in-person interviews could not be undertaken and the late start in workstream two across all the countries.

More attention was given to the Development Stories Workstream. Before COVID, the plan was to conduct the study in selected countries (Angola, Egypt, Ghana, Namibia, Senegal, Uganda and South Africa) and would have involved face-to-face interviews at selected branch libraries in addition to the headquarters. Given the circumstance, this plan was revised to an online survey in all 29 participating countries with focus on the headquarters of National Libraries/National Public Library Service or authorizing body running the public library systems in these countries (whether centralized or decentralized). The process was successfully piloted in Ghana. Contacts have been made with Angola, Nigeria, Botswana, Lesotho, eSwatini, Uganda, South Africa, Kenya, Benin, Cameroon, Sierra Leone, Egypt, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Zambia, Benin, Cote D’Ivoire, Mali, Cameroon, and Zimbabwe and the surveys sent to their National Libraries/Public Library Services for responses.

## List of papers published in 2020 under the ALVA Project.

1. Lynch, R., Young, J. C., Jowaisas, C., Boakye-Achampong, S., & Sam, J. (2020). African libraries in development: Perceptions and possibilities. *International Information & Library Review*, 1-14.
2. Lynch, R., Young, J. C., Boakye-Achampong, S., Jowaisas, C., Sam, J., & Norlander, B. (2021). Benefits of crowdsourcing for libraries: A case study from Africa. *IFLA Journal*, 47(2), 168-181.

Specific stand out activities on the ALVA Project are featured below under Activities for 2020.

## Our Activities in 2020

### January 2020

- ✓ AfLIA opened applications for the third cohort of AfLIA Leadership Academy. Applications were received and reviewed but commencement of AfLAc 3 was unanimously postponed by AfLIA Governing Council due to the prevailing impeding impacts of COVID-19.
- ✓ AfLIA signed a Memorandum of Understanding with The Wikipedia Library (TWL) from January 1<sup>st</sup> 2020 to extend the reach of Wikipedia and its sister projects within the African Librarians network through organizing webinars on Wikipedia topics relevant for libraries and librarians, organizing the first African Librarians Week, organizing a Wikipedia pre-conference at the AfLIA Conference in 2021 and hosting a progressive course model on AfLIA's Moodle platform. The partnership aims to equip African librarians with digital skills that will enable them to edit and add content to Wikipedia and sister projects. AfLIA finds this as critical as we seek to make African librarians producers and not just consumers of information as they work on the inclusion of Africa's local knowledge with its peculiar nuances and philosophies into the global body of knowledge. <https://web.aflia.net/african-librarians-invited-to-contribute-knowledge-to-wikipedia-through-a-new-wikimedia-aflia-partnership/>
- ✓ There was a progress meeting with ALVA Project country representatives (Champions) to discuss plans and strategies for facilitating the mapping of more public and community libraries in 2020. ALVA Champion's request for support letter (introductory letter) for Morocco and Gabon were sent to the respective Library Directors so that the Champions could officially start work.
- ✓ The scope of work of Phase 2 of the ALVA Project was revised due to the COVID-19 outbreak to include all the twenty-nine countries contributing to library location data and South Africa making thirty countries instead of the original 6 countries that the ALVA team started with in WS2 (Angola, Egypt, Ghana, Namibia, Senegal, and Uganda). These thirty countries were then prioritized into three

categories of more responsive and less responsive countries to determine the countries to start work with first. The revisions were proactive decisions taken to ensure that implementation of Phase 2 continued regardless of the effects of COVID-19 outbreak. It was agreed that if full response is received from about fifteen countries, the study will be considered a success.

## February 2020

✓ The Communications and Membership Offices developed and published an article titled, “AfLIA Membership: What’s in it for me?”. The article intended to enlighten readers on the importance and benefits of AfLIA membership and by extension, attract and guide potential members on the processes of AfLIA membership.

✓ AfLIA signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) – A UK library and information association which supports librarians, information and knowledge professionals in more than 20 industry sectors in the UK and worldwide

✓ AfLIA hosted a 4-part Wikipedia Webinar, from 20<sup>th</sup> February to 20<sup>th</sup> April. A series of webinars on Wikipedia geared at equipping Librarians with knowledge about Wikipedia and skills on how to be part of a dedicated network of African Wikipedian editors helping to improve the relevance, accuracy, reliability of articles about Africa hosted on Wikipedia.

✓ In furtherance of the Agreement between AfLIA and SAIDE, the following Learning Pathways on **Open Education Resources (OER)** were developed for training African librarians on Open Educational Resources in February, 2020: ***Find Open Content*** which is a short tutorial for librarians to be equipped to skillfully search for open content, understand the different Creative Commons rights and permissions for resources and evaluate the importance of Open Educational Resources (OER) for information services; ***Adapt Open Content*** which teaches librarians how to use Open Educational Resources by adapting them for new purposes. The different options for adaptation of resources, and how to revise and remix open content are all covered by the tutorial; ***Publish using Open Access*** explains the different strands of Open Access, and why librarians should encourage academics to use that route for publishing. The tutorial also covers the general concept of Open movements. The Learning Pathways were pilot tested by librarians in academic institutions in Botswana, Ghana, Nigeria and Uganda in April.

✓ Cohort 2 of the AfLIA Leadership Academy (AfLAc) attended the Public Library Association (PLA) conference (February 23<sup>rd</sup> – March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020) in Nashville, Tennessee as part of the learning process for understanding leadership in public libraries and their user communities. The Cohort also held their graduation on the last day of the PLA conference. Reports on the trip were published by AfLIA -

<https://web.aflia.net/libraries-are-more-than-books/> and PLA's online magazine - <http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2020/09/voices-are-power/>



**AFLAC 2 participants at a Library visit, in Nashville**



**AFLAC 2 participants at a Library visit, in Nashville**



**Graduation picture- Roland**



**Graduation picture - Rachel**



**Graduation picture – Glory**



**Graduation picture - Rachel**



**Graduation picture - Raymond**



**Graduation picture - Rohy**



## March 2020

✓ AfLIA, in collaboration with the African Parliamentary Institute of Yaounde – IPAY, organized a 2-day practically-oriented training workshop for 40 Parliamentary Librarians and Archivists from the 4-5th March 2020 in Yaoundé – Cameroon, to build up their capacities for 21<sup>st</sup> information service delivery and expose and equip them with requisite knowledge and skill sets in research, digital curation of legislative materials and the use of mobile apps for real-time information services to Parliamentarians and other stakeholders so as to enable them effectively and efficiently support the work of Parliament.

The following topics were treated: (1) Librarians as research consultants in parliamentary libraries (2) Mobile applications and Information services for the 21<sup>st</sup> century law makers (3) Management of libraries and archives of parliaments in the digital age. There was also practical sessions on topics that equipped them to; function as research consultants in Parliamentary libraries; use mobile applications effectively for information dissemination to 21<sup>st</sup> century parliamentarians; and understand how to digitally curate legislative processes and laws for effective parliamentary services in the continent.

The Workshop was organized under the auspices of IPAY and the National Assembly of Cameroon. <https://web.aflia.net/aflia-and-ipay-organize-a-2-day-training-workshop-for-parliamentary-librarians-and-archivists/>



**Workshop participants with the Deputy Secretary General of the National Assembly of Cameroon, Mr. Godwill Okia Mukete and AfLIA's Vice President Mr. Alim Garga**



**Participants at the AfLIA IPAY workshop**

- ✓ Work on a dashboard and map view to give a graphical representation of the library location data was completed in March 2020. A sample can be viewed at: <https://bree.shinyapps.io/alva-dashboard/>
- ✓ AfLIA's Freedom of Access to Information and Expression Statement was published online (<https://web.aflia.net/statements-and-declarations-reports/>) in April 2020 after approval by the Executive Director. With the publication, Activity 2.7a of the Strategic Plan, to: "review AfLIA's freedom of access to information and expression statement" was completed.
- ✓ AfLIA held a physical workshop in conjunction with African StoryBook organization in Abuja, Nigeria from 3<sup>rd</sup> -5<sup>th</sup> March with the theme; ***Use of technology to create and translate children's books for literacy promotion.*** The workshop helped participants to understand Open Licensing and how it can be used to build digital libraries and promote a country's artistic and documentary heritage. The National Library of Nigeria hosted the workshop.



**Prof. Lenrie Aina, Nigerian National Librarian of Nigeria welcoming participants to the workshop**

✓ A webinar on the Global Outreach program was held on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2020 to sensitize African librarians on how Wikimedia communities have worked with different libraries, including public libraries in Bulgaria and how rare book collections in Argentina were digitized using Wikipedia and sister projects. The webinar exposed African librarians to possibilities of what the partnership with the Wikipedia Library could yield for the library sector in the continent.

✓ Between March and May, 2020 AfLIA sought to find out how African libraries were responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, AfLIA asked about the emergency preparedness level of African libraries to the crisis, their roles in dissemination of information as well as the preventative measures and plans for post-covid-19 era. One hundred and fifty-one (153) libraries from twenty-four (24) countries across the five (5) regions of the continent responded. The report of the survey which has been shared with libraries in order to help them update their emergency plans can be found here: <https://web.aflia.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/REPORT-TRACKING-THE-RESPONSES-OF-AFRICAN-LIBRARIES.pdf>

## April 2020

- ✓ AfLIA conducted a study to Track African Libraries' responses to COVID-19 crises. Study findings were disseminated via a webinar. Findings were also presented at the 2020 LIASA Virtual Indaba Conference later in November, 2020.
- ✓ AfLIA Gender Policy, Whistleblower Policy and Quality Assurance Policy were approved and uploaded on the AfLIA website.
- ✓ Country-level progress updates on the Library Location data collection exercise were developed and circulated to Champions to guide their next course of action in the midst of COVID-19 pandemic. Closely after this the Champions were asked to momentarily halt the library location data collection due to the upsurge of cases of COVID-19 on the continent.
- ✓ A webinar was held on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2020 to educate African librarians, archivists, documentalists and other information workers within the library sector on how Wikipedia and sister projects have helped to globally showcase knowledge about Africa and African diaspora communities through experiences of volunteers from the Caribbean, New York City and South Africa which can all be replicated in different African communities and libraries.
- ✓ A webinar was held prior to the African Library Week to make African Librarians understand their role in ensuring that the information in Wikipedia is accurate by crosschecking and adding relevant references. This is important because every year, the one librarian one reference (**#1lib1ref**) campaign highlights the need for every librarian everywhere to at least add one more citation to Wikipedia. This is important as every single reference added improves the reliability of the online encyclopedia. The webinar was used as a rallying call for the first African Librarians Week which will be devoted to adding citations to articles on Wikipedia.
- ✓ The COVID-19 pandemic caused the shutdown of libraries and information centres in the continent and globally. Libraries needed to continue the provision of information services even while their doors were locked. AfLIA supported librarians with information about platforms that could aid the provision of online services for young people, students and lifelong learners. AfLIA had earlier enjoined all professionals in the African library sector to spearhead the dissemination of accurate information about the virus to check the deluge of misinformation.  
<https://web.aflia.net/suite-of-covid-19-resources-for-librarians/> and  
<https://web.aflia.net/corona-virus-covid-19-awareness-what-can-african-librarians-do/>
- ✓ Due to the global lockdown because of COVID-19 pandemic, the final Convening and Graduation for INELI-SSAf Cohort 2 scheduled for 16-19 April 2020 in Namibia was postponed to 2021.

## May 2020

- ✓ Certificates of participation were designed and disseminated to attendees who were present for all the sessions in the 4-part webinar series. Series of country-level online trainings were conducted to prepare African Librarians for the African Librarians Week. These include Botswana, Namibia, Nigeria, Ghana, South Africa, Kenya, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania.
- ✓ AfLIA partnered with Association of African Universities to hold a webinar on Supporting Academic Libraries in the COVID-19 Era on **19<sup>th</sup> May 2020**. The webinar assisted academic librarians to understand how they could support teaching and learning in online spaces, as well as how to plan for the post-COVID-19 era.
- ✓ The first AfLIA African Librarians Week was held from 24<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> May with the theme *'Promoting African Scholars to the world'*. The Week was a part of the global one librarian one reference (#1lib1ref) campaign by Wikipedia to get librarians add relevant references to the information in the online encyclopedia thereby making it more accurate and credible. Library and information professionals all over the continent participated actively in the campaign and set new records globally as follows:
  - A total of 27,846 edits were made on 3,946 articles in Wikipedia
  - 10,055 citations were added
  - 660,539 words were added
  - 81 images were added to Wikimedia Commons.
  - 28 new articles were also created
  - 844 editors registered on the dashboard for the First African Librarians Week.<https://web.aflia.net/recap-aflibwk-campaign-key-stats-outcomes-and-top-contributors/>



**Banner for the first African Librarians Week campaign**

The Wikimedia Foundation featured the campaign in their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration - <https://wikimediafoundation.org/wikipedia20/>

✓ To enhance the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) capacity of Libraries in Africa, an online study was conducted between February and May 2020 to find out the current status and use of ICTs in all library types in Africa. The questionnaire focused on: ICT infrastructure facilities, library automation, Internet connectivity, technical support, obstacles to use of ICT, ICT policies and strategies, and expenditure. The findings were that Adequate funding should be provided by governments and parent organizations across all library types to ensure enhanced security; library staff and users should be adequately trained and sensitized in the management and maintenance of ICT equipment; AfLIA should take the lead in the capacity building of emerging and established librarians in the area of website development, software and hardware development and maintenance of hardware; authorities should fund the provision of ICT equipment to meet the increasing demand of users for the provision of online services.

### **June 2020**

✓ AfLIA announced partnership with Commonwealth of Learning, Canada, to introduce the COL-Coursera Workforce Recovery Programme, a fully sponsored online learning opportunity for the unemployed (citizens, library users etc.) and students to gain skills towards employment. The program enabled free and unlimited access to over 3800 courses and 400 specializations to enhance employability of African library users. Certificates of participation were designed and disseminated to the top 50 contributors or participants of the maiden African Librarians Week. First batch of applicants under the COL-COURSERA Workforce Recovery Program submitted to Commonwealth of Learning, Canada.

✓ Guidelines for the structural development of Library Sections of AfLIA was developed, approved and distributed to the various sections for their input.

### **July 2020**

✓ Certificates of recognition were designed and presented to country representatives (Champions) who assisted AfLIA to mobilize and train African Librarians for the maiden African Librarians Week.

✓ AfLIA received a grant from Wikimedia Foundation to adapt the OCLC curriculum on *Wikipedia + Libraries: Better Together*, to make it more relatable to the African environment and run a course '*Wikipedia in African Libraries*' on it. The grant also provided for the employment of a Wikipedian in Residence for a year and a curriculum development consultant for three months. The advertisements for filling the posts were subsequently put up this month. - <https://web.aflia.net/job-opening-curriculum-development-consultant/> ; <https://web.aflia.net/job-opening-wikipedian-in-residence/>

✓ As African libraries wholly embraced the provision of information services through online platforms due to COVID-19 restrictions, AfLIA drew their attention to

Copyright and Licensing issues that they need to be aware about. African Librarians needed to know how to ethically take storybooks on their shelves and read to children online or share books online. A webinar on “*E-Resources during COVID-19: Copyright and Licensing issues*” was held on 14<sup>th</sup> July to highlight the principle of fair use as well as limitations and exceptions within the Copyright laws of different African countries.

✓ AfLIA participated in UNESCO’s *Future of Education* conversation; a global initiative to re-imagine how knowledge and learning can shape the future of humanity and the planet. Focus group consultation sessions on the futures of education in an ever-changing, uncertain world were held with stakeholders and partners on **21<sup>st</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> July**, Of particular interest to AfLIA was the investigation of availability of knowledge as a major component of sustainable education systems that can shape the future of education in the African continent. Key points of the conversation were submitted as a report to UNESCO.

✓ AfLIA’s Fraud Policy for AfLIA was developed and approved.

## August 2020

✓ Over 2,300 learners from 17 African countries were celebrated at a virtual convocation organized by Commonwealth of Learning, Canada (COL) and Coursera in collaboration with AfLIA as one of its implementing partners in Africa. These were learners who had successfully completed various online courses after joining the COL-Coursera Workforce Recovery Program. Overall, AfLIA recommended 7054 applicants from Africa for the program.

✓ After three phases of interviews conducted for shortlisted applicants, a Wikipedian in Residence, Alice Kibombo, was engaged to run the *Wikipedia in African Libraries* course. She worked with the Curriculum Development Consultant to ensure that the OCLC Curriculum ‘*Wikipedia + Libraries: Better Together*’ was adapted to fit African realities. A chat was held on Twitter to publicise the appointment and promote the forthcoming course - <https://web.aflia.net/aflia-gets-a-wikipedian-in-residence/>

✓ A 4-member evaluation committee was established under the WikiAfLibs project mainly to provide research support in drafting and reviewing a pre-training questionnaire for the project and to assist the Consultant Evaluator to evaluate the project through engaging the focus groups and other course participants.

## September, 2020

✓ AfLIA announced the Call for papers, posters and ignite talk proposals for the 4th AfLIA Conference & 6<sup>th</sup> African Library Summit slated for May 2021.

✓ A curriculum development consultant was engaged to work with the Wikipedian in Residence in adapting the OCLC curriculum for the *Wikipedia in African Libraries* course. <https://web.aflia.net/aflia-signs-on-a-curriculum-development-consultant-wikipedia-in-african-libraries-project/>

✓ AfLIA was honoured with an Award at the 2020 Ghana Development Awards on 12th September 2020 for its Contribution to Growth and Development in Education. The event was organized and hosted by The Business Executive Limited, publishers of the monthly magazine titled The Business Executive. <https://web.aflia.net/aflia-recognized-for-its-contribution-to-the-growth-and-development-of-education/>



**Snapshot of the Awards**

✓ AfLIA signed a partnership agreement with Mentors Without Borders, a group of passionate computer programming professionals who are helping underprivileged young people including the unemployed gain skills in HTML, CSS, Javascript, C++, Python and Kotlin for web development, mobile applications and artificial intelligence/machine learning. Participants for the training were drawn from Cameroon, Eswatini, Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The Opening session took place on Saturday **12<sup>th</sup> September** virtually. The training was for four (4) months.





### Virtual opening session of the training program

- ✓ The COVID-19 crisis moved teaching and learning at all educational levels to online spaces. This continued to exacerbate the digital and educational divide in Africa as many students lack access to the Internet and household computers/Internet enabled devices and are unable to join classes or complete assignments online. This hindered access to information and knowledge for students and lifelong learners. In collaboration with IFLA, a webinar was organized on 23<sup>rd</sup> September to cue in African librarians on the importance of spearheading advocacy for public Internet access in African libraries. The webinar targeted officers of National Library Associations all over Africa on how to lead the efforts on public Internet access for libraries in the continent as different countries have different regulations for access to Internet.
  
- ✓ A survey was deployed on 24<sup>th</sup> September as part of the Wikipedia in African Libraries course. AfLIA needed to collect baseline data that will aid in designing the course. The findings of the survey can be accessed here: <https://web.aflia.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/WIKIAfLIBS-PROJECT-PRE-RESEARCH-SURVEY-REPORT.pdf>
  
- ✓ A virtual panel discussion titled ‘*Open Access to Information: Promoting innovation in Africa*’ was held on 28<sup>th</sup> September to celebrate the International Day for Universal Access to Information. <https://web.aflia.net/open-access-to-information-promoting-innovation-in-africa/>

### October 2020

- ✓ Participants of AfLIA Webinar for African LIS Professionals who indicated their names on the list were contacted and invited to be members of AfLIA.
  
- ✓ One of the activities in the celebration of Open Access Week was through a webinar on **How to use the translation software on Wikipedia and also show how to participate in the Open Access Week Translation Contest** organized by AfLIA.

- ✓ On 1<sup>st</sup> October, the Call for Chapters went out for a book titled Digital Literacy, Inclusivity and Sustainable Development in Africa which was born out of the Memorandum of Understanding between AfLIA and CILIP. <https://web.aflia.net/digital-literacy-inclusivity-and-sustainable-development-in-africa-call-for-chapters/>
  
- ✓ The 2020 Open Access Week Theme “*Open with Purpose: Taking Action to Build Structural Equity and Inclusion*”. AfLIA celebrated the 2020 Open Access week by stretching Openness to include the possible pathways for using local African languages to provide access to knowledge as a means of adding a building block to structural equity in opening up knowledge. A webinar was held on **19<sup>th</sup> October** to kickstart the week and teach African librarians how to translate articles into their local languages on Wikipedia.
  
- ✓ The theme for the 2020 Global Media and Literacy Week (24<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> October) was “*Resisting Disinfodemic: Media and Information Literacy for everyone and, by everyone*” A short course was developed for African librarians around that theme. It was hosted on the Moodle platform and ran from 25<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> October. Thirty-nine (39) librarians fully completed the course and developed Action Plans that would be carried out in communities to check the deluge of false information about the COVID-19 pandemic. AfLIA chose ten (10) of the plans and would assist in ensuring that they are implemented <https://web.aflia.net/getting-into-action-media-and-information-literacy-in-africa/>
  
- ✓ A research brief and blog post developed from the study on the perception of development organizations of African libraries, was finalized and published on AfLIA and TASCHA’s website. <https://web.aflia.net/research-on-african-libraries-in-development-perceptions-and-possibilities/>
  
- ✓ Three graduates (Miriam Mureithi, Victoria Isaacks and Beatrice Ampadu) from the AfLIA Leadership Academy were identified to develop abstracts from their project works for the CIES 2021 Virtual Conference. Abstracts submitted were reviewed and edited for submission as subject matters for the panel discussion under the theme: “African libraries as development partners in education”.
  
- ✓ Pre-research survey questionnaire for the WikiAfLibs project was finalized and widely circulated to solicit responses

## November 2020

- ✓ The Communications Office re-designed a PowerPoint template to be used by the Secretariat, Governing Council members or any other person making internal and public presentations for or on behalf of AfLIA. This formed part of the strategy to strengthen AfLIA’s visual identity in the quest to establish the brand’s label.

- ✓ The call for the Pilot testing of the Wikipedia in African Libraries Course was opened on 3<sup>rd</sup> November. The pilot ran from 16<sup>th</sup> November to 20<sup>th</sup> December.
- ✓ Presentation made at LIASA Virtual Indaba 2020 to share key findings and recommendations on a study titled “Tracking African Libraries’ responses to the COVID-19 crisis” conducted by AfLIA.
- ✓ Preliminary findings and insights from pre-research survey shared with the Wikipedian-in-Residence and the Curriculum Development expert as they work on revising the OCLC curriculum

## **December 2020**

- ✓ The ALVA Project team began working on establishing a permanent platform for the library locations data collection exercise. Local and regional vendors with expertise in the building of a custom platform for mapping all library types across Africa were sought and Terms of reference shared with all identified vendors including ODK, ONA, Tech-Orient and Adroit Bureau and preliminary meetings were held with ODK, one of the potential service providers.
- ✓ ALVA Team’s proposal to make a presentation on the topic, “Neoliberal partnerships in African development: Lessons from libraries” at the CIES Virtual Conference 2021 is accepted.

## **New Partnerships**

While maintaining most of its existing partners, AfLIA signed MoUs with four new partners. The new partners are as follows:

### **AfLIA and the Wikipedia Library – 1<sup>st</sup> January**

AfLIA and The Wikipedia Library will collaborate on organizing webinars on Wikipedia topics relevant for libraries and librarians; Organizing the first African Librarians Week ; Organizing a Wikipedia pre-conference at the AfLIA Conference in 2021; Hosting a progressive course model on AfLIA’s Moodle platform

### **AfLIA and CILIP- 30<sup>th</sup> January**

AfLIA signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) – A UK library and information association which supports librarians, information and knowledge professionals in more than 20 industry sectors in the UK and worldwide to carry out best practice in the development of Library Professional standards and accreditation including pursuance of development agendas framed on UN 2030 SDGs; exchange of ideas and information on conferences; professional

exchanges enhancing professional experience and development; Cooperation in advancement of knowledge and access to information as a human right; and a discussion of the creation and distribution of best practice content and potential publishing partnership with Facet Publishing.

### **AfLIA and SAIDE - African Storybook - 13<sup>th</sup> February**

Creating and encouraging the use of a digital library of openly licensed stories for African children and with tools for creating stories as well as translating / adapting into local languages.

### **Mentors without Borders - 18<sup>th</sup> August**

The overall objective is to establish a mutually beneficial relationship built on the basis for the development of a close partnership between MWB and AfLIA for teaching software development. The program is aimed at teaching mentees about web development, mobile development or artificial intelligence/machine learning. In this program, the students will learn and practice under the direct supervision of software development experts. Students will develop their skills in HTML, CSS, Javascript, C++, Java, Python, Kotlin or Swift. Students will also learn database skills, Agile software development practices and test-driven development principles

## **Our partners**

AfLIA has different types of relationships with these partners as follows:

- **Africa Union** -Agreement towards the development of African Information and Knowledge Society, National, Academic and Community Libraries, etc, with a view to enhancing delivery of the right information to the right person at the right time and development of Library and Information professional associations as promoters and driving force for equitable access to information, knowledge, and innovative services in Africa.
- **Bibliotheca Alexandrina of The Arab Republic of Egypt (BA)** - promotion of cooperation in the field of library and information sciences, capacity building and establishing African libraries networks and disseminating information among African libraries.
- **Black Caucus of the American Library Association, Inc (BCALA)**- to establish co-operation between AfLIA and BCALA on issues relating to library and information services, library resources and services sharing, in order to promote research and learning in all fields.
- **EBLIDA** - best practice development of Library Legislation; implementation of UN 2030 Sustainable development Goals; and exchange of ideas and information on conferences

- **eLearning Africa (eLA)** - promotion of research and learning in all fields in Africa.
- **Electronic Information for Libraries (EIFL)** - capacity building of African public librarians.
- **International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)** - joint projects to strengthen the library field in Africa.
- **Public Library Association (PLA) of the American Library Association** - capacity building of African public librarians.
- **South African Institute of Distance Education (SAIDE)**- to work together on the African Storybook initiative and equitable and meaningful access to knowledge, skills and learning through the adoption of open learning principles and distance education methods.
- **The Technology & Social Change Group (TASCHA), University of Washington** - research into status of libraries in Africa.
- **World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)** - intellectual property rights and access to information.
- **Women's Global Education Project (WGEP)** - promotion of research and learning in Africa.
- **Worldreader** - local e-content for young children.
- **Yaounde African Parliamentary Institute (IPAY)** - to provide a non- exclusive framework for partnerships between the parties in the implementation of their action programmes for the training and capacity building of parliamentary staff in the fields of documentation and institutional information.

## Staff

Bless K. Dzah, Accountant

Doreen Appiah, Program Officer

Eunice Jones - Arthur, Administrative Assistant (Membership)

Nkem Osuigwe, Human Capacity & Training Director

Helena Asamoah-Hassan, Executive Director

Joel Sam, AfLIA & ACAfI Projects Director

Michael Thompson, Webmaster

Stanley Boakye-Achampong, Research Coordinator & Communications Officer

## **Governing Council Members (May 2019 – May 2021)**

- |     |                           |  |
|-----|---------------------------|--|
| 1.  | Mr. Mandla Ntombela       | President  |
| 2.  | Mr. John Tsebe            | Immediate Past President                         |
| 3.  | Mr Alim Garga             | Vice President                                   |
| 4.  | Prof. Rosemary Shafack    | Central Africa Representative                    |
| 4.  | Dr. Sarah Kaddu           | East African Representative                      |
| 5.  | Ms. Rania Shaarawy        | North Africa Representative                      |
| 6.  | Ms. Elizabeth Matheus     | Southern Africa Representative                   |
| 7.  | Dr. Chinwe Anunobi        | West Africa Representative                       |
| 8.  | Mr. Mandiaye Ndiaye       | French speaking West Africa Representative       |
| 9.  | Mr. Iaguba Djalo          | Portuguese speaking Africa Representative        |
| 10. | Ms. Sarah I. Negumbo      | Chair: National Libraries Section                |
| 11. | Mrs Neemat Abdulrahim     | Chair: Public Libraries Section                  |
| 12. | Mrs. Comfort Asare        | Chair: National Library Associations Section     |
| 13. | Ms. Nyarai Chibanda       | Chair: Academic and Research Libraries Section   |
| 14. | Dr. Cecile Coulibaly      | Chair, Library Consortia Section                 |
| 15. | Dr. Ayodele Alonge        | Chair, Education & Training Institutions Section |
| 16. | Mrs Nthabiseng Kotsokoane | Chair: IFLA Africa Section                       |
| 17. | Dr. Helena Asamoah-Hassan | Executive Director                               |
| 18. | Doreen Appiah             | Secretary to the Council                         |

## **Contacts**

Postal Address: P.O. Box. BC 38, Burma Camp, Accra, Ghana

Email: [secretariat@aflia.net](mailto:secretariat@aflia.net) ; [info@aflia.net](mailto:info@aflia.net)

Website: [web.aflia.net](http://web.aflia.net)

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/afliacon](https://www.twitter.com/afliacon)

Facebook: [facebook.com/aflianetwork](https://facebook.com/aflianetwork)

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/organization/22326599/](https://linkedin.com/organization/22326599/)

Flicker: [flickr.com/photos/15543599\\_6@N07/](https://flickr.com/photos/15543599_6@N07/)

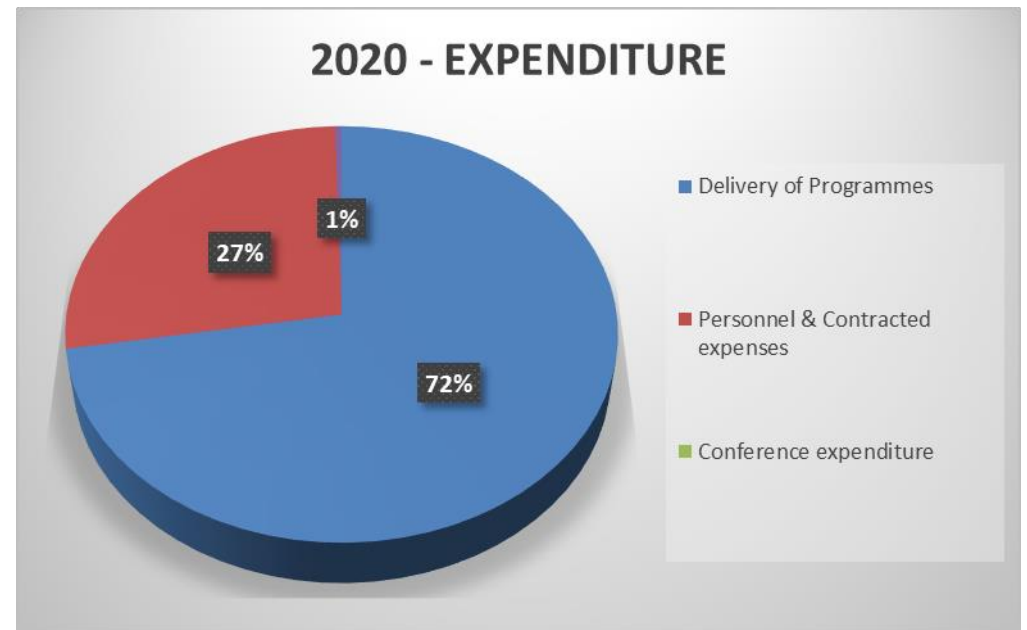
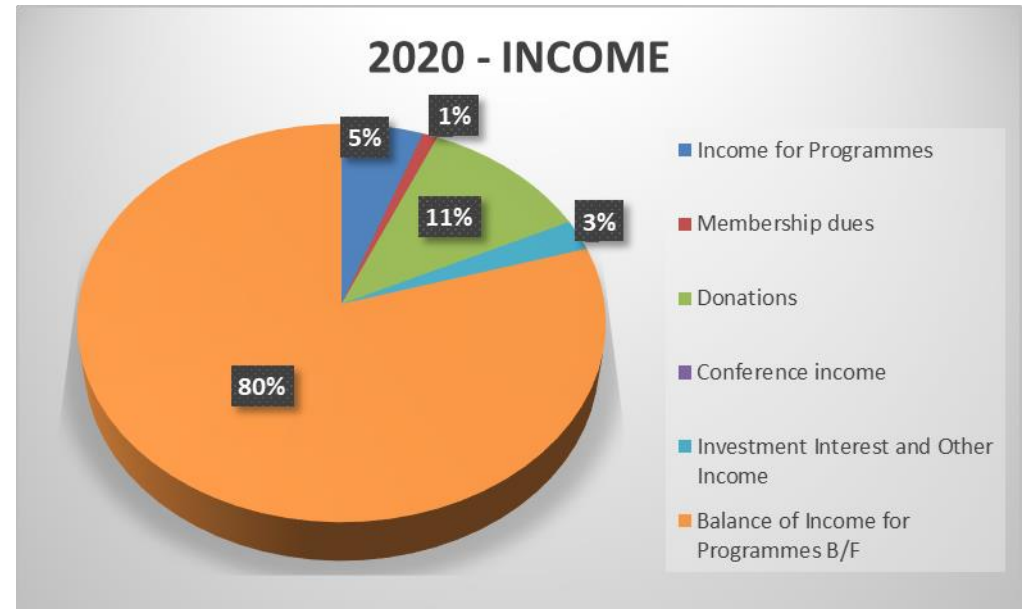
YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/c/AfLIA/>

# Financial Report

## AFLIA INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2020

| INCOME                               | US\$                | %          |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|------------|
| Income for Programmes                | 86,805.86           | 5          |
| Membership dues                      | 15,855.50           | 1          |
| Donations                            | 180,361.17          | 11         |
| Conference income                    |                     |            |
| Investment Interest and Other Income | 39,364.75           | 2          |
| Balance of Income for Programmes B/F | 1,261,024.56        | 80         |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>1,583,411.84</b> | <b>100</b> |

| EXPENDITURE  | US\$              | %          |
|--|-------------------|------------|
| Delivery of Programmes   | 529,766.13        | 72         |
| Personnel & Contracted expenses  | 199,200.00        | 27         |
| Conference expenditure   |                   |            |
| Other expenses(Web management, Marketing material, Webinar, Equipment service and repairs) | 3,024.01          | 0          |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>731,990.14</b> | <b>100</b> |





 [web.aflia.net](http://web.aflia.net)

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