WELCOME TO THE PRESENTATION FROM ZAMBIA

MUSEUM DOCUMENTATION SYSTEMS IN ZAMBIA: CHALLENGES AND ACHIEVEMENTS
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NATIONAL MUSEUMS IN ZAMBIA

Choma Museum

Moto Moto Museum

Copperbelt Museum

Lusaka National Museum

Livingstone Museum
Introduction

- The National Museums Board is a statutory body created by an Act of Parliament with the principle role of collecting, documenting, preserving and presenting Zambia’s movable heritage for public benefit, education, enjoyment and posterity. The Board comprises a Secretariat and five National Museums through which it executes its mandate. These are:

- **Choma Museum** established in 1988 displays the cultural heritage of the Tonga tribe of the Southern Province. It houses many traditional artefacts including beadwork, musical instruments, spears, clay figurines and jewellery.

- **Copperbelt Museum** established in 1962 houses items found in the area dating back to the Stone Age which include ethnographical artefacts, geological and historic items.

- **Livingstone Museum** established in 1930 is the biggest and oldest museum in Zambia. The museum contains artefacts related to the local history, prehistory, natural history including photographs, musical instruments and possessions of David Livingstone.

- **Lusaka National Museum** established in 1996 showcases contemporary art, highlighting the way of life of the Zambian people through painting, sculptures and models. The museum also displays Zambia’s development from ancient through historic past to contemporary way of life.

- **Moto Moto Museum** established in 1940 has a collection of cultural artefacts from the Northern part of Zambia covering ethnography and art, prehistory, history and natural history.
Museums in Zambia have been undergoing various modification in areas of research, exhibitions and documentation of collections. However, documentation had not been considered a serious element of museum work until recently.

In preparation for the reorganisation and standardization of the documentation system, a number of inadequacies were observed such that some objects were not included, listed or documented anywhere in the records of the museum.

As a result, museums in Zambia have had difficulties in proving legal ownership of objects in the event of theft. It has also been difficult to retrieve objects and information for research and exhibition purposes and to exchange information with other museums nationally and internationally.
While in the field, objects/specimens recorded in ordinary note books without proper fields
CHALLENGES OF THE OLD DOCUMENTATION SYSTEM

Use of ordinary note books or on forms without sufficient fields to record collected objects
CHALLENGES continued

Information of objects/specimens donated to the museum recorded on loose sheet of paper
CHALLENGES - Continued

Leading to some objects in storerooms or displays having insufficient information and not accessioned
OTHER CHALLENGES

- Registers not updated
- Insufficient recorded information on objects or specimens
- No systematic and uniform accessioning in museums
- No easy retrieval system
- No common documentation language
- No easy retrieval system
- Different documentation systems within one department or institution.
CURRENT SITUATION - STANDARDISED SYSTEM

In addressing the challenges above, the National Museums of Zambia standardized the documentation system (still manual) to be used by all national museums. In this regard, cards, forms, inventory books and registers to cater for various elements of museum documentation were designed.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Collection Date</th>
<th>Accession No. ZM</th>
<th>Accession Date</th>
<th>Object Name/Title</th>
<th>Object Description</th>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>Locality</th>
<th>Specific Area</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Index No.</th>
<th>Acquisition Method</th>
<th>Collector</th>
<th>Collection No./ Entry No.</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>04/05/2007</td>
<td>LK.ET.001</td>
<td>09/07/08</td>
<td>AXE (ADZE)</td>
<td>Small Axe blade/head. Has a wooden handle designed in two colors - Tinted darker parts</td>
<td>Luvale</td>
<td>Zambezi</td>
<td>Mize Capital, Chief Ndungu, North Western Province</td>
<td>Purchased</td>
<td>Chilala Habeenzu</td>
<td>001 NWH</td>
<td>Object used as a cutter &amp; for carving small wooden tools.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Other parts have natural wood colours</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>04/05/2007</td>
<td>LK.ET.002</td>
<td>03/01/08</td>
<td>Big Axe</td>
<td>Iron head/blade hard wood handle cracked in some section. To wear and tear – heavy iron.</td>
<td>Luvale</td>
<td>Zambezi</td>
<td>Mize Capital, Chief Ndungu, North Western Province</td>
<td>Purchased</td>
<td>Chilala Habeenzu</td>
<td>002 NWH</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>3.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Sample page from the current accession register
FUTURE OF MUSEUM DOCUMENTATION

In order to match with current technology, the National Museums Board in Zambia is establishing an integrated computerized documentation system of museum collections to be used by all national museums in Zambia using the Livingstone Museum as a pilot project.

Sample page from the digitalised documentation system
FUTURE OF MUSEUM DOCUMENTATION

Digital Register

Specimen
Accession No.: ZM.LS.MA.1490
Common Name: African Giant Shrew
Previous Acc. No.: NMZ 1490

Collection Localities
- Country: Zambia
- District: Kalabo
- Province: North-western
- Town: Kalabo

Notes:
Collector: Japp, M.

Collection
Group of Collection:
Collection Method:
Collector: Japp, M
Collection Date: 15/05/1966
Collection Field No.: 66
CONCLUSION

The National Museums Board has a rich cultural and natural heritage that needs to be well documented and preserved for posterity and also for further research by both local and international researchers.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!!!

THE END