

THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA



**PRESIDENT'S OFFICE
PUBLIC SERVICE MANAGEMENT**

RECORDS AND ARCHIVES MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT



**The National Archives of Tanzania Fifty Years After Wright's Report
on the Government Records and Public Archives of Tanganyika**

(By Charles Magaya and James Lowry)

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Introduction

On 2nd November, 1962, Miss Marcia Wright submitted her Report on the Government Records and Public Archives of Tanganyika with Recommendations for a National Archives, following her survey of the records and archives of the Tanganyika Government, which she undertook between July and October, 1962.

Her survey was the first substantial step taken by the newly independent government towards the organisation of public records

My Presentation wishes to compare Wright's main findings and recommendations with the present situation of the Records and Archives Management Division, President's Office – Public Service Management.

AIM:

To illustrate the development of the National Archives of Tanganyika/Tanzania in the last fifty years. Finally, we will look at the new challenges facing the National Archives in the digital environment.

A Summary of the Colonial and Post-Colonial History of Record-Keeping in Tanganyika/Tanzania

After Germany's defeat in the First World War, German East Africa was divided between Belgium, which took control over the districts of Ruanda (now the Republic of Rwanda) and Burundi (now the Republic of Burundi), Portugal, which assimilated the Kionga Triangle into Portugese East Africa (it remains part of the Republic of Mozambique) and Britain, which took control of the territory called Tanganyika (now mainland Tanzania).

In 1920, a British officer in Tanganyika discovered amongst the dilapidated records left behind by the German administrators secret instructions issued in 1916 by the last German Governor, that the most valuable government files should be buried at Tabora and other places, so as to prevent them to falling into enemy hands.

The German government agreed to send out two representatives in 1921 to assist the British in finding and disinterring the records. The recovered records form the nucleus of the collection of German records now held by the National Archives of Tanzania. The collection was inscribed in the UNESCO Memory of the World register in 1997.

In 1951, the British Government appointed Mr. V.W. Hiller, who was Chief Archivist at the Central African Archives at Salisbury (now Harare), to report on the feasibility of establishing an archive service in Tanganyika

Hiller recommended the establishment of an East African archives service to preserve the records of Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika and Zanzibar, but the Government did not take action on these recommendations.

Nothing further was done until independence in 1962, when UNESCO funded a study of the situation by Miss Marcia Wright. Wright's report provides an overview of record-keeping under German and British rule, and the registry reforms of the 1950s, the findings of her survey and her recommendations for the establishment of a national archives. Her recommendations were largely accepted, and the National Archives was established in 1962.

Mandate

Wright looked to the Archives of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (the Central African Archives) as an example of a well-functioning archives service: a reputation it had gained largely as a result of the work and writings of Hiller. In particular, Wright believed that national archives of Tanganyika "similarly, should be charged with the preservation, custody, control and disposal of "public archives", taken to include the records and judicial records of the government..."¹. This is broadly the mandate given to the National Archives by the original Act and maintained in the Records and Archives Management Act, No 3 of 2002.

Wright recommended four sections within the national archives;

The Records Management section responsible for: providing professional assistance on the establishment and management of records in public offices. It establishing and ensuring compliance with standards for the management of public records; training of the government's records staff; drawing up general retention and disposal schedules.

The Archives Management Section responsible for: providing suitable conditions for the preservation and consultation of the archives; arranging and describing the archives and providing appropriate guides, indexes and other finding aids to facilitate access; and ensuring that reasonable facilities are available to public officers and the public for inspecting and obtaining copies.

The technical Services section; to repair and binding equipment which conserves and restores archival materials that are deteriorating. Also makes copies available for consultation where the originals are at risk, and conducts microfilming and digitisation.

The Records Centre Services; maintaining the integrity of all semi-current records that transferred from government offices to the National Archives. It ensures proper implementation of retention and disposal schedules relating to semi-current records.

¹ Wright, M., *Report on the Government Records and Public Archives of Tanganyika with Recommendations for a National Archives*, Dar es Salaam, 2nd November, 1962, p. 15.

The Positioning of the National Archives Within Government

Since its establishment, the National Archives has been placed under a number of different Ministries. The decision to transfer the National Archives from the Ministry of Education and Culture to the President's Office - Public Service Management came when it was realised that there was a need to have one central organisation that could manage government records from creation to disposition.

Before that, the National Archives was responsible for the management of non-current records, while the Records Management Section in the President's Office was responsible for the management of current records.

In September, 1999, the National Archives moved to the President's Office, Public Service Management to increase the profile and authority of the National Archives to better enable it to influence record-keeping across government. The name was changed to the Records and Archives Management Division.

Ministries Responsible for the Management of the National Archives since 1963:

MINISTRY	YEARS
Ministry of National Culture and Youth	1963–1964
Second Vice President's Office	1965–1971
Ministry of Education	1972–1973
Ministry of National Culture and Youth	1974–1979
Ministry of Information and Culture	1980–1983
Prime Minister's Office	1984–1985
Ministry of Community Development, Culture, Youth and Sports	1986–1988
Ministry of Culture and Social Welfare	1989–1990
Ministry of Education and Culture	1990–1999
President's Office – Public Service Management	1999 to date

Perhaps the most significant development in record-keeping in Tanzania after the establishment of the National Archives in 1962 was the Records Management Improvement Programme that the United Kingdom's Department for International Development funded from 1997 to 2001.

The Programme delivered a number of reforms, including;

- i. Re-positioning the National Archives as a division of the President's Office (Records and Archives Management Division, President's Office –Public Sector Management),
- ii. Creating a records cadre across government,
- iii. Developing and introducing a new file classification system based on keyword indexing,
- iv. Introducing a full range of file control systems, including file titling rules, location indexes, file censuses, file movement procedures and access controls across a number of ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs),
- v. Developing records retention and disposal schedules, introducing physical improvements to registries, including removing closed files to records centres or destroying files with no ongoing value, according to the schedules,

- vi. and developing a professional certification course in records management at the Tanzanian Public Service College.

On 2nd November, 1962, Miss Marcia Wright submitted her Report on the Government Records and Public Archives of Tanganyika with Recommendations for a National Archives, following her survey of the records and archives of the Tanganyika Government, which she undertook between July and October, 1962. Her survey was the first substantial step taken by the newly independent government towards the organisation of public records. We intend to compare Wright's main findings and recommendations (omitting the recommendations Wright made about particular classes and series of records and the specific arrangements she suggested for the procurement of equipment, etc.) with the present situation of the Records and Archives Management Division, President's Office – Public Service Management (the national archives of Tanzania) to illustrate the development of the National Archives of Tanganyika/Tanzania in the last fifty years. Finally, we will look at the new challenges facing the National Archives in the digital environment.

A Summary of the Colonial and Post-Colonial History of Record-Keeping in Tanganyika/Tanzania

After Germany's defeat in the First World War, German East Africa was divided between Belgium, which took control over the districts of Ruanda (now the Republic of Rwanda) and Burundi (now the Republic of Burundi), Portugal, which assimilated the Kionga Triangle into Portuguese East Africa (it remains part of the Republic of Mozambique) and Britain, which took control of the territory called Tanganyika (now mainland Tanzania). In 1920, a British officer in Tanganyika discovered amongst the dilapidated records left behind by the German administrators secret instructions issued in 1916 by the last German Governor, that the most valuable government files should be buried at Tabora and other places, so as to prevent them to falling into enemy hands. The discovery led to negotiations between the British administration in Tanganyika and the German government, which had formerly claimed that all records were destroyed. The German government agreed to send out two representatives in 1921 to assist the British in finding and disinterring the records. The recovered records form the nucleus of the collection of German records now held by the National Archives of Tanzania. The collection was inscribed in the UNESCO Memory of the World register in 1997.

In 1951, the British Government appointed Mr. V.W. Hiller, who was Chief Archivist at the Central African Archives at Salisbury (now Harare), to report on the feasibility of establishing an archive service in Tanganyika. Hiller recommended the establishment of an East African archives service to preserve the records of Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika and Zanzibar, but the Government did not take action on these recommendations. Nothing further was done until independence in 1962, when UNESCO funded a study of the situation by Miss Marcia Wright. Wright's report provides an overview of record-keeping under German and British rule, and the registry reforms of the 1950s, the findings of her survey and her recommendations for the establishment of a national archives. Her recommendations were largely accepted, and the National Archives was established in 1962.

Perhaps the most significant development in record-keeping in Tanzania after the establishment of the National Archives in 1962 was the Records Management Improvement Programme that the United Kingdom's Department for International Development funded from 1997 to 2001. The Programme delivered a number of reforms, including re-positioning the National Archives as a division of the President's Office (Records and Archives Management Division, President's Office –Public Sector Management), creating a records cadre across government, developing and introducing a new file classification system based on keyword indexing, introducing a full range of file control systems, including file titling rules, location indexes, file censuses, file movement procedures and access controls across a number of ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs), developing records retention and disposal schedules, introducing physical improvements to registries, including removing closed files to records centres or destroying files with no ongoing value, according to the schedules, and developing a professional certification course in records management at the Tanzanian Public Service College.

Wright's Recommendations for National Archives

The Establishment of the National Archives

Wright's report recommended that a National Archives should be established. The National Archives of Tanganyika was established as a division of the Ministry of National Culture and Youth by the Presidential Circular No.7 of December, 1962. In June, 1963, with assistance from UNESCO, the newly independent Government contracted a professional archivist, Mr. J. R. Ede, to oversee the establishment. Ede's report of October, 1964, provides a comprehensive description of his work and recommendations for further developments². A parliamentary bill establishing the National Archives received the President's assent in July, 1965 and came into effect on 28th August, 1965, as The National Archives Act No. 33 of 1965. The Act was amended by the National Archives Amendment Act No.6 of 1979 and the Penal Reform (Miscellaneous Penalties Amendment) of 1991. Despite these amendments, the National Archives continued to have authority over non-current records only. In 1999, as a result of the Records Management Improvement Programme, the Government recognised the need for the continuous control of records throughout the records lifecycle, and merged the National Archives with the Records Management Section in the President's Office – Public Service Management. In 2002, the government passed the Records and Archives Management Act No. 3 of 2002, which repealed the Records (Disposal) Ordinance, 1931, and the amended National Archives Act No. 33 of 1965, and formalised the position of the National Archives as the Records and Archives Management Division (RAMD), President's Office – Public Service Management.

Mandate

Wright looked to the Archives of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (the Central African Archives) as an example of a well-functioning archives service: a reputation it had gained largely as a result of the work and writings of Hiller. In particular, Wright believed that national archives of Tanganyika "similarly, should be charged with the preservation, custody, control and disposal of "public archives", taken to include the records and judicial records of the government..."³. *This*

² Ede, J. R., *Tanganyika; Development of National Archives*, UNESCO, Paris, October, 1964.
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0000/000076/007641eb.pdf>

³ Wright, M., *Report on the Government Records and Public Archives of Tanganyika with Recommendations for a National Archives*, Dar es Salaam, 2nd November, 1962, p. 15.

is broadly the mandate given to the National Archives by the original Act and maintained in the Records and Archives Management Act, No 3 of 2002.

The current Act specifies the duties of four sections within the National Archives.

The Records Management section is responsible for: providing professional assistance, advice and guidance on the establishment and management of records management programmes; establishing and ensuring compliance with standards for the management of public records; making arrangements for the necessary training of the government's records staff; drawing up general retention and disposal schedules for approval and issue by the Minister; ensuring that the provisions of retention and disposal schedules are implemented; and ensuring that retention and disposal schedules are reviewed and amended periodically⁴.

Wright specified that a technical section should be created to focus on arrangement and description. These duties are given, by the Act, to the Archives Management Section, which is responsible for: taking charge of the national archives; providing suitable conditions for the preservation and consultation of the archives; arranging and describing the archives and providing appropriate guides, indexes and other finding aids to facilitate access; and ensuring that reasonable facilities are available to public officers and the public for inspecting and obtaining copies of public records in the National Archives⁵.

The Records Centre Services section is responsible for: maintaining the integrity of all semi-current records and approving access to them by third parties; maintaining semi-current records whose transfer from government offices to the National Archives has been deferred; implementing retention and disposal schedules relating to semi-current records; and transferring records of enduring value into the custody of the National Archives not later than twenty years from their creation⁶.

Wright's report drew attention to the need for repair and binding equipment. The National Archives now has a Technical Services Section, which conserves and restores archival materials that are deteriorating. The section also makes copies available for consultation where the originals are at risk, and conducts microfilming and digitisation.

The Positioning of the National Archives Within Government

Since its establishment, the National Archives has been placed under a number of different Ministries. The decision to transfer the National Archives from the Ministry of Education and Culture to the President's Office - Public Service Management came when it was realised that there was a need to have one central organisation that could manage government records from creation to disposition. Before that, the National Archives was responsible for the management of non-current records, while the Records Management Section in the President's Office was responsible for the management of current records. In September, 1999, the National Archives

⁴ United Republic of Tanzania, *Act No.3 of 2002*, s.11.

⁵ United Republic of Tanzania, *Act No.3 of 2002*, s.13

⁶ United Republic of Tanzania, *Act No. 3 of 2002*, s.10

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The Premises of the National Archives

The first quarters of the Archives were three large rooms in the building known as the Old Treasury, facing the harbour on Azania Front, Dar es Salaam. This building, known in German times as No.1 Building, was used for a time under British rule as the office of the Secretariat⁷.

In October, 1964, after the conclusion of Ede’s assignment, the Archives moved to India/Chusi Street in the commercial centre of Dar es Salaam.

Ede reports that £80,000 was earmarked for the construction of a new archives building in the government’s first Five Year Development Plan.

In 1984 the National Archives moved to purpose built premises at Upanga, Vijibweni Street No 7, off Magore Road, much closer to the centre of government.

and there appears to have been agreement that the building should be built on the University College site, on the outskirts of Dar es Salaam. It is unclear what caused the delays to the construction of the building, or why the decision was taken not to build on the University College site,

In 1996, the Official Capital city moved to Dodoma and Dar es Salaam remains Tanzania’s commercial capital and home to most of the MDAs. It remains to be seen if the headquarters of the MDAs, including the National Archives, will be relocated to Dodoma.

⁷ This building was recently rehabilitated and converted into the United Nations Information Centre.

Staffing

In 1962, Wright identified the immediate staffing needs of the proposed national archives as the Government Archivist, two trainee archivists (one senior and one junior), four clerks, and four messengers.

The establishment has grown to seventy, today, of which forty are archives and records management professionals. Today, the National Archives of Tanzania has the largest staff establishment of any of the national archives in the East African Community (EAC), and staff members have considerably more training opportunities than their counterparts in the other EAC countries.

The staff development budget has been used to provide professional and management training, largely through the Tanzanian Public Service College, the Eastern and Southern African Management Institute, and the School of Library, Archive and Information Studies at University College, London. In comparison, the national archives of Rwanda and Burundi have staffs of two, and their training opportunities are limited. The adequate resourcing of the National Archives of Tanzania is the result of the efforts of Directors to promote good recordkeeping, and is a factor in its position as a regional leader in records and archives management⁸.

The Directors of the National Archives of Tanzania

DIRECTOR	TERM
Mr. J.R. Ede	June 1963 – June 1964
Mr. Michael G. Cook	June 1964 – June 1966
Dr. Rudolf Rejman	March 1967 – April 1969
Mr. Silvin I. Mongela (Ag. Director.)	May 1969 – October 1973
Mr. A. Mturi	November 1973 – February 1975
Mr. Mohamed H. Nassor	March 1975 – 1978
Mr. Silvin I. Mongela	1978 – December 1993
Mr. Joseph M. Karugila (Ag. Director)	January 1994 – June 1997
Mr. Peter J. Mlyansi	July 1997 – August 2009
Mr. Charles G. Magaya	December 2009 – to date

Advice and Guidance to Government

At a number of places in her report, Wright emphasises the need for the National Archives to liaise with clerks across the government on matters of records management. For example:

Some indoctrination of Regional Office Supervisors will be required. As soon as possible, publicity should be given to the interest of the National Archives in local boma records and clerks reminded that they should not be destroyed without authority of the archivist, that they should be stored in order and that old file lists covering the old series should be kept⁹.

⁸ International Records Management Trust, *An East African Regional Situation Analysis*, 2011.

<http://irmt.org/portfolio/managing-records-reliable-evidence-ict-e-government-freedom-information-east-africa-2010-2011>

⁹ Wright, M., *Report on the Government Records and Public Archives of Tanganyika with Recommendations for a National Archives*, Dar es Salaam, 2nd November, 1962, p. 21.

Records management in MDAs is now monitored and evaluated regularly, and important records, such as missing land titles, have been discovered during inspections by the National Archives. Departmental records officers have been appointed in each MDA and these meet annually at a National Records Management Forum. A procedure has also been developed for seconding National Archives staff members to MDAs when problems arise. Interviews with government staff members revealed that good working relationships have developed between the National Archives and MDAs because of these mechanisms. Wright recognised the value of issuing record-keeping guidance to civil servants. She suggested that a “set of simple instructions might usefully be devised by the Civil Service Training Center and the Archives cooperatively”¹⁰. It is unclear whether the Archives did prepare guidelines with the Civil Service Training Centre, but the Records and Archives Management Division has prepared and distributed the following guidelines independently:

- Registry Procedures Manual 2005
- Desk Instruction for Registry Staff and Records Users 2008
- Records Retention and Disposal Schedule 2005
- Records Centre Services Guide 2005
- National, Ministerial, Regional and District Book Guide

The Division has, however, collaborated with the successor to the Civil Service Training Centre - the Tanzania Public Service College – and other institutions, to build capacity across government by training registry personnel and conducting records management seminars for users of records across government. In collaboration with the Tanzania Public Service College, the School of Library, Archives and Documentation Studies at Bagamoyo, and Mzumbe University, the Division has also established records and archives management courses at diploma and degree levels.

Destruction of Records

Wright recommended that a Records Committee, appointed by the Vice President, should make recommendations on the retention and destruction of government records¹¹. Ede believed that the kind of committee proposed by Wright would be cumbersome in practice:

The other proposal of Miss Wright, which I feel needs some qualification, concerns her conception of the role of a Records Committee. The Directors of other Commonwealth National Archives, who have Records Committees with the statutory duty of approving all destruction schedules, ‘have all told me that this well intentioned safeguard has in practice proved a time-wasting formality’¹².

Ede believed that power over the disposition of government records should be vested solely in the National Archives, and therefore his drafting instructions to the Parliamentary Draftsman made mention only of an Archives Advisory Committee that would advise the Minister on

¹⁰ Wright, M., *Report on the Government Records and Public Archives of Tanganyika with Recommendations for a National Archives*, Dar es Salaam, 2nd November, 1962, p. 20.

¹¹ Ibid, p. 16.

¹² Ede, J. R., *Tanganyika; Development of National Archives*, UNESCO, Paris, October, 1964, p. 11.
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0000/000076/007641eb.pdf>

matters of policy. The duties of the current Records and Archives Management Advisory Board are, similarly, and as its name suggest, advisory¹³.

At a number of places in her report, Wright emphasises the need for the Archives to appraise government records. She believed that the Archives should communicate to government clerks the need to ensure that records were not destroyed without permission from the Archives. Fifty years on, that message appears to have been communicated most effectively. Very little unauthorised destruction has taken place. Unfortunately, it is also the case that very little authorised destruction has taken place. Since the 1990s, approved records retention and disposal schedules have been available to public servants “but senior officials tend to be unwilling to authorize destruction due to a concern that they may be acting illegally. As a result, the available storage space is largely full... This makes records that are still needed increasingly difficult to locate”¹⁴. The National Archives wishes to address this problem by revising the relevant schedules and procedures and providing training in their use to staff members at all levels across government, but funding for this exercise has yet to be secured.

Microfilming and Digitisation

Wright observed that:

During the period before Independence, when no resolution to the problem of old records seemed possible, it was suggested that they be microfilmed, to “overcome all the many difficulties regarding storage of files, etc”. Luckily, the fallacy of indiscriminate microfilming was pointed out but the potential role of photo reproduction in records preservation should be carefully explored¹⁵.

Fifty years after her report was submitted, Wright’s concerns about indiscriminate microfilming have taken on a renewed significance. A study published by the International Records Management Trust in 2011 highlighted the enthusiasm for digitisation within the Tanzanian public sector¹⁶. The study found that there is a common belief within the public sector that if all hard copy records are digitised, they can be disposed of, which is seen as a solution to the problem of hard copy records storage that has arisen from the failure to appraise and destroy records. Indeed, a number of MDAs have started scanning projects independently of the National Archives. The study found that these projects had consistently failed to recognise the legal issues of evidence, the technical specifications that should be set for digital surrogates to ensure that high quality, lossless surrogates are created, and the need for systems that are capable of managing and preserving digital surrogates over time.

¹³ s7. <http://polis.parliament.go.tz/PAMS/docs/3-2002.pdf>

¹⁴ International Records Management Trust, *Tanzania Country Report*, 2011, <http://irmt.org/portfolio/managing-records-reliable-evidence-ict-e-government-freedom-information-east-africa-2010—2011>

¹⁵ Wright, M., *Report on the Government Records and Public Archives of Tanganyika with Recommendations for a National Archives*, Dar es Salaam, 2nd November, 1962, p. 25.

¹⁶ *Managing Records as Reliable Evidence for ICT/e-Government and Freedom of Information in East Africa*, <http://irmt.org/portfolio/managing-records-reliable-evidence-ict-e-governmentfreedom-information-east-africa-2010—2011>

The National Archives has recognised the issue. As the IRMT reports:

[Circular No 6] recognised the need to digitise hard copy records in accordance with standards set by PO-PSM through RAMD. However, these standards are not yet available. MDAs need guidance on scanning using consistent formats and according to international standards; assigning appropriate metadata to digital surrogates and linking digital surrogates to the hard copy originals. Staff [members] indicated that a good deal of time and money has been lost because digitisation projects were conducted in isolation, without guidance¹⁷.

Just as Wright cautioned that “the potential role of photo reproduction in records preservation should be carefully explored”, so too should the role of digitisation. Indeed, there is, in general, a great deal of work to be done in the MDAs before the hard copy records are in a state conducive to effective digitisation. Wright wrote that the “tendency of microfilm to increase difficulties in locating specific documents must be anticipated, by refraining from photographing until the materials are thoroughly arranged, described, identified, and until adequate finding aids have been devised”¹⁸. This remains true today. The IRMT report states that “the Ministry of Land’s staff... stated that the earliest batch scanning initiatives were indiscriminate and that files were not put in order before scanning started, with the result that the corpus of digitised records is incomplete”¹⁹.

Regional Headquarters

Regarding reports that records at Dodoma were being kept out-of-doors, Wright wrote that “Given the scarceness of early records in many up-country offices, the importance of Provincial Headquarters records is increased... The archivist should include the Central Region in his first safari”²⁰. Wright recognised the need for centralised control of government records, and looked to Kenya for a solution:

In Kenya, existing district and provincial records offices are supposed to be regarded as branch depositories of the Central Government Archives. Without necessarily designating them as such, Regional Headquarters in Tanganyika might be treated as temporary depositories, for they already control the management and organisation of current records in their Regions, when they care to exercise it²¹.

¹⁷ International Records Management Trust, *Tanzania Country Report*, 2011, <http://irmt.org/portfolio/managing-records-reliable-evidence-ict-e-government-freedom-informationeast-africa-2010—2011>

¹⁸ Wright, M., *Report on the Government Records and Public Archives of Tanganyika with Recommendations for a National Archives*, Dar es Salaam, 2nd November, 1962, p. 26.

¹⁹ International Records Management Trust, *Tanzania Country Report*, 2011, <http://irmt.org/portfolio/managing-records-reliable-evidence-ict-e-government-freedom-informationeast-africa-2010—2011>

²⁰ Wright, M., *Report on the Government Records and Public Archives of Tanganyika with Recommendations for a National Archives*, Dar es Salaam, 2nd November, 1962, pp. 20-21.

²¹ *Ibid*, p. 21.

The present situation in Uganda shows that it is difficult to maintain consistent controls over records across sites in an environment where the majority of records are being created in hard copy, and where power supplies, telephone and internet connections are unreliable²². The Government of Tanzania has recognised that it is not easy to develop and implement an effective records management programme from one central point, under these conditions. It has, therefore, decided to establish a National Records Centre and a number of Zonal Records Centres that are strategically located to serve several regions.

The National Records Centre is being constructed at Dodoma, the capital city. The construction work started in 2010 and is expected to be completed in September, 2012. The buildings, which will have adequate space for offices and storage, are to be used for storing semi-active records from public offices. The government's plan is also to construct six zonal records centres that will serve different parts of the country. Records centres will be constructed at Mwanza, for the Lake zone, Arusha for the Northern zone, Mbeya for the South Highlands zone, Mtwara for the Southern zone, Tabora for the Western zone and Kibaha for the Eastern zone. The construction of the Mwanza Zonal Records Centre started in the 2009/2010 financial year but has been abandoned by the contractor²³. This and other centres will be constructed depending on the availability of funds.

Responsibilities for Non-Government Records of Historical Value

Wright also believed that the national archives should have an obligation to “any document or other material from non-official sources which is likely to be of historical value”²⁴. To some extent, the National Archives is collecting nongovernment records of historical value, as is demonstrated by its church archives collection, and the existence of a section known as the Founders of the Nation Centre (FNC). The FNC was established in 2004 pursuant to Part II Section 4.-1 of the Founders of the Nation (Honouring Procedures) Act No 8 of 2004. This Act concerns the preservation of the legacy (official and non-official documents and artefacts) of the First President of the United Republic of Tanzania, the late Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere, and the First President of Zanzibar, the late Sheikh Abeid Amani Karume. The FNC has the following functions: collecting and preserving documentary materials and objects of the Founders of the Nation; ensuring that documentary materials and objects preserved by the centre are well-documented and made known to the general public; establishing and implementing procedures for the timely disposal of documentary materials and objects that do not have enduring value; and encouraging, promoting and facilitating research and publication about the

²² The distance between the offices and repositories of the Uganda National Archives (UNA) and the offices of the Ugandan MDAs is one of the causes of the UNA's inability to effectively influence government record-keeping. For an analysis of the challenges facing the Government of Uganda, see International Records Management Trust, *Uganda Country Report*, 2011, <http://irmt.org/portfolio/managing-records-reliable-evidence-ict-e-government-freedom-informationeast-africa-2010---2011>

²³ Records and Archives Management Division, President's Office – Public Service Management, United Republic of Tanzania, *Four Years Report 2008/09 – 2011/12*, 2012, p.14.

²⁴ Wright, M., *Report on the Government Records and Public Archives of Tanganyika with Recommendations for a National Archives*, Dar es Salaam, 2nd November, 1962.

Future: Born Digital Records

Fifty years after Wright reported on her study, the National Archives of Tanzania is facing a new challenge in the management of the digital records resulting from the computerisation of government work. The introduction of e-government systems is changing the way that government work is conducted in Tanzania, resulting in the creation of digital records, which are increasingly the only evidence of government decisions, actions and transactions. The National Archives is aware of the growth in the volume of digital records across government, and has issued circulars that are intended to support the management and preservation of these records. For example, the circulars articulate the principle that existing retention and disposal schedules should also be applied to digital records. However, the National Archives does not have the capacity, infrastructure or funding to institute a digital records management programme for the government. There are no digital records management specialists on the National Archives staff, and as yet, no steps have been taken to build a digital repository for the long-term preservation of digital records. The circulars issued by the National Archives require MDAs to transfer hard-drives to the National Archives for safe-keeping so that digital records might eventually be retrieved and preserved, but the Archives does not yet have the means to do this, much less to ingest digital records directly from MDAs. As the IRMT reported, it is significant that there is no:

- *digital preservation strategy to ensure that the electronic records remain accessible for as long as they are needed*
- *guidance on key issues, including classification, naming conventions and titling to support accurate retrieval*
- *training in electronic records management*
- *standardised guidance on functional or system requirements and no records management input to IT processes formal business continuity plans or assessments of the risk to electronic records caused by, for instance, power failure or surges, system or telecommunications break downs, computer malfunctions or data input errors*
- *education for users in identifying what electronic records are pertinent to the organisation's business*
- *off-site back-up and storage*
- *print and file policy to ensure that significant records are placed on the relevant registered files until electronic records management is introduced; as a result, paper files on a specific subject are incomplete because some information is held on computer and some in paper form²⁵.*

²⁵ International Records Management Trust, *Tanzania Country Report*, 2011, <http://irmt.org/portfolio/managing-records-reliable-evidence-ict-e-government-freedom-information-east-africa-2010-2011>

Digital records management must be the next priority for the National Archives if it is to continue to function as Wright envisaged, in the digital environment.

Conclusion

Wright wrote that:

Provision of secure, air-conditioned premises, an appropriation of some £5,000 for the establishment, and the imminence of technical assistance through the United Nations and wholehearted support within government and without, gives a most promising opportunity for building archival services and historical resources in Tanganyika²⁶.

It is now clear that Wright's optimism was justified. The National Archives of Tanzania is fulfilling the functions she envisaged for it, its staffing is adequate, it is working closely with records officers across government and it is issuing guidance and offering training to government. The unauthorised destruction of records is now rare, and the care of records from up-country offices is starting to be addressed through the construction of regional records centres. As Wright hoped, the National Archives is also collecting non-government records of historical value. Government offices are scanning paper records in an attempt to expedite information retrieval and liberate office space, both of which are problems resulting from reticence, across the public sector, to authorise records destruction – so well has the message against the illicit destruction of records been inculcated. The new and planned regional records centres will alleviate the strain on government offices in the short-term, but these centres are complements, not alternatives, to well-functioning records appraisal and digitisation programmes. Wright's note of caution about indiscriminate microfilming is highly relevant in the modern context of digitisation, which is not being planned with long-term preservation in mind, and is not coordinated

by the National Archives with the requisite technical support that could be provided through a digital records management programme. The National Archives is not yet equipped to deal with digital records: a digital records management programme is needed to develop the infrastructure and expertise the National Archives will need to fulfill the functions envisaged for it by Wright, into the future.

²⁶ Wright, M., *Report on the Government Records and Public Archives of Tanganyika with Recommendations for a National Archives*, Dar es Salaam, 2nd November, 1962, p. 15