

# ESARBICA JOURNAL

JOURNAL OF THE EASTERN  
AND SOUTHERN AFRICA  
REGIONAL BRANCH OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON  
ARCHIVES

Volume 37

2018

ISSN 2220-6442 (Print), ISSN 2220-6450 (Online)



# ASSESSING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICES ACT AT EDUARDO MONDLANE UNIVERSITY IN MOZAMBIQUE

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Received: 11 September 2017

Revised: 21 April 2018

Accepted: 16 July 2018

## Abstract

Archival legislation is a crucial tool for the public sector to ensure the management, preservation and access of a country's national documentary heritage. In Mozambique, archival legislation which has been enacted sets the scene for records appraisal and disposition, as well as classification schemes and retention schedules for administrative records of governmental bodies falling under the auspices of the National Archives and Records Services Act No. 36 of 2007 (NARSA). Despite this, the records management processes of many public entities in Mozambique have remained ineffective and inefficient. This article presents the data from a study conducted by Pereira (2017), which utilized the record life cycle concept as a framework to assess the state of implementation of the NARSA at Eduardo Mondlane University (EMU) in Mozambique. The study applied a quantitative research approach with triangulation of data collection tools, namely, questionnaire and document analysis. Data collected in the study revealed that EMU has established only one central records appraisal, destruction and transfer committee for its directorate units, which has not coped with the records management demands from other academic units such as faculties, schools and research centres. In most of the academic units, the records management staff were not involved in the training, records appraisal, destruction and transfer processes as required by legislation. Data analysis concludes that most EMU units do not comply with archival legislation, resulting in few prescriptions of the Act being implemented. The study recommends that the records management department at EMU should put in place the basic procedures of control for records management systems with the leadership taking a proactive role in strategic planning, budgeting and monitoring. Furthermore, it is recommended that another empirical study focusing on the assessment of implementation of the NARSA throughout the entire public sector in Mozambique should be undertaken.

**Keywords:** Archival legislation, Eduardo Mondlane University, Mozambique, records management, National Archives and Records Services Act

## **Introduction and background**

Many countries recognize the importance of having a transparent and efficient system for making official records available and, to this end, have developed national archives and records services acts for the public sector. Legislation that establishes the legal and administrative infrastructure not only allocates roles, powers and responsibilities among central state departments and public agencies, but also protects the rights of citizens with respect to recorded information (Ngoepe & Saurombe 2016:24). Archival legislation, therefore, is regarded as a crucial tool for the public sector to ensure the management, preservation and access of the country's national document heritage. However, some public government agencies around the world do not function effectively despite the availability of records and archival legislation. Ngoepe (2014:7) argues that having legislation and not implementing it is equivalent to not having it in place at all.

Recognizing the necessity of providing a satisfactory service to the public, the NARSA sets the legal environment for records appraisal and disposal, together with the classification schemes and retention schedules for the administrative records of governmental bodies. According to the NARSA, the Mozambique Historical Archives (MHA) plays an advisory role in the Central State Department of the Ministry of State Administration and Public Affairs. The MHA thereby advises on issues concerning the design of records management systems, the monitoring of records appraisal processes and the management of permanent records with reference to the NARSA provisions (Moçambique 2007:21). As a part of the EMU directorate units, the MHA is also in charge of the management, specifically of current, semi-current and permanent records within the EMU units. Consequently, the EMU, through the MHA as one of its special units, plays a contradictory double role regarding the management of public sector records, as the referee and player (regulator and regulated). As a result, the MHA has been undertaking several initiatives towards developing programmes for good recordkeeping within the university since 2007. Nevertheless, the main challenge is to ensure that specific records management rules, tools and procedures are developed to implement the NARSA in governing records and archives management within the university (Moçambique 2007:22-28).

The NARSA approach is based on the life cycle concept of records for distinguishing current records from semi-current records and archives. Therefore, the present study utilized the life-cycle concept as a framework to assess the implementation of the NARSA at the EMU as a

means of ensuring efficient and effective archives and records management within the EMU's administrative, academic and special units for the future. According to Ngoepe (2008:9), this concept is seen as the most integrated and comprehensive approach to analysing records management and it is widely used in the Eastern and Southern Africa region (ESARBICA) as a framework for managing public sector records, regardless of the media. However, the relevancy of the life-cycle theory to maintaining adequate archives and records management is challenged by the continuum theory. The life-cycle theory defines responsibilities for records management at each stage, while the continuum theory argues that record keeping is a continuing and rolling process during the life of records in time and space. This means that the life of records is not separately managed as in the life cycle theory (Upward 2000:118). The research work conducted by Pereira (2017) used the life-cycle theory because it is considered to be an integrated approach to records management and it has been extensively applied by many organisations in the ESARBICA region.

### **Historical background to archives and records management in Mozambique**

The background presented here refers to the historical periods of archives and records management in Mozambique both before and after independence from the Portuguese. It identifies and describes the key changes that occurred in the NARSA, particularly between 1992 and 2007 when the NARSA was passed.

#### **Mozambique under Portuguese colonial administration**

According to the national literature on archival science, the history of archives and records management in Mozambique dates back to the creation of the MHA by the Portuguese colonial government in June 1934 (Mangue 2015:17). The MHA was first administered by the Library Statistics Department and then passed to the Department of Instruction Services in 1957. However, its role was clearly defined by the legislative Diploma No. 635 of 1939. The objectives were not only to collect and preserve archival materials, but also to create a bibliographic collection about Mozambique. Furthermore, its responsibility was enhanced in 1939 because of the necessity for setting up library, historical and administrative archival records sections as well as a general register office for the colony. In December 1958, the MHA was recognised as the General Archives and Legal Deposit of the province (Mangue 2015:17). At that time,

Mozambique was regarded as a province of Portugal and this archives service was separate from the Portuguese colonial administrative services.

Aside from establishing the role of the MHA, the Portuguese colonial government in Mozambique formed a specialised committee on 12 April 1938, in order to investigate the organisation of administrative services, including book systems used for records registration. The committee concluded that there was a lack of organised, standardised and structured archival and records management services, but Ngoepe and Keakopa (2011:147) contend that the archival and records work could no longer be managed on an ad hoc basis by archival and administrative staff. As a result, Act No. 4: 244 of 16 December 1940, containing procedures for the Portuguese colonial administrative services, was enacted and updated in 1960 and again in 1969. This Act also did not state the role of the MHA regarding the management of public records within the Portuguese colonial administrative services.

Another significant development in this period was the establishment of the EMU, created as a public state organisation in 1962 under the name Estudos Gerais e Universitários de Moçambique (EGUM). From that time, it had to comply with the Archival and Records Management Act No. 4:244 of 1940. As Quilambo (2015:4) observes, the EGUM offered academic programmes in education, medicine, agronomy, veterinary sciences, civil engineering, mining, and electrical and chemical engineering. These programmes were extended in 1968 when the institution was elevated to the status of a university, adopting the name of the University of Lourenço Marques (ULM) through Decree No. 48790 of 23 December 1968.

### **Mozambique after independence from Portuguese colonial administration**

The Mozambican state was officially established on 25 June 1975, when it became independent from the Portuguese colonial administration. One year later, the MHA was moved from the Ministry of Education to the EMU, formally the ULM. Playing its role as a national archives of Mozambique, the MHA began collecting archival records from all over the colonial administrative services as well as from outside the country, such as in Portugal and Holland (Costa 1987:5). In 1992, the MHA was given a mandate to guide the archives and records management practices in all the central state departments and public government agencies, at provincial and district levels. However, a global strategy for public reform was launched in June

2001, which gave priority to the organisation and standardisation of the archives and records management function in the public sector (CEDIMO 2013:1).

The ULM opened to all Mozambicans in 1975 and was named the Eduardo Mondlane University on 1 May 1976. By 2015, the EMU had a student population of approximately 36,864 of which 91.1% were undergraduates and 7.9% postgraduates. The EMU is a public, fundamentally teaching-driven institution that endeavours to become a research and extension-led university in the near future, complying with both the vision and mission statements formulated in order to ensure excellence and high quality (UEM 2016:4-5).

### **Research problem**

Despite the availability of archival legislation guiding the management of records, many public agencies in Southern Africa, including Mozambique, are struggling to comply with these models of legislation (Asogwa 2012:199; Ngoepe & Saurombe 2016:270). The EMU as a public government agency is required by law to adopt a systematic and organised approach to the management of records and this is provided by the NARSA. Therefore, in accordance with this legal framework, several records management tools have been designed. These included the development of a procedures manual, a set of standards for records creation, records appraisal and disposition, guidelines for disaster and recovery planning, classification schemes and retention schedules for administrative and specific activities. The National Constitution, Act No. 30 of 2001, concerning the functioning of public administration and service delivery, indicates the importance of modernizing records management practices within public government agencies for making available records to the public when requested. In spite of the judicial requirements elaborating on the importance of proper records management practice, there is a suggestion that the situation is not reflected in practice (CEDIMO 2013:4; 2015:1). However, according to Keorapetse and Keakopa (2012:24-25), it would seem that the problem relating to the low level of systematic and organized implementation of records management at the EMU is aggravated by the lack of top senior management support of records management practices. At this administrative level, the importance of records management is not recognized, resulting in inadequate records management policy, standards and procedures. Within the units of the EMU, further problems arise from the lack of trained, qualified and motivated staff in records management or related fields. This leads to inadequate records management structure, with

inadequate records management and audit control, which is further exacerbated by insufficient funding for a records management programme.

### **Purpose of the study**

The general purpose of this study was to assess the implementation of the National Archives and Records Services Act, Act No. 36 of 2007, at the EMU as a governmental public agency which is required to ensure efficient and effective archives and records management within the EMU's administrative, academic and special units. The specific research objectives were to:

- Assess the availability and implementation of policies and procedures
- Assess the accessibility of records at EMU by the academic community
- Establish the level of skills and training in records management at EMU
- Determine the records appraisal and disposal processes at EMU
- Investigate the senior management support for the records management activities

### **Research methodology**

This study adopted a quantitative research approach to answer the research questions (Stake 2010:220; Creswell 2014:4). The self-administrated questionnaires, as the principal instrument of data collection, were supplemented with document analysis. In undertaking this study, the researcher investigated records management trends at a specific public government institution, namely, the EMU. The target population of this study was composed of 59 units at the EMU, consisting of academic, research, directorate and special units. According to the organisational website (<http://www.uem.org>), which was used to get the sampling frame, there were 17 academic units, (which included six polytechnic schools and 11 faculties), 15 research units, 20 directorate units and seven special units. The EMU units, which were the targeted population, also included their respective storage areas of current and semi-current records, records managers and senior management staff. During February 2017, the researcher distributed 46 questionnaires to academic, research, directorate and special units at the EMU. There was one questionnaire per unit and 35 were received by the researcher, representing an 80% response rate. Only nine (4%) questionnaires to records management officials were not returned to the researcher. The quantitative data from these questionnaires were processed using the statistical computer software, IBM SPSS Statistic 20, to produce the tables and pie charts.

## Research findings

This section presents the findings as per the objectives of the study.

### **Key records management documents: policy, procedures and classification**

The NARSA in Mozambique is an essential document that defines documents and promulgates policy and procedures on records management that must be communicated and implemented at all levels of EMU units. The purpose of this objective was to investigate policy, procedures and classification systems concerning records management at EMU units. Findings are presented according to the following sub-themes:

- The status of implementation and the availability of manual procedures on the records management.
- The status of implementation of classification systems for common records.

Respondents in the study were asked to indicate the status of implementation and awareness of policy on records management at EMU units.

Table 1 shows that 34% (11) of the respondents mentioned that they were not sufficiently informed about records management procedures. Another 29% (10) of the respondents said that the records management procedures were implemented. Only 9% (3) of the respondents indicated that the manual of procedures on records management was made available, but not implemented at all.

The Central Directorship of the National State Archives System in Mozambique has developed a classification scheme for common records and a classified information scheme for common records (Moçambique 2007:21-28). As a result, the EMU is required to implement such classification systems necessary for arranging organizational records in a systematic way that can ensure comprehensive retrieval. Respondents in the study were asked to indicate the status of implementation and availability of a classification scheme for common and specific records, as well as that for classified information. It also became apparent from the returned questionnaires that the respondents were not familiar with the records management terminology used. Despite this, 34% (12) said that a classification scheme for common records had been implemented,

while 9% (3) said that procedures had been made available, but had not been implemented. From one respondent, it was noted that an ongoing project undertaken by the EMU, through the MHA, is still being developed as a classification scheme for specific records. This project is expected to be approved in the near future by the EMU Rector and Central Director of the National State Archives System prior to its implementation. Furthermore, the classified information scheme for specific records has not yet been made available because the units were not sufficiently informed about it.

**Table 1: Key records management documents at EMU units (N=35)**

<b>Key records management documents</b>	<b>Available but not implemented</b> (percentage/frequency)	<b>Implemented</b> (percentage/frequency)	<b>Awareness</b> (percentage/frequency)
Policy		6% (2)	31% (10)
Procedures	9% (3)	29% (10)	34% (11)
Classification scheme for common records		34% (12)	

### **Access to records**

The purpose of this objective was to investigate the accessibility of a unit's records for the academic community at the EMU. The findings presented are related to the factors that can affect the accessibility of an EMU unit's records to any users.

Respondents were asked to identify the factors that can affect the accessibility of an EMU unit's records to any users. As reflected in Table 2, 23% (8) of the respondents mentioned that the lack of finding aids for the records affected the accessibility of both current records and semi-current records to users. Moreover, 23% (8) of respondents indicated that poor physical conditions affected the availability of a unit's semi-current records. Only 6% (2) mentioned that both current and semi-current records were affected by all factors, namely, backlogs, lack of finding aids and poor physical conditions.

**Table 2: The accessibility of unit's records to any users (N=35)**

<b>The conditions that affect</b>	<b>Current-records</b> (Percentage/frequency)	<b>Semi-current records</b> (Percentage/frequency)
No answer	23% (8)	
Does not perform this activity	26% (9)	23% (8)
Backlogs	17% (6)	20% (7)
Lack of finding aids	23% (8)	23% (8)
Poor physical conditions	6% (2)	23% (8)
All factors	6% (2)	6% (2)

### **Skills and records management training needs**

According to ISO 15489-1 (2016:17) and the NARSA (Moçambique 2007:5), an individual organization, acting in accordance with the directives from the Central Director of the National State Archives System, should establish an ongoing programme of records training to equip records management staff with the necessary skills and knowledge of specific practices. The purpose of this objective was to assess the training needs in records management within the EMU units.

The findings are presented according to the following sub-themes:

- Attendance of internal records management training.
- Training provided for records management staff within the EMU units.

The first sub-theme under investigation is attendance of internal records management training. Respondents were asked to indicate if they had ever attended a training programme on records management. Table 3 shows that 23% (8) of the respondents indicated that they had attended the training on records management. However, 9% (3) mentioned that they had attended library management, while 3% (1) had attended training on records management/library management. Only 9% (3) did not answer the question. A further 14% (5) mentioned that this activity was not performed at all within the EMU units. In contrast, 43% of respondents mentioned that they attended other courses, such as administration and management of human resources, political history and public management, history and finance.

**Table 3: Attendance of records management training (N=35)**

No answer	Records management	Library management	Records and library management	Others	Missing
14% (5)	23% (8)	9% (3)	3% (1)	43% (14)	9% (3)

When asked which body offered the records management training within the EMU units, the respondents said that the MHA and the Directorate of Human Resources at EMU provided the training. According to the respondents, the training on records management covers records management and preservation issues. However, the Directorate of Human Resources does not carry out records management training on a regular basis, whereas the MHA runs four courses per year of three months' duration for each course.

As reflected in Table 4, a significant percentage of the respondents indicated that they had received training on the records management issues, but as many as a quarter of them had not received any training at all.

**Table 4: Service providers for records management training**

No answer	MHA	Human Resource: MHA	MHA AND HR	Others	Missing
27% (9)	29% (10)	31%	3% (1)	6% (3)	6% (3)

### **Records appraisal and disposal processes**

According to the NARSA (2008:140), records appraisal refers to the identification of records of enduring secondary value. The process of evaluation of records of enduring permanent or temporary value uses certain relevant criteria. Records disposal is defined as the process of destruction of ephemeral records or the transfer of records of archival value to an archival institution for permanent preservation (Marutha 2011:17). This is preceded by an appraisal process (identification and selection of records).

The implementation of a disposal authority enables a government department to dispose of its records regularly. According to the NARSA, only the Central Director of the National Archives System has a technical disposal authority for the records through its records appraisal committees and records management units (Moçambique 2007:8).

The purpose of this objective was to analyze the efficiency and effectiveness of the records appraisal and disposal processes within the EMU units. Findings are presented according to the following sub-themes:

- Regularity of records appraisal processes at the EMU units.
- Regularity of destruction and transfer of records within the EMU units.

The following sub-section analyses the regularity of records appraisal processes at the EMU units. Respondents were asked when records appraisal processes were taking place within the EMU units. As shown in Table 3, 11% (4) of the respondents indicated that the records appraisal processes for semi-current records were carried out every five years, while 9% (3) of respondents pointed out that the records appraisal processes for current records were carried out annually. The timing was reversed for the records appraisal processes of semi-current records with only 3% (1) mentioning that these processes were carried out on an annual basis and 6% (2) saying that the records appraisal processes of current records were carried out every five years. Another 6% (2) of respondents said that the records appraisal processes for current records and semi-current records were carried out bi-annually.

**Table 3: When records appraisal processes are taking place for current and semi-current records at EMU units? (N=35)**

<b>Regularity of records appraisal processes</b>	<b>Current records</b> (Percentage/frequency)	<b>Semi-current records</b> (Percentage/frequency)
Annually	9% (3)	3% (1)
Biannually	6% (2)	6% (2)
Every five years	6% (2)	11% (4)

Respondents were asked when the records destruction and transfer processes were taking place within the EMU units. As presented in Table 4, 11% (4) of the respondents indicated that the records destruction and transfer processes for current records were carried out every five years. At the same time, 6% (2) of respondents pointed out that the records destruction and transfer processes for current records were carried out annually. In contrast, 20% (7) mentioned that the records destruction and transfer processes of semi-current records were carried out every five years. A further 3% (1) of respondents said that the records destruction and transfer processes for current records and semi-current records were carried out bi-annually.

From the respondents’ answers, it appears that the retention schedule for common records and for classified information was not implemented and the retention period schedule for specific records was unavailable at the EMU units.

**Table 4: How often current-records and semi-current records are destroyed and transferred (N=35)**

<b>Regularity of destruction and transfer processes</b>	<b>Current records</b> (Percentage/frequency)	<b>Semi- current records</b> (Percentage/frequency)
Annually	6% (2)	
Biannually	3% (1)	3% (1)
Every five years	11% (4)	20% (7)

**The senior management support for the records management activities**

The purpose of this objective was to investigate the annual budgeting for records management activities within the EMU units. The findings are presented according to the following sub-themes:

- Annual budget allocations to the records management function within the EMU units.
- Records management activities annually budgeted.

The first sub-theme is the annual budget allocation to the records management function within the EMU units.

Respondents were asked about the annual budget allocation to the records management function within the EMU units. The respondents mentioned that the annual budget included funds allocated to this function. However, from the data presented, it seems that the budgets for records of the EMU units were poorly managed. There was no strategic planning and financial investment in the records management function. It was not given a priority in the budgeting within the EMU units because it did not form part of the general administration.

Respondents were asked for information on records management activities which were budgeted for annually. Overall, the budgeting of records management activities was not performed within the EMU units. In fact, records capture, records registration, classification of common records,

classification of classified information, access to records, records transfer and destruction of records were not budgeted for at all. However, the annual budget allocated for the storage and handling of records was approximately 1000 to 6000 USD. Another 1000 to 6000 USD was allocated to records creation and retaining records and 7000 to 9000 USD was allocated for the records management training. Accordingly, it can be concluded that the records management activities were not strategically budgeted for. The existing resources were insignificant and had to be acquired from the general management function. These funds barely cover the storage and handling of records, let alone the records management training. Consequently, the records management function within the EMU units did not achieve its objectives.

### **Discussion of research findings**

This section deals with the interpretation and discussion of the research findings. It follows the objectives of the research study in its structure, namely key records management documents: policy, procedures and classification systems; security and physical protection and preservation of records; the records appraisal and disposal processes; access to records; skills and records management training needs; appraisal and disposal of records; management of digital records and senior support for records management activities.

#### **Key records management documents: policy, procedures and classification systems**

The senior management at the EMU, through the MHA, is responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of the records management policy and procedures. As a result, the key documents were recognized by senior management as important for the organization's business to achieve efficiency and effectiveness in the records service. It is expected that some efforts in this area will be made as soon as possible (Comissão de Avaliação de Documentos de Arquivo-UEM 2012:1-2).

According to the Comissão de Avaliação de Documentos de Arquivo-UEM (2012:1) and the results of this study, it has been clearly demonstrated that the EMU has a long way to go in designing key records management documents such as a manual of procedures for current and semi-current records. This was seen as an ongoing project at the completion of the research in April 2017. The senior management at the EMU, through the MHA, is also responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of the classification scheme of classified information for

common records and the classification scheme and retention schedule for common records throughout the organization. Regarding the classification scheme and retention schedule for common records, these have not been implemented by the EMU. Two factors were responsible for this, namely, the lack of an adequate organizational business stamp for capturing incoming and outgoing records and the lack of trained staff (Comissão de Avaliação de Documentos de Arquivo-UEM 2012:1-2).

With reference to the Comissão de Avaliação de Documentos de Arquivo-UEM (2012:1) and the results of this study, it has been clearly shown that the EMU has many challenges to overcome in designing key records management documents. For example, the university has not yet been able to make available the classification scheme of classified information for specific records and the classification scheme and retention schedule for specific records. It is necessary for the EMU to actually design the classification scheme of classified information for specific records.

### **Access to records**

The Mozambican Act No. 34 of 2014 concerning the right to information was approved on 31 December 2014. The purpose of this Act is to promote public and democratic participation in decision-making, complying with the National Constitution (Moçambique 2014:33). In this regard, members of the public should have access to information held by the state, municipalities and branches outside the country, as well as private organizations with public interests (Moçambique 2014:33). With regard to the right to information, this Act is regulated by Act No. 35 of 2015 of 31 December 2015.

According to the Act on the right to information, all civil servants from the public sector must provide citizens with required information within 21 days (Moçambique 2015:163). However, there are some restrictions or conditions for classified information that must be respected. If the request is not satisfactory, citizens may launch an appeal to the court or ask for verification of the dispatch from the competent civil servants, with technical assistance from a records appraisal and disposal committee (Moçambique 2015:163). However, a number of factors such as backlogs, lack of finding aids and poor physical conditions reflected more negatively on semi-current records than on current records in restricting the public's access to information. For example, some EMU units were unable to access records of administrative and enduring value in a suitable time. These records need to be properly identified and managed to enable compliance

with archival legislation and to facilitate easy retrieval of information that is normally done through a registration book of outgoing and incoming records. Furthermore, in one EMU unit, there is a database that is used for retrieval of information on the management of human resources. These tools are regarded as being used very easily, very effectively and efficiently, and therefore should be up to date and automatized (Comissão de Avaliação de Documentos-UEM 2012:3). From the study, however, it would seem that the EMU units continue to spend resources unnecessarily in order to manage records that should otherwise have been destroyed. Consequently, it is apparent that records storage areas should be made available to facilitate the retrieval of records by users. Although the semi-current records were less accessible than the current records, the data received in the study were contradictory, with 48.6% (17) of respondents arguing that they were fairly accessible and another 20% (7) stating that they were poorly accessible. Only a few users requested access to semi-current records.

Despite the above, records kept on site in close proximity were quickly retrieved by most users when requested. On the contrary, users of active files kept in off-site storage areas experienced enormous difficulties in retrieving those records. The study also showed that some EMU units had tried transferring records to an off-site storage unit without them being arranged and described, only to remove those records and create space for active ones. Of great significance for the continent was the fact that this practice was being undertaken by other government institutions in sub-Saharan Africa. Retrieval, consequently, becomes a challenging issue due to the lack of a disposal authority (Ngulube 2013:4).

According to Library and Archives Canada (2012), operating in this way poses a high risk because records can be hard to find and kept beyond their useful life. This situation is affecting students, lecturers, researchers and administrative staff members at the EMU, who need the records to operate or to respond to access to information requests and for legal cases. Lost and mismanaged records reduce their ability to deliver programmes effectively (Ngoepe 2013:165).

The EMU units were thus not able to deal satisfactorily with requests under the Act, which was supposed to be enabling the right to information. The respondents were not sure which sector was responsible for the implementation of legislation concerning the right to information, with the possibilities resting among the records appraisal and disposal committee, the records management unit and the Legal Services Directorate at the EMU. Furthermore, the records

management units and the records appraisal and disposal committee, which should be responsible for implementation, have not yet been created within the EMU units.

### **Skills and records management training needs**

Staff training in records management is one of the crucial processes for a successful records management programme. Therefore, an organization should establish an ongoing programme of records training to equip records management staff with the necessary skills and knowledge of specific practices (ISO 15489-1 2016:17). The lack of trained staff in the records management area within an organization means that the records management services become problematic. Most of the existing records management staff at the EMU units were not trained specifically on records management issues (Comissão de Avaliação de Documentos de Arquivo-UEM 2012:1). Apart from the lack of trained records management staff, there was also a shortage of qualified staff in the records management field or related disciplines at the EMU units. From the respondents, it appears that there was a strong need for records management training. They demonstrated that a significant investment should be made in training and education in the field.

Respondents indicated that the records management training was offered by both the MHA and the Directorate of Human Resources at the EMU as an ongoing programme. That initial training was directed towards records management staff to give them the capability to facilitate the implementation of the National Archives System within the EMU units. In terms of standards, the MHA is regarded as a competent institution in the country, consisting of recognized and qualified staff with a great deal of experience in records management training. Such training was one of the planned processes that was to be performed by the MHA and, in particular, the central records appraisal and disposal committee within the EMU units (Comissão de Avaliação de Documentos de Arquivo-UEM 2012:2-4). As a means to a unified approach, the EMU Directorate of Human Resources contracted qualified records management staff from the MHA for the running of short courses on records management for the EMU units, although without any planning. No coordination activities existed between these two EMU units with regard to records management training issues. There was an overlap of records management initiatives at the EMU units, thereby duplicating unnecessary resources, which were not readily available. The two EMU units were competing in records management training within EMU schools, faculties, research centres, special units and directorate units. In addition, there was a lack of digitisation capacity because organisations are unable to develop appropriate strategies to digitise archival

collections due to obsolete technology, fragile technology, or the lack of best practice and best organisational infrastructure to achieve effective digital curation (Harvey & Mahard 2014:4).

From the questionnaires, it appears that due to the lack of sufficient funding, these two EMU units were not undertaking sufficient staff training with regard to records management. The level of trained records management staff remained low. Existing trained staff were constantly being moved to other sections or units with new responsibilities differing from the records management function (Comissão Central de Avaliação de Documentos-UEM 2012:1). These vacancies were filled with newly recruited staff without specific knowledge of records management issues. This situation did not provide a basis for the successful implementation of the National Archives and Records Management Act at the EMU units.

The records management staff at the EMU units were thought to be trained to a reasonable level, but 17 out of 35 respondents felt that there were no skills transfer from most of the staff in their EMU units. For example, the classification scheme and retention schedule for common records and the sectorial scheme of classified information were not implemented. As a result, the records management staff in registry are still in need of more training.

In short, there were no coordinated initiatives on records management training within the EMU units mentioned above. The two units were apparently competing, thereby duplicating efforts unnecessarily and spending more resources. The standard of the records management staff in EMU units has remained at low levels, with the result that there is increasing organizational demand for qualified staff to deal with more complex issues.

### **Appraisal and disposal of records**

Moçambique (2007:23) has reported that records appraisal, destruction and transfer committees play an important role in records management within the public sector. These committees are technically and methodically supervised by the National Commission on Records Destruction and Transfer, based on the approved standards on functioning of records appraisal, destruction and transfer committees within the public administration in Mozambique (Moçambique 2010:4-6). This point is underscored by Moçambique (2007:23) when stating that the main functions of the records appraisal, destruction and transfer committee within the National Archives System include formulating and implementing a records management plan, coordinating and

implementing a classification scheme and retention schedule of common and specific records, and coordinating records appraisal and disposal processes (Moçambique 2007:23),

According to respondents, the budget of the central records appraisal, destruction and transfer committee created at the EMU for the period 2011 to 2012 was not made available at that time. Due to the lack of funding, it had to extend its work for a further 12 months. In total, the committee was delivering records services for 18 months from 2011 to 2013. This plan covered records management staff training on records classification, appraisal, destruction and transfer and assessment of 12 targeted EMU directorate units. It was also responsible for the designing of instructions for the functioning of this committee at the EMU (Comissão de Avaliação de Documentos de Arquivo-UEM 2011:[1]).

The EMU did not create any sectorial records appraisal, destruction and transfer committees and records management units that could carry out the records appraisal and disposal processes. This was confirmed by 82.6% (29) of respondents who indicated that the records appraisal and disposal activities for current records and semi-current records were not carried out at all within the EMU units. Regarding non-current records with archival value, these must be transferred to the archive's repositories even if they were stored either on site or off site. In fact, most of these records may have no enduring business or historical value and should be the subject of an appraisal, destruction and transfer process. The Comissão de Avaliação de Documentos de Arquivo (2012:1) gave evidence of the fact that the EMU units did not have their own specific storage areas for semi-active and non-active records.

According to respondents, the central records appraisal, destruction and transfer committee was not functioning after 2013, thus requiring the extension of its mandate. This means that from 2013 up to the date of this study, the responsibility for the records appraisal and disposal processes was not assigned within the EMU units. Consequently, the processes were not carried out within these units and a records review that had to be done before the records appraisal process took place, was non-existent.

As shown in Tables 3 and 4, the EMU units had different periods for records appraisal processes and for destruction and transfer processes. As reflected in Table 3, 11% (4) of the respondents mentioned that the records appraisal processes for semi-current records were carried out every five years. In addition, as shown in Table 4, 11% (4) said that the records destruction and

transfer processes of current records were carried out in the same period. This situation was worsened by the fact that the retention schedule for common records was available but not implemented and the retention schedule for specific records was not made available at all. This had a negative effect on records destruction activity.

Many respondents said that destruction of records through shredding or by using other methods was carried out without applying an approved retention schedule, either for common or for specific records. Such destruction of records was not documented. From the questionnaires, it was also apparent that non-current records for units were kept in semi-current storage areas. Due to a lack of storage areas, shelving and archival enclosures, no records were transferred to the MHA. The existing semi-current storage areas for units were overloaded and some of the records were kept in registries and working places, demanding an appraisal and disposal activity for selection, transfer and destruction of these records. In this study, however, it was found that most of the records appraisal, destruction and transfer committee members were unmotivated. Along similar lines, to the audit committees functioning in government bodies in South Africa (Ngoepe 2013:180), it is recommended that the Mozambican records appraisal and disposal committees establish and maintain effective relationships with key stakeholders who influence and inform the responsibilities and operations of the committees. This can be achieved by records appraisal and disposal committees through their meetings and through working with key stakeholders outside of committee meetings (Ngoepe 2013:180). The stakeholders may include: personnel in leadership, records management, IT, information management and risk management (Ngoepe 2013:180-181). This relationship is central to enabling the committee to meet its responsibilities. When Moçambique (2010:5-6) classified the responsibilities of records appraisal and disposal committees, the surprise omissions were records creation, preservation and access to information issues.

In short, following from the above situation, it was understood that the effectiveness of the records appraisal and disposal committee at the EMU units was very poor. The committee remains nebulous and because of that it could not achieve efficiency and effectiveness regarding its role, particularly with regard to coordinating, designing and implementing records management tools within the EMU units.

### **Senior management support for records management activities**

As records contain important information, it is critical that the records management function should protect them as evidence of activities within an organization's business and in society (ISO 15489-1 2016:4). For this purpose, records management activities and processes must be budgeted for or funded as a specific business activity within the organization (Ngoepe & Ngulube 2013:8; Wamukoya & Lowry 2013:159; Ngoepe & Ngulube 2014:148).

The results of the study indicate that the records management function at the EMU units was not the subject of any budgeting and was poorly managed. Only 2.9% (1) of the respondents mentioned that a portion of the annual budget was allocated to the records management function. There was no strategic financial investment in the records management function that was prepared from the state's annual budget, which thus presents the state of affairs of government revenue and expenditure (Moçambique 2004:555). The records management function was also not given priority within the EMU units because it did not form part of the general administration and would therefore incur more costs. Lack of a records management section with trained and qualified staff within the units seems to be the root cause of exclusion of the records management function from the planning and budgeting of the units. As a result, a regular internal audit of its execution throughout the year could be done. The only external control of the legality and efficiency of public income and expenditure is provided by the Administrative Court, which is a supreme and independent body (Moçambique 2004:566).

To sum up, the EMU units are required to submit an organizational budget, but it does not cover records management needs. As a result, the businesses conducted by the units were not fully supported by documentation.

### **Conclusion and recommendations**

The study clearly revealed that the NARSA will not be successfully implemented without senior management's support for recruiting qualified staff and maintaining their continued training, as well as overseeing the acquisition of software and hardware, furniture, shelving and other records and archival materials. This means that the archival legislation cannot ensure the effective and efficient management, preservation and access of the country's national document heritage if it is not properly supported financially. The provision of sufficient funding is crucial

for the implementation of the NARSA. However, EMU records managers are not able to enforce the compliance with the NARSA according to life cycle of a record. The implementation of the NARSA also faces great challenges because the existing records management staff at EMU units remain at a low level of training and they cannot deal with more complex issues. In addition, trained staff are frequently moved from one department or unit to another and given new responsibilities not related to records management issues.

From the study, it is clear that the EMU has a long way to go before the successful implementation of the NARSA. Clearly, records management plays a significant role as it establishes both legal and administrative infrastructure and protects the rights of citizens with respect to recorded information as well as allocating roles, powers and responsibilities among central state departments and public agencies. Therefore, the EMU administrative, academic and special units should start raising awareness of the importance of the role of records management issues for the implementation of a records management system that would comply with the NARSA.

This study recommends that the records management function at the UEM should follow basic procedures of control for records management systems with the leadership bolstered by the commitment of top management in taking a proactive role in the strategic planning, budgeting and monitoring. To achieve these reforms, it is necessary to appoint records managers at senior level. Essentially, these records managers should be adequately qualified, trained and properly motivated to undertake the documentation of their unit's activities in a serious manner.

Regarding the effectiveness and efficiency of records appraisal, destruction and transfer processes, this study recommends that the EMU should consider the extension of the mandate of the central records appraisal, destruction and transfer committee and create two additional sectorial records appraisal, destruction and transfer committees for research, and teaching and learning processes.

Finally, there is also a need for the EMU, through the School of Communication and Arts and the MHA, to develop training modules for records management based on the National State Archives System requirements. This training would identify and define the key functions and activities associated with the design, implementation and maintenance of records management infrastructure for the EMU units.

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