

# Survey Report on the Establishment of National Cooperative Archive in Tanzania: Prospects and Challenges

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## 1. Abstract

Moshi University College of Cooperative and Business Studies in collaboration with Cooperative College of Manchester launched a project known as “Preserving East African Co-operative Heritage (PEACH)” in January 2011. As the first step in implementing this project a team composed of staff from MUCCoBS and Cooperative College, Manchester conducted a survey in cooperatives and other stakeholders in seven regions of Tanzania. This survey was a pilot study aiming to identify the extent, availability, location and preservation needs of co-operative archives in Tanzania and establish potentials and challenges to establish National Cooperative archive. The surveys established the existence of a long range of cooperative records with archival value and therefore validated the intention of MUCCoBS to establish National Cooperative Archive. However many archival materials identified, were mostly in a bad condition, they are fragile, dirty, strained, brittle, crumbling, sometimes bent and full of rusty metal clips and they are stored in dirty rooms. Most cooperatives visited do not know the difference between archival records with long term value and records with no value that can be destroyed. The survey established that all cooperative stakeholders are supporting the idea of establishing National Cooperative Archive and are willing to surrender the archival materials to MUCCoBS for preservation. It was observed that there is high commitment of the management of MUCCoBS to establish the cooperative archive and the staff of the College needs some capacity building to acquire the required competency to manage the cooperative archive to be established. As a way forward it was proposed that MUCCoBS should strive to establish the repository to be used to preserve cooperative archive.

**Key words:** cooperative archive, cooperative society, repository, records, survey

## 2.0 Literature Review

### 2.1 Definition, importance and characteristics of archive

Cooperative archive is an accumulation of records and documents from cooperative societies at different level i.e. primary, secondary and apex. Archives are a by-product of activities and functions, not deliberately and consciously created for their own sake. **Archive** can also mean the physical repository where archives are kept. According to Babu (2008:19) quoted from the Oxford Dictionary defines the Archives as a place in which public records are kept. Also the term is defined as ‘the non current records of an individual, organisation, institution, kept for their continuing value. Archives are those records that are worthy of permanent retention because of their enduring value as evidence or for research. Archives are an elite body of records. They provide a reliable and authentic knowledge base, enabling the past to be reconstructed and understood. Without archives, the past would remain largely unknown. By documenting the significant decisions, transactions and events of political, social and economic life, archives serve as the essential link in the chain of human history (International Records Management Trust, 1999). In other words, it is the agency or institution responsible for the care of archival materials and the building or other repository housing the archival records. Private papers are also referred to as manuscripts for an administrator particularly the record creating agency, ‘ Archives are useful for reference in conducting its day to day business’ Generally archives are valuable as the permanent and continuing worth of records based on their administrative, legal, evidential, financial or historical usefulness.

According to Ramaiah (2008:69) archives has been derived from the Greek word ‘archeon’ meaning that which belongs to an office. Archeion has its origin in the word arche which has a number of meanings, and consequently a number of derivatives with different connotations. Arche means (1) beginning, origin, first cause; (2) first place, power, sovereignty, empire, realm, and (3) magistrates, office. From the first of these sets derived

the Greek archaios meaning old, ancient, etc. and from this we have such derivatives such as archaic, archeology. From the second set is derived architekton from which we get architect, archbishop. From the third set is derived the word archaion. From this Greek word, the Latin word Archivum was derived. From the Latin word Archivum, the French words l, archive and lesarchives have come. From those French words the English word Archives has come. In English language, the term Archives has at least three distinct things: (1) the records themselves; (2) the building which houses the records; and (3) the administrative set-up responsible for the maintenance of records. In general, archives consist of records that have been selected for permanent or long-term preservation on grounds of their enduring cultural, historical, or evidentiary value. Archival records are normally unpublished and almost always unique, unlike books or magazines for which many identical copies exist. This means that archives (the places) are quite distinct from libraries with regard to their functions and organization, although archival collections can often be found within library buildings (Ibid)

According to Cox (2000) fundamental purpose of the archival or records work is to preserve permanently valuable records and make them available for us. The activities involved in providing access to records constitute the archival institutions reference service. To the archives professional, an archive is an accumulation of records and documents from one organisation, family or individual – known as the provenance of the archive. Essentially, provenance is where a record comes from and it is vitally important because it tells us about the context of our archives. If you know where the archives come from you will more easily identify the separate record groups and series and understand how they relate to each other ([www.archive-skills.com](http://www.archive-skills.com)). According to Margaret Crocket, archives are records and documents created in the normal course of the life of an institution, family or individual, regardless of medium, which have been selected for permanent preservation due to their continuing value as primary source material. The cooperative archive holds many records relating to individual co-operative societies. These include minute books of society committees and sub-committees, financial records, photographs, reports, member registers, letters and society histories. These records are useful for researching family history, national and local events and for learning about the formation of co-operative societies. (<http://www.co-op.ac.uk/our-heritage/national-co-operative-archive/collections/co-operative-society/>)

Few creators of records will have any interest in their records as a potential cultural or research resource. Furthermore, as the usefulness of the records in the conduct of business diminishes, so does the willingness of the administration to pay for the maintenance and preservation of those records. If the identification of valuable materials were left to records creators, it is likely that few records would be kept. Few records are recognized as having archival value at the point of their creation. The perceived value and use of the bulk of records change over time. A file created this week may have great archival value in twenty-five years, but it can be difficult to discern that value at this early stage in the record's life (International Records Management Trust, 1999). Furthermore, the value of records differs between the different communities of users. For the creator or original user, the usefulness of the records is likely to diminish once the record has fulfilled its initial purpose. Managers and auditors, for example, use records to assess performance and accountability. To them, the administrative value of records ends when regulatory requirements have been met. The majority of records will be destroyed once their business function has ended and there is no further need to retain the evidence they contain (Ibid). In spite of the different uses to which archives are put, all the different perceived values of archival materials rest upon a common foundation. In order for a record to provide valuable research information, its value as evidence and its integrity, authenticity and meaning must be retained intact (Ibid)

It is worth spending money and time to maintain archives permanently because:

They are unique - archives will usually be the only record or evidence of the decision, policy or activity which they document.

They have been selected for preservation due to their continuing value as primary source material documenting the culture and history of the individual, organisation and society.

Archive serve several sort of values and that is why they are very important to the organizations and individuals. Firstly is the evidential value which provides proof or evidence of the existence of an individual or organisation and of its activities and functions. Because of this, records can be used to document and protect civic, legal and human rights as well as serve as a reliable picture of an organisation's or individual's history. Secondly is the informational value contained in the archives, distinct from their evidential value – archives are often used for research which has not been envisaged by creators and custodians. Thirdly is the historical value which is used loosely, and often confused with “archival value”, but it is the value which arises from exceptional age or a connection with a historic event or person ((<http://www.co-op.ac.uk/our-heritage/national-co-operative-archive/collections/co-operative-society/>)). All this is in line to Kimambo, (1984:10) who asserted that;

“historically human experience is cumulative and cannot just be erased from memory. Record keepers and archivists must be able to prove that the essential characteristics of records as evidence have been protected and preserved over time. The value of archives as authoritative evidence depends upon the quality of their custody and care from the time they were first created and used. The archivist is perfectly placed to understand this requirement. At any point in their life, whether in the custody of their creators or an archival institution, records are unusable or valueless if their context and authenticity has not been safeguarded. Without context and authenticity, the evidence contained in archives cannot be relied upon or fully understood (International Records Management Trust, 1999). Knowing what happened in the past is necessary ingredient in being able to evaluate the present and plan for the future”. Hence materials and knowledge in the years back have to be preserved in archives for today and the future generations. Cook, (1984:2) add that no planning is possible without basic information, and this information is frequently held only in archival media.

## 2.2 Accessioning and Planning a Repository

All records should be appraised to determine the means and timing of their disposal. As a general principle, no materials should be accepted into the archival institution unless they have been appraised and selected for retention because of their enduring value. Appraisal is one of the main functions of archival institution. It should be understood that the archival institution and its staff have an essential role in the appraisal process. Records that have been appraised and transferred to the archival institution become archives. The preparation of materials for transfer is generally the responsibility of the records centre or the creating agency. Accessioning is a physical transfer of records and a transfer of ownership and responsibility (Cook, 1993). Preparing archival materials for transfer involves the procedures outlined below.

- a) Arranging them: putting files, volumes, bundles, papers and so on into an intelligible order that facilitates retrieval.
- b) Physically protecting them: making sure that all components of the consignment are tidy and properly packed in their folders or containers. All ferrous clips and treasury tags should be removed and plastic or brass tags and clips used to replace them.
- c) Describing them: transfers to the archival institution should be accompanied by their transfer lists, or they should be described on the accessions form. This description is necessarily brief but allows the material to be brought under control from the beginning. (International Records Management Trust, 1999).

In all cases, both the transferring agency or records centre and the archival institution must record exactly what has been transferred, and the archival institution must document what it does to the archives subsequent to their accession (International Records Management Trust, 1999). The collection and management of archives is a serious commitment: we are aiming to keep the archives permanently as evidence of society and culture. The most important resource to have in place is a secure location with a cool dry environment and appropriate storage equipment. Basic preservation of archives in all media depends on providing as much protection as possible from the main threats of light, humidity, insect infestation, magnetic field, theft and hacking, heat, damp, dust, obsolescence, poor handling. Repository staff must ensure that the archives are kept safe and secure during their transfer and accessioning and that the paperwork is accurate and current. Keeping of accurate records will be enhanced by keeping accession register. The accessions register is a formal document that records the archival repository’s acceptance of responsibility for the archives. It documents the transfer of custody of the archives to the archival institution. The accessions register contains the following information, recorded in columns:

- accession number
- date received
- details of archives (series number if known, title or description, covering dates, number of boxes or quantity)
- source, transferring agency or depositor
- archival references
- remarks (including variations to the statutory closed period)
- date action completed.

(International Records Management Trust, 1999).

Margaret Crocket point out that, the likelihood of damage from the threats can be minimized through controlling

the environment in which the archives are stored and through good preservation management practice and control of the humans who come into contact with the archives.

### 2.3 Providing Access to Archives

Ultimately the reason we preserve and manage records and archives is so that they, and the information they contain, can be used. The records may be used by colleagues from within your organisation or by the general public who have expectations and/or rights to carry out research into the archives. The collected materials with this project are to be disseminated to students, scholars, historians and the public. Students in archival collection find information to fulfill their assignments; researchers find information on their family histories, facts for legal arguments, health and scientific information, or background material for novel (Kajjage, 1984). Archives and records reference services are the public interface of repositories and it is important that this area is managed in an efficient and friendly manner. It is important to distinguish between reference services, which enable users to access the documents they require, and research services which provide information from the documents in response to user enquiries. Most repositories provide reference services free of charge whilst fees are usually levied for research services.

Archive users need a quiet place in which to work with all relevant facilities. This place should be separate from the processing and other internal administrative areas of the repository. The reference area, often called the search room, is a controlled sector within the institution in which users can consult archival materials in an atmosphere conducive to study. Search area is the area in an archival repository open to users for the consultation of archives and finding aids that relate to them. Effective accessibility need to be supported by accessibility policy, procedures and regulations, security, finding aids, reprographic services, etc. The reference area should be a welcome and accessible environment. According to Michael Cook, the reference area should have the following features.

- The entrance door should be clearly labelled.
- a) Opening times should be shown on or near the entrance door.
- b) Reference staff should have their own desks, marked with labels such as 'Search Room Officer on Duty' or 'Enquiries'.
- c) The room should be clean, tidy and uncrowded, with furniture arranged so that staff can supervise the research area from a single point.
- d) Silence should be maintained by both researchers and staff. If possible, a separate reference area should be used for meetings or interviews.
- e) The location of lists and finding aids, including reference books, should be clearly marked.
- f) Archival documents should not be left in the research area, nor should they be left unattended on desks in the search room. If researchers have to leave the room they should advise the staff of their absence and ask them to watch the documents or return them to the document issue area for safekeeping.
- g) The area where requests for documents are submitted and the documents themselves are issued to and returned by researchers should be clearly marked.

Cook further suggests that, during opening hours, it is the duty of the reference staff to see that the following steps are taken.

- a. The search room should be adequately staffed. This task involves setting up duty rotas, monitoring staff leave and making contingency plans if staff are off sick or arrive late.
- b. There should be a member of staff on duty at all times. If there is only a single member of staff available and this person has to leave the room, emergency relief from another department or branch of the archival institution should be obtained.
- c. Staff should explain search room procedures to all new researchers and make sure that they are familiar with the rules.
- d. Staff should keep restricted archival materials out of the search room whenever possible. If such materials are needed for a particular reason, they should be kept in locked drawers or cabinets.
- e. Staff should check regularly to see that finding aids are in good condition. At the end of each day, one member of staff should be responsible for seeing that the finding aids are in correct order and stored tidily.
- f. Officers on duty in the search room should walk down the aisles between the desks from time to time.

Active supervision shows the researchers that staff are diligent in enforcing the rules.

### **3.0 Methodology used in conducting the Survey**

Before the commencement of the study the survey team identified suitable co-operative unions, primary cooperatives and other stakeholders to visit and made initial contact with them via the network of regional centres. A pre survey questionnaire was developed jointly and sent out to the unions. The intention was to establish prior to the field visit the extent and type of materials present at the unions. The schedule of field visits was prepared jointly with MUCCoBS and Cooperative College of Manchester. The survey was conducted for two times; the first survey was conducted from 3<sup>rd</sup> January to 29<sup>th</sup> January 2011 and the second survey was conducted from 11<sup>th</sup> January to 21<sup>st</sup> January 2012. The first survey was conducted by a team of three experts, one from Cooperative College Manchester and the second survey was conducted by four staff, all from MUCCoBS. The surveys involved cooperative Unions, primary cooperative societies, department of cooperative in Kagera, Mwanza, Shinyanga, Kilimanjaro, Arusha, Dodoma and Dar es Salaam regions, COASCO, Tanzania Coffee Marketing Board, HQ of cooperative development department, Tanzania Federation of Cooperatives and National Archive of Tanzania. The major methods used to gather information included interviews, focus group discussion and observation. The survey team conducted Semi Structured Interviews with key stakeholders of the organizations visited. The survey team also conducted Focus Group Discussion with board members of both primary cooperatives and cooperative unions where various issues on records management and archival materials were discussed. The team also conducted direct observation whereby records, filing and storage system, storage facilities, storage buildings were observed. Through observation various materials with archival value were identified and reserved for digitization and latter to be transferred to the repository to be established at MUCCoBS. As part of data collection, a one day history day was organized and attended by leaders from 32 primary Agricultural Marketing Co-operatives from Moshi, Hai and Rombo districts. It was decided to conduct cooperative history day in Kilimanjaro region because it is the area where cooperatives started in Tanzania and therefore we expected to generate relevant historical information on cooperative development. In this day more records with archival value was identified and participants were interviewed on historical development of cooperatives in the region. In this study Qualitative analysis technique was used to analyze survey data. It involved describing, summarizing and interpreting the data through logical reasoning. This was done to ensure reliability, accuracy, clarity, meaningfulness and completeness of information. Basically the qualitative data were collected from the survey and an interim analysis was conducted during the survey process through documenting all information generated from the interviews, focus group discussion and observation and develops memos which were used as additional data to be further analyzed. Data were then transcribed into a word processing document and organized into retrievable sections. It is here that the researcher carefully read the transcribed data, line by line, and divide the data into meaningful analytical and coded accordingly. Data validation was done by triangulation through using multiple data sources and using multiple survey methods. Theory triangulation was as well used by accessing multiple theories and perspectives in archive. After data collection, the researcher gave the feed back to the stakeholders on the major findings and this enhanced the validation of the information.

For more details on the places visited see table 1.

Table1: Areas visited

S/N	Region	Organizations visited
1	Kilimanjaro	i. Kilimanjaro Native Cooperative Union ii. Tanzania Coffee Marketing Board iii. Isuki Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Society iv. Moshi District Consumers Cooperative Society
2	Arusha	i. Arusha Cooperative Union ii. Sokoni 2 Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Society
3	Shinyanga	i. Shinyanga Region Cooperative Union ii. Cooperative Audit and Supervision Corporation (COASCO), Shinyanga Region
4	Mwanza	i. Nyanza Cooperative Union ii. Office of the Regional Cooperative Officer iii. Bukumbi Ginnery iv. Mwalogwabagole Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Society
5	Kagera	i. Kagera Cooperative Union ii. Karagwe District Cooperative Union iii. Rwagati Agricultural Cooperative Society iv. Maruku Agricultural Cooperative Society v. Kamahungu Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Society vi. Bukoba PWD SACCOS
6	Dodoma	Department of Cooperative Development
7	Dar es Salaam	i. Tanzania Federation of Cooperatives ii. National Archive of Tanzania

#### 4.0 Findings and Discussion

The findings of the study in the areas visited are discussed in the following paragraphs:

##### 4.1 Potentials for establishment of Cooperative National archive in Tanzania

Although there were issues around record storage and challenges of identifying record with archival value there are high potentials in establishing National Cooperative archive. The survey established the following potentials:

##### 4.1.1 Existence of unique records of archival interest

There is no doubt that unique records of archival interest exist and that they are a valuable resource for understanding the history of co-operatives in Tanzania. In all places visited the materials with archival value were available. The survey team conducted a rapid appraising and identified various records with archival value and agreed with the cooperatives to keep them in a safe place before they are transferred to repository to be established in MUCCoBS. Some of these records were created before independence of Tanzania; interestingly some of them were created since 1932. For example the survey team located in Kamahungu AMCOS a “Bye-Laws of the Native Farmers Cooperative Society LTD. of 1932 which was composed in Haya language and also a “Cooperative Societies Ordinance and Rules of 1948” was identified in Rwagati AMCOS in Kagera region.” The materials of archival value identified included Minutes books, Visitors books, By Laws, Contracts, registration Certificates, audited financial reports and artifacts such as weighing scale, typewriters and calculators. Table 2 summarizes the materials with archival value identified.

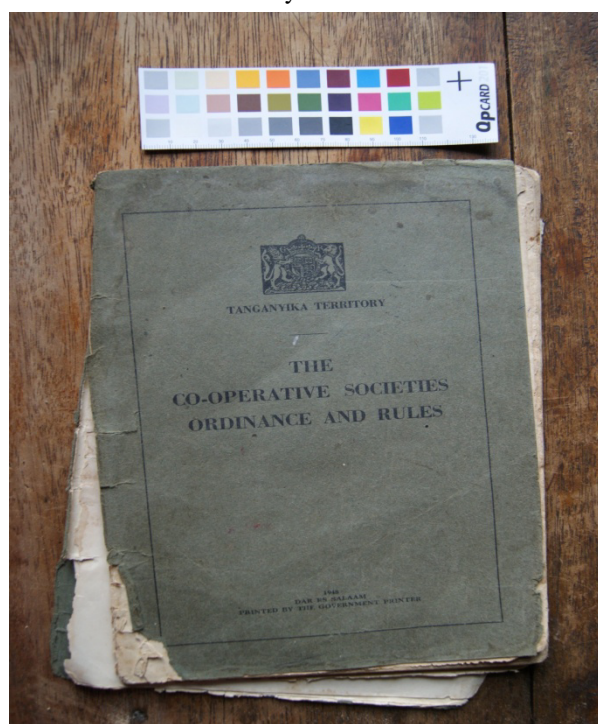


Table 2: Identified Materials of archival value

S/N	Region	Location	Material identified with historical archival value
	Kilimanjaro	Isuki Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>File relating to the School of Commerce at the KNCU in the 50's – the early Co-operative College. This includes student reports and letters of correspondence between the society and the school of commerce.</li> <li>Register of all Coffee Growers in the Moshi District in 1955</li> <li>Photograph of all the secretaries of primary co-operative societies under KNCU in 1961</li> </ul>
		Moshi District Consumers Cooperative Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Registration Certificate</li> <li>Annual Progress Report with photographs 1980</li> <li>Photograph of the 10 year anniversary of the consumer co-operative in 1974</li> <li>Photograph showing fund raising event conducted in Sweden in 1980</li> </ul>
2	Arusha	Sokoni 2 Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Registration Certificate (1963)</li> <li>Bye-laws of the Meru Co-operative Union – Before 1964</li> <li>A thank you letter for support to the TANU party in 1973</li> </ul>
3	Shinyanga	Shinyanga Region Cooperative Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Photograph: first board of directors for SHIRECU (1984)</li> <li>Photograph of delegates of a Cotton industry stakeholders workshop. International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC)</li> <li>The implementation framework of resolutions /decisions made by executive committee of CCM in rural co-operative production. (1985)</li> </ul>
		Cooperative Audit and Supervision Corporation (COASCO), Shinyanga Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audit reports reflect the situations for co-operatives over different years</li> <li>Liquidation report for Shinyanga Cooperative Union (SHIRECU).</li> </ul>
4	Mwanza	Nyanza Cooperative Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Documents relating to cotton e.g. documenting the history of the relationship between the Cooperative Union and marketing boards.</li> <li>Government documents e.g. circulars from colonial and independence government.</li> <li>Reports on International Cotton Aid Programmes in the 80s/90s.</li> <li>Minutes of General Meeting of Victoria Federation of Co-operatives, 1961</li> <li>Minutes of two Annual General Meetings of Nyanza Co-operative Union – from 8/4/88, and 11/11/87</li> <li>Memorandum and articles of association of Nyanza Transport Company</li> <li>Minutes of two Annual General Meetings of Nyanza Co-operative Union – from 8/4/88, and 11/11/87</li> </ul>
		Office of the Regional Cooperative Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Records of all co-operatives registered in the region since 1974.</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government documents e.g. circulars</li> <li>• Co-operative College exam papers from first year of opening.</li> <li>• Staff ID cards (inspectors from Co-operative Department, 1977)</li> </ul>
		Bukumbi Ginnery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Handing over notices dated 1999 and 2001</li> <li>• Committee meeting minutes for the period of 1961 to 1964</li> <li>• Bukumbi economic analysis documents,</li> </ul>
		Mwalogwabagole Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orders/directives from Registrar of Cooperative Societies,</li> <li>• Registration certificates,</li> <li>• By laws,</li> <li>• Minutes,</li> <li>• audited financial reports,</li> </ul>
5	Kagera	Kagera Cooperative Union	<p>Documents such as meeting minutes and reports covering the periods when co-operatives were under colonial rule, independent and then government rule. They include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minutes of BNCU General Meeting 1950-1954</li> <li>• Bank reconciliation Statement for 1964 / 1965 within Minute book 1964/5</li> <li>• Development subcommittee minutes from November 1963 (Committee responsible to formulate development activities of the union)</li> <li>• BNCU Reports 1961-64</li> <li>• Valuation of Coffee factories in Bukoba (1955)</li> </ul>
		Karagwe District Cooperative Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribution of assets between KCU and KDCU at the time of the split</li> <li>• Registration Certificate, 1990</li> <li>• Meeting Minutes, 1999</li> <li>• List of debtors and creditors, for the year ended 30th of April 2001</li> </ul>
		Rwagati Agricultural Cooperative Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter written in 1989 by Bukoba Cooperative Union asking the primary societies to make their contribution and annual subscription to political party- CCM. At the time, all co-ops were under a Washirika which was affiliated to the CCM.</li> <li>• Tanganyika Territory Certificate of Registration for Rwagati Co-operative Society 1950</li> <li>• Artefacts from 1950s including scales, stamps, huller and calculator</li> <li>• Colonial document: The Co-operative Societies Ordinance and Rules 1948</li> <li>• Visitors book recording visitors since 1954 (shows inspection frequencies etc)</li> </ul>
		Maruku Agricultural Cooperative Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An invitation to the society to attend a celebration of 10 years of the CCM and 20 years since the Arusha Declaration (1987) – shows co-operatives being used as vehicles of government, that they recognise them as vehicles of development and supporters of their activities.</li> </ul>



			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loan application letter of 1978 by Maruku AMCOS to the Butairuku SACCOS. This shows that, The Maruku co-op and the Butairuku Savings and Credit co-operative were separate legal entities but worked closely e.g. payments for crops were paid into the savings account in the SACCOS.</li> <li>• Pass book for members</li> <li>• Photograph of delegates at a meeting of the BCU (between 1960 and 1972)</li> </ul>
		Kamahungu Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loan contracts</li> <li>• Audited reports</li> <li>• Annual General Meeting minutes,</li> <li>• Registration certificates etc.</li> <li>• Bye-Laws of the Native Farmers Cooperative Society LTD. of 1932 in Haya language</li> </ul>
		Bukoba PWD SACCOS	The book on the history of Bukoba PWD SACCOS since 1964 to 1994.
6	Dodoma	Department of Cooperative Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copies of the Co-operative Societies Acts of 1966, 1975, 1982, 1991, 2003</li> <li>• Lists of cooperative unions in the country and their primary members since 1933 to 1979.</li> <li>• An act to give statutory effect of Jumuiya ya Muungano wa Vyama vya Ushirika and to dissolve Cooperative Union of Tanganyika of 1979,</li> <li>• Inspection reports of Cooperative societies, Cooperative Union Register for the period of 1933 to 1970,</li> <li>• Cooperative societies model By Law, and other documents.</li> <li>• Registers of o-operatives registered from 1933 to 1971.</li> </ul>
7	Dar es Salaam	Tanzania Federation of Cooperatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A file containing minutes of meetings of Co-operative Bank of Tanganyika from 1964. Audited Balance Sheets of 1966,</li> <li>• Reports of Nordic Project for Co-operative Assistance</li> <li>• Various photographs e.g. Storekeepers of Co-operatives attending training in Rukwa in the 1970s (at RURECU), a collection centre for Primary Societies, and members selling cashew nuts at a society in Coast Region in the 1960s.</li> </ul>

In addition, there are many more co-operative unions, regional offices and hundreds of primary societies that have remained outside the scope of this pilot study such as Mbeya, Ruvuma, Tanga, Iringa, Mtwara, Lindi regions and so forth. The survey carried out with members from 32 primary co-operatives at the Co-operative History Day, for example, indicated that a number of cooperatives had records dating back to their foundation. It is probable that this situation is replicated throughout Tanzania

#### 4.1.2.1 Support from cooperative stakeholders in the College efforts to establish Cooperative archive

In respect of the support of the intention to establish National Cooperative archive there was a substantial support locally for the pilot project and the plans for establishing a national co-operative archive. Stakeholders indicated that they would be willing for records to be accessioned by MUCCoBS provided that they are going to a safe repository where they would still be able to access them. All respondents consulted in all organizations visited indicated willingness to surrender the materials to MUCCoBS to be preserved for the future use. The fact

that farmers from 32 co-operatives took the time to come to the Co-operative History Day also demonstrates interest in preserving this heritage. In addition, there is not only local academic interest in the archives, but also internationally, especially in the light of the United Nations (UN) Year of Co-operatives 2012 and the various conferences being held. The ability of a new archive repository to improve access to such audiences through digitizing and uploading archive images to the internet could be greatly enhanced as a new national fibre optic line has recently been installed in Tanzania and already MUCCoBS is connected. The result of the survey is also in line to Kuhanga (1984) that the duty of archival institutions which is to this case is MUCCoBS is to collect all available information, regardless of who the creator or producer of the written material is, and preserve it in a form that can facilitate frequent consultation by those formulating cooperatives and development policies and plans

#### **4.1.2.2 Willingness and commitment of the University College to establish the Cooperative archive**

Basing on the definition, importance, characteristics, planning the repository and procedures for accessibility of archives, it is vividly seen that MUCCoBS is the only institution which can effectively manage the national Cooperative archive. MUCCoBS is planning to build an archive repository. This survey has helped to identify the skills and knowledge gap in Tanzania. Further support and assistance is needed to set up and effectively run the proposed co-operative archive which will be the first such established in Africa. MUCCoBS is now better placed to recognize the requirements for setting up and effectively running cooperative archive, which creates an opportunity for a bigger project to develop from the findings of this pilot study. Good co-operation between MUCCoBS and the Co-operative College, Manchester helped to strengthen the pilot project and both partners recognize ways in which they can continue to co-operate. For example, the UK National Co-operative Archive, which is held by the Co-operative College-Manchester, has a lot of expertise to offer, in particular in providing a model of cataloguing specific to the nature of co-operative records. In addition, the UK Archive holds materials which complement those found during the pilot project in Tanzania.

The management team was sensitized on the establishment of cooperative archive and therefore this idea has a support from the authority of the University College. Members of the senior management team attended the stakeholder workshop in which they were trained in the basics of archive skills and management. This knowledge is therefore invaluable in championing the agenda of establishing Cooperative archive in the College. All this effort makes the right to the statement of Roper as cited by Cook, (1984) which state that; “although the primary reason for creating and maintaining archives, whether national, institutional or private, has always been the practical one of preserving records for continuing administrative and legal purposes, the use of archival material for historical research has often antedated the establishment of modern formal archival institution” in his presentation to ACRBICA conference Cook, further cemented that “ no planning is possible without basic information, and this information is frequently held only in archival media”

#### **4.1.2.3 Potential competency of the College staff to manage the cooperative archive**

In terms of the competency in managing the archival activities this project has contributed to the knowledge and skills level to the MUCCoBS library staff through the training provided. The library staff attended the digitization workshop, as they will be responsible for the safe-keeping and continued use of digitization equipment that was left by the project. They also attended the archive skills training workshop as they will be responsible for managing the proposed archive. This is a good potential to ensure the effective operations of the cooperative archive to be established. In respect of enhancement of knowledge and skills of the staff to manage cooperative archive, the following opportunities were established:

- i. MUCCoBS has established Diploma programme in Library and Archival studies
- ii. There is a diploma course in archive offered by the School of Library, Archives and Documentation in Bagamoyo, MUCCoBS can send some of its staff to study this programme.
- iii. The National Archives gives in-house training to staff from ministries and staff on attachment and this is another opportunity which MUCCoBS can access to strengthen the capacities of its staff to effectively manage the cooperative archive.

All these is done so as to observe the views of Schellenberg, (1965:59) once commented that, “the methodology of the archival professional is a compound of the ideas of librarians, historians and archivists”

but unlike librarian who are usually not part in the preparation of materials, archivists has quite often been involved in at least one of the stages of processing the materials and should therefore be more familiar with the records. The records and the way they are organized are a reflection of the way they were created and prepared for use (Whaten, 1986)

#### **4.1.5 Support from National Archive of Tanzania**

One of the key stakeholders of this project of establishing cooperative archive who was consulted is the National Archive of Tanzania who showed a positive gesture towards this idea. The National Archive of Tanzania was also very positive about MUCCoBS' initiative to develop its own archive repository. They affirmed that they can provide standards and guidance, and would consider digitizing the archives that they have which are relevant to the co-operative archive. The Authority of National Archive of Tanzania was pleased to hear about the Co-operative movement's initiative to develop its own archive repository. The national archives have the right to monitor archives in Tanzania and to inspect them. They have an Advisory Board which could request that the Minister declares MUCCoBS a place of deposit co-operative archives. The National Archives have identified suppliers of archive boxes, folders and other enclosures. They also have specifications and standards that they can share, MUCCoBS can as well access the services of these suppliers.

### **4.2 Challenges in establishing National Cooperative Archive in Tanzania**

#### **4.2.1 The repository for the cooperative archive**

The collection and management of archives is a serious commitment: we are aiming to keep the archives permanently as evidence of society and culture. The most important resource to have in place is a secure location with a cool dry environment and appropriate storage equipment. Long term plan of the college is to build a seven storey building of which the basement floor will be used as a repository of the cooperative archive. However, funds to construct the structure are not yet acquired and there is a possibility of the construction to delay. The stakeholders are currently motivated to support the move of establishing cooperative archive at MUCCoBS, but if this action is further delayed there is a possibility of the stakeholders to loose hope. Another dilemma is that basement is not appropriate repository for the archive as it does not meet the storage standards especially for light and humidity level. Unless this controversy is resolved immediately there is a high possibility of national Cooperative archive not to be established in MUCCoBS.

#### **4.2.2 Capacity of Staff to undertake operations of cooperative archive**

Well-trained staffs are crucial to the successful care of archives. However, currently MUCCoBS do not have adequate qualified staff on record management and archive administration. Whilst not all staff needs to have a professional qualification in archives administration, they all need to have basic training to ensure that the archive repository is managed effectively in line with the goals of preserving the archives permanently and providing access to researchers and other users.

Record Management as the field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records, including processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records is very vital to smooth operation of cooperative archive. Record management skills is vital to be able to identify the archives – as distinct from the mass of old records that have been kept through lack of any kind of records management process – before the archives can be quantified and scoped for digitization together with accurate descriptions and metadata tagging. However, this knowledge is lacking among the MUCCoBS library staff and poses big threat to the establishment of cooperative archive. Lack of knowledge and skills in Archival appraisal is another challenge underpinning the move of College to establish cooperative. Staff of the college does not have adequate knowledge and skills in archival appraisal.

#### **4.2.3.1 Inadequate knowledge and skills on archival administration to Cooperative**

##### **Stakeholders**

Stakeholders did not all demonstrate an understandings of the definition of “Archives”. All stakeholders visited failed to differentiate between archive and records, most of them thought all old records are archive. Some stakeholders (including the Tanzania Federation (which wants to set up regional “Resource Centres”), the KNCU and the Coffee Board) mentioned a desire to set up their own archives but it was unclear whether they currently had the relevant skills to identify archives. This does however indicate an understanding of the importance of archives, and if these stakeholders can acknowledge the need for training on specific needs of archives, they

could play an active role in future projects. Appraisal is the archival function of selecting which records should be kept permanently to provide evidence, and information, on the history, functions and development of the record-producing body. Archivists appraise records based on their evidential and informational value. Appraisal is a difficult and complicated function. As well as experience, archivists require appreciation of the principles of archival appraisal, an understanding of the organization's functions and history, and a broader historical perspective. It was observed that the cooperative stakeholders lack the knowledge and skills on archival appraisal.

#### 4.2.4 Poor ICT connectivity and skills

Tanzania's infrastructure does not yet support electronic recordkeeping, in spite of the recent introduction of national fibre optics cable providing Wide Area within Tanzania and East Africa. The main problems are the lack of ICT skills and lack of reliable electricity supply. However, E-Government is an aspiration and the widespread use of mobile phones would seem to indicate that IT skills levels could increase at any time. The National Archives itself is still paper-oriented but there are some initiatives from government departments to start automating their processes. It currently has a simple but effective computer system to search for and retrieve records. There is a plan to develop a course in electronic records management at the Eastern and Southern Africa Management Institute (ESARMI) in Arusha. Several East African national archives are involved. The International Records Management Trust (IRMT) is keen to have it as the preferred training centre. If this possibility materializes, it should be possible to offer short courses in records management

##### 4.2.5.1 Identifying archive materials is a time consuming process

Generally, extensive collections of materials were found but investigation of them was time limited. Any future collection programmes would face the challenge of allocating sufficient time to first identify relevant archival materials and then to digitally preserve them. Cooperative stakeholders such as Union, and primary cooperative visited were often unable to identify the records that were held. In most locations, documents were scattered, in no obvious order, and no one was able to indicate an order. In some cooperatives a lot of time was spent to identify few material of archival interest. This situation could be revitalised in future if we provide training to cooperative stakeholders on record management and archival appraisal so that, the archival appraisal start at the point of records generation

#### 3.2.6 Poor storage conditions

Poor storage conditions/accessibility of records: Most unions kept records for recent and current activity in the offices, however, older records tended to be placed in unsuitable storage rooms in no obvious order. No system was apparent for selecting what records needed to be kept when they were no longer used in the day to day running of the organization. The storage rooms were often dusty, mouldy, had high temperature and relative humidity readings, and there was evidence of insects and other pests including rats and in one union, snakes! Generally the records were not protected; some were in box files, but often they were in coffee jute bags or loose.

Many archival materials were identified, mostly in



a bad condition. They are fragile, dirty, strained, brittle, crumbling, sometimes bent and full of rusty metal clips. There is evidence of rodents. Many of the records were originally produced on poor quality paper, which has high acid content, putting the archives even more at risk and causing brittle and crumbling appearances. It was further observed that in many storage rooms there are open windows allowing in dust. The environment cannot be controlled in the locations where documents were found. Many are lose on shelves without the

protection of boxes. Some were piled on top of each other.

#### **4.2.5.2 Poor handling of records**

In all places visited it was observed that records are poorly handled by the users and they not cared and respected by the staff and other users. It is an unfortunate fact that one of the most serious dangers to the survival of records is people. Careless handling by humans is one of the major threats to archives and the main counter-action is to cultivate respect for the records among staff and users alike. In an environment where the records are respected they will be handled accordingly. A properly packaged record will be treated with respect by both staff and user. If records look as if they are cared for then people will handle them with care. Another point to remember with handling is that skin, because of the natural oils it produces, can be harmful to archives. Some of the records in the areas visited are stained with oils and are full of spots. It is strongly advised that in order to eliminate the problem of staining the documents with oil staff and users should keep skin contact to a minimum, and if necessary, wear white cotton gloves to give the archives extra protection.

### **5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations**

Although there were challenges around record storage and identifying record, there are high potentials in establishing National Cooperative archive. There is no doubt that unique records of archival interest exist and that they are a valuable resource for understanding the history of co-operatives in Tanzania. In all places visited the materials with archival value were available. There is a need to work on the considerable amount of materials found in the organisations already visited. This alone is a substantive task which would require further training for MUCCoBS staff at the main campus and cooperative stakeholders. Many archival materials were identified, mostly in a bad condition. They are fragile, dirty, strained, brittle, crumbling, sometimes bent and full of rusty metal clips. There is evidence of rodents. Many of the records were originally produced on poor quality paper, which has high acid content, putting the archives even more at risk and causing brittle and crumbling appearances. In many storage rooms there are open windows allowing in dust. The environment cannot be controlled in the locations where documents were found. Many are loose on shelves without the protection of boxes. Some were piled on top of each other. Cooperatives are not aware of what is in their record stores, or what value it has. Most cooperative visited do not know the difference between archival records with long term value and records with no value that can be destroyed. This is something a future project could address. The survey provided a snapshot example of archival materials and existing storage together with an insight into potential capacity within MUCCoBS and the National Archives that can be used to support future efforts to get stakeholders involved in identifying and managing archives.

In order to enhance the efforts of establishing National Cooperative archive at MUCCoBS the following are recommended:

- i. MUCCoBS should make the best alternative on establishing the repository to store cooperative archives. It is therefore recommended that the College should provide a room to be used as a repository for the cooperative archives and acquiring archive boxes, folders and other enclosures to store the archival materials to be transferred from the cooperative stakeholders
- ii. Proactive rescue approach is to be done since owners of these documents are ready to deliver the archive materials to MUCCoBS.
- iii. To appraise and digitize all the archival materials reserved in all areas visited.
- iv. The next stages in developing the National Co-operative Archive in Tanzania must include identification of the record series that are of archival value.
- v. Identifying and looking after archives is a serious commitment. To ensure what is kept is worthy of keeping permanently, trained specialists are needed. A team of people is needed who understand the principles of acquiring and managing the archives to carry out this appraisal task. Manpower is needed to catalogue the archive (including developing a cataloguing and description strategy) and also to put them into the boxes, keep them in a clean storage area, and to keep insects and hazardous chemicals out. Guidelines and procedures are needed to do all these things. As the co-operative organisations are still in business, there is an ongoing need for forward planning for adequate storage area and space.
- vi. To build capacity of staff, there are several options. There is an East African School of Management in Arusha, as well as the National Archive which MUCCoBS might be able to link up with. The National Archives gives in-house training to staff from ministries and staff on attachment. MUCCoBS can as well enjoy this opportunity and build its capacity to manage effectively the cooperative archive to be established.

- vii. In terms of archives and records management training and education in Tanzania, there is a diploma course at the School of Library, Archives and Documentation in Bagamoyo and they are in the process of accrediting the curriculum. MUCCoBS can utilize this opportunity to build capacities of its staff. Staff at MUCCoBS as well as in the co-operative organisations must be given training to raise capacity in managing records and archives.
- viii. The National Archives also have identified suppliers of archive boxes, folders and other enclosures and they promised to link MUCCoBS to these suppliers. They also have specifications and standards that they can share with MUCCoBS. MUCCoBS should be aggressive in utilizing these opportunities.
- ix. A professional archivist must be consulted and/or provide advice and direction to set up the national co-operative archive at MUCCoBS. The planning and establishment phases are the most intense – and the most crucial in the life of an archive repository and it requires appropriate resources and expertise.
- x. Guidance and expertise needs to be provided to co-operative organisations to help them manage their records. This includes written guidance and training.
- xi. Once the materials are transferred, security copies should be made. The archives are very fragile so high quality digital copies can be used so as to reduce handling original ones. This also makes them more accessible to researchers who cannot travel as they can be put online.
- xii. At the primary level, secretaries could be provided with basic records management training e.g. setting up good filing systems, managing them over time, and destroying unnecessary material.
- xiii. An annual Co-operative History day should be held to raise awareness about records and archives, capture oral histories and written accounts

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