

Managing records as a strategic resource in the government ministries of Tanzania

Author(s)

Esther Ndenje-Sichalwe
Patrick Ngulube
Christine Stilwell

Abstract

In Tanzania, the Records and Archives Management Act of 2002 established the Records and Archives Management Department (RAMD) to provide for the proper administration and better management of public records and archives throughout their life cycle. This article is based on findings from an ongoing study of the government ministries of Tanzania which examines the current state of records management practices in fostering accountability in the implementation of the Public Service Reform Programme (PSRP) in Tanzania. A total of 120 registry personnel, 24 senior ministerial officials and National Archives personnel were involved in the study. The study established that although the introduction of the PSRP had resulted in some efforts in reforming the records management practices in the government ministries, records in the government ministries were not managed a strategic resource. The findings of the study revealed that current records management practices in the government ministries were accorded low priority. The absence of specific budgets allocated to registry sections, lack of support from senior officers, lack of records management policies and low levels of training for registry personnel were among the records management problems in the government ministries. Further, records surveys were conducted irregularly and the majority of government registries lacked records retention and disposition schedules which led to the congestion of records which were also disorganized and poorly managed. In order to manage records as a strategic resource, the article recommends the restructuring of existing records management systems.
