

# **Growing the Profession – A Comparative Study of Southern African Surveying Professional Institutions**

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**Key words:** Professional association, Southern Africa, Botswana Surveying and Mapping Association

## **SUMMARY**

Professional growth in the surveying profession is at both personal and professional institutional level. At personal level a person who qualifies as a surveyor must strive to develop himself and continue to grow. On another score, growth is at the professional institutional level in which growth is seen when a professional institution is seen to be growing both in terms of members joining it as well as quality of contribution to national issues by the institution.

This paper explores the growth of surveying professional institutions in Southern Africa. In particular it looks at the stage of development of the Botswana Surveying and Mapping Association in relation to organisations such as the Surveyors' Institute of Zambia, the Surveyors' Institute of Zimbabwe and the South African Geomatics Institute. The legal framework in which these associations operate is analysed and the current status of the organisations is presented. The focus is on the status of Botswana Surveying and Mapping Association where an analysis is done on the membership of the professional vis-à-vis the number of surveying professionals in the country.

The paper identifies the numerous challenges that new associations face in attracting new members as well as sustaining old ones. It also concludes that in order for professional associations to grow it must analyse the success factors and address these in line with the purpose of their establishment.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The establishment of an organization, with all its good intentions, is not an end in itself. An organization requires continuous nurturing in order to grow from one level to another. Organisations have life cycles with different stages. Admira (1994) for instance states that there are 5 phases in organisational growth see [http://www.zenska-mreza.hr/prirucnik/en/en\\_solution\\_5.htm](http://www.zenska-mreza.hr/prirucnik/en/en_solution_5.htm). These stages adapted from the work of Greiner L (1972) are indicated as follows:

The initial stage is said to be the pioneering stage. Some organisations will never enter a second stage, because they stay the same, or they simply disappear.

The second stage is one that is characterised by growth.

The third stage is one of delegation.

The fourth stage is characterised by the reduction of top management and the increase of technical and support staff.

Lastly the fifth stage is said to be characterised by cooperation.

Greiner describes organisational development as the cyclic alternates between periods of growth and moments of crisis that indicate a new stage. Each evolution creates its own revolution. Each stage has a typical style of management; each revolution has a typical management problem that should be solved to enter the new stage. Greiner, L. Harvard Business Review; Jul/Aug72, Vol. 50 Issue 4, p37-46, 10p.

Others such Malunga & Banda, (2004) state that there are 3 phases in organisation development i.e. the pioneer phase in which organisations are started as an idea of an individual or individuals. There is a lot of enthusiasm by the leaders of the idea. In this first phase the organisation cannot continue to be the same and must transition to the next stage. The transition from this stage is often precipitated by crises such as loss of leadership, growth and radical shift in environment. This is similar to Greiner's concept of revolution and evolution in which the crisis can either kill the organisation or can usher it into the next stage. The next stage is the so-called Independent phase which arrives as a solution for the first phase and the last phase is the interdependent phase in which relations are symbiotic and interdependent in nature. At what is stage is the Botswana Surveying and Mapping Association? As a newly formed organisation it is at a stage where enthusiasm seems to have waned. The association needs to transition to the next stage if it has to grow.

## 1.1 Professionalism and Professional Organisations

Firstly we need to define two items in order to set the tone for this paper; professionalism and a professional organisation. Professionalism according to on B. Robinson quoted in Simpson, K.W and Sweeney G (1973) *“is not an ethereal something understood only by philosophers and advocated only by idealists. It is the intangible, yet very practical cloak of integrity, altruism and culture that shrouds and protects a body of men whose conscious purpose in life is to serve humanity and who are willing to give spiritual values an even chance with material things in life.”* According to FIG (2002) a professional organisation can be defined as one that does some of the following:

- Awards professional qualifications
- awards professional licences
- regulates the conduct and competence of surveyors
- represents surveyors and their interest to external bodies including national governments.

The professional organisations in the region, however, do not award professional qualifications and neither do they licence or regulate the conduct of the profession. Only in the case of South Africa with respect to PLATO do we see the participation of professionals in regulating the profession. This is done through nominations by members of the professional Institutes to PLATO. This allows a measure of control to the professional institutes.

Most of professional organisations which have been established fail to grow and sometimes stagnate. This can be as a result of their perceived relevance or the lack of it. Professional organisations are more amenable to failure or stagnation because these are run on a voluntary basis which means that their success or growth would largely depend on the spirit of volunteerism in the organization. As stated earlier most of the organisations in the region seem to have problems of growth. In the concept of organisation life spans one can note that organisations that fail mostly are those that do not pass the first phase of development. The Independent phase or second phase allows organisations to make its laws, create professionalism and is not so dependent on individuals who mooted the idea.

No doubt professional organisations have a reason to exist otherwise they would not have been formed in the first place. FIG highlights the reasons for forming an association as:

- To unify the profession
- To provide continuing professional development
- To act on behalf of the profession and
- To contribute to society's well being.
- (FIG publications No.16)

The FIG has identified eight common functions which lie behind the formation and operation of any professional association. These have been identified as networking, representing, promoting, educating, setting standards, producing products and services, providing

professional and technical advice, and finance and funding. An association should therefore be a facilitator of networking between peers and peers should not look at each other as if there were enemies especially in economies which are small. Associations allow the distillation of ideas of the general membership to government and local authorities. As FIG puts it surveyors must be active in contributing to the creation of public policy in all levels of government. This can be achieved through associations. Associations should also promote the important services to the community. An active association can inform the public about how these services can be made available. One of the important issues of the association is that of education. FIG states that the association has a responsibility to work with relevant academic institutions to ensure that surveying courses being offered meet the needs of profession and equip graduates with relevant knowledge. The incorporation of Continuous professional Development for surveyors is also important to ensure that those that qualify do not stagnate.

Standards need to be set. These standards are with respect to the ethical behaviour, performance, education and training as well as CPD.

The problem, however, is that these noble aspirations are not easily achieved by most organisations and therefore these organisations fail to grow as interest in them wanes. FIG advises that when an association is formed it will need nurturing, care, energy, commitment, time and other resources to make it survive and grow. Growth of a profession is dependent on the way it is organised and how it fulfils the mission it sets itself to achieve. If professionals can act and work in an environment without belonging to any professional organisation and still succeed it is most likely that the professionals will not belong. This leads us to the question of what professionalism is. If as indicated by Robinson professionalism is meant to be a cloak of integrity most professionals who qualify and do not belong to any professional organisation must surely not be labelled professionals?!

Looking at all these issues raised it seems clear that most associations are not meeting these functions and their relevance is being questioned. To quote Molenaar as quoted by Greenway *“Today’s surveyor has become a technologist... without a clear understanding of real world problems... As a result, the surveyor will lose his role in society... Surveyors need to... pivot from a preoccupation with technology to face the problems which today confront society in general and geo-information users in particular.”* It is not clear whether this notion has changed even in the way our professional organizations are run. With the fixation of technology surveyors have tended to play a minor role in the formulation of policy and guiding society in issues of the day. Little wonder that Magel (2005) has vigorously advocated for what he calls a “well grounded specialized generalist” as one who would be able not only to tackle technical issues but one who must also have ‘soft’ skills. According to him such a person would have excellent management skills and good knowledge on the technical aspects of the profession, like geodesy and modern technology. He feels that over specialization and compartmentalization of the profession might spell the end of the profession. Coleman, Groot and McLaughlin (2000) also observed that university departments that offer in-depth education in areas such surveying, photogrammetry, geodesy etc had seen a decline in numbers. They mention that the “democratization” of the practice of these disciplines has led to the declining demand of the specialists. They conclude that

instead there should be a geoinformatics professional who should purposefully integrate many subjects i.e. marry technical, legal, financial and social science subjects in a “problem-focussed way”. Now, the geoinformatics professional must find his feet by being able to articulate issues outside the technological realm. This can only be possible if the “new professional” is well organized and employers recognize that this indeed is a “profession”.

## **2. ROLE OF THE SURVEY PROFESSIONAL BODY IN A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT**

Internationally surveyors fall under the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG). This is the umbrella body of all professional associations. The umbrella body has recognized the need to marry science and management in what the surveyor is meant to do. According to Magel (2005) one important change in the role of FIG in the last 10-15 years has been a change from looking at internal issues in the organization to a more outward oriented organization. He states “this means that we have brought in more policy level issues for example on land tenure, spatial information or disaster and risk management”. This had led to cooperation with organizations such as United Nations and its agencies. The role of FIG it is hoped will be to foster the togetherness that any professional organization would feel by belonging to this august body. The challenge for the mother body is to nurture the smaller professional associations as they stumble so that they can grow and contribute to the world’s discourse.

### **2.1 State of Professional Bodies in Southern Africa**

The study was meant to cover the state of professional bodies in Southern Africa so as to gain insight on what was going on and how surveying professional associations could grow. Three countries were covered from the initial desire to cover five countries. South Africa, Zambia and Botswana were covered. South Africa was used as a standard because of the relative successful organization of the profession.

#### **2.1.1 Surveyors Institute of Zambia**

This is an Institute made up of 3 chapters i.e. Valuation, Quantity and Land Survey Chapters. These 3 chapters have their own chairmen who are elected at chapter meetings. These chapters then meet at a General meeting of SIZ to elect the SIZ council-i.e. the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and committee members. Each Chapter is represented on this council by the chapter chairmen. SIZ subscribes to the Professional Centre (this is a centre that provides secretarial services to most professional organizations in Zambia) so that all correspondence and matters concerning the Institute can be channeled through them.

SIZ has existed since the early seventies and has exhibited growth until the early nineties when its fortunes seem to have declined. There is a general apathy by the various professionals who feel that the professional organization does not play any part in their professional lives. The various practices are governed by Acts of parliament in which the registration to practice are stipulated. For instance those who want to practice in cadastral

surveying are governed by the Land Survey Act CAP 293. It essentially defines a land surveyor as one who holds a licence to practice as a cadastral surveyor. Likewise the Quantity Surveyors and the Valuation Surveyors are governed by different Acts with no role played by the Surveyors Institute of Zambia. Given this scenario belonging to a professional body which does not affect one's professional practice is seen by many as a luxury in hard economic times. The Surveyors Institute of Zambia as a result has seen a decline in subscriptions and depends a great deal on the enthusiasm and dedication of a few individuals. The situation is no different from the Surveyors Institute of Zimbabwe which runs in very similar lines with SIZ.

### 2.1.2 South African Council of Professional and Technical Surveyors (PLATO)

South Africa has had a relative mature surveying profession in the region. Its main handicap earlier seemed to be that it was white male dominated. As Fourie (1993) observed "the present profession is white male dominated and often is perceived as very elite. This is a unique aspect which needs to be addressed." A perusal of who is registered as a land surveyor seems to suggest that it is still white dominated. Fourie had suggested then that there was need to not only strategize on bringing a more representative sample of the South African population but also that the needs of the women and the poor needed consideration. It is worth noting that the South African Geomatics Institute has embraced some of these issues.

The South African Land Surveying profession is regulated by the South African Council for Professional and Technical Surveyors (PLATO). This is a statutory body established by an Act of parliament No 40 of 1984. The Act provides for the registration of all professional and technical surveyors who want to practice in South Africa. It ensures registration of surveyors by verifying qualifications, quality, ethics and experience. It also attends to disciplinary matters, bursaries, legislation and educational standards. PLATO's governing council is established according to the Act as follows:

- a) one professional surveyor nominated by the Institute of Professional **Land Surveyors** of the Eastern Cape mentioned in section 40 (a);
- (b) one professional surveyor nominated by the Institute of Professional **Land S**urveyors of the Western Cape mentioned in section 40 (b);
- (c) one professional surveyor nominated by the Institute of Professional **Land Surveyors** of Natal;
- (d) one professional surveyor nominated by the Institute of Professional **Land Surveyors** of the Orange Free State;
- (e) two professional **surveyors** nominated by the Institute of Professional **Land Surveyors** of the Transvaal;
- (f) one professional surveyor nominated by the education advisory committee, who shall be a professor or lecturer in surveying at a university which offers a degree course in surveying;
- (g) two professional **surveyors** in the service of the State;
- (h) one professional surveyor nominated by the Association of Air Survey Companies;

(i) three persons, each of whom shall be a professional or a technical surveyor, nominated by the Institute of Topographical and Engineering **Surveyors** of South Africa who ordinarily are resident and practise in the Republic;

(iA) two persons, each of whom shall be a professional or a technical surveyor, nominated by the Institute of Mining **Surveyors** of South Africa and who ordinarily are resident and practise in the Republic;

(j) one person nominated, after the election of the president of the council in terms of section 6 (1), by the body mentioned in paragraph (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (h), (i) or (iA) of this subsection which had nominated the member so elected as president, or, if the president was appointed as a member of the council in terms of paragraph (g) of this subsection, one professional surveyor in the service of the State; and

(k) one person appointed by reason of his knowledge and experience concerning public affairs and the practise of surveying

As can be seen from the extract of the Act PLATO's governing council membership is by way of nomination from the professional Land Surveying Institutes which are regionally spread<sup>1</sup>. This ensures that professionals play a part in their registration as well as their practice both in terms of

All persons registered with PLATO are given a unique registration number within the category the verifying committee deemed applicable. Registration Categories include:

The Professional level includes Land Surveyors, Mine Surveyors, Surveyors, Photogrammetric Surveyors, Hydrographic Surveyors, Geoinformatic Practitioners.

The Standard level includes Surveyors and Technicians, Mine Surveyors and Technicians, Photogrammetric Surveyors and Technicians, GISc Technologists and Technicians.

According to the PLATO's Registrar the following are the number of registered surveyors and their categories is as follows; format the table

Professional Land Surveyors	721
Professional Mine Surveyors	126
Professional Surveyors	17
Professional Surveyors (Photogrammetric)	5
Professional Surveyors (Hydrographic)	4
Professional Geoinformatic Practitioners	5
Surveyors	237
Mine Surveyors	42
Surveyors (Photogrammetric)	8
GISc Technologist	12
Survey Technicians	274
Mine Survey Technicians	37
GISc Technician	33
Survey Technicians (Photogrammetric)	6

This is a significant number of registered surveyors at various categories compared to countries such as Botswana who have a list of registered cadastral surveyors in the region of less than 30.

PLATO's mandate is more to do with protecting the public by ensuring that those that profess to be professionals in the field meet the minimum requirement in terms of qualification. The Act stipulates improper conduct that a professional surveyor would be engaged in and the penalties thereof. The Council's responsibilities therefore are to ensure that professionals act in a professional manner in order to protect the public.

This seems to be congruent with other bodies representing Land Surveyors. For instance the preliminary sections of the Ontario Land Surveyors Act states that:

*"The principal object of the Association is to regulate the practice of professional land surveying and to govern its members . . . in order that the public interest may be served and protected."* (Ontario, RSO 1990, c.S-29)

The responsibility of issues such as education-continuing education, workshops, conference and marketing of the profession are left to the professional Institutes such as South African Geomatics Institute.

### 2.1.3 The South African Geomatics Institute (SAGI)

This is an institute whose main objective is to ensure that the best benefits are obtained for the Geomatics profession as a whole. Looking at the charter it covers a broad array of responsibilities that a Geomatics professional is involved in.

SAGI incorporates all grades of membership under one body. There are five branches of SAGI, geographically placed to endeavour to ensure as many members are able to be served and to participate in technical and social functions.

Annual subscriptions are paid to Council. These funds are distributed to branches for running expenditure where necessary and to cater for the expenditure required to achieve the goals and objectives of SAGI and to provide bursaries and awards to registered students.

Except for members working outside the borders of South Africa, instrument manufacturers and others in survey related occupations, all members are obliged to be registered with PLATO. Membership is made on an application basis, with applicants being screened to ensure acceptable quality of work and ethics. Since SAGI was recently created the secretariat indicated that 80% of those that had been members in the various regional Institutes had joined SAGI. This was seen to be very positive compared to the associations in the region.

The Vision, Charter and Goals of SAGI are best outlined in the following extract from the Constitution. Following extract looks strange font and setup

### 1.1. Vision

To serve our nation with holistic and appropriate solutions in the domains of:

- Land reform and land administration.
- Development and resource management.
- Geo-spatial information and information management.

### 1.2. Charter

- Align our services with the needs of the nation as expressed, *inter alia*, by the people through the Integrated Development Plans (IDPs).
- Promote solutions for land delivery, land reform and land management challenges facing the country and the continent.
- Facilitate the resolution of spatially related challenges facing the country and the region through geo-spatial and design information.
- Develop capacity amongst members and user communities.
- Encourage global competitiveness and “world best practice” amongst our members
- Promote representation within the geomatics industry to be in line with South African demographics.

### 1.3. Goals

- To promote sustainable delivery, and maintenance, of appropriate land rights.
- To facilitate/encourage accessible geo-spatial information services.
- To transform the geomatics industry through empowerment and skills development.
- To contribute to the development of the country and serve its people through the application of geomatics.
- To advance the discipline of geomatics (surveying and geoinformatics) in its broadest sense.
- To serve the public in matters connected with geomatics and to stimulate public interest therein.
- To promote the interest and assist in the advancement of its members.
- To set standards for the conduct of its members.
- To disseminate and augment knowledge of the survey discipline by every possible means.
- To cooperate with all other scientific and learned bodies where there is a common interest in the advancement of the science of geomatics.
- To compile and publish maps, records and other documents concerning geomatics, and the holding of exhibitions, demonstrations and lectures to its members, other scientific bodies and the public generally, with the object of furthering the aims and objectives of SAGI.
- To render assistance to members to register or patent technology or improvements thereto used in the science of geomatics.
- To render assistance financially or otherwise to persons wishing to further their academic studies in the geomatics and allied disciplines.
- To do any other matter incidental to the above which may be necessary to carry out the aims and objectives of SAGI.
- To initiate effective and sustainable mentorship programs to empower and capacitate members.
- To market the Geomatics industry and its practitioners.

The charter clearly outlines responsibilities of the new Geomatics professional. SAGI in many respects seems to be bridging the gap between surveying, GIS and all the landed professions.

#### 2.1.4 The Botswana Surveying and Mapping Association (BSMA)

Botswana Surveying and Mapping Association was registered in August of 2001 with the objective being “to secure the advancement and facilitate the acquisition of that knowledge which constitutes the profession of surveying and mapping” (BSMA Constitution Article 3). This was established after identifying that there was a professional vacuum in Botswana as there was no professional body representing the interests of surveyors in the country. The

main drivers of this association were the private surveyors who put money together and drafted the first constitution.

## **2.2 Structure**

The association is divided into 3 chapters which are 1) cadastral 2) cartography, remote sensing and GIS 3) Engineering, topographical and Mine Surveying. These structures are envisaged in the constitution but are not functioning at the moment. The governing body is made up of an executive committee which consists of the chairman, vice chairman, secretary and Vice secretary and treasurer. The office bearers are elected every year, at an annual general meeting.

Since its formation the association has only managed to have a membership of around 20 surveyors most of whom have come from private practice. The surveyors in government have not fully participated in the activities of the association. This has prompted the association executive to identify how many surveyors are in the country and why there are only so many registered.

## **3. AIMS OF THE RESEARCH**

- To identify the main constraints in running successful professional organizations
- To identify the critical success factors
- To encourage surveyors to belong to professional bodies
- To publish a report on best practices for successful professional organizations

## **4. RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### Survey Instrument

The study was done both through questionnaire and interviews in order to understand the issues regarding perception by surveyors about their professional association in Botswana. (see Appendix A). The interviews were carried on the key informants like the heads of survey departments and registrars of associations. The questionnaire had two sections. The first section requested personal data which would be used to populate the survey database. This data included qualifications and area of specialisation. The second section requested information about the respondents' membership and reasons for membership of professional bodies such as BSMA, the issues they would like addressed by an organisation such as BSMA and whether they would be interested in contributing to the organisation.

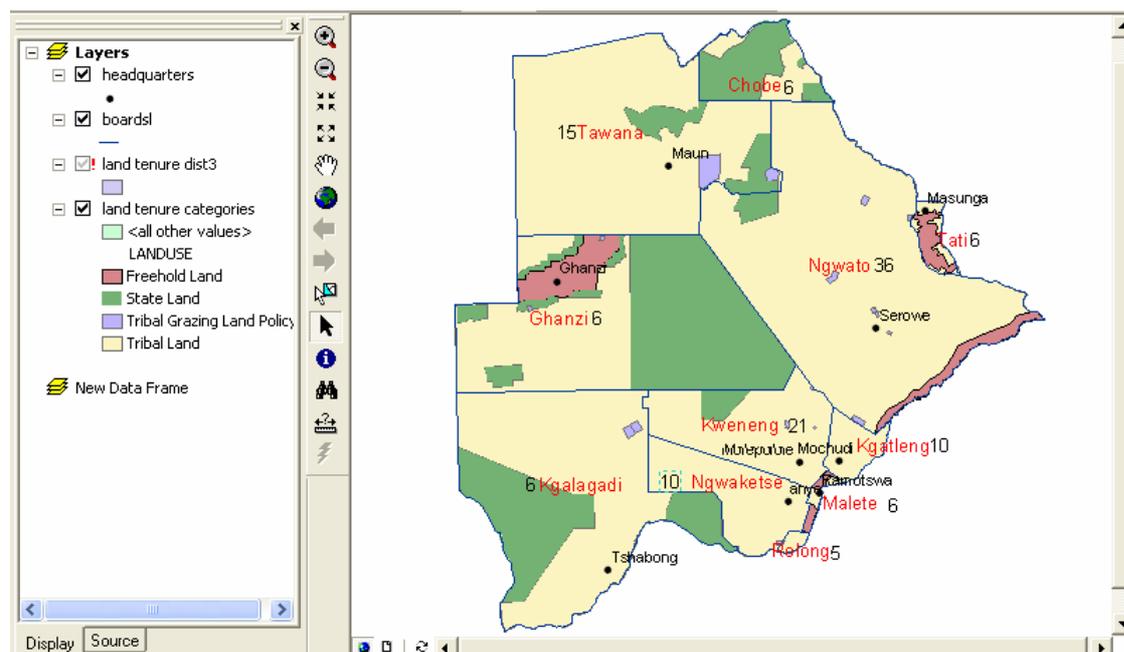
Procedures for the study

We determined the number of surveyors and technical officers around the country to be in the region of 225 (see table below) see paging

**Table 1: Number of surveyors**

Organisation	Surveyors	Technician
Chobe Land Board	2	4
Kgalagadi Land Board	3	3
Ghanzi Land Board	1	5
Tati Land Board	2	4
Tawana Land Board	7	8
Ngwaketse Land Board	3	7
Ngwato Land Board	9	27
Rolong Land Board	2	3
Kweneng Land Board	7	14
Tlokweneng Land Board	3	4
Malete Land Board	4	2
Kgatleng Land Board	4	6
Govt/Private/Mines	35	56
	82	143

The surveyors and technicians are distributed in the country according to Figure 1 below



**Figure 1:** Regional distribution of surveyors (excludes the capital, Gaborone)

As one of the objectives of the study was to capture the population of practicing surveyors at both professional and technician level we chose to carry out a simple random sample. The sample represented 50% of the total population which was felt to be realistic. Although we

could have stratified the sample design to take into consideration professional surveyors and technician surveyors we felt that the variables required did not need stratification except for identification of numbers between the two categories. One important consideration also was that officers who receive questionnaires are normally at professional level and do not pass them on to their technical officers.

In order to be effective we decided to deliver the questionnaires and the following towns were visited: Molepolole, Gaborone, Tlokweng, Mochudi, Serowe and Selebi Pikhwe. We also used the opportunity of a survey workshop held on the 9<sup>th</sup> of September 2005 to distribute some questionnaires.

A total of 44 questionnaires were returned for this survey. This represented a 20% of the population and the researcher felt that this was representative enough to be used for generalising the findings.

## **5. RESULTS OF STUDY**

The number of professional surveyors i.e. those with degree qualification and above are around 83. According to the records at the department of surveys and mapping (DSM) the number of registered surveyors were 30. These were registered according to the Land Survey Act CAP 33 which stipulates the qualifications for registration as, inter-alia a university degree in surveying or engineering together with approved experience. Upon being registered after paying a prescribed fee one remains registered for life. One does not need to play any part in the profession at all. Of all the registered surveyors only 14 were active members of the association.

**Table 2** Responses from the questionnaire

Total		% with degree	% with diploma	% with certificate
44		72%	22%	6%
Area of Specialisation	S&M	60%	70%	
	Geoinf	20%		
	Geomatics	60%		
	Cartography	4%	30%	
	Photogrammetry		10%	
Membership to BSMA		20%	0%	0%
Reasons for non membership	Don't know how to join	50%-		
	Don't know about it	22%-	60%	
	Does not make a difference in professional life	5%-	20%	

N.B. respondents would choose more than one option on *area of specialisation*

Key: S&M: Surveying and Mapping option; Geoinf: Geoinformation

**Table 3:** What issues did respondents feel the association should address?

Issue	% respondents
Registration of professionals	70%
Regulation of the profession	70%
CPD & continuing education	86%
Raising policy issues	76%

All respondent indicated willingness to assist in promoting the professional either through contributing to a newsletter, organising social functions or contributing something to the national discourse.

80% of the respondents felt BSMA should be organised regionally to allow for those outside the capital to participate in its activities.

## 5.1 Analysis of Results

The survey identified the number of surveyors at both professional and technical level to be in the region of 225. The number participating in professional activities through BSMA was 23. This represented 10% participation in the new organisation. Of these 23, 6 were technicians and the rest were professional. According to the study there were 183 technicians around the country and only 6 were members of the BSMA. This represented some 3% of the technicians. In the survey none of the technicians surveyed were members of BSMA. It is recognised that in the current set up Technicians do not feel the need to register because in any organisation one can practice on the basis of one's certificate without the employer insisting on professional membership. However, the same is the case with the professional

surveyor where employers do not require one to have any professional affiliation to be employed. This is seen as remiss in view of the changing technological and social environment that a surveyor must work in. Private companies such as contractors and consulting engineers sometimes insist on engineers belonging to a professional body but it seems not to be a requirement for the surveyor. Any surveyor can come and work in the country and practice without any ties to any professional body.

6 respondents who were not affiliated with BSMA belonged to other professional associations. These, incidentally were non-citizens who had just come into the country and were members of professional organisations from their countries of origin.

### 5.1.1 Reasons for not Joining

50% of the professionals with degree indicated that they did not know how to join the association although they had heard about it. 22% stated that they did not know about it while 60% of the technicians stated that the reason for not joining the association was that they did not know about its existence. Given that it had been established in 2001 it was clear that the association had not projected itself fully to all possible members. No one indicated financial considerations as a reason for not being a member and therefore we can assume that membership fees were not a deterrent to membership. As expected a high rate (20%) of technicians interviewed felt that joining the professional association did not make any difference in their professional life.

At the workshop of 8<sup>th</sup> September 2005 a question was asked as to why anyone would want to join the association. While a voluntary organisation such as BSMA is formed to further the goals of the profession, professionals sometimes do not see how these goals can be furthered by joining the association. Belonging to a volunteer organisation (rather than one where there is coercion through legal means) has its advantages to society. OECD Wellbeing of Nations (2001) quoted at [http://www.iave.org/resources\\_burns\\_1.cfm](http://www.iave.org/resources_burns_1.cfm) for instance talks of the creation of social capital through the *'networks together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate cooperation within or among groups'*. Social capital as a concept can be perceived to be an extension of economic capital from which sustainable communities are built. Social capital therefore helps in building sustainable communities (organizations) and this can only happen if networks are built around social and professional interest groups.

As earlier indicated Professional associations act as enablers of the common good for the profession and if professionalism is to be achieved there is need for the common good to be identified and all professionals should strive for it.

## **5.2 Comparisons between BSMA and SAGI**

Some respondents felt that BSMA required a secretariat from which forms for applications and correspondence could be routed. The fact that they know about the existence of the association but did not know how to join the association indicated the difficulty some of the

respondents had in trying to become members. A quick comparison between SAGI in South Africa and BSMA in Table 4 reveals the fact that organisational structure does play an important role in attracting members to an organisation.

**Table 4:** Comparisons between BSMA and SAGI

Issue	BSMA	SAGI
Organisation	No full time secretariat	Paid secretariat
Contribution to profession	No voice in registration	Voice in registration through nomination to PLATO
Organising CPD	Never	Mandated
Policy articulation	In the process	In the vision

### 5.3 Main Reasons for Stagnation of Associations

From the findings it seems clear that an organisation cannot grow if it is not known in its own profession. There is need for BSMA to market itself within the profession first and establish itself as an organisation that would represent their interest. According to Allred K (2005) marketing the profession serves two purposes; ensuring that the public is made aware of the services and ensuring that there is a steady flow of survey professionals into the profession. In the case of BSMA the challenge seems to market itself to the profession and make the profession understand its value before it goes out and markets itself to the public. It, of course, needs to market itself to different stakeholders who must listen to its voice on matters of the survey profession. The Government for instance through the Public Procurement and Asset Disposal Board is in the process of setting up a registration system for contractors (those that provide goods and services to government) and one of the requirement is for such contractors to affiliate to a professional body. BSMA will need to ensure that all surveyors and companies that want to provide services to government must become members. This is not for the purpose of selfish protection but should rather be for the interest of the public. Those that pretend to offer survey services to the public must be vetted by a professional organisation so that they do not only provide this service but provide it within the framework of professionalism. This is in line with making sure that professional organisations protect the interests of the public and not just its members.

One way in which the association can have a full impact in the running of the profession is for it to gain legal status. The problem with legal enforcements in a profession is that it might not be based on clear eagerness of the professional to participate in the association but rather because he has no choice. However, without any law there is a tendency for non enforceability of any well meaning rules and regulations to govern the profession. In this respect at a workshop held on the 8<sup>th</sup> of September 2005 it was proposed that Land Survey Act be revised to include among other things issues of registration of the profession, establishment of the council and establishment of a code of ethics.

It was proposed that all professionals falling in the Geomatics Engineering ambit should be registered through the establishment of a Geomatics Engineering Council. According to the Director of Department of Surveys and Mapping Mr. Morebodi the council to be established should take over some of the responsibilities that are currently bestowed to the director in the Land Survey Act. The new Act should make sure that issues of registration and regulation are

left to the profession. This means that the section on the establishment of the Land Survey Board should be removed and moved to the proposed Council Act.

It is anticipated that by the end of the year (2005) a new Land Survey Act draft will be in place. There might be need to establish a separate Act to establish a Geomatics Engineering Council which could be tasked with the responsibility of regulating the profession. If the council is created it is hoped that the BSMA will have a major say in the appointment of members of the council.

### 5.3.1 Organisation of CPD

One of the major issues that came out of the study was the need for the organisation to arrange continuous professional development for its members. The association must embed this in its regulations so that any member must meet a minimum number of CPD requirements.

### 5.3.2 Regional Organisation

While the most of the respondents suggested that the organisation required to organised regionally past experience by the BSMA executive had shown that meetings arranged outside the capital did not attract the number of people anticipated.

## 6 CONCLUSION

In conclusion we highlight the success factors that will ensure that an organisation grows and remains successful. The key factors require strategies by profession bodies to be achievable.

### 6.1 Key Success Factors

- A successful organisation is one whose members value their membership in the association. Association's strength is drawn from the members who must feel the need to belong and contribute to the ideals and values of that association.
- A successful organisation is one that has marketed itself to both the members and the public. Public perception is an important part of success. If your ideals are not known and not valued by the public the association will be seen to be self-seeking.
- A successful organisation is one which adds value to the members and society. Members will associate more if they can "see" the benefits of being a member, through things like CPD, workshops, professional titles etc. Society demands title to land, good roads etc but do not know that surveyors are the ones who make it possible to have this.
- A successful organisation is one that regulates itself. It ensures who comes in and sets the standards for practice. A professional body must set up its code of ethics and commit its members to abide by it.
- A successful organisation is one that will participate in the registration of its members. Registration of members must be done with the involvement of the professional

organisation. Professional registration or certification is a key factor in recognising and ensuring quality in the profession.

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## **DISCLAIMER**

All views expressed here are however entirely those of the author.

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## **BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES**

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