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The legacy of Professor Ulla Kann

Ulla Kann died of a heart attack, during the last week of February 2008, at home in Stockholm, Sweden. She would have been 70 years old on the 4th of April 2008. She will be well remembered by many people in Botswana. She had worked at the University of Botswana before she left Gaborone, to live and work in Namibia in 1992. "I am deeply saddened to learn of the untimely death of Prof Ulla Kann. Certainly, she made a great contribution to the research on Botswana's educational system, both when she was at the Ministry of Education and while at the former NIR" - Isaac Mazonde, University of Botswana.

Born in Sweden, she obtained her first degree in psychology from the University of Gothenburg. Between 1962 and 1967 she worked as a psychologist, Child and Youth Psychiatric Clinic, Jonkoping, Sweden. She then moved to Pakistan for a number of years with her new family. She first came to Botswana in 1973, worked for SIDA (Swedish Aid) and then became a Consultant to the Regional Testing Centre. Over the decade of the 1970s she maintained her links with Institute of Applied Psychology, University of Stockholm and embarked on her doctoral studies. In 1981 she earned a PhD in International Education awarded by the University of Stockholm.

From 1981 to 1985 she served as an Educational Planner/Senior Planning Officer, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning assigned to the Ministry of Education in Gaborone. From there she moved to the National Institute of Development Research and Documentation, University of Botswana, where she became an Associate Professor and head of the Educational Research Unit. Between 1992 and 1997 she worked in Windhoek as Advisor to the Ministry of Education and Culture, Namibia, on Planning, Policy Development and Coordination. During 1999 she served as Secretary to the residential Commission on Education, Culture and Training in Namibia (like the 2nd National Education Commission in Botswana). In 2000 she resumed working part-time for SIDA, as Regional Education Consultant covering Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania and in West Africa Mali and Burkina Faso based in Windhoek.

Ulla Kann was a member for planning of the IIEP Council of Consultant Fellows (1992-1997), a lifetime member of the Botswana Society, a founding member of the Botswana Educational Research Association (BERA), active in NERA, the Comparative and International Education Society (USA) and a member of the Southern African Comparative and Historical Education Society (SACHES) where she also served on their advisory board for their journal *Southern African Review of Education*.

She participated in numerous consultancies, wrote dozens of applied research reports, and left a mark on education in Botswana and Namibia. She believed in promoting girls' education, encouraging women in science, in the rights for development of remote areas, minority empowerment and in Education for All. Perhaps most significantly she helped to train and mobilize local researchers. She was a founding member of FAWE (Forum for African

Women Educationalists). A seminal paper she wrote for BERA is how to do a “State of the Art Literature Review” when embarking on a research project.

One of her most cited articles is with Mapolelo and Nleya (1989) “The Missing Children: Achieving Universal Basic Education in Botswana—The Barriers, and Some Suggestions for Overcoming Them”, published by the National Institute of Development Research and Documentation. There are dozens of others including “Let them talk: A review of the Accelerated Remote Area Development Programme”. Ten of her publications are listed by Amazon. For example: “Where the sand is the book: Education for everyone in the Nyae Nyae area a challenge” is on the education of First Peoples in Namibia.

Ulla raised her two daughters in Botswana, Nina and Linda. Her first husband died of cancer. Her second partner, Andrew Quarmby was one of the founders in 1980 of Tirelo Setshaba (TS). One of her papers on TS with Nelson Mokgethi was "An educating, broadening, maturing experience: a report of the evaluation of the pilot project of Tirelo Setshaba, the community service scheme". Andrew Quarmby died tragically in 1991 in an accident in the Kalahari. Those of us who knew her will miss her. She is survived by her daughters and four grandchildren—and all those who she stimulated and supported over the years. By Dorcas Molefe, Owen Pansiri and Sheldon Weeks [Reprinted from *Mmegi/Monitor* (Gaborone, Botswana) 10 March 2008].