



IFLA to accelerate development of library associations through expanded Building Strong Library Associations programme

Programme will be expanded to build capacity within the profession for equitable access to information and improved library services in partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Global Libraries Initiative.

PRESS RELEASE

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World Library and Information Congress in Singapore - The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) today announced that its successful Building Strong Library Associations (BSLA) programme will be expanded through a series of convenings and projects at the regional level in Africa, Asia and Oceania, and Latin America and the Caribbean. These regions have a rising demand for library services that can support their growing needs in education, literacy, information for the community, and access to electronic information services and delivery. There is also a need for certainty to secure libraries, library services and access to information within government legislative frameworks.

The BSLA programme consists of a training package and case studies on library association development; mentoring and advice on forming partnerships; an online platform for interactive learning and materials; and impact assessment. Between 2010 and 2012 IFLA delivered the BSLA programme in 6 countries (Botswana, Cameroon, Lebanon, Lithuania, Peru, Ukraine) and BSLA-related activities that reached a further 30 countries across the IFLA regions including Africa, Asia and Oceania, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Emerging and Transition countries. A report on the impact of the programme was published in 2012 and can be downloaded from: <http://www.ifla.org/bsla/impact>

Over the next three years until 2016, IFLA will build on the success of the programme and deliver convenings at the regional level where participants will be encouraged to think strategically about needs across the region, and in their own countries. Associations can apply for small project funding to implement further workshops and activities utilising BSLA materials, develop partnerships and strategies. The project will develop sustainable structures within regions for continued development, drawing on the expertise of associations and existing regional organisations.

IFLA President Ingrid Parent said, "Library associations represent the interests of all library users. This programme builds the skills and strategy needed to tell the story of libraries and gain policymaker support. The success of BSLA will now be extended to the regional level. The reach and pace of change possible through the programme will increase dramatically."

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