



# GLOBAL VISION DISCUSSION

## Report of the News Media Section & IFLA

### PAC Anglophone Africa survey

### *How a united library field can tackle the challenges of the future*

12 September 2017

Contributors

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## Introduction

Since 28 June 2017 by way of survey seven librarians participated in a conversation about how a united library field can tackle the challenges of the future. Due to limited fields (10) available in a free version of Survey Monkey, the following questions were excluded:

- 1) What is your secret library superpower
- 2) How many years have you worked in libraries
- 3) Imagine the year 2022, what have libraries achieved.

As Chair of the IFLA News Media Section and Director of IFLA PAC Anglophone Africa members of the News Media Section were invited as well as 68 librarians in Uganda, Tanzania, Ghana and South Africa. The questions were included in the invitation emails as participants would need time to prepare before doing the survey. Ten questions were posted with the option to give up to 5 answers for each. Unfortunately only 7 completed responses were received.

## A vision for libraries

Libraries enable literate, informed and participative societies. When we look at the future, according to the responses received, this means that:

*E.g. Libraries are an accessible source of factual information, where people come to find the truth. Libraries are inclusive community centres where all voices are represented. To make this vision reality, librarians feel part of a global community where they exchange ideas and help each other overcome challenges.*

### The core values of libraries (Q4):

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1. Ethical approach
2. Intellectual freedom
3. Quality service
4. Confidentiality
5. Trusted information and knowledge resources

#### Comments:

Not all participants understood the question correctly and listed activities such as preservation, access, training, information literacy and social engagement. Not in order of priority.

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### Libraries are exceptionally good at (Q5):

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1. *Research assistance*
2. *Connecting people*
3. *Change lives*
4. *Organise information resources*
5. *Promote reading habit*

**Comments:**

Not in order of priority.

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### Libraries should do more of (Q6):

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1. *Collect and preserve*
2. *Engage with patrons*
3. *Educational advancement*
4. *Information repackaging*
5. *Connect with book chain*

**Comments:**

Not in order of priority.

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### Libraries should do less of (Q7):

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1. *Rules that hinder patrons*
2. *Limiting user discussions*
3. *Employ unqualified staff*
4. *Failure to try*
5. *Photocopying*

**Comments:**

Not in order of priority.

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## Challenges and solutions

### The main challenges to society (Q8):

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1. *Unemployment*
  2. *Political factors*
  3. *Diseases*
  4. *Corruption*
  5. *Language barriers*

#### Comments:

Not in order of priority.

### The main challenges to libraries (Q9):

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1. *Too high overhead costs*
  2. *Staff not qualified / trained*
  3. *Preserving material*
  4. *Copyright*
  5. *Illiteracy*

#### Comments:

Not in order of priority.

### The main professional challenges (Q10):

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1. *Limited professional training*
  2. *Change mind-set of library staff*
  3. *Comparatively low salaries*
  4. *Few job opportunities*
  5. *Rationalising library services*

#### Comments:

Not in order of priority.

## How a united library field can make a difference

### How should a united library field help meet the challenges identified (Q11)?

1. *Offer online accredited training*
2. *Find other means to cover library expenses*
3. *Resource sharing*
4. *Collaboration and research skills*
5. *Go back to the basics*

#### Comments:

Not in order of priority.

### The characteristics of a united library field (Q12):

1. *Willingness to share success and failure*
2. *Multiculturalism*
3. *Sharing operation costs*
4. *Qualified professionals*
5. *Creative and innovative*

#### Comments:

Not in order of priority.

### The focus of a united library field (Q13):

1. *Reach out to parents and children*
2. *Accessible to the world*
3. *Strengthen professionalism*
4. *Capacity building to practitioners*
5. *Build information literate citizenry*

#### Comments:

Not in order of priority

## A global conversation

This report was created by way of a survey, on 12 September 2017. It is part of a global conversation initiated by IFLA on how a united library field can tackle the challenges of the future.

Over the course of two years (2017-2018), IFLA will involve as many librarians and others as possible in this global conversation. Participants are encouraged to continue the conversation in their own networks and organization and share the results with IFLA. At the end of 2017, the first results of all the workshops and online discussions will be turned into a *Global Vision Report*, which in turn will be adapted into concrete strategies, processes and work programmes in 2018.

To learn more about the global conversation, and download supporting materials to support your own activities, visit [globalvision.ifla.org](http://globalvision.ifla.org).

Stay tuned for news about the IFLA Global Vision discussion following [#iflaGlobalVision](https://twitter.com/iflaGlobalVision) and make sure to cast your vote in August when the online voting platform is available on <https://globalvision.ifla.org>.

### **\* Additional instructions:**

- *Please send the report to [globalvision@ifla.org](mailto:globalvision@ifla.org) not later than 14 days after the meeting*
- *The report must be written in English*
- *Please update the Index by choosing the option to update entire table*
- *Before submitting the report, please make sure that all parts highlighted yellow have been replaced by text and/or data and remove any remaining fragments highlighted yellow*