



# KM, ADVOCACY, & the UN-SDGs 2030:

Advocating for the role of Knowledge Management (KM) in organizations as the catalyst for supporting the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (UN 2030 SDGs)

*Prepared by Sylvia Piggott, K. Jane Burpee and Mary-Augusta Thomas for the IFLA Knowledge Management Standing Committee*

*May 2018*

## Executive Summary

The objective of the document is to advocate for the role of Knowledge Management (KM) in organizations as the catalyst to support the United Nations (UN) 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It uses the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) Knowledge Management (KM) Advocacy Document, 2017 as the central thesis which guides the UN 2030 SDG Advocacy document.

IFLA promotes libraries within the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The IFLA strategic plan sets out IFLA's strategic directions and goals for 2016-2021. The IFLA strategic plan sets out IFLA's strategic directions and goals for 2016-2021. [Key Initiative 4.1](#) is to: Promote libraries within the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The UN 2030 Agenda consists of 17 SDGs relate to economic, environmental, and social development activities.

IFLA asks libraries to take on an advocate role and become a partner in achieving these goals. Since all the UN 2030 17 SDGs need information for successful implementation then Libraries with well-implemented KM systems can and should play a critical role in the success of achieving these goals

This SDG 2030 Advocacy document sets out to:

1. Support the implementation of KM culture in libraries and information environments;
2. Provide an international platform for communicating the significance of KM for librarians and their institutions;
3. Outline some of the ways organizations can implement KM practices to support the 2030 SDGs;
4. Keep IFLA Core Values at top of mind as the document is created;
5. Propose the development of a KM Portal to house useful examples of sustainable development projects carried out in libraries across the globe;
6. Enlist the cooperation of all KM standing committee (SC) members to contribute examples to the Portal;
7. Propose measurements to evaluate sustainable activities in these programmes; and
8. List resources which provide information on sustainable development in different parts of the world.



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## OBJECTIVE

Objective is to create an advocacy document on how to make the case for KM in an organization, personalizing KM topics for geographical regions, with discussion based on the broad terms that describe KM.

*NOTE:* This document uses the KM Advocacy Document, 2017 as the central thesis which guides the UN 2030 SDG Advocacy document and therefore is in sync with original Advocacy document.

### A. IFLA VALUES

IFLA embraces the following core values:

- The endorsement of the principles of freedom of access to information, ideas and works of imagination and freedom of expression embodied in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- The belief that people, communities and organizations need universal and equitable access to information, ideas and works of imagination for their social, educational, cultural, democratic and economic well-being
- The conviction that delivery of high quality library and information services helps guarantee that access
- The commitment to enable all members of the Federation to engage in, and benefit from, its activities without regard to citizenship, disability, ethnic origin, gender, geographical location, language, political philosophy, race or religion.

### B. IFLA and the UN 2030 SDGs.

IFLA promotes libraries within the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The IFLA strategic plan sets out IFLA's strategic directions and goals for 2016-2021. [Key Initiative 4.1](#) is to promote libraries within the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The UN 2030 Agenda consists of 17 SDGs relate to economic, environmental, and social development activities. THE SDGs are:

- Goal 1: End Poverty
- Goal 2: Zero Hunger
- Goal 3: Good health and well-being
- Goal 4: Quality Education
- Goal 5: Gender Equality
- Goal 6: Clean water and sanitation
- Goal 7: Affordable and clean energy
- Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth
- Goal 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
- Goal 10: Reduced inequality
- Goal 11: Sustainable cities and Communities
- Goal 12: Responsible consumption and production
- Goal 13: Climate Action
- Goal 14: Life below water
- Goal 15: Life on land
- Goal 16. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
- Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals

IFLA is asking libraries to take on an advocate role and become a partner in achieving these goals. Since all the UN 2030 17 SDGs need information for successful implementation then Libraries with well-implemented KM systems can and should play a critical role in the success of achieving these goals.

### **C. The IFLA KM Section**

The IFLA KM Section supports the building of strong KM practices within its parent organizational context.

### **D. The IFLA KM Standing Committee**

The IFLA KM Standing Committee is a section of IFLA the leading international body, representing the interests of library and information services, their users and their communities. The KM Section supports the building of strong KM within its parent organizational context. Strong KM practices within libraries means that attention is paid to things like access, sustainability, technology, infrastructure, and good communication about services. The IFLA KM SC believes these tie directly to the IFLA Goals to support the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

### **E. The IFLA KM SDG 2030 Advocacy document**

This KM SDG 2030 Advocacy document sets out to:

1. support the implementation of KM culture in libraries and information environments;
2. provide an international platform for communicating the significance of KM for librarians and their institutions; and

3. outline some of the ways organizations can implement KM practices to support the UN 2030 SDGs.

## **F. THE PREMISE**

KM is a powerful tool of advocacy and is essential to help secure recognition for the role of libraries as engines of local development. The implementation of specific KM systems will help to ensure that libraries receive the resources they need to continue this work. The document will:

- keep IFLA Core Values at top of mind as the document is created;
- propose the development of a KM Portal to house useful examples of sustainable development projects carried out in libraries across the globe - websites which provide personalized capabilities to users and to convert them into knowledge which can be customized for development projects;
- enlist the cooperation of all IFLA KM SC sections and individual members to contribute examples of how these were achieved; and
- propose some measurements to evaluate and demonstrate sustainable activities in these programmes.

## **G. THE KEY PLAYERS IN KM**

**PEOPLE:** People as the creators of knowledge should be persuaded to express and share their knowledge with other partners with the goal of preserving their knowledge and without any fear of losing it once it is articulated.

**SENIOR MANAGEMENT:** The support of senior management is critical for the accomplishment of KM because this leadership role establishes the priorities in the strategic plan of the organization. Support and involvement of executives lend credibility to the KM initiative and anticipate sustainability. Senior management is able to extend support in both human and financial resources.

**GOVERNMENT:** Agencies responsible for funding and implementing the UN 2030 SDGs by means of creating the overall policy direction for their citizens as well as for funding National libraries.

**LIBRARIES:** The traditional information places which are transformed to KM places as they constantly change and adjust to the conditions and requirements of the organizations which support the UN 2030 SDGs.

## **H. KEY STEPS TO CREATE STRONG KM ADVOCACY STRATEGIES**

The following strategies are offered as suggestions for ways one could persuade the key players to take action:

1. Carry out a KM audit to evaluate the current situation related to KM in the organization by designing a questionnaire to collect this information.

2. Produce a report with the pertinent results which will help to inform the advocacy plan.
3. Set the goals of the advocacy plan.
4. Stress the importance of KM with supporting examples.
5. Pursue alliances in the hierarchical structures of the organization to ensure their approval and support.
6. Develop an environment of openness, knowledge-sharing and organizational learning.
7. Align the advocacy plan with the mindset of the organization, understand the business and have a better understanding of the overall strategy of the business.
8. Communicate the advocacy plan effectively by demonstrating the value of information and Knowledge services to the business, governments, the people.
9. Measure the consequences of advocacy.

## I. THE KM ACTIVITY PLAN – THE DETAILS

Advocacy is a continuous process which requires time and patience. Activities must be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound) to become feasible and applicable. Taking small steps is more successful rather than creating a flamboyant and complicated plan.

The advocacy plan entails components that pertain to project management such as the need to:

1. Make a needs assessment of KM because of carrying out the knowledge management audit.
2. Prepare a road map about advocacy.
3. Pursue examples of advocacy in libraries to adjust it to the KM advocacy plan. Do not attempt to re-invent the wheel.
4. Create a team to collaborate for the creation of the advocacy plan. The team members could be library staff members and knowledgeable people from other business units.
5. Pilot. Start small, grow big: start with a pilot project, i.e. talk about knowledge management and the UN 2030 SDG in the library or among information professionals.
6. Build partnerships with other business units. Coalitions are essential for the implementation of a knowledge management project.
7. Start networking, staying on the pulse of the business and keep talking about knowledge management to pertinent people.
8. Proceed to lobbying within the organization: be part of the business and be embedded within teams or various departments across the organization.
9. Engage in deliberate efforts to raise awareness about KM among potential supporters within the organization.
10. Go to senior management to convince them that embracing KM is a win-win process.
11. Grasp opportunities to advocate KM: attend social events in the organization, literally walk the corridors in the business, do the elevator chats and water-cooler discussions to present the advantages of knowledge management, present of value of KM at professional conferences.
12. Get close to the business and forge strong relationships with others in the business.
13. Show how the skills of the information professionals / knowledge managers add value to business and build advocacy skills necessary to carry out the KM advocacy plan.
14. Work effectively and become the live paradigm of how to organize and exploit knowledge thus demonstrating by example yourself skills as a trustful knowledge manager in the organization.

## J. COMMUNICATING THE PLAN

One of the main activities of the library is to design and implement a Communication Plan which promotes the activities which can be linked to the UN 2030 SDGs. This plan needs to demonstrate the value of knowledge management in the success of UN 2030 SDGs.

### ***Aspects of the Plan would include:***

#### **External advocacy**

##### WORD OF MOUTH

1. speak out about KM to the Public Media such as via Print, TV interviews, Presentations at government, business and professional conferences
2. as library instruction and information literacy are included in the core business of libraries, instruct people about the significance of KM that sharing their knowledge is an advantage because their knowledge is spread, utilized, exploited and its value is multiplied with re-use. Stress that the knowledge holder becomes indispensable and known for the knowledge shared with others

##### IN PRINT

1. design a brochure or a poster
2. Send newsletters to government departments highlighting relevant Sustainable Development information on their KM Portal
3. include the advocacy actions in the library's newsletter
4. publish articles and sided-bars in the staff magazine about the added-value of KM in an organization, especially as it applies to any of the UN 2030 SDGs

##### ONLINE

1. create a banner on the library's website
2. Send newsletters to government departments highlighting relevant Sustainable Development information on their KM Portal
3. include the advocacy actions in the library's newsletter
4. initiate an intranet news service for the staff about the benefits of KM
5. create a short video about the benefits of KM in the organization and publish it on the library's webpage or on the library's pages on the intranet, show it at relevant conferences
6. prepare a webinar to demonstrate the advantages of KM in the organization, as officers often are very busy to attend seminars
7. publish articles and sided-bars in the staff magazine about the added-value of KM in an organization, especially as it applies to any of the UN 2030 SDGs
8. as library instruction and information literacy are included in the core business of libraries, instruct people about the significance of KM that sharing their knowledge is an advantage because their knowledge is spread, utilized, exploited and its value is multiplied with re-use. Stress that the knowledge holder becomes indispensable and known for the knowledge shared with others

## Self directed advocacy

### INDIVIDUAL/PERSONAL

1. Acquire additional and pertinent skills to KM
2. Evaluate the advocacy plan in regular intervals to remain relevant and informed
3. Present KM Advocacy achievements at appropriate professional and business conferences.

## K. ASSESSMENT AND INDICATORS – HOW TO JUDGE PROGRESS AND SUPPORT OF UN 2030 SDGS

1. Several quantitative indicators can measure the progress of the impact of KM in the organization:
2. The number of visits on the library's webpages where information on knowledge management pertaining to sustainable development is published
3. The number of hits and likes on the Facebook page and relevant numbers for social media exposure
4. The number of onsite visits to the library as the knowledge management center
5. The number of articles, postings, news published
6. The number of visits on pertinent videos created about KM
7. Any other in-house created and invented measures for judging the impact of KM to the organization

## L. KM IN PRACTICE FOR SOME OR ALL OF THE 17 GOALS.

We are requesting that KM SC Members provide examples of KM use in libraries that support any of the goals. This will include KM examples, impact and pictures of library programmes and services that contribute to specified targets and that demonstrate what libraries can contribute in meeting the Goals. The examples should be clearly linked to a specific SDG Goal and Target, have a clear impact on people and the community the library or service serves, and, ideally, be delivered either nationally or regionally through several libraries.

Send the [IFLA KM SC Information Officer](#) a description of each example ~ 100-150 words that you wish to include in this section of the document.

Your contribution will be included in **SECTION L. KM IN PRACTICE LIBRARIES SUPPORTING THE SDGS** and will help to enrich the document. We thank you for your help.

## M. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY MAKERS

1. That libraries are included in their national development plans (information sharing). With a good strong KM within libraries ...

2. That governments partner with libraries and others to implement national strategies for information sharing across the community.
3. That governments work with libraries to raise awareness about the SDGs.
4. That Have-libraries help the have-not libraries to support idea of no one left behind.

## N. SOME EXAMPLES OF KM IN LIBRARIES SUPPORTING THE SDGS

1. New York Public Libraries is helping citizens in need of housing...how...  
<https://nyti.ms/2eTLkQQ> “Ex Libris: The New York Public Library,” Frederick Wiseman takes his camera into the halls where people read, learn and seek a perfect union.

Quote from the NY Times article (18 Sept. 2017) below it:

"In 2014, the city selected the Fifth Avenue Committee to undertake the novel task of redeveloping the Sunset Park branch. There, an eight-story building will rise, with the first two floors dedicated to a library 75 percent larger than the one there now. The floors above will have 49 apartments, all of which will be rented to low- and middle-income families in perpetuity."

2. ***Libraries Can Be More Than Just Books*** By MATT A.V. CHABAN

Pairing affordable housing with new library branches can revitalize New York’s far-flung communities. <https://nyti.ms/2jBbFZd>

3. ***New York City’s Libraries Will Forgive All Children’s Fines*** By SARAH MASLIN NIR and JEFFERY C. MAYS

An amnesty at the city’s three library systems will wipe out fines for all children, allowing 160,000 youngsters whose borrowing privileges had been suspended to check out books again. <https://nyti.ms/2zlhcGb>

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