ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

How libraries contribute to the United Nations 2030 Agenda

IFLA

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions

1 NO POVERTY
2 ZERO HUNGER
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
4 QUALITY EDUCATION
5 GENDER EQUALITY
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES
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12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
13 CLIMATE ACTION
14 LIFE BELOW WATER
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16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
17 GOALS TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD

In the context of the UN 2030 Agenda, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) believes that increasing access to information and knowledge across society, assisted by the availability of information and communications technologies (ICTs), supports sustainable development and improves people's lives.

In September 2015
Member States of the United Nations
adopted Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for
Sustainable Development (UN 2030 Agenda).

The new UN 2030 Agenda is an inclusive, integrated framework of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) spanning economic, environmental and social development. By achieving this Agenda, **no one will be left behind**. Libraries are key institutions to help achieve the Goals.

Public access to information enables people to make informed decisions that can improve their lives. Communities that have access to timely and relevant information for all are better positioned to eradicate poverty and inequality, improve agriculture, provide quality education, and support people's health, culture, research, and innovation.[1]

Access to information has been recognised in the SDGs as a target under Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels:

> *Target 16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements*

Culture (target 11.4) and ICT (targets 5b, 9c, 17.8) have also been included in the SDGs.

> *Half of the world's population lacks access to information online. In our knowledge society, libraries provide access and opportunity for all.*

And, universal literacy is recognised in the vision for the UN 2030 Agenda.

> *We envision…a world with universal literacy.*
> UN 2030 Agenda

Worldwide, 320,000 public libraries and more than a million parliamentary, national, university, research, school, and special libraries ensure that information and the skills to use it are available to everyone, making them critical institutions for all in the digital age. Libraries provide information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure, help people develop the capacity to use information effectively, and preserve information to ensure ongoing access for future generations. They provide an established, trusted network of local institutions that can reach out effectively to all parts of the population.

LIBRARIES SUPPORT ALL THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Libraries and access to information contribute to improved outcomes across the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by:

- Promoting universal literacy, including digital, media and information literacy and skills, with the support of dedicated staff;
- Closing gaps in access to information and helping government, civil society and business to understand local information needs better;
- Providing a network of delivery sites for government programmes and services;
- Advancing digital inclusion through access to ICT;
- Serving as the heart of the research and academic community; and
- Preserving and providing access to the world's culture and heritage

LIBRARIES DRIVE PROGRESS ACROSS THE ENTIRE UN 2030 AGENDA

While the SDGs are universal goals, each country will be responsible for developing and implementing national strategies to achieve them, and will be expected to track and report progress. As these plans are developed, the library community in each country stands ready to show how libraries serve as partners to help meet the Goals and local development needs.

GOAL 1 END POVERTY IN ALL ITS FORMS EVERYWHERE

Libraries, by providing access to information and skills, help provide opportunities for people to improve their own lives and support informed decision-making by governments, communities and others to provide services and support that reduce poverty and improve the prosperity of people everywhere.

SLOVENIA

In Slovenia, the Ljubljana City Library hosts an Employment Information Service (EIS) which helps around 1200 people a year, many of whom are homeless or receiving social benefits, to find a job. The library provides media and information literacy skills and helps them develop their resumes and apply for jobs. As many homeless patrons of the library suffer from drug abuse, the library works closely with the Centre for the Prevention and Treatment of Drug Addiction at the University Hospital of Psychiatry in Ljubljana to support rehabilitation, reintegration and social inclusion.[2]

SRI LANKA

The e-Library Nenasala Programme[3] is a government-sponsored initiative to increase digital literacy and access to technology among the nation's poorest residents, often living in remote rural areas. 300 centres in all parts of the country offer instruction in basic computer skills, guidance on accessing information through the Internet, and a wide variety of locally relevant knowledge. The centres are open to everyone and are the most robust form of access to infrastructure in many remote and impoverished parts of the country.

GOAL 2 END HUNGER, ACHIEVE FOOD SECURITY AND IMPROVED NUTRITION AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

Libraries including specialist agricultural libraries and extension services provide access to research and data on crops, market information and farming methods that supports resilient, productive agriculture.

ROMANIA

Librarians trained by Biblionet[4] helped 100,000 farmers receive US $187 million in subsidies via new Internet and computer services between 2011 and 2014.

The 1,000+ librarians who had participated in training decided to rollout the service in libraries with the support of local mayors who understood the benefits that this service brought to farmers. The programme helped farmers learn how to use the technology available in libraries to access financial forms and submit them to the government, saving time and money. Special attention was paid to local needs in order to guarantee take-up.

GOAL 3 ENSURE HEALTHY LIVES AND PROMOTE WELL-BEING FOR ALL AT ALL AGES

Medical libraries, hospital libraries and other libraries are essential providers of access to medical research that supports improved public health outcomes. Public access to health information in all libraries helps people to be better informed about their own health and to stay healthy.

AUSTRALIA

A report released in 2014 found that hospitals, government departments, associations and other organisations involved in healthcare get a $5 return for every $1[5] they invest in libraries.

KYRGYZSTAN

Faced with a tuberculosis (TB) epidemic, the government of Kyrgyzstan has launched an intensive national TB prevention and control programme. The Kyrgyz Libraries Information Consortium (KLIC) 'No to TB!' service works in partnership with civil society organisations like Project HOPE and the Red Crescent Society to mobilise public libraries to support government goals. Following a pilot grant for three libraries from the EIFL (Electronic Information for Libraries) Public Library Innovation Programme, 'No to TB!' initiatives were set up in 190 rural libraries with training for 800 people on how to raise awareness of TB, as well as public debates attended by 5,600 people.[6]

UGANDA

Health and medical practitioners in rural Uganda still face challenges in accessing basic information needed to ensure quality health care. The Uganda Health Information Digest published by the Makere University library repackages scholarly information in print format for health workers who cannot access the information online. The Digest includes abstracts on topical disease and health issues. It is distributed to over 1500 health units including hospitals, health centres, dispensaries, health related NGOs, district medical offices, all district health and social services committees and Members of Parliament. The Digest is one of the few sources of up-to-date information in remote areas during outbreaks of disease such as Hepatitis.[7]

GOAL 4 ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION AND PROMOTE LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

Libraries are at the heart of schools, universities and colleges in every country around the world. Libraries support literacy programmes, provide a safe space for learning, and support researchers to reuse research and data to create new knowledge.

NETHERLANDS

Boekstart[8] works with day care and healthcare centres, public libraries and the first two years of primary school to provide books and literacy training to 75,000 children aged 0-4 per year. The programme is supported by national and local government, and aims to establish long-term collaboration between organisations that support children's literacy.

SWEDEN

Malmö City Library works to overcome the digital divide and encourage social inclusion and sustainability. The library's Learning Centre offers courses called "Get Started!", where digitally inexperienced users learn how to open email accounts, get better acquainted with the Internet and adjust privacy settings. The library has many immigrant visitors, especially unaccompanied minors who can access tools designed to improve literacy and help them with their homework.[9]

SINGAPORE

National Library Board Singapore (NLB) engages local Singaporeans through programmes and services—both within and outside libraries—via physical and digital platforms across the country. NLB also pays special attention to populations that lack mobility and face difficulties in getting to libraries. NLB has worked with partners to provide customised programmes and mobile library buses that enable special needs schools, orphanages and care homes to have access to library collections and services. These services are to a large extent the same as those offered by a physical library, such as good collections, borrowing and returning services, librarian assistance and storytelling programmes.[10]

GOAL 5 ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS

Libraries support gender equality by providing safe meeting spaces, programmes for women and girls on rights and health, and ICT and literacy programmes support women to build their entrepreneurial skills.

UGANDA

The National Library of Uganda has an ICT training program designed for female farmers,[11] providing access in local languages to weather forecasts, crop prices, and support to set up online markets. This programme increases the economic well-being of women through technology skills.

NEPAL

READ's (Rural Education and Development) *Information and Resource Centre's Capacity-building Initiative* helps women and girls gain insights and take control of their own lives. The empowerment programme includes seminars and workshops on women's rights, gender equality, health, violence against women and other issues. The library encourages women to sign up for the women's group, which meets once a month in a separate section of the library where its members feel free to speak their minds. Practical courses include literacy and numeracy, English language, ICT, entrepreneurship skills and hands-on classes in making goods for sale. READ Centres across the country also offer training programmes in life skills, health, digital literacy and technology.[12]

GOAL 6 ENSURE AVAILABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF WATER AND SANITATION FOR ALL

GOAL 7 ENSURE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE, SUSTAINABLE AND MODERN ENERGY FOR ALL

Libraries provide public access to information on water, energy usage and sanitation. Many public and community libraries around the world are the only place where people can get reliable access to light and electricity to read, study and apply for a job.

HONDURAS

San Juan Planes Community Library plays a central role in bringing safe drinking water to the entire community via a water treatment project they established in the town's central square.[13]

UNITED KINGDOM

At libraries in Croydon, Derby and other cities across the UK, users are able to borrow energy monitors to find out which electrical appliances use a lot of energy, enabling people to change and reduce their energy use.[14]

GOAL 8 PROMOTE SUSTAINED, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH, FULL AND PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK FOR ALL

Public access to ICT and training at libraries enables people to apply for jobs. Skilled library staff can help people with online applications, writing support materials and finding the right job.

EUROPEAN UNION

250,000 people find jobs through their public library in the European Union each year. Public libraries helped 4.1 million Europeans with queries related to employment and further helped 1.5 million Europeans to apply for jobs.[15] Public access to ICT and training enables people to apply for jobs, as the application process for many jobs has moved online.

UNITED STATES

In New York City, the Science, Industry and Business Library at Queens Public Library, and Brooklyn's Business & Career Library (B&CL), run popular business plan competitions that offer guidance to participants, targeting current and prospective business owners from underserved communities. At B&CL, 25 percent of the participants are immigrants, 29 percent are unemployed or underemployed, and more than half have a household income below the median in New York City.[16]

GOAL 9 BUILD RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE, PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRIALIZATION AND FOSTER INNOVATION

Libraries are at the heart of research and academic life. They provide access to high speed Internet, research infrastructure and skilled professionals. In many countries, public and educational libraries are the major or only providers of public internet access at low or no cost, a critical means of increasing connectivity.[17]

LATVIA

For every dollar invested in public libraries in Latvia from 2008-2010, nearly $2 in value (direct and indirect) was created. The return on investment of computer and Internet use in public libraries was even higher, returning more than **$3 for every $1 invested.**[18]

FINLAND

The Open Science Lab hosted by the National Library of Finland enables access for everyone to research publications, research data and methods used in research. Open Access is one of the core principles in furthering access to information.[19]

GOAL 10
REDUCE INEQUALITY WITHIN AND AMONG COUNTRIES

Equitable access to information, freedom of expression, freedom of association and assembly, and privacy are central to an individual's independence. Libraries help to reduce inequality by providing safe, civic spaces open to all located in urban and rural areas across the world.

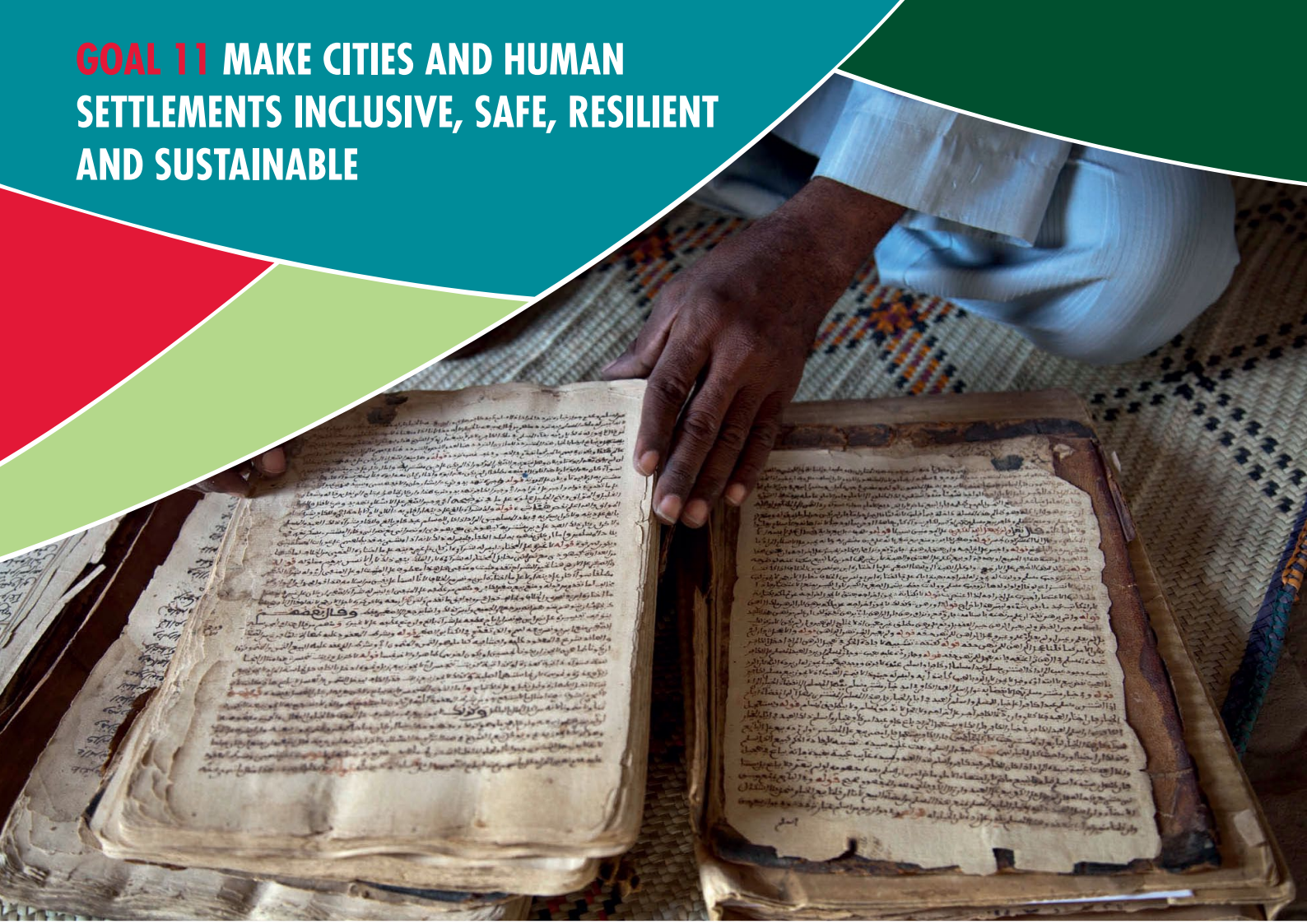
MONGOLIA

Most of Mongolia's 15,000 blind and low vision people are out of work and receive little if any support. In 2010, Ulaanbaatar Public Library (UPL) and the Mongolian National Federation of the Blind built two recording studios to create talking books in digital DAISY format, hugely increasing the amount of accessible material, as well as opening up new worlds of learning for visually impaired people. The Mongolian Libraries Consortium (MLC) also successfully advocated for the adoption of the Marrakesh Treaty (2013) to facilitate access to published works for persons with print disabilities.[20]

INTERNATIONAL

Libraries Without Borders provide access to information and resources in refugee camps through the Ideas Box, which enables people to access information via satellite internet connections, as well as including books. The Boxes are in part sponsored by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).[21]

GOAL 11 MAKE CITIES AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS INCLUSIVE, SAFE, RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE



Libraries have an essential role in safeguarding and preserving invaluable documentary heritage, in any form, for future generations. Culture strengthens local communities and supports inclusive and sustainable development of cities.

MALI

In 2013 armed groups occupied Northern Mali and Timbuktu, a city famous for its cultural heritage and its vast number of public and private libraries with invaluable documentary heritage. To safeguard the manuscripts during the occupation, volunteers smuggled them to safety in Bamako with international support. The manuscripts have since been kept in the capital and are undergoing restoration and digitisation work. Libraries have been at the forefront of rescuing and preserving the unique heritage of Mali.[22]

CHINA

In January 2015, the first Beijing subway library, the "M Subway Library", was opened at the National Library of China (NLC) Station. This subway library aims to broaden new services, deliver high-quality NLC resources such as freely downloadable eBooks, sustain and promote traditional culture, and encourage civil reading. In this library, passengers are readers, readers are passengers, and the subway library becomes a "reading station for everyone."[23]

COLUMBIA

Public libraries are an integral part of the city of Medellín's urban renewal strategy. Strategically located in some of the most disadvantaged communities on the outskirts of Medellín, they have become centres for social development that address an identified need for more cultural and education space. The Library Parks are a series of public libraries that offer educational tools and programmes to benefit the local communities, as well as providing a hub for further urban development and green projects.[24]

GOAL 12 ENSURE SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION PATTERNS

GOAL 13 TAKE URGENT ACTION TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACTS

GOAL 14 CONSERVE AND SUSTAINABLY USE THE OCEANS, SEAS AND MARINE RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

GOAL 15 PROTECT, RESTORE AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE USE OF TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS, SUSTAINABLY MANAGE FORESTS, COMBAT DESERTIFICATION, AND HALT AND REVERSE LAND DEGRADATION AND HALT BIODIVERSITY LOSS

Libraries are sustainable institutions; they share resources in the community and internationally and ensure everyone has access to information. All libraries play a significant role in providing access to data, research and knowledge that supports informed research and public access to information about climate change, and a key role in the preservation of indigenous knowledge – which includes local decision-making about fundamental aspects of life including hunting, fishing, land use, and water management.

UNITED STATES

The Biodiversity Heritage Library is an ongoing open access digital library for biodiversity literature including more than 46 million pages from over 170,000 volumes of biodiversity literature published from the 15th to the 21st centuries in over 40 languages. Scientists are using the data to identify new species, map population and ecosystem developments, and inform future climate change models. Such data can be used to inform policies related to conservation, sustainable development, and responsible resource management. The collection ensures that everyone, everywhere, has access to the information they need to study and save Earth's species and ecosystems.[25]

SINGAPORE

The National Library Board Singapore (NLB) has worked with sponsors to build a Children's Green Library that provides special collections on environmental conservation and interactive public education programmes, notably aimed at helping children understand climate change. Much of the building is also made of recycled materials, confirming the conservation message. In developing and operating its network of libraries, NLB ensures they follow good practices in energy and resource consumption, and minimise waste. The flagship National Library Building has achieved the Green Mark Platinum Award in 2013 from the Building and Construction Authority of Singapore.[26]

GOAL 16 PROMOTE PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, PROVIDE ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL AND BUILD EFFECTIVE, ACCOUNTABLE AND INCLUSIVE INSTITUTIONS AT ALL LEVELS

To realise access to information fully, everyone needs both access and skills to use information effectively as outlined in the *Lyon Declaration on Access to Information and Development*. [27] **Libraries have the skills and resources to help governments, institutions and individuals communicate, organise, structure and use information effectively for development.**

MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, UKRAINE

The Open Government Partnership (OGP)[28] is an international organisation that works with member state governments to make and deliver on strong engagements in the fields of transparency, civic participation, fighting corruption, and open, accountable government. The OGP has committed to integrating Goal 16 into the resulting National Action Plans. Countries such as Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine already have access to information and library commitments as part of their OGP National Action Plans. Librarians in these countries have attended civil society meetings to help develop their country's plan, and have raised awareness about the contribution libraries and access to information make in delivering on OGP commitments.

INTERNATIONAL

In line with the World Bank Group's strategy to end extreme poverty by 2030, the World Bank Group Library provides both staff and the global community with access to relevant information and services in order to foster knowledge transfer, good governance and economic development. Highly trained information professionals answer development-related questions, find information from multiple internal and external sources, and familiarise staff with collections, resources and services aligned with the Bank's development priorities. The library also promotes transparency and accountability more broadly by providing capacity building on public access to information to non-staff members around the world. The library's work is integral to global development through public access to information.[29]

SWITZERLAND

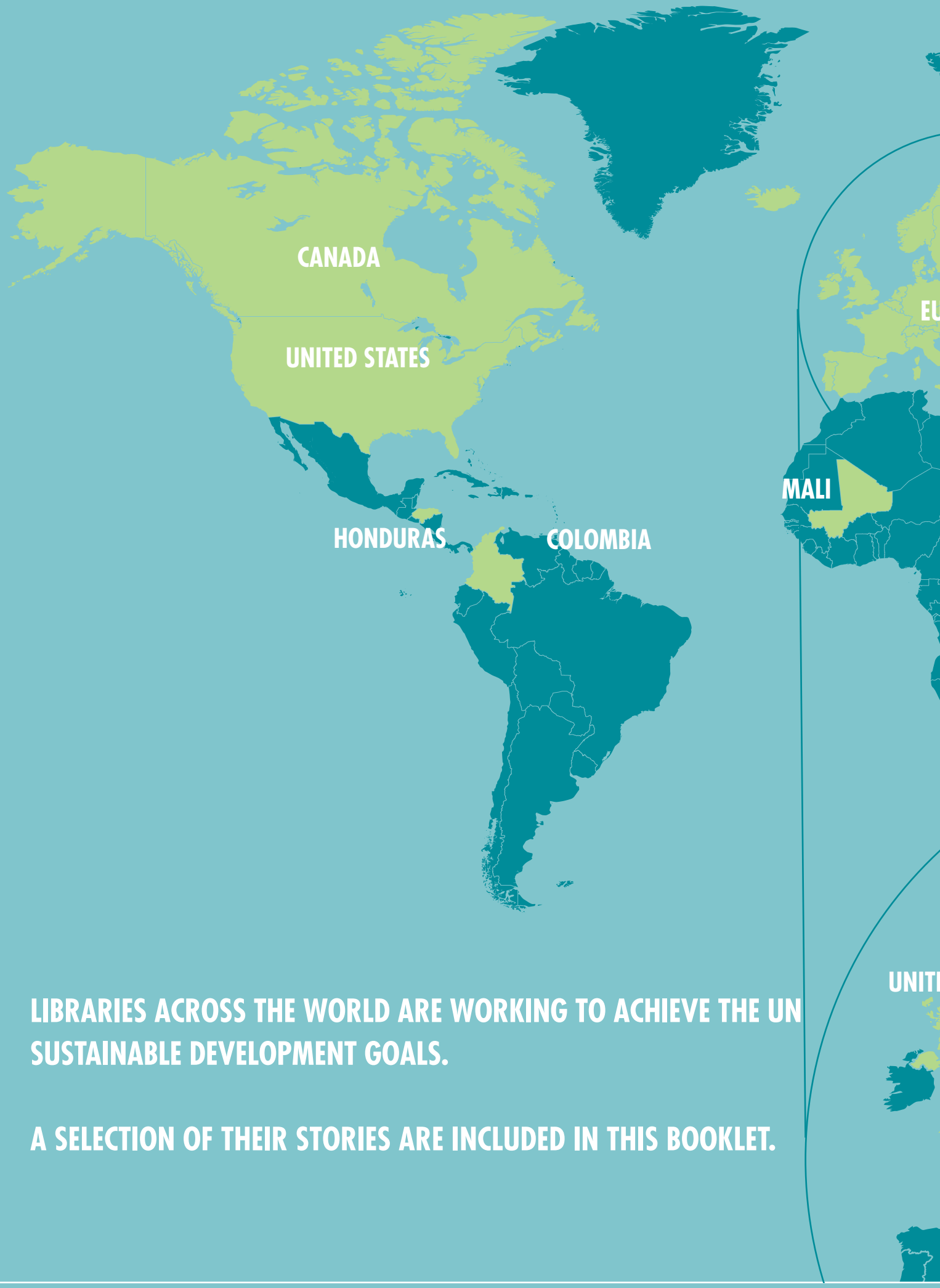
The Globethics.net Digital Library on Ethics is an online library that offers free access to hundreds of thousands of full-text documents on ethics and related disciplines. By contributing to the improvement of access to resources on ethics in the southern hemisphere, this international initiative aims to improve knowledge-sharing, both North to South and South to South, and to contribute to development, in particular by promoting responsible leadership, good governance, and values-based decision making and processes.[30]

GOAL 17
STRENGTHEN THE MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND REVITALIZE THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Libraries provide a global network of community-based institutions ready to support national development plans locally and nationally, and a resource for improved decision-making.

CANADA

The National Science Library at the National Research Council is a co-sponsor of the Federal Science Library – a project bringing together seven federal science department libraries to create a single shared discovery and access platform. This aims to guarantee more sustainable library and information services for federal government researchers and employees and to enhance visibility and access to federal science library collections and repositories for Canadians. The project is a commitment in Canada's Open Government Partnership National Action Plan under the Open Information Core Commitment.[31]



LIBRARIES ACROSS THE WORLD ARE WORKING TO ACHIEVE THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS.

A SELECTION OF THEIR STORIES ARE INCLUDED IN THIS BOOKLET.

UROPE
KYRGYZSTAN
MONGOLIA
CHINA
NEPAL
UGANDA
SRI LANKA
SINGAPORE
AUSTRALIA
SWEDEN
FINLAND
ED KINGDOM
LATVIA
NETHERLANDS
UKRAINE
SWITZERLAND
MOLDOVA
ROMANIA
SLOVENIA
GEORGIA

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICYMAKERS

1. INCLUDE LIBRARIES IN YOUR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS

National development plans will shape many government spending and programme priorities. These plans can include a single national development plan, or individual plans for broadband, digital inclusion, or social development amongst others. Whether people need the latest on crop prices or where to find medical care, progress toward the Goals relies on information-sharing. Libraries are especially effective at extending access to information to marginalised populations, and at times of crisis or transition.

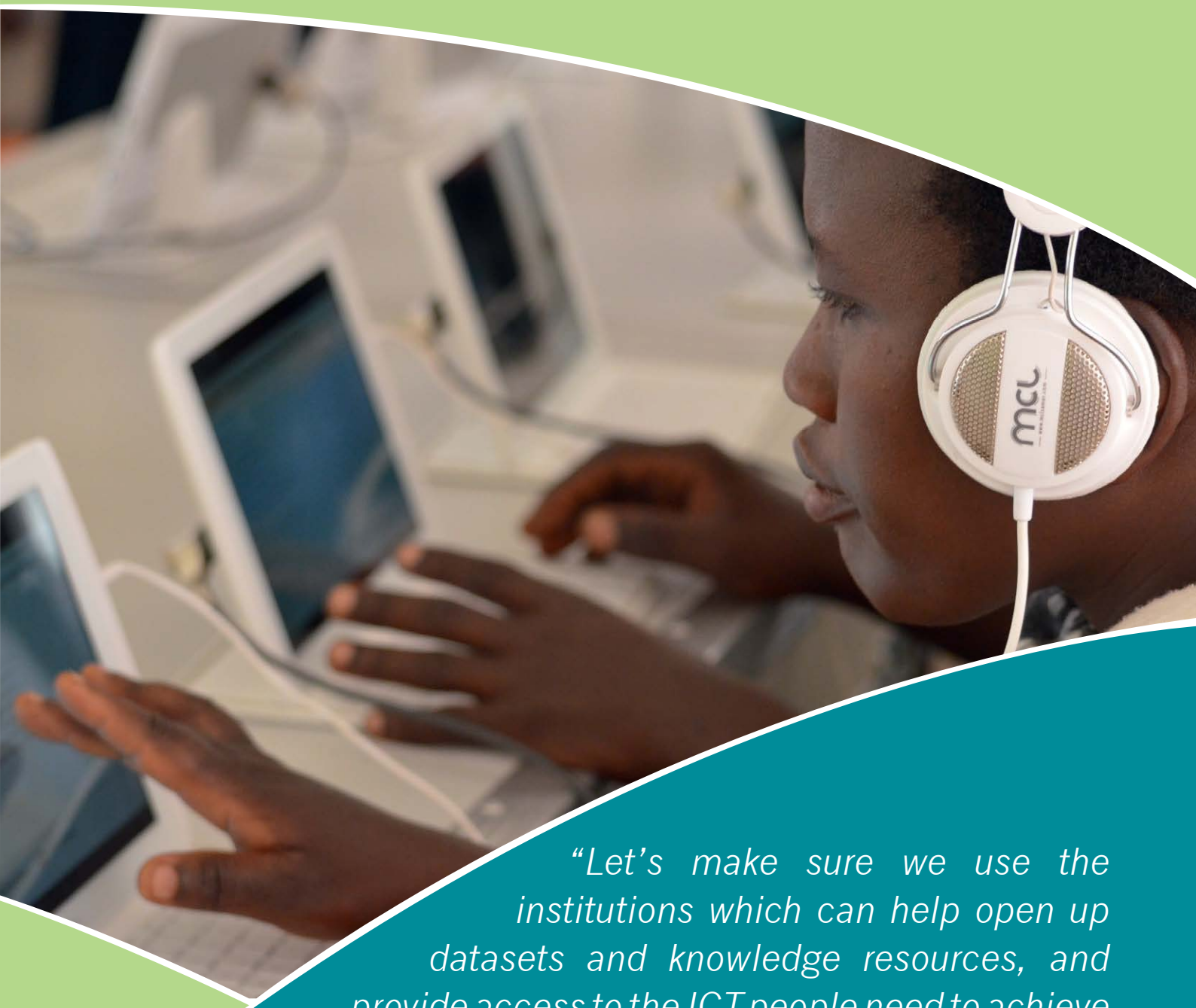
2. PARTNER WITH LIBRARIES

Libraries can partner with government and others to implement national strategies and programmes to make sure that no one is left behind. The access to information that libraries can provide underpins the entire UN 2030 Agenda, and supports poverty eradication, sustainable and productive agriculture, quality education, health and all other Goals. In libraries, governments have an established, cost-effective and powerful partner in the fight for poverty reduction, economic development, and learning for all.

3. WORK WITH LIBRARIES TO RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT THE SDGS, AND WHAT THEY MEAN LOCALLY

As part of the UN 2030 Agenda, each country is being asked to make sure that everyone, from stakeholder organisations to the general public, knows about the SDGs and why they matter to everyone. Librarians can help by providing information and updates about the SDGs both for decision makers and people in local communities:

- Libraries can share information about the SDGs and national development priorities within their communities and across borders, and connect people with further information about the Goals online;
- Libraries designated as UN Depository Libraries and UN Information Centres across the world fulfil an essential role in communicating UN information and research, and getting the feedback that helps local and national decision makers achieve the Goals.[32]



"Let's make sure we use the institutions which can help open up datasets and knowledge resources, and provide access to the ICT people need to achieve sustainable development.

LIBRARIES look forward to being partners in the data revolution and helping us get to 2030 in great shape."[33]

Donna Scheeder, IFLA President

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ABOUT

IFLA: The trusted global voice of the library and information profession

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) is the leading international body representing the interests of library and information services and their users.

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Cover: Amsterdam Public Library, The Netherlands (Jorge Royan)

Verso: UN Sustainable Development Goals: 17 Goals to Transform Our World (United Nations)

Libraries Drive Progress: Stuttgart Public Library (jwltr Freiburg, Flickr)

Goal 1

Sri Lanka: e-Library Nenasala Program of Sri Lanka (Access to Learning Award 2014)

Goal 2

Romania: Biblionet (IREX)

Goal 3

Kyrgyzstan: Knowledge without boundaries (EIFL)

Goal 4

Netherlands: BoekStart.nl

Sweden: Open educational resources in libraries (Läranderum)

Goal 5

Uganda: Beyond Access meeting in Uganda (Beyond Access)

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Goals 6-7

Honduras: San Juan Planes Community Library (Beyond Access)

Goal 8

European Union: Public library service in Slovenia (Public Libraries 2020)

Goal 9

Finland: Open Science Lab

Goal 10

Mongolia: Knowledge without boundaries (EIFL)

International: Ideas Box in Burundi (Bibliothèques Sans Frontières)

Goal 11

Mali: Culture in Timbuktu 25 (UN Mission in Mali, Flickr)

Goals 12-15

United States: Biodiversity Heritage Library (BioDivLibrary & Les Veilleux, Flickr)

Singapore: World's 1st Green Library for kids at the National Library Board (Choo Yut Shing, Flickr)

Recommendations for Policy Makers: Atelier Khan Academy, Burundi (Bibliothèques Sans Frontières)

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