Handbook of Research on Advocacy, Promotion, and Public Programming for Memory Institutions

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Chapter 12

Advocating for Library and Information Services by National Library Associations of Africa in the Context of Sustainable Development Goals

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ABSTRACT

The chapter documents the role that is played by national library associations in advocating for the development of library and information services for the attainment of the United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda in Africa. A structured records review and literature review was done to solicit information on how national library associations are taking part in achieving the sustainable development goals. Websites of associations were looked at and participants were drawn from national library associations in Africa, Standing Conference of Eastern, Central and Southern Africa Library and Information Associations (SCECSAL), African Library and Information Association and Institution (AfLIA), and the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA). The results indicated that national library associations are facing challenges in their advocacy work and there is a need to offer training to library staff and improve communication between librarians and policymakers.

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INTRODUCTION

The adoption of the UN 2030 agenda in September 2015 positioned the library to work with the government in the national development programmes. Libraries have a mandate to show that they are partners in the drive towards the achievement of these goals. In order to achieve these goals, libraries in Africa must communicate with the government leaders on how they can partner to advance national development priorities. Advocacy is therefore needed so that libraries can be recognised as cost effective partners and as engines of local development. This would assist libraries to get the resources that are needed to operate in an economically challenged environment.

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 recognises the importance of access to information. Target 16.10 points out on ensuring public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms in accordance with national legislation and international agreements. Therefore, advocacy at national level would ensure the recognition and commitment to support the access to information in libraries as they work towards the attainment of the SDGs. There is need to look at the SDGs and see how libraries can contribute towards the achievement of those goals. It is against this background that the authors sought to study and document how national library associations in Africa are advocating for library services to achieve the SDGs. The objectives that were addressed by this chapter are:

1. To identify the role of African national library associations in achieving the sustainable development goals.
2. To identify the strategies used by African national library associations in advocating for library services in their countries.
3. To assess the challenges being faced by African national library associations in advocating for library services in their countries.

The rest of the chapter is organised into Library and Information Services in Africa, UN 2030 agenda, advocating for Library and Information Science (LIS), library associations, AfLIA, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), libraries and UN 2030 agenda, strategies for advocating for library and information services, challenges faced in advocating for library services and some areas for further research are suggested.

LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES (LIS) IN AFRICA

Libraries can be divided into academic or university, school, public, special, or national (Made, 2000). Mayer (2002) added that there are community libraries as well and these were regarded as part of the public library by Made (2000) which is there to serve the needs of individuals, groups and organisations in a certain area. According to Dent (2014) the distinction between different types of libraries is often based on governance, affiliation and funding. Libraries in Africa provide information in order to educate, inform, entertain, recreate, and enlighten the users as pointed out by Nwokocha and Chimah (2016). Dent, Goodman and Kevane (2013) noted that libraries play an important role in the dissemination of knowledge. Community library and information services play an important role in the rural areas by empowering the rural community members in as far as their basic needs are concerned as pointed out by Mayer (2002). Community libraries can also be regarded as community information centres and their...
Advocating for Library and Information Services by National Library Associations of Africa

major role is to uplift the living standard of the community with “timely educational, informational, recreational and cultural information, documents or resources” (Mokgaboki, 2002, p. 78). Kernicky (2006) believed that “the rural information centres provide the community with relevant, timely and current information” (p. 31). Community library and information services play an important role in the rural areas by empowering the rural community members in as far as their basic needs are concerned (Mayer, 2002).

However, it had been noted that libraries in Africa are crippled by the challenges of budget cuts, increased user base, information explosion, rising costs, competition from database producers/vendors and complexity in user information requirements, wants and needs (Edewor, Okite-Amughoro, Osuchukwu, & Egreajena, 2016; Madhusudhan, 2008). There is need to ensure that those challenges are dealt with in order to achieve the sustainable development goals since libraries are partners in national development.

UN 2030 AGENDA

World leaders at the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Summit (25 - 27 September 2015) adopted the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Council of Europe, 2018). The SDGs are also known as “Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” or 2030 Agenda in short. They are also regarded as the Global Goals for Sustainable Development and the goals were developed to replace the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which ended in 2015. It is an ambitious plan that took effect 1 January 2016 to end poverty by 2030 and universally promote shared economic prosperity, social development and environmental protection. The UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a framework of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) spanning economic, environmental and social development. SDG stories demonstrate how libraries and access to information contribute to improved outcomes across all SDGs (European Commission, 2017). The United Nations (UN, 2018) indicated that the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals will require all hands-on deck. It will require different sectors and actors working together in an integrated manner by pooling financial resources, knowledge and expertise. Since 2012, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) has been actively engaged with initiatives that led to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. IFLA, the global voice of the library and information profession, calls on library associations, libraries and librarians to further development and provides resources to promote this effort. In 2016 - 17, the “Libraries for Peace” Initiative invited librarians and libraries to advance the UN Sustainable Development Goals to build a peaceful and sustainable world.

ADVOCATING FOR LIS

Advocacy is planned, deliberate, sustained effort to develop understanding and the active support of an idea through strategies and methods’ that influence the opinions and decision of people and organization (Buckley, 2009). It is regarded as a tool for improving service delivery (Myenzi, 2008). A study that was done by Stenstrom and Haycock (2015) indicated that the advocacy tools that can be used include building strong relationships and networks with those who are involved in decision making especially concerning funding. The authors noted that in most cases those who advocate for services would be
doing so as a reaction to a decrease in financial support. Sewell (2016) indicated that in public libraries, advocacy helps to improve funding and to ensure that the collection is up-to-date. A successful advocacy campaign can be done to cultivate leadership and this can be done through the involvement of the community and all the stakeholders. It has been noted by Madhusudhan (2008) and Edewor et al., (2016) that library advocacy is important to ensure the following:

- Promotion of the use of information resources
- Create perception of need and thereby create demand
- Ensure the optimum use of information
- Improve the image and status of the libraries and library profession
- Tackle the problems of rising costs of reading materials, journals and databases
- Cope with the information explosion
- Introduce cutting edge information technology systems in library services
- Balance shrinking funds
- Save libraries from devaluation
- Save libraries from declining reader support
- Uphold the dictum that information is power

LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS

The *Encyclopaedia of Communication and Information* (2002) defined a library association as organised groups consisting of individuals and institutions that share interests in libraries and librarianship. These are under charters that are approved by state or national governments. Library associations deal with the standards in terms of service delivery; support of professional principles and ethics related to information access and intellectual freedom; accreditation of library programmes; and certification of professional personnel in library and information science. The encyclopaedia also added that there are many associations at national, regional and international level worldwide. In Africa, as at 9 March 2018 (AfLIA Secretariat, 2018), there were 54 national library associations that served the interests of library and information professionals. These national associations work in collaboration with the African Library and Information Associations and Institutions (AfLIA) at a continental level and the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) at a global level in advocating for library services to meet the SDGs. There are regional library associations as well and in Africa, the Standing Conference of Eastern, Central and Southern African Library and Information Associations (SCECSAL), the African Library and Information Associations and Institutions (AfLIA) represents library and information centres in the region. The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) represent librarians and information professionals worldwide. There are many international associations that are related to special library interests and these are the International Association of School Librarianship (IASL), the International Association of Law Libraries (IALL), the International Association of Agricultural Information Specialists (IAALD), and the International Association of Technological University Libraries (IATUL).
STANDING CONFERENCE OF EASTERN, CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN AFRICAN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION ASSOCIATIONS (SCECSAL)

SCECSAL is a regional forum for library and information associations in Central, Eastern and Southern Africa. According to the website (SCECSAL, 2018), membership to SCECSAL is open to national library and information associations from Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Congo Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, eSwatini, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. SCECSAL works in collaboration with AfLIA and IFLA in advocating for library and information services in Africa. As part of its advocacy campaign, conferences are held in member countries after every two years and influential people are invited to be the guest of honour on such events to pass the message on the importance of libraries in contributing to the implementation of SDGs. The recent SCECSAL was held in Uganda and in 2020 it would be held in Namibia.

AFRICAN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION ASSOCIATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS (AfLIA)

AfLIA is a not for profit organisation which pursue the interests of library and information associations, library and information services, librarians and information workers and the communities they serve in Africa (AfLIA, 2018a). It was established in 2013 and was registered as an international non-governmental organisation (NGO) under the laws of Ghana in 2014 (AfLIA, 2018a). A presentation was done by Dr Helena Asamoah-Hassan in South Africa at the first African Library Summit in May, 2011 (Mbambo-Thata, Raubenheimer, J, and Linde, 2011). The presentation led to the formation of the African Library Association that provides a platform for discussing issues pertaining to the library and information sector in Africa. Its main duty is to advocate for favourable library policies to be included in national development policies. AfLIA is currently playing a leading role in working with African librarians to empower the library and information community to actively promote the development agenda through dynamic services that transform livelihoods to meet the aims of the UN 2030 and AU 2063 Agenda. Currently, it is working with libraries and National Library Associations in Africa; Governments and Government Agencies responsible for Libraries in Africa; African Regional and Economic Bodies and African Union (AU) and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA); Global Partners and related organisations. Therefore, it is regarded as the voice of libraries and the Information Profession in Africa. The motherboard of all the library associations is IFLA.

AfLIA held its 3rd African Public Libraries Summit on 3-4 July 2018 at the International Conference Centre in Durban, South Africa. The theme of the summit was “driving development: African public libraries delivering the development agenda”. The summit brought together public library leadership and librarians, government officials and other informational professionals and stakeholders from across Africa. This was in line with its objectives of advocating for library and information services by promoting library and information centres as vital institutions that enhance people’s lives through equitable access to knowledge, information, and innovative services. By including the government officials, it helped to put the library and information profession on the national and continental agendas (AfLIA, 2018b).
THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS (IFLA)

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. It is the global voice of the library and information profession (IFLA, 2018a). IFLA is an independent, international, non-governmental, and not-for-profit organization which works with libraries and library associations at national, regional and international level to advocate for library and information services to meet the SDGs. The aims of IFLA are to promote high standards of provision and delivery of library and information services; to encourage widespread understanding of the value of good library & information services; and to represent the interests of its members throughout the world (IFLA, 2018a). It has various services and programmes that advocate for library services towards the achievement of SDGs. One of the programmes is the International advocacy programme (IAP) which was developed in 2016 as a capacity-building programme designed to promote and support the role libraries can play in the planning and implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda and the SDGs (IFLA, 2018b). IFLA’s consistent position is that access to information is essential in achieving the SDGs, and that libraries are not only key partners for governments but are already contributing to progress towards the achievement of the 17 Goals.

IFLA also launched a new toolkit (IFLA, 2016) which would help national associations to advocate for library services to national and regional policy makers to ensure that libraries and access to information are included as part of national and regional development plans that play a role in meeting the 2030 agenda. The toolkit was revised in August 2017 and is available on the IFLA website (IFLA, 2017). Garcia-Febo (2016) indicated that as these plans are developed, the library community in each country should communicate with government leaders on how libraries serve as cost-effective partners for advancing their development priorities. As a result, national library associations would be part of crafting of the national development plans. This would put the library and information service at an advocacy role which is essential in securing recognition and pointing out the role they play in local development. In turn, the libraries would then receive the resources that are needed to ensure that access to information is made possible. The toolkit helps to:

1. Understand the UN 2030 Agenda process, and IFLA’s advocacy
2. Understand how the UN 2030 Agenda will be implemented at the national level
3. Organise meetings with policymakers to demonstrate the contribution libraries and access to information make to national development, and across the SDGs
4. Monitor the UN 2030 Agenda and implementation of the SDGs
5. Tell library users about the SDGs

In view of the above, the toolkit is important to ensure that all the people know about the SDGs and this can be accomplished by librarians who have a role in ensuring that everyone who visits the library is aware of the goals.
LIBRARIES AND UN 2030 AGENDA

Around the world, public access to information enables people to make informed decisions that can improve their lives. IFLA (2014) added that “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”. National library associations are using various strategies to advocate for library and information services within their countries and some had already made notable strides in contributing to the 2030 agenda. According to IFLA (2015) library services had been contributing to improved outcomes across the SDGs by:

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

In addition to the above, libraries are proven, cost-effective partners for advancing development priorities and in many countries there are designated libraries which act as UN depositories which hold information on the SDGs. Libraries are already supporting progress toward specific SDGs including by promoting lifelong learning opportunities which is goal 4 of the SDGs. The library has become a provider of knowledge, developing its collections, holding consultations on higher education, helping children to do their homework and integrating library activities into the local educational network. According to IFLA (2013) in Botswana, public libraries have taken large strides toward supporting the government’s objectives under its National Vision 2016, including introducing ICT access, improving the computer skills of library users, and enabling users to be successful in business, education, and employment. In Uganda libraries have been empowering women and girls as a contribution towards goal 5. The National Library of Uganda has provided ICT training specifically designed for female farmers so that they can access weather forecasts, crop prices, and support to set up online markets, in their local languages (Beyond access, 2012). Some of the ways which are used by libraries to support community development are providing comfortable, inclusive, safe and neutral space to all groups of the population (SDG 11), helping the community to identify members in social and physical need in order to help them and include them in public life; promoting a peaceful society for sustainable development (SDG 16) whereby libraries are used as places for meeting, talking and trying to address issues that might affect community development. The information that was extracted from IFLA (2018b) indicated that libraries play a major role in meeting the SDGs as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1 shows that libraries have an important role in the achievement of national development plans and meeting the SDGs. Societies are now in the knowledge era access to information is crucial in implementing national goals. Lack of access to information can negatively affect the development of Africa. National library associations should therefore advocate for the development of library and information services to ensure that information is accessible. The voice of librarians should be heard by using the
### Table 1. Role of the libraries in meeting the SDGs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Role of Libraries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal 1: No poverty - End poverty in all its forms everywhere.</td>
<td>• Provide public access to information and resources that give people opportunities to improve their lives.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provide training in new skills needed for education and employment.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Provide information to support decision-making by governments, civil society, and business to combat poverty.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goal 2: Zero hunger - End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.</td>
<td>• Provide agricultural research and data on how to be more productive and sustainable.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Libraries provide people with access to research and data on crops, market information and farming methods that supports resilient, productive agriculture.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Provide public access for farmers to online resources like local market prices, weather reports, and new equipment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goal 3: Good health and well-being - Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.</td>
<td>• Provide research available in medical and hospital libraries that supports education and improves medical practice for health care providers.</td>
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<td>• Provide public access to health and wellness information in public libraries that help individuals and families stay health.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goal 4: Quality education - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.</td>
<td>• Libraries are at the heart of schools, universities and colleges in every country around the world.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Libraries support literacy programmes and provide a safe space for learning for people of all ages.</td>
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<td>• Provide dedicated staff that supports early literacy and lifelong learning.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Provide access to information and research for students everywhere.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Libraries support researchers to reuse research and data to create new knowledge.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Provide inclusive spaces where cost is not a barrier to new knowledge and skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goal 5: Gender equality - Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.</td>
<td>• Provide safe and welcoming meeting spaces.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Provide programmes and services designed to meet the needs of women and girls, like rights and health.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Provide access to information and ICT that helps women build business skills.</td>
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<td>Goal 6: Clean water and sanitation - Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.</td>
<td>• Libraries provide public access to information on water and sanitation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 7: Affordable and clean energy - Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.</td>
<td>• Provide access to quality information and good practices that support local water management and sanitation projects.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• In some cases, libraries play a central role in bringing safe drinking water to the entire community.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Provide free and reliable access to electricity and light to read, study and work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth – Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.</td>
<td>• Provide widespread existing infrastructure of public and research libraries and skilled library professionals who can help people with information to find the right job, complete online applications, and write support materials.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goal 9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure - Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation.</td>
<td>• Provide welcoming and inclusive public spaces</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Provide access to ICT like high-speed internet that may not be available anywhere else.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Provide training to enable people to become more entrepreneurial.</td>
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<td>Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities - Reduce inequality within and among countries.</td>
<td>• Libraries help to reduce inequalities by providing safe, civic spaces open to all and located in urban and rural areas across the world.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Provide neutral and welcoming spaces that make learning accessible to all, including marginalised groups like migrants, refugees, minorities, indigenous peoples, and persons with disabilities.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Provide equitable access to information that supports social, political, and economic inclusion.</td>
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## Goal Role of Libraries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Role of Libraries</th>
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| Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities - 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.  
• Provide trusted institutions devoted to promoting cultural inclusion and understanding.  
• Provide documentation and preservation of cultural heritage for future generations.  
• Culture strengthens local communities and supports inclusive and sustainable development of cities. |
| Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production - Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.  
Goal 13: Climate action - Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.  
Goal 14: Life below water - Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.  
Goal 15: Life on land - 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 provide communities with information on sustainable practices relevant to their situation.  
• Provide sustainable system of sharing and circulating materials that reduce waste.  
• Provide historical records about coastal change and land use.  
• Provide research and data needed to inform climate change policy.  
• Provide widespread access to information needed to guide decision making by local and national governments on topics like hunting, fishing, land use and water management. |
| Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions - Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. | • Provide public access to information about government, civil society, and other institutions.  
• Provide training in the skills needed to understand and use this information.  
• Provide inclusive, politically neutral spaces for people to meet and organise.  
• Libraries have the expertise and resources to help governments, institutions and individuals communicate, organise, structure and use information effectively for development. |
| Goal 17: Partnerships for the goals - Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development. | • Provide global network of community-based institutions, primed to support local development plans. |
strategies that are documented in the next section. These strategies would help to position the library on the national map to ensure that access to information is achieved in this knowledge society.

STRATEGIES FOR ADVOCATING FOR LIBRARY SERVICES

In order to accomplish the roles that were pointed out in Table 1, advocacy is essential to ensure that libraries are recognised as partners in development. There are various strategies that are employed by national library associations and these include the use of websites, print materials, use of social media, office for library advocacy, friends of the library, public demonstrations, letter-writing campaigns, involve community vision strategy and input from all stakeholder groups, cultivate leadership, library advocacy toolkit, IFLA toolkit, organise meetings with policymakers, and participate in national consultations on development plans.

Organise Meetings With Policymakers

There is need to demonstrate the importance of the library and the contribution of equitable access to information in national development and across the SDGs to the policy makers. The IFLA advocacy toolkit (IFLA, 2017) provides the steps that should be taken in planning for meetings with policy makers. These are:

1. **Identify Representatives From the Library Sector**: This must be done to ensure that the voice of the library the UN 2030 agenda is coordinated and supported at national level. This would also help in aligning the activities with IFLA’s international position at the overall body responsible for library and information services and associations. The national executive council should be responsible for leading the advocacy campaign and organise and attend meetings with the policymakers. Representatives from the national library or major public and research libraries can also be included even if they are not in the national executive council of the national association. It is important to use legitimacy and knowledge of the profession when selecting the representatives so as to form a formal relationship with the policymakers.

2. **Identify Implementation Process and Government Priorities**: This can be accomplished by understanding how the UN 2030 agenda would be implemented at a national level. The national library association should identify policymakers, priorities and planned activities that would enable them to identify the role that libraries can play in the implementation of the SDGs. This would determine the implementation processes as they vary from country to country as indicated in Table 2. The implementation process would differ from country to country through adapting and localising SDGs for local context. Some countries have national development plans already and these direct the government priorities and these can include a single national development plan, digital inclusion, social development plans among others. Libraries would then partner with the government and other stakeholders in these developmental programmes by providing access to information to eradicate poverty, give public access to ICT, quality education, agriculture, health, universal service provision, culture, economic growth and all the SDGs. An extract from the toolkit states that:
“If access to information and libraries are not included in National Development Plans, it’s more than a missed opportunity. Governments may overlook libraries and fund other organisations to provide public access, information and skills, or they may not recognize the need for public access at all.”

The toolkit would help national library associations to demonstrate the value of libraries in meeting health, educational, economic and cultural goals. It would also assist them in advocating for adequate resources from the government so that the libraries are well resourced to provide high quality library and information services (IFLA, 2017).

3. **Develop Library Strategy and Key Messages:** IFLA provides messages that can be used by national library associations in Africa in advocating for their library and information services. The toolkit has an appendix 2: Briefing/handout: Libraries and access to information make an important contribution to national development (IFLA, 2017) so that the message of access to information is strong. It is important to focus on national priorities and make adaptations to suit the local context. The key message must support public access to information which enables the creation of knowledge societies with the necessary infrastructure, ICT, media and information literacy so that library users are able to efficiently and effectively use information. After planning the meeting, the representatives from the national library association should do their research to ensure that they are knowledgeable about the people they are going to meet as well as the priorities and interests of the government. The representatives should know the investments and policies regarding to libraries and access to information in their countries.

4. **Organise Meetings With Policymakers and Participate in Consultations:** The meetings would assist in creating awareness among the government officials and policymakers on the importance of libraries in meeting the SDGs as well as why access to information is essential. If the meetings are successful, libraries would be able to partner with the government and other stakeholders to implement national programmes that benefit library users. The national library association representatives would be in a position to identify opportunities where libraries can be included since the national development plans drive the spending direction and programme priorities of governments. There is need also to identify the policymakers who are responsible for the implementation of SDGs. In some countries, a minister or senior staff member might be appointed to coordinate implementation activities. Other key ministries that work with libraries such as Ministries of Education, Culture, and ICT should also be involved to gain support. The United Nations Country teams should also be included since the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have an important role in working with governments in the implementation of SDGs. UNDP can also be a source of information in terms of the forums and consultations that would be discussing the implementation of SDGs in various countries.

5. **Utilize the Media, Partners and Champions:** It is important to work with those who are outside the library sector to reinforce the advocacy efforts. This can be accomplished by working with the media, partners and champions of SDGs implementation. The media would assist in creating awareness to the general populace and also gaining the attention of policymakers. National library associations can make use of the commemorations of national and international days to inform the world what libraries are doing. Champions such as Members of Parliament, celebrities or writers can be used to make the library voice heard. Local and national newspapers, social media, radio stations and the television can be used to create awareness.
6. **Monitor the Process:** The implementation process and the activities laid down by the national library associations should be monitored to ensure that the planned activities are being achieved.

These steps show that it is important to lobby for the establishment and development of a viable library and information service in Africa by engaging policymakers. If the librarians are recognised, even their work within the society would be valued. Therefore, there is need to prove the importance of providing enough resources and infrastructure for the development of library and information services in Africa.

**Personal Discussions With Important Stakeholders**

In addition to organising meetings with policymakers, there is need to organise and participate in personal discussions with important stakeholders who have a major role to play in the library and information services sector. This calls for excellent interpersonal communication skills to ensure that those who would be representing the associations are able to dialogue with the role players to make the voices of librarians be heard.

**Table 2. Summary of approaches of implementing the SDGs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Suggested Strategy</th>
<th>Example Countries</th>
<th>Policymaker to Target for Meetings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. New national development plan</td>
<td>Country will formulate a new national development plan using the SDGs and regional plans as the basis. Get involved in the consultation process. Emphasize the contribution access to information makes across the SDGs; Use other declarations to support your advocacy including the Cape Town Declaration and the Lyon Declaration on Access to Information and Development.</td>
<td>Tanzania, Uganda</td>
<td>Minister or senior staff member responsible for SDGs. May be located in Ministry of Foreign Affairs, National Development, or another Ministry or Department.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Existing national development process</td>
<td>SDGs will be incorporated into existing national development process.</td>
<td>Zimbabwe, Gabon</td>
<td>Minister or senior staff member in national development Ministry or Department.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Variety of plans and processes</td>
<td>SDGs will be integrated across different portfolios and policies as these countries do not have a single national development plan. Policies may or may not be updated to specifically reference the SDGs.</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>Minister or senior staff member in targeted Ministries or Departments, e.g. Health, Education, Culture, Social Inclusion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Not yet known</td>
<td>It is not yet known what the process will be.</td>
<td>Visit the website of the UN Permanent Mission in your country where announcements may be published. Contact your UN Country Team and your Focal Point listed in the Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(IFLA, 2017)
Public Speeches at Conference

There are a number of conferences that are organised in various African countries with themes on national development and the attainment of SDGs. National library associations can take advantage of these conferences to present their plea to the conference participants and advocate for the development of library and information services in their country. The public speech could help in selling the idea of having a library or information centre at every institution be it a school, college, university, company, or any organisation.

Letter-Writing Campaigns

Letter writing campaigns can be utilised by national library associations in Africa as a way of informing law makers, general populace and other library officials about library and information services. Library and information advocates can write letters or send e-mails to elected officials and the nationalities citing the important role that libraries are playing in implementing SDGs and enabling access to information for all.

Public Demonstrations

A public demonstration is a march or gathering which people take part in to show their opposition to something or their support for something (Collins dictionary, 2018). Public demonstrations for libraries take place in the form of rallies, protests and reads-ins. Masses can hold peaceful march to send a message to the policymakers on the how they are benefiting from libraries with regard to the implementation of SDGs. However, according to Tufekci (2017), the act of protesting takes time and energy and it can be dangerous, depending on the country, with risks ranging from arrest to tear-gas exposure and, sometimes, death. As a result, library advocates should organise the public demonstrations in a professional manner to ensure that such issues are avoided. A petition can be signed and presented to decision makers that are influential in the implementation of SDGs.

Friends of the Library

The national library associations can work with friends of the library who can be influential people in the communities who serve the public through dollar gifts, volunteer and program support, and through advocacy (Reed, 2012). Reed (2012) added that friends of the library prioritize their roles for serving the library and focus most on their highest priorities in making sure that libraries are well resourced, these people can pass the message to the policymakers through advocacy work. The goal should be that of creating awareness to every single person in the community to know how access to information can lead to the achievement of SDGs.

Use of Social Media

National library associations can utilise various social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Skype, WhatsApp, Flickr among others to advocate for library and information services. According to American Library Association (ALA, 2014) social media has the potential to facilitate much closer
relationships between libraries and their patrons and the uptake of these tools is accelerating and would continue to play an increasingly important role in library service provision and outreach. According to Boyd and Ellison (2008), social networking sites are defined as “web-based services” that aim to allow users to create a profile, link with their acquaintances and be able to view and interact with their friends’ connections. Social networking sites are becoming more and more popular triggering an increase in published research and impacting different aspects of daily life including the implementation of SDGs. Phillips (2015) noted that social media provides librarians with an inexpensive and innovative avenue to advocate for libraries. Not only do librarians need to know how to use social media to reach patrons, but they also must understand what types of patrons they are reaching and what services appeal to social media savvy patrons (Horn, 2011).

**Printed Material**

National library associations can make use of printed materials such as flyers, newsletters and brochures to create awareness and advocate for its role in implementing the SDGs. These can be distributed to individuals in the streets or send to the policy makers and other public libraries so that access to information for all is increases. The use of technology had enhanced how libraries can produce these materials that can be used in the advocacy campaigns. Technology provides the chance for librarians to innovate, boost quality, measure success, and align services with the priorities of their organizations to ensure that they serve the communities with their information needs. With technology, librarians can reintroduce themselves as visible, valuable, and essential partners in achieving SDGs.

**Website**

The advocacy campaign can also be accomplished by using websites. Most of the national library associations in Africa have their own websites and they can create pages specifically dedicated to the advocacy work. These pages would be informing the masses and the policymakers on the activities being done by libraries towards the achievement of SDGs. The website is regarded as the 24/7 gateway to information which connects users to the latest news about libraries.

**CHALLENGES FACED IN ADVOCATING FOR LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES**

The process of advocating for library and information services is not an easy task. National library associations face quite a number of challenges in their advocacy work. These include but are not limited to lack of advocacy skills, insufficient support, lack of resources, poor networking and connection, and lack of recognition by those who are responsible for implementing the SDGs. Advocacy is an art that should be mastered by possessing the skills that are needed especially when communicating with policy makers. However, some of the librarians do not possess these skills leading to the failure of the advocacy campaigns. There is also generally lack of support of libraries in Africa and some do not take the advocacy work seriously. Library and Information Science Professor Debra Kachel (Kachel, 2017) noted that librarians engage in advocacy only when library budgets and staffing are at risk of being cut.
Developing an advocacy campaign requires funding and there is need for national library associations to make sure that a budget for that activity is available. The funds are needed for human resources and the development of infrastructure that would be used during the advocacy campaigns. Librarians can make use of the websites and social media platforms in order to achieve their advocacy aims. In order to get the funds that are needed to carry out a successful advocacy campaign, national library associations must apply for grants and appeal for donations from the friends of the library group. Other institutions that value the importance of libraries can also be approached to assist in funding the advocacy campaigns. There are international organisations that support advocacy campaigns in developing countries such as Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Electronic Information for Libraries (EIFL), International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP), International Federation, IFLA, and (Online Computer Library Centre (OCLC) among others. Some library associations such as American Library Association (ALA) have developed an advocacy toolkit which can customised and used by national library associations in Africa.

Communities suffer from bad transport connectivity, inability to commute and to get information quickly and effectively. As a result, national library associations would not be in a position to deliver comprehensive services due to lack of services. Some libraries do not have internet connection and the collection is not sufficient leading to some groups being underserved. These people would not be in position to offer access to information for all due to limited public spaces for people to meet, to access information, to develop new skills, to communicate with the rest of the world, to discuss problems and to work out strategies to build a better community, to talk to authorities and to keep the young population interested in living. This is a major drawback as these people would not have access to information on the implementation of SDGs and they would not support the role that is played by libraries. The solution is the transformation of library facilities into modern and welcoming spaces and the improvement of library activities and training of library staff.

Ossai-Onah (2013) added that the techniques used in lobbying and advocacy range from face to face meeting with policy makers and legislators as well as using friends of library. However, he pointed out that limited access to legislators and policy makers, lukewarm attitude of librarians, lack of librarians in politics were identified as factors militating against effective lobbying and advocacy. Some national library associations also do not include stakeholders in the process of defining their mission and as a result would not be supported during the advocacy campaigns. Therefore, national library associations should justify their role and the role of libraries to legislators, administrators and community members to ensure that their advocacy work is successful. National library associations should create a quality brand that adds value to the products and services that are offered in the achievement of SDGs (Barker, 2017). Effective branding would help to increase the visibility of libraries, inform how the library is viewed by stakeholders and communicate the value of the library to the community. The other strategies that are employed by national associations to deal with the challenges are training of library staff, improving communication with community leaders, developing community champions, strengthening intersections with diverse communities, advocate for support from institutions and government, demonstrating the collective impact of partners working together, and reaching out to and engaging with young professional organisations.
AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This chapter documented the strategies that are used by national library association to advocate for library and information services in Africa. The authors suggest doing a further study on the effectiveness of these strategies considering the diversity of the national programmes and priorities in the implementation of the SDGs. It is important to investigate if the national library associations are implementing these strategies and whether they are satisfied with the outcomes of their advocacy activities.

CONCLUSION

The role that is played by libraries in the achievement of the SDGs cannot be overlooked. Access to information is enhanced by ensuring that the libraries are well resourced. As a result, the importance of advocacy is crucial in order for libraries to successfully provide the information that is required to achieve the SDGs. There is need for partnership between librarians, national library associations and the legislators in order to put the library in national development plans. If that is not done, the library would be left out and people would not be able to access the information that is crucial in achieving the SDGs. This chapter pointed out the strategies that are employed by national library associations in Africa to put the library on the developmental map to ensure that the SDGs are achieved. These strategies include organising meetings with policymakers; personal discussions with important stakeholders; public speeches at conferences; letter writing campaigns; public demonstrations; friends of the library; use of social media, printed materials, and websites. The challenges that are faced in advocating for library and information services were also noted and these include lack of advocacy skills; insufficient support; lack of resources; poor networking; lack of recognition of librarians; and poor infrastructure. It can be concluded that national library associations should ensure that librarians have the advocacy skills that are necessary to engage the policymakers so that their advocacy work is successful. It is also the role of national associations to ensure that policy makers and other important stakeholders are involved in the process of defining the mission of libraries so that the role of libraries is incorporated in the crafting of national development plans.

REFERENCES


Advocating for Library and Information Services by National Library Associations of Africa


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**KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS**

**Advocacy:** It is an activity that aims to influence decisions by legislators and other influential people towards a certain cause.

**Banding:** The process involved in creating a unique name, design and image for a product in the consumer’s mind, to attracts and retains loyal customers.

**Community Development:** A process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to strengthen each other in the community where they stay.

**Information Professionals:** People responsible for providing access to information and knowledge. These can be librarians, archivists, or records managers who train users on how to access and use information by offering information literacy skills training.

**Library and Information Services:** Provision of access to information in information and knowledge centres to meet the SDGs.

**Library Associations:** An organisation that promotes library and information centres as well as library education. It can be national, regional or international.

**Policymakers:** People responsible for formulating policies.

**Social Media:** Applications and websites that are used for social networking such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, WhatsApp, Flickr that enable users to create and share content.

**Strategy:** A plan of action designed to achieve a certain aim.

**Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** They are a collection of 17 global goals by the United nations that are aimed at ending poverty, protect the plant as well as ensuring that have peace in their countries. They are also known as 2030 Agenda or Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.