



# IFLA STRATEGIC PLAN 2006-2009

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), founded in 1927, 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 pursues its priorities within the framework of the three pillars:

*Society* – Libraries and information services serve society by preserving memory, feeding development, enabling education and research, and supporting international understanding and community well being.

*Profession* – As the global voice for libraries and information services and the profession, IFLA has always been vitally concerned with improving methods, technical means and standards.

*Members* – As a membership organisation, IFLA serves the interests of its members and draws both its mandate and global reach from them.

This plan establishes the priorities of the IFLA Governing Board for the period 2006-2009 and is intended to guide both its work and that of IFLA's divisions, sections and other activities. It will be reviewed annually by the Governing Board.

### 1.1 VISION

Libraries and information services are essential to the sound operation of the inclusive Information Society. IFLA and libraries and information services share the common vision of an Information Society for all adopted by the World Summit on the Information Society in Geneva in November 2003. That vision promotes an inclusive society in which everyone will be able to create, access, use and share information and knowledge.

To enable access to information by all peoples, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions is committed to the fundamental human rights to know, learn and communicate without restriction. It opposes censorship and supports balance and fairness in intellectual property regulation. IFLA is also vitally concerned to promote multilingual content, cultural diversity and the special needs of Indigenous peoples, minorities and those with disabilities.

IFLA, working with its members and other partners, the profession and other partners, will advance the position of libraries and information services and their capacity to contribute to the development of individuals and communities through access to information and culture.

(adapted from *Alexandria Manifesto on Libraries, the Information Society in Action*, IFLA, 11 November 2005).

## 1.2 MISSION

IFLA is an independent, international, non-governmental, not-for-profit organization. Our aims are to:

- Promote high standards of provision and delivery of library and information services
- Encourage widespread understanding of the value of good library & information services
- Represent the interests of our members throughout the world.

(from *IFLA Statutes*)

## 1.3 CORE VALUES

In pursuing these aims IFLA embraces the following core values:

1. 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
2. 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
3. the conviction that delivery of high quality library and information services helps guarantee that access
4. 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.

(from *IFLA Statutes*)

## 2 STRATEGIC ANALYSIS

The environment in which IFLA operates includes the environment in which libraries operate.

### **Issues facing IFLA's main constituencies (libraries, library associations, and library/information workers)**

- Climate change: more extreme weather conditions can be expected, with more natural disasters (hurricanes, flooding) affecting libraries.
- Technology: the impact of ICTs, especially the potential threat of disintermediation where intermediaries such as publishers, subscription agents, booksellers and librarians can be eliminated because it is thought that end-clients can obtain the information directly from creators. Google executives keep stressing that Google's mission is to organise the world's information – something libraries have been doing for millennia. Judging by the information-seeking behaviour of university students, Google already has. Impact of Internet on expectations of library users: "If it's not on Google it doesn't exist". Some closures or downgrading of libraries because organisations believe they can do without their libraries.. Less dramatically but more significantly, the management of digital resources is becoming a major preoccupations of librarians world-wide – an area with which IFLA is not yet dealing holistically but which today is perhaps as significant to the profession as universal bibliographic control or universal availability of publications were twenty years ago.
- Economics: the commodification of information leads to new imbalances between copyright holders (not necessarily authors) and users and to pressure to extend the scope of copyright.

Globalisation allows powerful multinationals to take control and effect quasi-monopolistic vertical integration (e.g. Google moving into the production and organisation of digital resources), etc. This makes life more difficult for librarians as intermediaries (intellectual property restrictions), and reduces the space available for linguistic and cultural diversity and freedom of expression.

- International political relations: Radical anti-western movements, gulf between rich and poor countries, enormous pressure of economic migrants trying to escape poverty (e.g. Rio Grande, Canary Islands), international impact of failed states, instability, and polarisation. Rise of China and India as economic powers. In a recent book, *The war of the world: history's age of hatred*, the historian Niall Ferguson has characterised the 20<sup>th</sup> century as one of unparalleled bloodshed in the history of the world. The 21<sup>st</sup> century looks set to follow in the same pattern. Librarians claim that freedom of information and access to books and reading favour understanding and tolerance and hence promote peace. Should the profession, and IFLA, be doing something more concrete about this?
- National politics: governmental policies in respect of culture and cultural industries, book promotion, education, information, the information or knowledge society, research and innovation, trade relations and privatisation all affect libraries.
- Socio-economic and demographic factors: greying of populations in western countries, consequently the rising social costs constitute a growing burden on a proportionally smaller working population. In contrast: declining life expectancies in countries affected by HIV-AIDS (aids orphans). Also the challenge of reintegrating former child soldiers into society in countries recovering from bloody conflict. In the West, emerging countries of the former Soviet Union and elsewhere materialism rules: "I want it all and I want it now" – possibly already reflected in some countries by unwillingness of younger librarians to get involved in professional associations.

### **Issues facing IFLA**

- IFLA is recognized as the global leader for libraries and information services. Its strong international reputation results from its committed and active members, loyal staff, effective leadership and strong partnerships, especially with national libraries and national library associations. Its global reach and diversity create a strong presence which is manifested through its publications, brand strength, partnerships with international organizations, and well regarded conferences, especially the IFLA World Library and Information Congress.
- Those strengths are mirrored by weaknesses which derive from the challenges of operating globally and multi-lingually with insufficient financial and other resources, over dependency on membership income and limited infrastructure. It depends for much of its infrastructure, including accommodation and information technology, on the goodwill of other organizations. Its membership is geographically scattered, does not reflect all of the profession and is not growing.
- Threats to IFLA arise from its weaknesses and also include insufficient recognition in some regions and sectors, potential loss of membership, the impact of global socio-political divisions into its operations, and pressures on the profession arising from competition and political priorities.
- Opportunities exist for IFLA to build on its global reputation to expand its membership geographically and in under-represented sectors, attract more new professionals, strengthen and diversify its funding, extend strategic alliances with other organisations within the profession and beyond, develop relationships with regional conferences, and further exploit new technologies. In contributing to the achievement of an inclusive world information society, IFLA can take

advantage of its well established programs and further extend its activities in developing countries to strengthen the profession and better equip it to meet the needs of all peoples.

(IFLA Governing Board March 2006)

### 3 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

#### Society Pillar

IFLA, working with libraries and information services, will assist people throughout the world to create and participate in an equitable information society and to exercise their rights of freedom of access to information and freedom of expression in their daily lives.

1. IFLA will develop and conduct an effective **advocacy programme** in support of libraries, librarians, and library users worldwide.

##### *Strategic Actions*

- a. Create an advocacy capability at IFLA headquarters and develop an advocacy campaign focusing on the following themes:
    - o Freedom of access to information and freedom of expression
    - o Equity in the area of copyright; information flow among rich and poor nations; and intellectual property
    - o Inclusion in the areas of information access in an information society and building information/knowledge societies
  - b. To strengthen IFLA's advocacy capacity through consolidation and the building of partnerships
  - c. Promote implementation of the recommendations from the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)
  - d. Implement *Libraries on the Agenda* campaign
  - e. Promote reading, information literacy and life long learning as keys to participation in the information society.
2. IFLA will materially **affect international policies and practices** in key areas relating to libraries and information services.

##### *Strategic Actions*

- a. Influence international copyright law and intellectual property law so that library users have access to information under principles of fair use (CLM)
- b. Promote the need to respect the rights to information and freedom of expression (FAIFE)
- c. Advance the protection of and access to information and cultural resources throughout the world (FAIFE, PAC, Blue Shield, World Digital Library)
- d. Participate in and influence the multi-stakeholder forum on Internet governance when it is established in 2006

#### Profession Pillar

IFLA will assist libraries and information services to fulfil their purposes and shape responses to the needs of clients in a rapidly changing information environment.

3. IFLA will take the lead in collaborative efforts to establish **guidelines and standards** for the organization of information for access across international boundaries.

*Strategic Actions*

- a. Enable users to find, identify, select, and obtain information through international agreed standards and guidelines (eg Universal Bibliographic Control, document delivery, etc.)/ICABS
  - b. Develop guidelines and best practices through Sections and Divisions to provide guidance to local libraries and assist libraries to reduce costs through cooperative ventures
  - c. Promote resource sharing to assist library users to access and receive needed resources from beyond their own library
4. IFLA will promote the development **quality in library and information service** in all parts of the world, particularly in developing countries.

*Strategic Actions*

- a. Work with colleagues and local library stakeholders in developing countries to assist in capacity building for the library profession, library institutions, and library and information services through the Action for Development through Libraries Programme (ADP)
  - b. Develop and deliver programs and activities of IFLA Sections and discussion groups
  - c. Develop and facilitate the management of library associations especially in developing countries
5. IFLA is a source of **professional publications** to assist libraries and information services in improving their governance, management, and services.

*Strategic Actions*

- a. Revitalization of IFLANET for professional development and exchange.
  - b. Produce IFLA Journal regularly with articles of high quality
  - c. Produce print and electronic publications on topics of high interest to the profession
6. IFLA will work to **strengthen library associations**, especially in developing countries.

*Strategic Actions*

- a. Develop and roll out the GLAD (Global Library Association Development) Programme.
- b. Develop and deliver workshops and other training events to train and equip office-bearers of national library associations for the democratic, effective and efficient governance of their associations". "

## **Membership Pillar**

IFLA will be well managed and will provide services to members through efficient communication, exemplary programs, and learning opportunities that increase their ability to provide quality service to their clientele

7. IFLA will **communicate** with current and potential members **systematically** and so that information disseminated is current, accurate, timely, and useful of members.

*Strategic Actions*

- a. Implement assertive management of the services for members and the corporate partners and recruitment of new members including electronic renewals
- b. Establish an electronic newsletter directed to officers and members
- c. Improve communication with and services to Section officers including orientation of new officers and a discussion list for officers

- d. initiate a systematic and continuous process of monitoring the needs and wishes of our membership, starting in 2007 by undertaking a membership survey, and following this up by continuous monitoring in subsequent years
  - e. following the initial survey, develop an integrated communication strategy and communication plan that addresss the challenge of communicating with our “indirect” members (the members of LA members and the staff of institutional members) through the library associations and institutional members
8. IFLA will provide **forums** and other opportunities **for networking** to assist the professional development of current and potential members.

*Strategic Actions*

- a. Organize an annual World Library and Information Congress that is efficiently managed, financially beneficial to IFLA and reasonably priced for members
  - b. Deliver exemplary continuing education programs and other events that allow attendees to gain knowledge about their field and about international librarianship
  - c. Sponsor other conferences and meetings that allow members to present and exchange information and expertise
  - d. Create tools for members to work collaboratively through IFLANET
  - e. Increase the involvement of members in IFLA
9. IFLA **manages the organisation effectively and manages IFLA headquarters and other offices efficiently** to meet the needs of current and potential members.

*Strategic Actions*

- a. Increase capacity of all IFLA offices to support the Strategic Directions and Actions.
  - b. Thoroughly renovate IFLA’s information technology systems to improve administrative efficiency and for more effective communication, including the integration of database systems and the redesign of the IFLA website as the central communication and administrative tool.
10. IFLA **receives financial support** through increased membership and fund raising to support current and increased services to members.

*Strategic Actions*

- a. Allocate and manage IFLA’s finances effectively and efficiently to enable achievement of IFLA’s goals
  - b. Recruit new members with emphasis on underrepresented countries and commercial partners
  - c. Develop diverse, broad based and stable sources of funding, including income from the annual congress, expansion of membership, a revamped system of corporate partners and the establishment of an IFLA Foundation as conduit for non-taxable donations
11. IFLA will **examine its structure** (including statutes revision, core activities, and the number of sections)
- a. Review sections, taking a life-cycle approach to professional groups, streamlining IFLA, and making it more responsive
  - b. Review and revise IFLA statutes
  - c. Review core activities to move toward greater diversity and flexibility