

Building forward better: African library partnerships for inclusive information and education towards Agendas 2030 and 2063

Libraries are trusted providers of information, and spaces for research, skills formation and community development, contributing to progress across the SDGs, as highlighted by the recent UN Public Service Award to the Ghana Library Service. They bring unique contributions to partnerships.

To explore this potential, and realise it more fully, the International Federation of Library Associations & Institutions (IFLA) Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Division Committee (SSA RDC) and Kigali Public Library therefore propose a hybrid side event (90 minutes) in the form of a dynamic Panel Discussion under the theme, **Building forward better: Africa library partnerships for inclusive information and education towards Agendas 2030 and 2063.**

IFLA itself works to bring about a united global library field powering literate, informed and participatory societies. It focuses strongly on the SDGs as a framework for structuring and maximising the positive impact of libraries on societies, and building awareness and partnerships. IFLA's SSA RDC plays a vital role in building capacity for learning and defining regional action plans and local advocacy priorities that respond to Africa's needs, with reference also to the 2063 Agenda. It emphasizes the transformational role that information and informed societies can play in accelerating achievement of the SDGs in Africa.

IFLA has successfully hosted similar events, in partnership with Library Aid Africa, at the 2020 and 2021 African Regional Forum on Sustainable Development. These have helped raise awareness and mobilization among Africa's librarians, as well as build new partnerships to help deliver the SDGs.

In this event, speakers from inside and outside of the library field, across Africa, will first identify development challenges created or intensified by COVID-19, and explore how partnerships involving libraries have helped provide innovative and effective responses.

Responding to a series of questions, panelists will share lessons and insights about the unique potential of partnering with libraries, and what is needed to unlock this. The floor will be open to participants to contribute their insights and ask questions.

Speakers will include:

- Francoise Tuyishime, Director, Kigali Public Library, Rwanda
- Mandla Ntombela- South African Librarian for the Blind (Representing PWDs)
- Prof. Eugene Ndabaga, University of Kigali, Rwanda
- Hon Minister Prof. Joyce Ndalichako- Minister of State (Policy, Parliament, Labour, Employment, Youth, and the Disabled, in the Office of Prime Minister, Tanzania;
- Dr. Albert Byamugisha, Senior Technical Advisor-SDGs, Head, SDG Secretariat, Office of the Prime Minister, Kampala, Uganda
- Moderator: Victoria Okojie- Nigeria; Back up Moderator: Bhule Mbambo-Thata - Lesotho

Desired outcomes:

- Renewed energy in the library field to act and form partnerships for SDG delivery
- Create awareness among governments and others of the potential of working with libraries
- Identify concrete steps to be taken to facilitate partnerships and realise their potential
- Contribute to global reflection on innovative partnerships for the goals involving libraries

Conclusion: The proposed Kigali event builds on the set foundation to create visibility on the role of libraries towards the attainment of Agendas 2030 and 2063. It presents another opportunity to strengthen synergies between Africa's library community and the SDG committees.