

Reporting for IGF Workshop Sessions

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| Session title: | Dynamic Coalition on Public Access in Libraries |
| Date: | November 11, 2015 |
| Time: | 11:00 |
| Workshop Organiser: | Dynamic Coalition on Public Access in Libraries |
| Chairperson/Moderator: | Christina de Castell |
| Rapporteur/Note Taker: | Christina de Castell |
| List of Speakers and their institutional affiliations: | Stuart Hamilton, International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) Manu K. Bhardwaj, U.S. State Department Ramunė Petuchovaitė, Electronic Information for Libraries (EIFL) |
| Estimated Attendance | 25 |

Key Issues raised (1 sentence per issue):

- We need to continue to raise awareness of libraries' role in access to information, building from the inclusion in the UN 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development Goals, so that they are included at a national level.
- Effort is required to increase the ability for library workers in developing countries to support their community members' technology, media and information literacy needs through training staff.
- We need to take the vision of connecting the next billion and access in the Sustainable Development Goals to the level of implementation by engaging the development community in conversations so connectivity is included as part of core infrastructure.
- Policy makers/funders need to prioritize existing community spaces, such as libraries, at a design level when planning connectivity or creating granting programs.
- Greater participation is needed from IGF stakeholder groups, beyond civil society, as although all groups were present at the workshop, representation was low from other stakeholder groups: government, private sector, and technical community.

If there are Presentations during the workshop session, please provide a 1-paragraph summary for each Presentation

Stuart Hamilton, IFLA Deputy Secretary General, spoke about the work of some of the Dynamic Coalition's members at the UN in New York between 2013 and 2015, where the focus was on the preparation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development. He covered IFLA's objectives, which were to ensure access to information was recognised as supporting development in the new framework, and recalled the Lyon Declaration on Access to Information and Development (www.lyondeclaration.org) a document backed by a coalition of 600 organisations from across the library, development and technology sectors. He observed that the WSIS/IGF community had been sadly under-represented in the discussions in New York, which impacted the quality of the ICT targets in the Sustainable Development Goals. He reviewed the goals and targets, pointing out where the Dynamic Coalition could engage (particularly around 9c which deals with Internet access in Least Developed Countries) and

raised awareness of the outstanding issues to be completed at the UN, notably the indicators to be used to measure the new framework, and the Technology Facilitation Mechanism which will be further developed in 2016. Finally, he called for all Dynamic Coalition members to pay attention to the importance of national development plans, as these are the mechanisms for delivering the SDGs at national levels.

Manu K. Bhardwaj, Senior Political Advisor, Technology and Internet Policy, U.S. State Department discussed the Global Connect Initiative, which seeks to bring 1.5 billion people who lack Internet access online by 2020. He commented that the initiative aims to make this goal real in a development context, raising awareness of the issues and the benefits of connectivity for the world and engaging US development agencies in connectivity. The Global Connect Initiative makes the case that the Internet is a key driver of sustainable economic development and that it is as fundamental as other infrastructure. He commented that this is a new idea for many development agencies who think about traditional infrastructure, but that it can be integrated into these processes, such as by laying cable when trenching, with minimal relative increases in cost. The Global Connect Initiative also considers positive ICT environments that support freedom of expression, and Mr. Bhardwaj drew a connection to the DC-PAL Principles statement. He commented that global NGOs provided many letters of support for Global Connect, and that this helped the industry participation build momentum. The Global Connect Initiative will host a side event during the WSIS+10 review in December 2015.

Ramune Petuchovaite, Manager of EIFL's Public Library Innovation Programme (EIFL-PLIP), presented a case of EIFL's capacity building programme for public librarians in Africa ([link](#)). The programme has been piloted in three countries - Kenya, Uganda and Ghana - where there has been some progress in government supported ICT roll out to public libraries, but pre-assessment showed that librarians lacked capacities to use technologies and public access to enable communities. The curriculum grew out of EIFL-PLIP's practical experience in Africa, and consists of four modules covering such topics as advanced computer literacy and training for the public, e-resources and searching, project management for new ICT-based library services, and advocacy. Two months after the training, post-assessment showed that 80% of public librarians offered ICT skills training for fellow librarians and community members, and also were offering specific programmes and guidance to online resources to women and girls, farmers, drop-outs and other groups. She argued that this case proves that libraries are well suited and ready to take over the roles of public access providers to knowledge and ICT skills to enable people's participation in digital society. Librarians' training should be an integral part of national and regional public access initiatives to unleash their potential as ICT trainers and consultants for communities. She concluded that EIFL is open for dialogue & partnership with other stakeholders in public access initiatives in developing and transitioning economy countries, especially in Africa.

Please describe the Discussions that took place during the workshop session: (3 paragraphs)

The moderator provided a summary of the Principles on Public Access in Libraries drafted by the Dynamic Coalition in 2015 and efforts to promote the role of libraries through workshops at the regional meetings: EuroDIG, Asia Pacific IGF and Africa IGF. The Principles Statement was distributed to all participants as a launching point for discussing concrete actions stakeholders could take. The workshop was in three parts: presentations, general discussion, and brainstorming concrete action to further the principles statement.

The discussion included ideas about the benefits of using existing facilities for providing public access, because it may be easier to increase funding in existing budget areas than create new ones, and in recognizing the challenges where library staff do not have the skills to support

technology and need capacity building. Participants added contributions of the challenges in post-conflict zones, where libraries have been severely damaged or destroyed, and mobile solutions are needed. Participants identified that libraries need to work to connect with the expertise and opportunities offered by all IGF stakeholder groups.

Following the discussion, participants worked in groups to brainstorm concrete actions that IGF stakeholders can take to further the Principles of Public Access in Libraries, as a launching point for the Dynamic Coalition's work in 2016. Participants identified the need for local content on the Internet to increase relevance for communities, and the opportunities for libraries, academic institutions and government to digitise local content. They commented on the challenges of preserving digital and local content, especially where legal frameworks do not facilitate this, and suggested partnerships with stakeholders who can address this area such as academia and the private sector. They suggested that the academic community could make their locally relevant research available freely online, and provide summaries appropriate for the use of local people, such as by sharing summaries of findings on farming that consider the potentially low literacy level of the audience. Participants suggested that civil society can participate by identifying windows of opportunity in countries and bringing libraries into the dialogue on public access, ensuring that local institutions are included. They identified that engaging government and private sector in connecting all libraries is a necessary step to achieving the principles.

Please describe any Participant suggestions regarding the way forward / potential next steps /key takeaways: (3 paragraphs)

The purpose of the workshop was to provide an update on the work of the Dynamic Coalition and to begin discussing the intersessional activity for 2016. The participants agreed to the activity of developing concrete suggestions for actions that stakeholders can take to further the principles statement as the objective for 2016.

The initial brainstorming resulted in ideas for stakeholder action that the participants will build on in 2016. The coordinators will post the initial ideas to the DC-PAL list and create a document for collaborative intersessional work.

Following the Main Session on Dynamic Coalitions, the members will discuss the findings of broader stakeholder feedback and decide on next steps for the Principles document.