



DA21

HOW TO USE THE DEVELOPMENT AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION 2019 REPORT



**International
Federation of
Library
Associations and Institutions**



**TECHNOLOGY &
SOCIAL CHANGE GROUP**
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON
Information School



[DA21.ifla.org](https://da21.ifla.org)

The DA2I Report is aimed at policy-makers and all others invested in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals. It serves to inform debate, making the case for access to information as a development accelerator

Librarians have long understood that by giving access to information, they improve the lives of their communities. Access to information allows people to learn, take part in society, make better choices, and innovate. It pays off in every aspect of people's lives – finding jobs, building networks, staying healthy, and coming up with ways to improve their situation.

Access to information – understood as the rights and capacity to use, create, and share information in ways that are meaningful to each individual, community, or organisation – can therefore be seen as a driver of development. The Development and Access to Information (DA2I) Report not only provides evidence of this contribution, but also offers a framework for assessing progress toward its delivery.

The DA2I Report is aimed at policy-makers and all others invested in achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It serves to inform debate, making the case for access to information as a development accelerator – a factor that can unblock progress across a variety of areas. It focuses in particular on the unique role of libraries providing this access, and advancing positive change as a result.

More Than Connectivity

For IFLA, access to information is about more than just an internet connection and device. To make a difference, leaving no one behind, access needs to be meaningful. Users must be able to find locally relevant content, in a local language. They should have the skills and confidence necessary to find, apply, and create information. And they must have laws and social norms that protect fundamental freedoms and everyone's right to participate in cultural, social and civic life.

Access to information cannot be taken for granted. Too many people still lack internet access and computers or smartphones. Skills levels – not least basic literacy – are often inadequate and people can be daunted by what goes on online. Restrictive laws and practices remain, reinforcing inequalities. And not all libraries have the funding and laws needed to realise their potential. Investment – of time and resources – is necessary. The pay-off will be major progress towards sustainable development.

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The Enduring Power of Libraries

Effective libraries can make a major contribution to progress. While they benefit from connectivity and fundamental rights to fulfil their missions, they in turn support internet access and the enjoyment of freedoms. Moreover, they have a unique role in reaching out to all members of the community, and have a dedicated staff with knowledge and skills.

Through this combination of characteristics, libraries continue to prove their value. Their activities – providing access to information and the skills to use it – can provide multiple dividends: greater individual autonomy, better decision-making, and support for research and innovation.

This, arguably, makes them a great example of a development accelerator – a driver of progress in different areas at the same time – in line with the concept outlined in the UN Development Programme's Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support initiative.

DA2I – Providing the Evidence Base

The DA2I Report, produced by IFLA in partnership with the Technology & Social Change Group (TASCHA) at the University of Washington Information School, offers the evidence to back up this message. Delivering on a commitment in the Lyon Declaration on Access to Information and Development, it sets out how meaningful access to information drives development.

Its content is organised in the following sections:

- A framework for measuring meaningful access to information around the world, in terms of physical connectivity, pro-equality social norms, skills, and protection of free expression and access to information. In this context, it sets out baseline indicators.
- A look at the unique role that libraries can play in delivering access, reaching out to all members of their communities.
- Chapters focusing on how access contributes to achieving key areas of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The DA2I 2019 Report features thematic chapters by guest authors on how access to information promotes the achievement of each of the following SDGs: Quality Education (SDG 4), Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8), Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10), Climate Action (SDG 13), and Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions (SDG 16).

A Tool to Support You!

The Development and Access to Information (DA2I) 2019 Report is a tool for library advocacy. It is designed to be used at the UN and in other international settings to promote the importance of access to information, and underline the role of libraries as development accelerators. This helps to ensure that the statements, recommendations, declarations and guidance issued by such institutions echo the arguments of library associations nationally.

The DA2I Report should also serve IFLA Members and support the work done at the local, national, and regional levels in library advocacy relating to development.

Freely available online, and offering a variety of supporting materials in several languages, it is an affirmation of the role of libraries, and it helps underline the connection between our institutions' work and the SDGs.

We therefore invite and encourage you to read the DA2I Report and complementary resources, and to consider how these can be useful for you.

Here are some ideas:

- Share the DA2I Report in your institutions' website, newsletter and social media!
- Use it as a basis for discussion within your association – what does development and access to information mean for you, your members, and library users in your country?
- Use data from the DA2I Report to support your arguments for advocacy, and to raise awareness
- Look at your country statistics on the measures of access to information – how does your country compare? ([See a list of DA2I indicators](#))
- Think of how libraries in your country support progress across the different dimensions of access to information (connectivity, skills, equality and rights)? Do you have statistics or stories on these?
- Translate the Executive Summary into your language (we can share a template to facilitate translation!)
- Present copies or send the link when you are meeting with relevant ministers or senior officials
- Use the postcards and the images to spread the DA2I messages on special days or at events.
- Download and learn more about DA2I: DA2I.ifla.org
- Ask us any questions! Contact us at: DA2I@ifla.org



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