

Multi-Level Library Advocacy

The below table sets out a high-level model for how we think about how we can shape the policy environment to the benefit of libraries. It is based on the idea that different decisions are made and shaped at different levels.

Of course, this will vary according to the policy in question, and often the country or region in question. For example, in Europe or Southeast Asia, many more policies will be determined at the regional level than elsewhere. Policies are also run differently, with some countries deciding on education policies nationally, while others leave them to regions or even local areas.

The table aims to give an idea of how work at the level of IFLA can contribute to wider library advocacy, and in particular to show how we believe that working globally can make it easier to achieve advocacy wins (laws, funding, partnerships) at the local and national levels.

For example, through working with UNESCO to update and agree the UNESCO-IFLA Public Library Manifesto (something that IFLA is uniquely placed to do), we now have a text that can be promoted to national and local governments as a reference for what they should enable public libraries to do (something that national associations and individual libraries alone can do).

Any questions? Contact us at ifla@ifla.org

	What can be achieved	Who influences, who is influenced?	How we try to achieve it at IFLA	Examples
Global	International law (including trade deals) (rule-setting): this is rare in our case, but can happen. This sets a binding framework which governments technically have to implement, although a lot depends on how effective enforcement mechanisms are. These decisions are of course taken by member states, and so	The Global Level is influenced by: national governments primarily, but also regional bodies, their own staff, international civil society, and researchers.	Participation in meetings: simply being at meetings is a useful opportunity to do much of the above, making the most of the time to speak up, talk about libraries, distribute materials, and hold meetings. This can be done by IFLA HQ and/or volunteers. Clearly, it is	Through our work at the World Intellectual Property Organization , we supported the Marrakesh Treaty , which has provided a stimulus and steer for national reforms in dozens of countries around the world. However, there is

	<p>depend on the decisions taken in national capitals and representations</p> <p>Recommendations and statements (explicit norm-setting): these can cover a much wider range of issues, but have no real force in themselves. However, they represent a normative commitment to something which can be a helpful reference in relevant advocacy at other levels. They may be affected by who has signed (economy ministers may not feel bound by something culture ministers have signed).</p> <p>Research reports (implicit norm-setting): these can also cover a very wide range of issues. They are normally issued under the authority of the secretariat of an organisation, not of governments, but when they reference libraries, do give a strong sense of international vindication for what we do.</p> <p>Access: this is not an output, but a key thing we can achieve through international engagement is more direct access to national, regional</p>	<p>The Global Level influences: national governments, as well as local and regional entities. Public and private funders by providing frameworks. Other stakeholders at different levels.</p>	<p>important to be visible, friendly and professional.</p> <p>Participation in processes: by the time of meetings, key recommendations and declarations have usually long been agreed. It is therefore important to engage in advance if we want to shape these, through making submissions, joining consultations, building coalitions, and engaging through member states.</p> <p>Engaging with international officials and member states: by attending events, as well as organising meetings outside of them with diplomats, we are able to send our message, seek support for our objectives, and also pass messages on behalf of our members. In our work with UN officials and others, we try to get them interested in libraries, and encourage them to launch initiatives that either focus on libraries, or include us.</p> <p>As already hinted, we are likely to do this through a mix of direct engagement by IFLA HQ,</p>	<p>not much of an enforcement mechanism, so we rely heavily on WIPO encouraging people, the Treaty being included in trade deals, and pressure from civil society. We produce monitoring reports, and organisations like EIFL offer much more direct support.</p> <p>Through our engagement at UNESCO, we promoted the Recommendation on Documentary Heritage (2015), which offers a reference for governments in how they treat this. There is a process of regular review, but progress in delivering on the Recommendation depends extensively on whether it is seen as a reference point.</p> <p>We work at the UN in order to use the</p>
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	<p>and local decision-makers than we might otherwise have. The same can go for meeting with partner organisations.</p> <p>Network-building: Linked to the above, we can also use connections at the international level to support the development of partnerships at other levels (for example between our members and those of other organisations, or UN offices etc)</p> <p>Funding: in some cases, there may be possibilities to bid for and receive funding or projects at different levels.</p>		<p>and mobilisation of members and volunteers. Member and volunteer engagement can bring more legitimacy and expertise to the table, and of course when it comes to building up contacts with national authorities, it is also more direct. In these situations, the key task of IFLA is to make this as simple and impactful as possible.</p>	<p>structure around the SDGs both to create a normative sense that libraries have a role to play in delivering policy successes across the board (through references in reports etc), but also as a way to engage directly with governments (often with volunteers), and create connections between our members and members of partners at the global level.</p>
Regional	<p>What can be achieved is largely the same as at the global level, with the following clarifications.</p> <p>First of all, the amount of international law created at the regional level depends very much on the institutions in place – some are stronger than others (for example the European Union). There are of course also trade deals. In each case, these can have a major influence on national law-</p>	<p>The Regional Level is influenced by: the positions and decisions of member states, as well as (to some extent) decisions taken at the global level, plus the actions of regionally-organised civil society and experts</p> <p>The Regional Level influences: the</p>	<p>The way we engage is in many ways the same as at the global level, with the following clarifications.</p> <p>In terms of who leads on participation in meetings, contributions to processes and engagement with officials and representations, this may be done by IFLA, or by other regional library organisations. It is valuable to coordinate this in order to avoid unhelpful</p>	<p>We engage in the EU in order to shape copyright and other laws which are then supposed to be faithfully implemented at the national level, with a strong compliance monitoring regime.</p> <p>We work, through our LAC Regional Office and Regional Division</p>

	<p>making, at least where regional entities have a role to play.</p> <p>The story is much the same on recommendations, research, access, network-building and funding, although once again depends on the strength of infrastructures. Once again, institutions like the European Union stand out, given the size of their budgets and ability to enforce decisions, but even then, do not usually have complete control over what happens.</p>	<p>national level, by creating rules and norms, and the global level by shaping frameworks and sometimes coordinating positions (for example the EU at the UN)</p>	<p>duplication and ensure consistency of messaging. The same also applies to some extent to bids for funding, network building and access.</p> <p>For IFLA, a key question is how and where we can build stronger connections in regional spaces (regional organisations, as well as regional offices of international organisations) through Regional Division Committees and Regional Offices. What is possible, and what help is needed?</p>	<p>Committee, with the Organisation of Ibero-American States to hold activities focused on celebrating the role of libraries, as well as setting up a programme of work with CERLALC. This helps build norms around how libraires should be supported in the region.</p>
National	<p>Passing legislation and budgets: the national level remains the most important in most countries. While constitutions vary, it usually controls the largest share of the budget, and takes decisions with national application, as well as leading in setting foreign policy goals (including positions in regional and global spaces).</p> <p>While this will vary, rules around copyright, overall national budgets, welfare, higher education and research are often taken at this level, as are wider policies</p>	<p>The National Level is influenced by: voters (in a democracy) and key stakeholder groups, national civil society, experts, and the regional and international level.</p> <p>The National Level influences: the local level (by setting parameters), the regional and global levels by defining positions that</p>	<p>The lead in shaping decisions and participating in processes at the national level lies with national library fields, with IFLA in a more supporting role. How national fields organise themselves is a question for the, but typically, we can hope that library associations exert pressure from the outside, while national libraries and library agencies do so from the inside. They are also best placed to mobilise members and staff.</p>	<p>Around climate change, we draw on the positive references in various text and turn these into key messages that we share among members, so that they can get more readily involved in national climate empowerment initiatives.</p> <p>On the SDGs, we provide briefings and communications materials, as well as</p>

	<p>around welfare, labour markets, security and more.</p> <p>Standard-setting and softer law: there are also plenty of efforts at the national level to create texts that shape behaviour without forcing change. Codes of conduct, recommendations, covenants and other agreements can help create expectations and norms which tend to be followed, at least by actors who want to look like they are ready to play the game.</p> <p>Funding and other processes: beyond laws and other texts, there can be processes and initiatives that bring actors together nationally (including in relatively decentralised countries) in order, for example, to promote innovation, encourage exchange and sharing, and even feed into international processes.</p>	<p>(alongside those of others) determine what is and isn't decided</p>	<p>IFLA's role, as said, is to support. We can do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating and highlighting rules, norms and references at the international and regional level that can support national advocacy • Providing materials that can be (adapted and) used in order to strengthen engagement • Helping to put national library field actors in touch with potential partners (UN country teams, UNESCO offices, other stakeholders etc) to build impact, influence, innovation and more. • Direct engagement, through letter writing (and in limited cases, meetings) • Supporting those carrying out advocacy by celebrating their work 	<p>coaching around engagement in Voluntary National Reviews, so as to help associations and others widen networks and get recognition for their work.</p>
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<p>Local</p>	<p>While this depends heavily on the set up of individual countries, local and regional governments are often the most important stakeholders when it comes to budgets and wider resourcing for public and community libraries, and sometimes also for school libraries (when elements of education are decentralised). They also often lead on many other public services that shape wellbeing and economic development.</p> <p>There can also be opportunities, depending on the area, to build partnerships and processes that maximise libraires' impact at this level.</p>	<p>The Local Level is influenced by: the national level, which can set overall budgetary parameters, as well as key laws (including minimum service obligations). Where the regional level has possibilities to set rules and often funding, these may also shape what local governments do. The global level is more likely to influence through providing frameworks, but has little direct leverage. Local institutions and stakeholders, plus voters, also shape how things work.</p> <p>The Local Level influences: through both practical sharing of experience and advocacy (in some countries, mayors are often well connected to national</p>	<p>IFLA's role at the local level is through providing materials that can be used in lobbying for the best possible decisions.</p> <p>In this, we are as likely as not to work through national associations and others which will often have their own plans for shaping local decision-making. In this case, it certainly makes most sense for IFLA to play a supporting role. Typically, we are not resourced to engage local governments directly anyway, and would only do so, for example, when a mayor or local figure is also engaged in international decision-making.</p>	<p>The UNESCO-IFLA Public Library Manifesto is a great example here – a global text that has a vocation to be used to shape planning and decision-making at the level of local governments. Through active promotion by local libraries and library supporters, as well as national associations, we hope that it will raise the bar for support to library services.</p> <p>We also look to engage with local government organisations like United Cities and Local Governments to ensure that they are encouraging their members (mayors and regions) to make full use of libraries to achieve their goals.</p>
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		processes), the National Level. In some cases – in particular through their own organisations, they also have a voice at the regional and global levels.		
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