

Beyond Access:
Perceptions of
libraries as
development
partners

May 2012

W TECHNOLOGY & SOCIAL CHANGE GROUP

UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON
Information School

TECHNOLOGY & SOCIAL CHANGE GROUP (TASCHA)

The Technology & Social Change Group (TASCHA) at the University of Washington Information School explores the design, use, and effects of information and communication technologies in communities facing social and economic challenges. With experience in 50 countries, TASCHA brings together a multidisciplinary network of social scientists, engineers, and development practitioners to conduct research, advance knowledge, create public resources, and improve policy and program design. Our purpose? To spark innovation and opportunities for those who need it most.

CONTACT

Technology & Social Change Group
University of Washington Information School
Box 354985
Seattle, WA 98195

Telephone: +1.206.616.9101
Email: tascha@uw.edu
Web: tascha.uw.edu

RESEARCH SPONSOR

Beyond Access is an initiative of IREX, EIFL, IFLA, Makaia, Civic Regeneration, TASCHA, the Riecken Foundation, and READ Global, with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Michelle Fellows is a Research Analyst with the Technology & Social Change Group at the University of Washington Information School.

Chris Coward is Principal Research Scientist & Director of the Technology & Social Change Group at the University of Washington Information School.

Rebecca Sears is Assistant Director of the Technology & Social Change Group at the University of Washington Information School.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank Adriana Sanchez, Jay Friestadt, Samantha Becker, Angelea John, Greg E. Bem, Elly Krumwiede, Leah R. Johnson, Michelle Dillon, Anna Shelton, Elise Doney, Keneka M. Garrett, Karen Hirst, Matthew Vanderwerff, and Ari Katz for their valuable contributions to this report — as well as the 50+ informants and partners who have helped bring together this study.

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ABSTRACT

Libraries are typically overlooked as partners in development. This despite the existence of 230,000 public libraries around the world, 73% located in the developing world, and despite the widespread recognition that access to information plays an essential role in development. This report examines the question: what are the perceptions of key decision makers around the world regarding public libraries and their potential to serve a more prominent role in development initiatives? This report looks at participants' impressions of libraries, views towards forming partnerships with libraries, and provides examples of successful projects.

130-CHARACTER SUMMARY

What is the potential of public libraries to serve a more prominent role in development initiatives? Perceptions of decision makers.

KEYWORDS

libraries, development, perceptions, Internet, computers

RECOMMENDED CITATION

Fellows, M., Coward, C., & Sears, R. (2012). *Beyond Access: Perceptions of libraries as development partners*. Seattle: Technology & Social Change Group, University of Washington Information School.



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1. Introduction

This has been interesting for me because I didn't sit down and think about these questions beforehand and so things have kind of emerged right in the course of the conversation. I didn't ever really think about libraries as active, more actively engaging society, right? I mean I think they do. I think it's actually very interesting but I haven't, certainly I haven't thought through it all (49E, 49:25).

Background

Libraries are typically overlooked as partners in development. This despite the existence of 230,000 public libraries around the world, 73% located in the developing world, and despite the widespread recognition that access to information plays an essential role in development.¹ This report, produced on behalf of Beyond Access,² a global campaign formed to draw attention to this phenomenon, examines the question, what are the perceptions of key decision makers around the world regarding public libraries and their potential to serve a more prominent role in development initiatives?

Why public libraries? Many countries have instituted programs to provide the public with access to information and communication technologies (ICTs), especially in remote and underserved communities or to provide training and other services for novice users to become acquainted with computers and the Internet. Some countries have focused on existing public library facilities for this purpose; but it's more common for countries to roll out programs through alternative infrastructure. In the Philippines, for instance, while it has some 1,100 public libraries, the country decided to establish a network of community e-centers to provide the public with access to computers and the Internet. Why is this? Did it not occur to use an existing public institution? Or were libraries considered but deemed inadequate for any number of legitimate reasons?

While such historical questions are interesting, this report is forward looking. It aims to uncover the perceptions of decision makers about public libraries within an ecosystem of public access that includes alternative public and private models, and to reveal the likelihood of libraries playing a more significant role in future

¹ IREX (2012), "Beyond Access Factsheet." Available at: <http://www.beyondaccesscampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Beyond-Access-Factsheet-US.pdf>

² For more information about Beyond Access, visit beyondaccesscampaign.org

development initiatives along with the opportunities and challenges this would entail. Our hope is that this research will invigorate discussion about the potential of libraries as development partners.

The study is based on 51 stakeholder interviews that contrast the perceptions of development leaders with library leaders. Development leaders are comprised of government officials responsible for national digital inclusion or information access policies, as well as representatives of international development agencies and other public and private global organizations. Library leaders are represented by government officials with library oversight authority, and practitioners who are regarded as being at the forefront of library innovation. The study focuses on ten developing countries that have extensive public library networks but which have not made recent efforts to equip the libraries with computers.

This report begins with a brief look at participants' impressions of libraries, both generally and as places that provide public access to computers and the Internet. Next we examine participants' views towards forming partnerships with libraries, including their perceived strengths and challenges as partners. Finally we provide a number of examples of successful projects to illuminate patterns and characteristics of approaches that have proven effective.

2. How to use this report

This section clarifies key terms and notation used throughout this report.

Stakeholder groups

We assigned each study participant to a stakeholder group based on his or her professional experience. (For more information on participants' professional experience, see appendix.) There are five stakeholder groups, listed below as categories A through E.

LIBRARY LEADERS (LL) consist of two stakeholder groups:

- (A) **Library innovators:** Unique, trailblazing library workers who target development goals through their public libraries.
- (B) **Library planners:** Government officials responsible for administering library systems or shaping national policy. In some countries this category also includes non-government officials.

DEVELOPMENT LEADERS (DL) consist of three stakeholder groups:

- (C) **National information access planners:** Government officials or directors of nationwide initiatives responsible for national ICT access initiatives.
- (D) **National development practitioners:** Representatives of multinational development agencies or foundations located in the country.
- (E) **Global development practitioners:** Representatives of multinational development agencies or foundations located in North America or Europe.

LIBRARY LEADERS (LL)	
(A)	Library Innovators
(B)	National Library Planners
DEVELOPMENT LEADERS (DL)	
(C)	National Information Access Planners
(D)	National Development Practitioners
(E)	Global Development Practitioners

Notation

Throughout this report, we identify stakeholder groups by using the letters "A" through "E." Broader stakeholder types are identified by the letters "LL" for library leaders and "DL" for development leaders.

For example, quotations are followed by citations like this one: (44B, 33:10). Citations indicate a participant's unique identifier (i.e., 44) and stakeholder group (i.e., B), as well as a quote number (i.e., 33:10). Please note that the quote

identifier has an administrative purpose and will not be included in the final version of this report.

Additionally, readers will see statements followed by a parenthetical note, such as “(LL 8, DL 4).” This note indicates the number of library leaders (i.e., 8) and development leaders (i.e., 4) who expressed an opinion in support of the statement.

NOTE: Quotations included in this report have been edited for clarity.

Additional terminology

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

We apply the term “public library” to any library facility open to the general public. We use the term irrespective of funding source (e.g., taxpayers, donors, or fee-based) or authorizing body (e.g., local government, national government, or nonprofit). This definition does not include institutions that restrict use by membership, occupation, or age, such as schools or universities open only by students, staff and faculty. We recognize that some of our sample countries have both public library and community library systems that are very different from one another, and we have taken this into account when reporting findings.

PUBLIC ACCESS VENUES

“Public access venues” are places that provide computers for the general public to use. These venues may be for-profit or non-profit, free or fee-based, and be connected to the Internet or not. Examples include stand-alone venues such as public libraries, telecenters (i.e., venues supported by a nonprofits or government agency), and Internet cafes (i.e., venues run by a private business) and venues housed in other facilities (e.g., schools, post offices, and government offices). In instances when it was not immediately clear to an interviewer whether or not an organization provided public access, the interviewer asked for clarification.

ICTS

ICTs is shorthand for “information and communication technologies.” In this report, our focus is on computers and the Internet. Participants discussed other types of ICTs—broadcast radio, mobile phones, and other types of personal electronic devices—but these ICTs feature less prominently in the report.

3. Methodology

This report shares the results of research conducted between November 2011 and April 2012. Researchers collected qualitative data from 51 participants, including 41 participants across a ten-country sample and 10 participants based in the United States, Canada, or the United Kingdom. For data analysis, researchers developed a set of codes which they systematically applied to interview transcripts. A more detailed description of methodology follows.

Sample

COUNTRIES

For stakeholder groups A, B, C and D, the research team interviewed participants based in ten countries: Bangladesh, Brazil, Costa Rica, Macedonia, Namibia, Nepal, Nigeria, the Philippines, Thailand, and Zambia. Initially twelve countries were chosen, but Jordan and Algeria were later omitted from the sample due to difficulties recruiting interview participants. Participants in stakeholder group E work at various international headquarters based in North America and Europe. (Figure 1 lists the sample countries and corresponding number of participants from each country.)

Figure 1. Sample composition

Country	Participants
Bangladesh	4
Brazil	6
Costa Rica	5
Macedonia (FYR)	2
Namibia	6
Nepal	4
Nigeria	6
Philippines	3
Thailand	1
Zambia	4
Global (US, UK, Canada)	10

The ten-country sample was designed to include countries that differ in regard to a few key characteristics. (See appendix for data on countries included in the ten-country sample). Selection was based on the following criteria:

- **Geographic region.** The final sample includes countries in Africa (3 countries), Asia (4 countries), Latin America (2 countries), and Europe (1 country).
- **Level of development,** as measured by Human Development Index. The final sample includes countries in the low quartile (4 countries), medium quartile (3 countries), and high quartile (3 countries). Very high quartile countries were excluded. (See appendix for country sample development statistics.)
- **Library density,** as measured by the estimated number of public libraries per 100,000 people. For countries in our final sample, this number ranged from a low of .03 in Nigeria and a high of 3.44 in Brazil.

Countries were excluded from this study based on two additional criteria:

- Countries that have recently embarked on large-scale library modernization programs, including countries that have received library grants from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.
- Five African countries included in a recent study by EIFL, *Perceptions of Libraries in Africa*.³ The reason was to avoid duplication of effort and contribute new knowledge from other African countries.

PARTICIPANTS

Researchers recruited study participants using a combination of expert referrals and snowball sampling. In addition to TASCHA's network, Beyond Access partners IREX and EIFL referred the research team to individuals based in countries and organizations of interest, and those contacts recommended their colleagues for participation. Additionally, interview participants referred us to others in their networks.

NOTE: Country names and other personal identifiers have been removed from all quotes with the purpose of assuring anonymity.

Participants were selected based on the following characteristics:

- **Degree of alignment with one of the five stakeholder category.** (See previous section, "How to use this report.")

³ Prepared for EIFL by TNS RMS East Africa (July 2011), "Perceptions of public libraries in Africa." Available at <http://www.eifl.net/perception-study>

- **Organization type and role.** We spoke with decision makers, that is, people with a perceived ability to influence organizational or policy decisions. (See appendix for a list of organizations.)
- **Fluency in English, Spanish or Portuguese.**

We invited 98 participants and ultimately interviewed 51 participants, for a total response rate of 52%.

Figure 2. Participant response rate

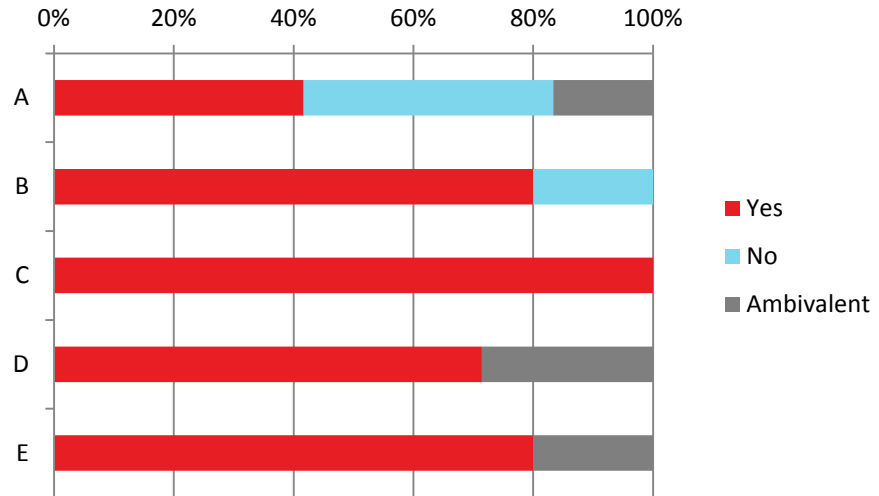
	Stakeholder Category	Participants	Response Rate
A	Library Innovators	12	92%
B	Library Planners	11	52%
C	Information Access Planners	11	44%
D	In-Country Development Leaders	7	32%
E	Global Development Leaders	10	59%
	Total	51	52%

In light of the qualitative approach to this study, its small sample size, and our method of recruiting participants, we must emphasize that the views shared in this report are not intended to be representative of a larger population of library and development leaders. However, we wanted to know if participants felt the opinions they shared with us were common across their organization and professional cohort. We asked them at the end of the interview:

Do you think your views about the potential of libraries are similar to or different from your colleagues?

We found that, with the exception of library innovators (A), the majority of participants believed their colleagues held similar views. Library innovators held more divergent views, reaffirming our selection of participants in a group meant to be forward-thinking visionaries who could readily disagree with their colleagues and challenge the status quo.

Figure 3. View is similar to colleagues



Interviews

Researchers collected data through phone and in-person interviews. Five participants opted to submit written responses instead due to either connectivity problems or hesitancy to conduct an interview in English. The interviews took 30-60 minutes to complete. Interviews were recorded and transcribed only with participant consent. We asked participants to speak on behalf of his or her organization while also sharing personal views.

All interviews were conducted in English, Spanish (for five participants in Costa Rica) or Portuguese (for six participants in Brazil). We provided questions to all participants in advance of the interview.

Researchers conducted interviews using a semi-structured questionnaire. Most questions were open-ended, allowing participants to provide unique and nuanced perspectives. A few questions asked participants to agree or disagree with statements, but otherwise, interviewers did not ask participants to select responses from a closed list. Although questionnaires were tailored for each stakeholder group, they intentionally had a considerable amount of overlap. (See appendix for interview questions.)

Data analysis

The research team analyzed over 700 pages of interview transcripts using Atlas.ti and a coding scheme developed through a grounded, iterative process. Ultimately, the researchers applied 414 codes across 15 themes, determined the most commonly held views for each theme, and selected quotes to illustrate prominent and outlying views. This report describes the major findings.

4. First impressions

This section explores general opinions about public libraries, comparing and contrasting the views of development leaders and library leaders.

Public libraries in your country

We asked participants who live and work in one of the sample countries (groups A-D) for their opinions on public libraries in their country with the following question:

The following is a list of statements about libraries. Please indicate how much you agree with each statement: strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree, or don't know. (n=40)

- a) People in rural areas have access to libraries
- b) People in urban areas have access to libraries
- c) Librarians have the skills to help people find what they need
- d) People of all ages use libraries
- e) People come to the library to solve their everyday problems
- f) Libraries provide access to the Internet and computers
- g) The government strongly supports libraries

LIBRARY LEADERS (LL)

- (A) Library Innovators
- (B) National Library Planners

DEVELOPMENT LEADERS (DL)

- (C) National Information Access Planners
- (D) National Development Practitioners
- (E) Global Development Practitioners

How do the views of development leaders and library leaders compare? As shown in figure 4-5, library leaders agree with each of these statements more often than development leaders do. Generally:

- Development and library leaders agree on the distribution of libraries across their country: people in urban areas have access to libraries, and people in rural areas do not.
- While both groups agree librarians have some of the skills needed to help people find what they are looking for, library leaders are more confident in their assessment (74% agree, including 39% who strongly agree) than development leaders (59% agree, including 12% who strongly agree).
- Library leaders are more likely than development leaders to think that people of all ages use libraries. Two-thirds of library leaders think so, versus one-half of development leaders.
- Although both groups doubt people come to the library to solve day-to-day problems, development leaders are much more likely to disagree with the statement (11%) than library leaders (43%). In fact, 61% of development leaders disagree strongly versus 24% of library leaders.

- Over two-thirds of library leaders think libraries provide access to computers and the Internet (71%), but only one-third of development leaders believe they provide access (33%).
- A majority of library leaders and development leaders do not think that the government supports libraries. More development leaders hold this view (67%) than library leaders (52%).

Figure 4. Perceptions of library leaders (groups A and B)

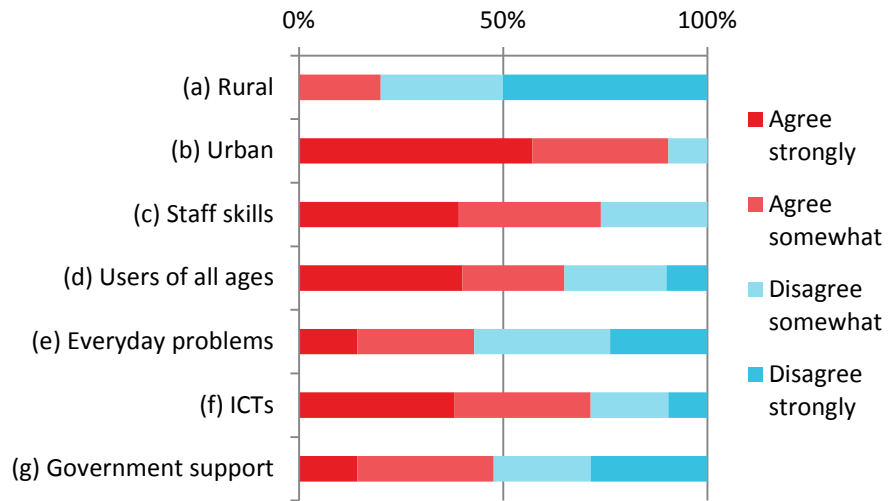
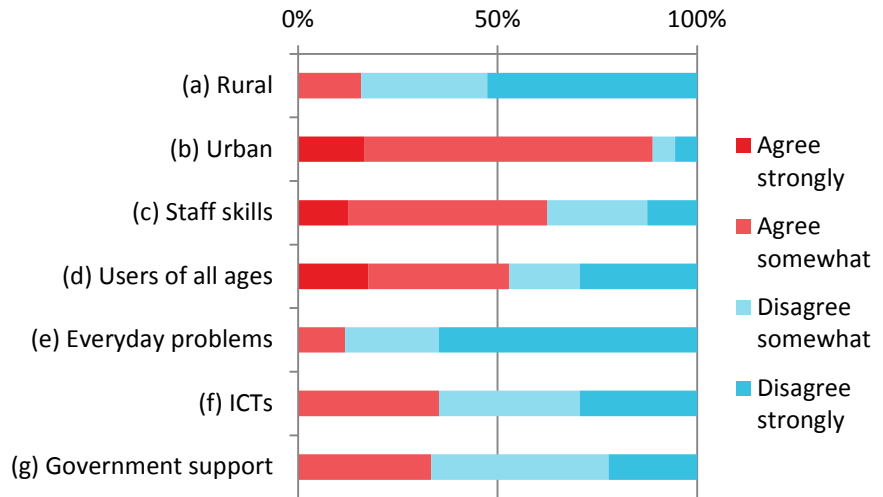


Figure 5. Perceptions of development leaders based in-country (groups C and D)



Library users

When describing who uses library services, most development leaders and library leaders emphasized that libraries are used predominantly by students and researchers (LL 8, DL 9). Participants gave several reasons: libraries focus on students; libraries cannot afford to purchase much more than school textbooks; libraries hours are too restrictive for adults; libraries are located near schools and universities. Multiple participants stated that library users tend to be well-educated, and that people with fewer years of formal education may be less likely to visit a library (LL 1, DL 2).

People with no education probably do not find it very useful. It might be because they don't know how to read, so they don't visit the libraries even though there is one in their community" (31D, 33:53).

Several participants stated that young people and children use libraries more than other groups (LL 4, DL 2). To a lesser extent, unemployed persons, seniors, and pensioners were also seen as regular library users (LL 2, DL 2). Working adults were not seen as typical library users due to irregular or inconvenient hours or operation (LL 1, DL 1).restrictions on use (DL 1), or libraries being unpleasant places to visit (LL 1, DL 2).

I surveyed our drivers, our cleaner, and other staff, and the thought of going to a library had just never even approached their minds (36D, 31:5).

Three words

We wanted to know what words or images come to mind when stakeholders think about public libraries:

If you had to summarize your perceptions of places that provide public access in three words, how would you describe libraries?

The table below shows five lists of words, organized by stakeholder group. All of the groups chose descriptors with positive and negative connotations. Moreover, library innovators (A) provided positive responses most often and national development practitioners (D) least often. (Several participants declined to provide three words.)

NOTE: Repeated terms are shown in red.

Figure 6. Describe libraries in three words

Library Innovators (A)	Library Planners (B)	National Information Access Planners (C)	National Development Practitioners (D)	Global Development Practitioners (E)
information	sustainable	subsidized	stand-alone service	community
digital literacy	programs	must go digital	must change	public service
lifelong learning	information literacy	easier	free Internet access	variable
innovative	community venue	research	not well publicized	available
essential	professionally assisted	Internet access	Internet problems	restricted
community	one stop shop	good and effective	underutilized	books
inclusiveness	Slow	needs work	potential	physical space
helping people	frustration	ill-equipped	not used	books
relevant information	old	not ICT literate	reduced access	omnipresent
urban	all community members	few		culturally important
not very functional	public space	underutilized		run down
meeting people	precarious	information		doesn't offer much
resource center	controlled	few		old
reading	knowledge centers	rare		transforming
fun	sustainable	schools		public
academics	information needs	underused		affordable
reading habit	meeting people	cultural		not cutting-edge
students	reading	still a lot to be done		traditional
open access	culture			center of town
underfunded				expertise
absence				study
potential				research
cares for people				potential
modern				traditional
lively				old-school
human development				

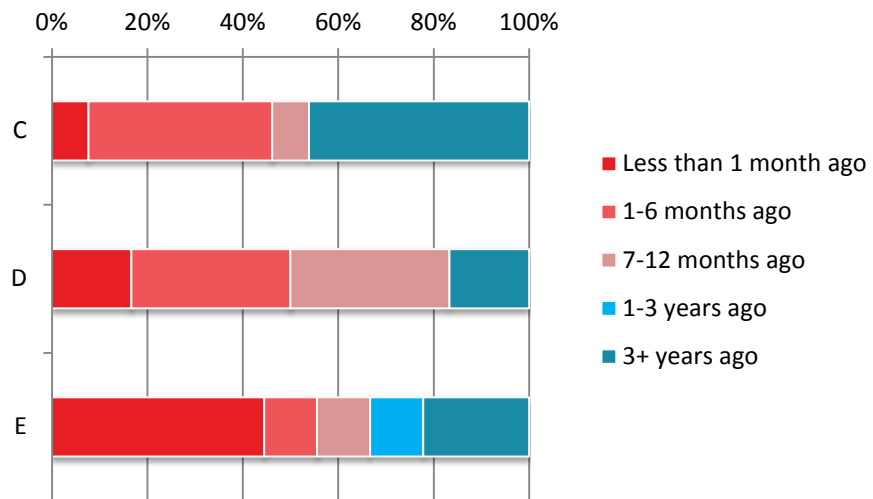
Last library visit

We wanted to gauge the extent to which opinions of development leaders were based on recent experiences in public libraries:

When was the last time you visited a public library? (n=28)

As shown in the following figure, a majority of national information access planners (C), national development practitioners (D), and global development practitioners (E) had visited a library in the last year. National development practitioners were the most likely to have had visited a library in the last year (80%). Most global development practitioners had likewise visited a library recently (67%), although a few (22%) had not visited a library in the last three years. Meanwhile, about half of national information access planners had been to a library in the last year (54%), whereas 46% had not visited one in the last three years.

Figure 7. Last library visit



Likelihood of partnership

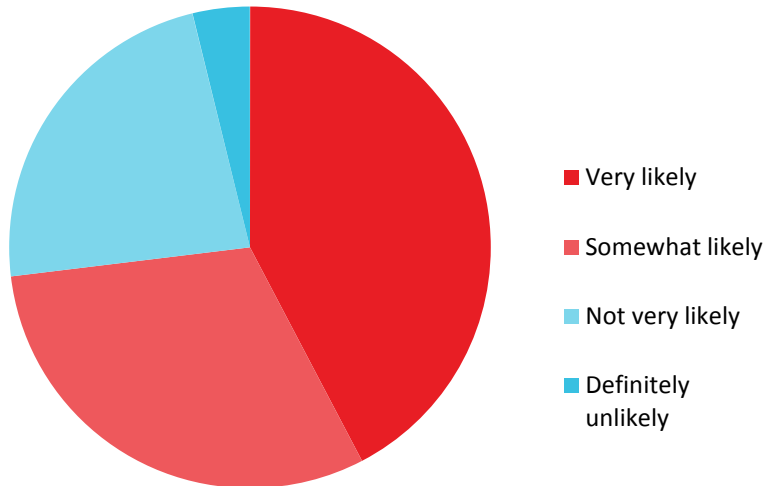
We wanted to know if the development leaders could see their organization working with public libraries in the future:

Going forward, what is the likelihood of your organization supporting a program that involved a partnership with public libraries? (n=26)

As shown in the figure below, almost three-quarters of respondents expected to work with libraries in the future or were open to the possibility. Over one-quarter

of respondents did not think it was likely they would work on a project with libraries in the future.

Figure 8. Likelihood of partnering with libraries



The following explanations were typical for each response category:

Very likely

Many of our colleagues have an active interest in this. We do a lot of education programs, and we work with the school teachers. And we're actively planning to mobilize more supports and resources to promote libraries in [this country] and other countries as well (31D, 33:5)

Somewhat likely

[Yes, but] I would then make a counter offer! I think that the Internet cafes should position themselves for the public as libraries, as a place that offers access to knowledge, so that people would understand that what used to be on bookshelves before are now on Google; today it's possible to be found on the Internet... I believe that, if we utilized the Internet cafés and trained their employees to become tutors, to help the population to have access to those things, we would have a huge leap in the quality of access to information. (39C, 39:61).

Definitely unlikely

We don't know any people that work in libraries who are doing the kind of research and the thematic [work] that we're interested in. It's hard for me to imagine it happening (49E, 49:25).

Summary of first impressions

- Most participants agree that people in urban areas have access to libraries and that librarians possess the skills necessary to help people find information.
- Most participants do not think that people in rural areas have access to libraries or that people use libraries to solve everyday problems.
- Compared to library leaders, development leaders are much less likely to believe that people of all ages use libraries, that governments support libraries, and that libraries provide public access to ICTs.
- Most development leaders visited a public library in the last year and think it is possible (i.e., somewhat or very likely) that their organization would partner with libraries in the future.

5. Perspectives on access to ICTs

As we saw in the last section, library leaders and development leaders have different views on the degree to which public libraries make computers and the Internet available for public use. In reality we know that the provision of ICTs in public libraries varies widely from country to country, and within countries between urban and rural areas.⁴

But to what extent does this matter? Many observers of ICTs in development suggest that a continuing shift in the ICT landscape has made public access to ICTs less relevant. This is partly because more people around the world own mobile phones and can access the Internet at home, work, or on personal devices than they could even five years before. (See appendix, figure 12 for data on ICT penetration across this study's ten-country sample.) And following extensive private and public sector investments in telecenters since the early 2000s, some people believe that there is public access fatigue among the donor community, in part brought about sustainability challenges and studies that have not found empirical evidence of impact or program success.⁵

Below we briefly examine perceptions of public access venues, including public libraries, Internet cafes, and telecenters.

LIBRARY LEADERS (LL)

- (A) Library Innovators
- (B) National Library Planners

DEVELOPMENT LEADERS (DL)

- (C) National Information Access Planners
- (D) National Development Practitioners
- (E) Global Development Practitioners

Public access venues available

Are public libraries thought of as places people visit to use computers and the Internet? We asked participants the following question:

For people who do not have home or work access to computers and the Internet, what types of places provide people with access to ICTs? (n=40)

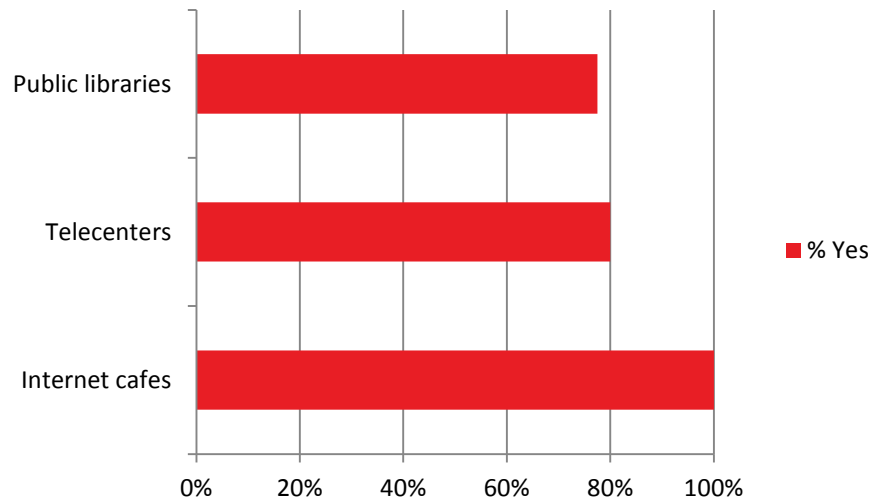
As shown in the figure below, all respondents thought Internet cafes existed in their country, but 20% of participants did not think that telecenters existed.

⁴ See the results of other TASCHA research projects, including the Global Impact Study of Public Access to Information & Communication Technologies at <http://tascha.uw.edu/projects/global-impact-study/> and the Public Access Landscape Study at <http://tascha.uw.edu/projects/public-access-landscape-study/>

⁵ Sey, Araba and M. Fellows. (2009). Literature review on the impact of public access to information and communication technologies. TASCHA Working Paper, No.#6. Seattle: Technology & Social Change Group, University of Washington. <http://tascha.uw.edu/publications/literature-review-on-the-impact-of-public-access-to-information-and-communication-technologies/>

Furthermore, nearly one-quarter of participants (23%) did not see public libraries as a place people can visit to use ICTs.

Figure 9. Places that offer public access to ICT

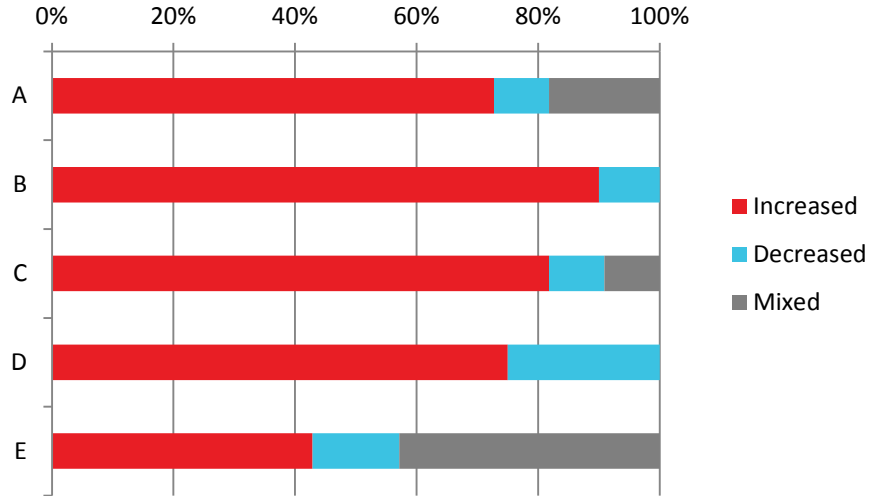


Importance of public access ICTs

We hypothesized that a large proportion of participants would say that the importance of places that offer computer and Internet access to the general public has decreased in the last five years for reasons mentioned earlier (i.e. popularity of mobile phones, increase in private Internet access), but this was not the case. As shown in the table below, few participants believed the importance of public access to ICTs decreased, and no one thought it had remained the same. Over two-thirds of library leaders and development leaders living in the ten-country sample (groups A-D) thought the importance of these venues had increased, although global development practitioners (E) more likely to have mixed views than the other groups.

Compared to 5 years ago, has the importance of these places increased, decreased, or stayed the same? (n=28)

Figure 10. Change in importance of public access venues



Participants provided a variety of explanations, as summarized below.

Increased (n=32): Demand for Internet access has increased generally. Demand has increased as Internet connections improved. Demand is now very high among young people. People place greater value on ICTs than they used to. Online content has become much more relevant. Online content has become essential. Students and learners need Internet access, and some schools lack connectivity. Personal access is still too expensive. More people rely on ICTs to stay connected with overseas relatives.

Given the sheer volume of information available on healthcare, the existence of job sites, and the presence of advice on how to improve one's life, it is hard to imagine that they have not become more important. Having a trained person to help people navigate towards trusted content would be an important element, so I could imagine libraries occupying a unique place in the growth of the global Internet (33E, 35:16).

Decreased (n=5): Importance of public access venues has fallen as more people have gained Internet access through mobile phones or more affordable broadband connections.

I think they're becoming less relevant, but this is because of the mobile revolution. (49E, 49:34).

Mixed (n=6): Answer to the question depends on country, differs by venue type or services offered. Otherwise, not sure.

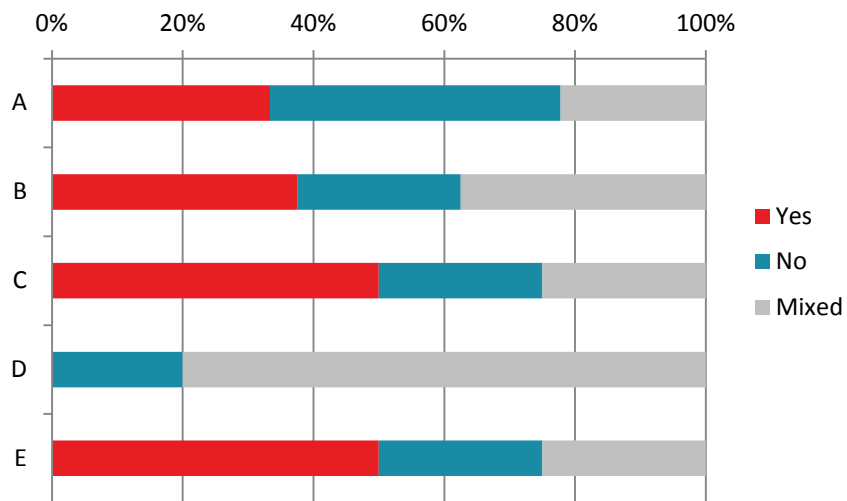
You know, I think that's on a country-by-country basis. My understanding is when you see the access in cities, they've made a major difference in places like Nairobi, for instance, but they haven't really penetrated as much in the rural areas as we would like (13E, 2:28).

Effectiveness of public access ICTs

Generally, participants believed public access venues were not achieving their potential as places that help people meet their information and communication needs. Among development leaders, national development practitioners (D) were much more likely than other groups to say that public access venues are not fulfilling people’s needs. The two groups with the most positive impressions were national information access planners (C) and global development practitioners (E). However, as seen below in the statements below, many of the negative responses concerned insufficient supply, infrastructure challenges, affordability and other factors that did not reflect negatively on the value of public access to ICTs.

To what extent do you think these places are helping people meet their information and communication needs?

Figure 11. Public access venues help satisfy information and communication needs



Participants’ comments are summarized below.

Yes (n=12). Demand is very high. Public access is the only affordable option. Venues provide people with better access to information. Venues are the only option in rural areas with problematic connectivity. Education opportunities are much greater. An increasing amount of government services are available online.

Oh, I think they play a huge role. I think in communities, particularly rural communities where broadband is not affordable for members of the general population to have in their homes, or the infrastructure is just not there, or computers or other devices are not affordable for people to own individually. I think having access centers are critical to being able to participate in an information economy. I have been in lots of very small remote places in the world where the only access to technology was in a telecenter of some sort and it provided a phenomenal way for the people in

that village or community to be able to participate in a larger global world. I think it's been a tremendous value (14E, 13:16).

No (n=10). Supply is much too limited. ICT service is of low quality due to Infrastructure problems. Not used for the purposes of finding useful information. The majority of people don't use them. Too expensive. Used mostly for communication. Illiteracy too high for people to use them. Small player in the overall ecology of information access.

Not so much. I think they're not even reaching a tenth of the population. They are expensive to visit for lower income groups, very expensive and they're ill-equipped (6C, 26:34).

Mixed (n=12). Venues are used by youth and people with ICT skills, but not by those lacking skills. Public access ICTs used most often for personal communication. Supply is not keeping up with demand. People in rural areas lack access.

I am sure they are but I think the question is quite broad. I mean, if they weren't helping to address some kind of need, people wouldn't be using them. The question for me is whether they are helping as much as they can. Are they keeping a finger on the pulse of local needs and linking people to information related to those needs in a timely fashion? Granted, I am not sure if they see that as their job (33E, 35:15).

Perspectives on ICTs in Libraries

PROPORTION OF LIBRARIES PROVIDING INTERNET ACCESS. When asked about ICT services in their country's libraries, many participants felt that few to no libraries provided Internet access (LL 6, DL 17). Development leaders tended to be succinct: "It is almost nonexistent" (5C, 25:48).

Library leaders also acknowledged that most libraries are not connected to the Internet. Several estimated the proportion of public libraries in their country with Internet access, and with the exception of library leaders in two countries, all estimated that fewer than half of the libraries in their country provided Internet access. However, a few participants added that they knew of libraries lacking Internet access that still provided computers to the public.

Very, very few provide access. It's simply that there are too many problems for the libraries to actually overcome in providing access to computers alone. Let's not even talk about Internet. And I don't think the innovative thinking and the skills to support and all that is there" (6C, 26:59)

QUALITY OF ICT SERVICES. Participants explained that connected libraries had poor Internet service due to a variety of factors: expensive ISP services, limited bandwidth, a poor power supply, challenges with maintenance, and the

unavailability tech support. As a result, services were described as variable and unpredictable.

"Today we can get connected, tomorrow we can't" (38B; 38:54).

"Many people do not go to the public libraries to use the Internet because most times either the facility is not available, or the down time is strict, or access is slow and things like that" (16B, 4:56).

Library leaders sometimes spoke of ICT service quality issues in the context of overarching funding problems (LL 4, DL 1).

However, a large number of participants focused on the positive aspects of computer and Internet access in libraries, including very high demand (LL 3). Even libraries without ICTs said that demand was high: "If ICTs are in our libraries, people will come."

INTERNET CONNECTIVITY PROGRESS. A few library leaders discussed ways libraries have improved and expanded ICT services at selected facilities (LL 4). Library leaders in an African country spoke about rolling out ICTs to half of their branches within a few years, and that the quality of service was relatively high:

The government is subsidizing the access to the communities through community libraries, so the lines are faster and they're free so they don't have to worry about anything (9B, 10:29).

Additionally, participants in libraries with ICTs identified not only that people used computers, but that the library uses them in instruction for computer skills targeted toward a variety of groups, including children, working adults, women, and small business owners.

Summary of perspectives on access to ICTs

- When asked where people can go to use computers and the Internet, three-quarters of participants living within the ten-country sample (groups A-D) list public libraries as an option.
- However, there remains a large gap between the perceptions of development leaders and library leaders as to whether or not libraries provide access to ICTs generally. Participants believe that when libraries do provide access to ICTs, the quality of services is not high.
- The importance of public access venues has increased over the last five years according to most participants, although global development practitioners (E) have more mixed views.
- Most participants do not believe public access venues are achieving their potential as places that help people meet their information and communication needs. Participants explained that demand for public

access ICTs is high and that people need better access to online content. Others stressed that large numbers of people lack the computers skills (and basic literacy skills) to make use of ICTs. Additionally, public access ICTs can be prohibitively expensive for large segments of the population.

6. Strengths of libraries as partners

Why would development agencies want to work with libraries? This section presents the views of development leaders and library leaders on the possible advantages of working with public libraries.

We asked participants what they thought libraries would contribute as project partners and coded their responses based on twelve types of strengths. Here, we review comments on the five most prominent strengths--as determined by the number of participants who mentioned them. For context, we also include statements shared at other times in the interviews. The next section will review themes on challenges of partnerships and negative perceptions of libraries.

What strengths do you expect libraries would offer in a partnership?

Five themes came to the forefront:

1. Community connections (17 = LL 8, DL 9)
2. Skilled staff (13 = LL 5, DL 8)
3. Complementary services (11 = LL 5, DL 6).
4. Physical space (9 = LL 4, DL 5)
5. User base (7 = LL 2, DL 5)

LIBRARY LEADERS (LL)

- (A) Library Innovators
- (B) National Library Planners

DEVELOPMENT LEADERS (DL)

- (C) National Information Access Planners
- (D) National Development Practitioners
- (E) Global Development Practitioners

Community connections

Participants most frequently cited public libraries' connection to local communities as an asset to leverage in partnerships (n=17). Community connections were described in three key ways: as being knowledgeable about the needs and desires of a service population; as being connected to local organizations; and as having a positive presence in the community.

Later in this report, we will see how the relationship between libraries and local communities is also seen as a challenge to partnership (n=18).

KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT SERVICE POPULATION (LL 4, DL 4). According to some development leaders, libraries are well-situated to understand community needs because they frequently interact with and help local people.

Libraries have a strong understanding of local social conditions and how this might relate to the need for local services and information (33E, 35:33).

Knowledge about the community could be used to support other types of community engagement (LL 1, DL 2).

I think libraries play a key role in helping raise awareness on certain social issues. They're rooted in a context where they interact with people in all corners of society and would be well-placed to make judgments on how to respond to the needs of people with different levels of literacy in different sectors (47E, 47:36).

Library leaders also commented on the value of local knowledge. Compared to development leaders, library leaders were somewhat more likely to talk about community knowledge in terms of library collections than knowledge gained through experience with patrons.

We know our surroundings very well. We have data about our communities (46A, 46:50).

I think the future of the libraries is to adapt more and more to the communities around them. That's my main focus, in both the selection of books and as an incentive for local artists (41A, 41:36).

Libraries are capable of identifying local needs. If we can provide the training, and if we can design an application that is localized, then it should be good (42B, 42:82).

CONNECTED TO LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS (LL 2, DL 4). Development leaders felt they could benefit from working with libraries that had strong ties to local organizations and leaders. The most appealing networks stretched across the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

The strength would be in public private partnerships, where everyone is in the game and vested in the outcome (15E, 3:28).

Building partnerships with different service institutions. A successful partnership should include other stakeholders with an interest in public libraries. Government institutions, the Department of Education, and the private sector—there are a lot of companies with an active interest in promoting education (31D, 33:61)

Two library leaders spoke about the value of libraries' community networks as a key strength of libraries.

At organizing, they'll know the locality, they know the right person to call, and even with short notice they can get people in, and so they are very good (18B, 15:53).

Our libraries have a very good network with local government, local organizations, and schools. It's very good for external partners if their local partners are very good at partnering with other local organizations so that there are already leaders as an asset for external partners to use" (42B, 42:66).

Library leaders brought up the value of partnering with local organizations at other points in their interviews.

Community-based NGOs can provide crucial connections with local leaders and community members, and in-depth knowledge about the information needs, constraints, and priorities of the areas where they work (32A, 34:73).

Community-based organizations should be the main leaders to develop communities. Partnering with the community-based organizations is very important (42B, 42:40).

POSITIVE PRESENCE (LL 4, DL 3). Library leaders and development leaders spoke positively about the general population's awareness of and good favor toward libraries. Global development practitioners (E, n=7) and library innovators (A, n=6) saw this as a strategic advantage most often.

It already has a footprint in the community. It's recognized as an institution in that community (6C, 26:64).

It's a community space, and so many people feel comfortable going there. That's the biggest strength, that it's acceptable to the community members. That acceptance can be utilized to provide many different kinds of services to the community members (31D, 33:61).

However, participants who viewed the general attitude toward public libraries as an advantage in partnerships were sometimes conflicted.

I don't know if they are looked upon well. I think at least on an esoteric level, they're thought of well, as institutions that do something. If they do it right, people think of them well. The concept of a library is universally well regarded. It's like kittens. What's wrong with kittens? (34E, 30:37).

Skilled staff

Many participants identified library staff as a key strength for libraries to leverage in partnerships (n=15). Development leaders cited library staff as a valuable asset in partnerships slightly more frequently than library leaders did (LL 5, DL 8). While speaking about perceptions of staff more generally, participants made many favorable comments about staff, but the number of participants making negative comments about staff roughly outnumbered the positive ones by a ratio of 2 to 1. (See more in next section on challenges.)

Participants who viewed library staff as valuable resources in community projects said staff were trained to help people (n=3), eager to engage with partners (n=3), well educated (n=1), and possess strong leadership qualities (n=2). Other participants simply thought that with library staff already on the payroll, "we do not need to put in the additional money" (n=2).

Of all the stakeholder categories, global development practitioners (E) mentioned the value of staff most often.

So it can be a bit of a mixed experience but we've found them a really good group to work with because it's starting with people who use their role to make information and knowledge more readily available in the right ways to the public. So you've people with more trained expertise than you would typically find elsewhere (47E, 34:98).

Fewer library leaders identified staff as a key strength. The library leaders who did talk about staff as a strength emphasized staff's level of education and training (n=2), research skills (n=1), and eagerness to work with and learn from partners (n=1).

In more general comments about libraries, participants said library staff are trained, experienced, "user-friendly" (4A), "trusted" (33E), and "proud of what they are doing" (42B).

I think the librarian is like the Google of different communities. Not exactly the same way, obviously. But they help people connect to information that is relevant to them, information that they can trust (33E, 35:19).

Complementary Library Services

Participants identified complementary library services as the next most advantageous aspect to partnership (LL 5, DL 6). These participants felt library literacy programs, book lending, targeted programming, and community events were likely to bolster the success of partners' projects. Both development leaders and library leaders mentioned library services as a strength, but when speaking more generally about their perceptions of public libraries, development leaders made fewer positive statements about library services.

Six development leaders—all national information-access planners (C)—said library services could advance the goals of external partners. These planners explained how library services complement computer access by teaching people to read, evaluate information, and use technology. Others highlighted the ongoing importance of books:

The best model for digital inclusion is created by having a library [with computers]. The computer that gives us access to the Internet is open at a certain place, such as a telecenter, for a certain period of time. It's not always available. But a book can be taken home, can be read and continued. One thing does not eliminate the other (48C, 30:23).

Library leaders also emphasized that the help and instruction users receive can have a strategic value for partners (LL 4).

Libraries are in a unique position to go beyond issues of access and help people develop information literacy. Access alone isn't enough. People need

to know how to navigate the information that's available, which is where we librarians and library programming and outreach can play a major role (32A, 34:62).

Other participants stressed that the combination of ICT services and basic literacy programs could have a strong impact on communities (LL 3, DL 3).

You can't just have computers alone. You also need other resources to be able to teach the people in a community how to read and write. The literacy classes should also be under one roof (9B, 10_42).

The level of literacy in our community among adults is pretty low, but when you have audio visual, that seems to help a lot because we do have a very strong oral culture in this community (26A, 19:34).

Physical space

Nine participants indicated physical space in libraries would be useful for external partners (LL 4, DL 5). For some development leaders, library facilities were the primary reason they would work with a library (n=5). These participants expressed their views succinctly: "It's the venue because it has good infrastructure," "It has a site," "The libraries have the space, the physical location."

The libraries provided the space for free, there's no rent, all the electricity, somebody else to watch so that everything stays there (2E, 18:39).

Two library innovators noted that external partners can take library facilities and other resources for granted.

They only just see the library as their partner because we always offer them a space. If we have to do something about the costs, it is all mainly free for them (28A, 20:54).

Still, three library leaders also stated that library facilities are a key benefit for partners because partners can use existing facilities rather than build new facilities (10B, 11:52).

User base

Participants stated that access to library users was an appealing reason for external partners to work with libraries (DL 5, LL 2). They believed that libraries are open to everyone and impose very few restrictions. As such, their user base could be particularly beneficial to program implementation.

Libraries can be utilized to provide many different kinds of services to the community members (31D, 33:57).

On the other hand, one leader who saw library use as restricted to the more educated community members still thought that population could be a strength in partnership.

I think that there could be potential opportunities to just kind of engage with different people that we don't normally (31D, 54:105).

Although very few library leaders spoke about library users as beneficial to working partnerships, many spoke positively about the size or diversity of their user base at other points in the interview. Several library leaders stressed that libraries serve a broad range of people looking for information on a wide variety of topics (LL 5).

Additionally, several library leaders spoke about how they reach out to underserved populations through targeted programs (LL 5).

We are developing activities for babies, children, young people, adults, older adults, and they are coming more and more to the libraries. But the group of patrons that come the most are the ones with academic level. If the percentage of patrons with academic levels to others before was 80% to 20%, now we can say it is 60% to 40% because the influx of other kinds of patrons. And reading and recreational activities have increased (44B, 44:36).

Other examples of services targeting traditionally underserved populations included:

- Bibliotherapy, a program for women to build computer skills while socializing and reading self-improvement articles (46A, 46:30)
- Practical Answers, a program for providing topical information that meets the needs of people in rural areas (42B, 42:54)
- Librabus, a program to bring books to indigenous communities in rural areas (46A, 46:33)

One library planner (B) made the case that, given sufficient resources, libraries could work with underserved populations to advance national development goals:

I would really like to see a situation where the public libraries are empowered to attract more people. Government policy talks about reaching disadvantaged people, whether they are women, children, out of school youth, or physically challenged. And these are people who normally find it easier to use public libraries to access information than perhaps other places. I think there is a key role for libraries, if they have the resources and designs to carry out those kinds of services. I think the public library is, as we say, the people's university (16B, 14:57).

More generally, both groups highlighted the importance of libraries as a place for people to socialize (LL 2, DL 2) or generally enjoy themselves (LL 5, DL 2).

Summary of strengths of libraries as partners

- Of all the strengths public libraries can bring to partnerships, development leaders and library leaders most frequently described the connections libraries have with local communities as advantageous to partnering. This includes the knowledge libraries have about the needs of a service population, their relationships with local organizations, and their positive presence in the community.
- Development leaders also frequently mentioned library staff as a key strength in partnerships due to their skills, training, willingness to help users, and eagerness to engage with partners.
- Other strengths mentioned by participants include: libraries provide a variety of complementary services; library facilities are useful; and nearly everyone is welcome to use a public library.

7. Challenges in partnering with libraries

We asked library leaders and development leaders what challenges would arise when public libraries partner with external organizations. This section summarizes their responses. We focus on the most prominent challenges as determined by the number of participants who commented on each of twelve types of challenges. We also include general comments where they provide context.

Six areas were mentioned most frequently:

1. Library staff (25 = LL 10, DL 15)
2. Level of community ownership (18 = LL 5, DL 13)
3. Politics (15 = LL 12, DL 3)
4. Role of libraries (13 = LL 1, DL 12)
5. Sustainability (12 = LL4, DL 7)
6. Infrastructure (12 = LL 8, DL 3)

Library staff

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Participants frequently stated that library staffing issues could be problematic for partnerships (LL 10, DL 15).

Library leaders said partnering with external organizations was difficult given lack of qualified library staff (LL 6). Insufficient staffing creates barriers to implementing new projects (LL 2), particularly for projects involving ICTs (LL 4) and outreach (LL 1). Library leaders often attributed staffing problems to over-stretched budgets and inadequate compensation (LL 3).

Despite the fact that we have such a wonderful program where we want to make sure that we make every community member a computer literate and have access to internet and free information, we have the challenge of not having the personnel to help us with the outreach programs we should be having (9B, 10:71).

We still have some problems with human resources for us to actually develop that kind of project proposals and administer them and things like that because of our salary structure... it's quite difficult to get people to run this kind of a cooperation project (25A, 8:54).

Development leaders foresee problems related to too few staff (DL 3) and poorly trained staff generally (DL 5), as well as underdeveloped skills related to ICTs, community engagement, and project management.

As for general feelings about library staff, participants made many positive and negative comments about staff, but they were more often negative. At least a dozen participants commented on low quality of services from staff due to lack of staff training and skills (LL 6, DL 5). Both library leaders and development leaders felt staff need to be better trained to work with underserved populations and find information that meets the day-to-day needs of local people (LL 2, DL 2).

They need to have knowledge on how to solve daily problems. But for now, we have few staff that can do that (22B, 17:35).

Some development leaders and library leaders doubted staff was sufficiently motivated to carry out projects with external partners. Participants hypothesized that staff lacked proper incentives, that staff compensation was insufficient, and that staff were overstretched as a result of thin staffing (LL 2, DL 4). Two information-access planners (C) saw library staff as typical of government employees who would leave for the higher compensation in the private sector if they could.

Library employees are public employees, and as such can't be laid off, are rarely open to undertaking new tasks and see the Internet as extra work they don't need to do. They resist change and limit themselves to finding books requested by users and have little or no positive influence in addressing library patrons' needs (39C, 39:59).

Three participants felt library staff had poor attitudes or were locked into outdated habits (LL 1, DL 2). The word "apathetic" was used by two participants.

If I come in and say, 'I'm looking for information on animal husbandry, and I want to know whether this breed of cows can be mixed with this breed of cows, or how to graze them, I don't know where to look for that.' Then most of the time, they tell you 'find it somewhere,' and that's it. The people sit there have no interest in playing around and saying, 'Let me see what I can find.' Nobody ever has the knowledge to sit and say, like a proper librarian should say, 'I think I can direct you to where that is' (24C, 18:28).

Level of community ownership

Although participants cited libraries' connection with communities as a strength, it was just as often seen as a challenge, and most often for development leaders (LL 5, DL 13).

For library leaders, challenges centered on inadequate levels of community participation, commitment and buy-in. People who live near public libraries don't see themselves as stakeholders (LL 3, DL 1).

Do people say "it's important to have a library?" (44B, 44:42).

People do not take possession of the place (40C, 40:35).

If we don't change the profile that the libraries have, they are going to be extinct in [South American country] (38B, 56:121).

Most development leaders, and some library leaders, viewed the problem in terms of poor public perception and inadequate marketing.

PUBLIC PERCEPTION. Some participants felt libraries have a perception problem. Both library and development leaders believed that "a lot of people don't value libraries" and "people do not think libraries are important" (LL 3, DL 3). A few library leaders acknowledged that historically the institution did not serve the general public. Instead, libraries have been associated with unpopular regimes and restricted access.

MARKETING. Given libraries are providing services that matter, participants think communities need to know more about what they do. Participants emphasize the importance of community outreach, building partnerships with local organizations, and expanding local networks so libraries can promote themselves more effectively.

The challenge is that they are thought of as traditional, backwards, maybe slow-moving, not connected to the real world, retirement villages (34E, 30:38).

There has to be a lot of social marketing, a lot of change in the mindset of the local leaders about how the libraries can be transformed to something else (7C, 27:45).

Politics

More often than not, library leaders believed obtaining political authorization could introduce delays, if not barriers to partnership. Library leaders cited a variety of political challenges more often than any other type of challenge to partnership, whereas this concern was less prevalent among development leaders (n=27; LL 20, DL 7).

Library leaders gave examples of delays caused by formal processes and procedures (LL 8). Other political challenges include changes in leadership that slow progress in library improvements or lead to library closures. Lack of involvement and recognition from public officials was also seen as problematic (LL 1).

Development leaders questioned if libraries were high enough on political agendas to be effective partners.

I'm not too sure if even public officials are aware what purposes libraries provide and if this is written down.... We know libraries are important, but what roles should they play? (37C, 37:55).

There is a need for a strong involvement with local leaders ...the potential of libraries so that they will support it...they will support the transformation of libraries (7C, 27:46).

When speaking generally about libraries, participants recognized that public libraries are political entities that need support from local leaders and the general public. However, many more participants discussed the negative aspects of this reality than the positive. Common negative perceptions included that libraries are often a low government priority (LL 4, DL 1), particularly when they must compete with schools for funds (LL 2, DL 2). Others felt public officials do not support libraries because they do not generate revenue (LL 2) and librarians can be replaced by computers (LL 1).

I don't think that typically governments think of libraries as the means of facilitating this digital movement forward. That's not the first place they think of. They think of, if we want to do the public access computers, we'll stick to the post office. And if we want to educate the kids, we will do it in a school (34E, 30:19)

Both library leaders and development leaders thought public libraries are forced to fight for public funds (LL 3, DL 3). Others spoke about how libraries fight for inclusion in relatively well-funded government initiatives related to information access and/or digital inclusion efforts, where libraries are not traditionally seen as important players (LL 3, DL 4).

I don't think that typically governments think of libraries as the means of facilitating this digital movement forward (34E, 30:20).

The initiatives to have access to the ICTs are still very much focused on the LAN houses (41A, 66:66).

I would like to see a situation where the government strategy and policy is more inclusive of libraries and librarians and our roles in actually achieving the objectives of government in terms of providing access to information to the citizenry (16B, 14:47).

Some library leaders felt local authorities do not see a need for libraries, lack appreciation for their role, or only support libraries when it is politically advantageous, which can change every election (LL 4).

The government still doesn't understand. It has a very elitist vision of what a library is. They view the library as a place for reading only, as a place to help schools fulfill their obligations, and not as a place to have access to information. They don't think about the unemployed person, the housewife, the ordinary citizen as users, unless these people want to go there just to read books (38B, 38:46).

This interference is not allowing the library to develop because you have beautiful ideas, but the protocol of having to get approval for this, having to do this, is really killing the system (21A, 6:50.)

Role

Development leaders were fairly consistent in discussing the uncertain or inadequate role of libraries as a challenge to partnership, whereas library leaders spoke about the changing role of libraries in other terms (LL 1, DL 12).

Most development leaders said they are uninterested in working with libraries that see themselves as “a repository for books” (14E, 13:37) or “just a place of knowledge” (14E, 13:40) (DL 8). Instead libraries need an “attitude to cope with changes” (17D, 4:54), “see themselves as service organizations” (1E, 21:40), and show that they can “modernize...fast enough” (36D, 31:12).

Several library leaders emphasized the need for an overarching shift in the role libraries play in their communities, but none cited the role of libraries as a major challenge to attracting partners and implementing projects. However, one library leader explained how the real challenge was others’ perception of the role of public libraries:

The difficulty comes from the mistaken perception that the library is nothing else but a place to keep books (38B, 38:65).

Beyond their thoughts about challenges to partnerships, participants held mixed views on the current and future role of libraries. No participant shared an entirely negative opinion; however, several questioned the role of libraries now and in the next 10 to 20 years given social and political changes and technological shifts.

Either they cope with the changes of the time or they will be derailed from the mainstream (17D, 4:36).

In one African and two Asian countries, participants stressed the need for today’s libraries to actively challenge historical perceptions and recreate themselves as institutions open to everyone (LL 2, DL 1).

[Country name] doesn’t have a historical background of using libraries. Libraries were apartheid institutions where the majority of inhabitants never used them. They never entered libraries and their parents never entered libraries, so they don’t see the usefulness. They were never brought up to know what libraries can do for communities. This comes up very clearly in the policies they are drafting (9B, 10:39).

Participants in two South American and one Asian country explained that officials aren’t clear if public libraries should be situated within or outside of the education system (LL 2, DL 1).

There's a lack of understanding of what a public library is. Our people transformed public libraries into school libraries.

We have asked about library strategies and oftentimes they are very, very disconnected from the education sector (1E, 21:34).

The role of libraries was also questioned in regard to future technological advances and improved broadband connections (LL 2, DL 2). This is attributed on one hand to increasing Internet penetration (e.g., users will not need libraries once when they can afford Internet access) and on the other, to the role of libraries as public access venues. Many participants believed national digital inclusion strategies have excluded libraries, producing in a competitive disadvantage for libraries.

When computers entered the market, society realized that everything is easier with the help of a computer and that libraries were no longer needed. Actually, the opposite should have happened. But libraries became outdated, dead places that only hold books with dust on them. We have less and less employees. If we don't change, if we can't invert these orders in the next years, the kind of library that exists in the majority of the towns will have no purpose anymore (38B, 38:47).

At least two participants expressed confusion about what libraries do (LL 1, DL 1).

I'm confused, as I guess many people are, about what exactly a library is. But I'm a firm believer in libraries and the potential role that they can play (1E, 23:27)

Other participants were more comfortable with a broader definition of libraries, both in the traditional sense of providing books for learning and recreation as well as a growing importance to provide Internet access, new types of programming, and outreach (LL 2, DL 2). One library innovator showed how the perceived role of libraries changes once others see the range of services libraries provide.

We showed people, and they would say, 'Oh my goodness, this is so much more than a library.' No, this is a library. Libraries can do mentoring, can have programming, can do outreach and can be very effective (19A, 5:54).

Another recurring perception was that libraries are about books and reading (LL 1, DL 5), and the cultural importance of book and libraries is different in North America and developing countries (DL 3).

Sustainability

Development leaders and library leaders thought insufficient funding for public libraries could hamper partnerships (n=12). Development leaders voiced this concern more often than library leaders (LL 4, DL 7). However, when speaking about their perceptions of libraries at other times in the interview, library leaders discussed the poor state of library funding more frequently than development

leaders did (LL9, DL 6). The theme of library sustainability was mentioned in negative contexts (n=15) more often than positive contexts (n=4).

According to library leaders, public libraries have very limited budgets and partnering with external organizations could bring additional strains (LL 4). The costs of opening facilities for outside groups could increase staff, heating and electricity costs. And after a project period concludes and funders no longer support the project, libraries would have a difficult time allocating a portion of the budget to ensure project sustainability.

The Social Security Department asked us for spaces to train their pensioners so that they could learn to complete forms and things like that. The same with the Treasury Department. Libraries are included in these projects but they don't do them because they don't have enough equipment or human resources (46A, 46:55).

Development leaders also identified library funding as a challenge to partnerships (n=7). Their concern was both with "serious underfunding" (DL 4) that could threaten Internet connectivity (DL 2), and the inability to train staff and buy library materials (DL 1). Development leaders expected that working with libraries would require substantial investments to help cover library overhead (DL 2).

The challenge for this kind of library is the long term sustainability because it needs resources which aren't always available. Not many organizations, not even the schools, want to put the money into this kind of library. There's not a lot of interest in putting money into library projects or making some investment in expanding the library service. So this is one of the challenges that libraries have had in the countries we've worked in (31D, 33:58).

More generally, most participants who discussed their views on library funding and ongoing operations felt public libraries are underfunded. The current state of funding has kept libraries from providing adequate services and fulfilling their potential.

We don't have resources and sustainability is the main issue. The libraries cannot survive (42B, 42:66).

Libraries are run down. I mean most places just don't have a budget and can't keep them how they used to be (2E, 22:36).

Some development leaders and library leaders opined that publicly funded libraries are built on an inherently unsustainable model (n=4).

A library is never going to be sustainable. It's a public good. You're going to have to put money in it (3E, 23:40).

Several participants had observed the effects of insufficient budgets firsthand, having had recently visited libraries providing poor services and outdated materials (LL3, DL 4). These participants described the quality of public libraries as "grossly inadequate" (16B) and "very ill-equipped" (6C).

I don't know if the libraries are very well used. They don't have materials. They don't have public access computers. They don't even have print materials. They don't have great collections, and they don't have programming, and they don't have outreach. So the basic elements of what makes an effective library don't exist there (19A, 5:51).

One development leader described a particularly dismal visit to a public library in southern Africa:

I went to see [a library] when I was there. I was horrified. The room was basically the same as this size room and all it's got is some dusty old books and newspapers and not one person there. It was horrible. And I asked the librarian, who I know very well, whether she wanted me to try to arrange to send some new materials, and she said, 'Don't, I don't have room for them' (3E, 52:19).

In contrast, only three participants said libraries are sustainable and partners were well-placed to leverage an institution supported by taxpayers (LL 2, DL 1).

Infrastructure

A dozen library and development leaders expect that infrastructure limitations in libraries would create problems for project implementation (n=12).

Library leaders expressed concerns about electricity and equipment maintenance (LL 8).

I've already told you that we don't have electricity about 15 to 16 hours per day, so that can be a challenge (42B, 42:48).

Among development leaders, national information access planners (C) expected difficulties due to the unavailability of basic infrastructure, ICT connectivity, and equipment maintenance in libraries (DL 3).

The infrastructure, ICT illiterate staff, and no tech support in some of the regions. You'll find that your closest tech support is a hundred and fifty kilometers away (6C, 26:66).

As a result, these participants tended to agree with the assessment presented earlier: that few public libraries offer ICTs and the ones that do offer generally poor quality of service. (See section 5, "Perspectives on access to ICTs.")

Summary of challenges of partnering with libraries

- Development leaders and library leaders did not identify the same top challenges in partnering with libraries.
- Even though development leaders saw library staff as a strength in partnerships, library staffing issues were the challenge they mentioned most often. Development leaders assume libraries will be understaffed and that staff lack important skills, particularly those related to ICTs. Development leaders also expected problems related to libraries' relationships with local communities, future relevance, and long-term sustainability.
- Library leaders saw staffing levels and staff training as a top challenge for partnerships as well. However, they mentioned political authorization more often. Library infrastructure was also a frequently cited challenge.

8. Examples of successful partnerships

In previous sections, we described how study participants believe libraries could be strong partners due to their connections to the community, trained staff, and range of user services. However, participants are also concerned that limited library capacity, public perception, and other factors could present formidable challenges to implementing projects.

How can libraries and development organizations work together effectively given these strengths and challenges? This section highlights examples of successful partnerships in the words of development leaders and library leaders. We draw attention to factors that support successful partnerships and promising opportunities.

Development leaders

LIBRARY LEADERS (LL)

- (A) Library Innovators
- (B) National Library Planners

DEVELOPMENT LEADERS (DL)

- (C) National Information Access Planners
- (D) National Development Practitioners
- (E) Global Development Practitioners

1. Going to places where people gather and providing them with information that matters.

Recently I visited Peru, on a trip with the kids, and I loved it. I went nuts when we went to take a walk on the beach and, because in Lima a lot of people go to the beach on Saturday, the library sets up a bookmobile. And the kids said: "Look, mom." People go to the beach on Saturdays, they dive, the beach is public, and people own the beach. So, they take the bookmobile there. They also bring a program to promote skin cancer awareness; they distribute sun block and run cancer examinations and all those things (51C, 52:18).

2. Attracting diverse groups of people to the library through popular programs and realizing the potential of libraries as community centers.

It would be interesting to work with libraries to look at what their potential needs are because the libraries here don't even know what they could possibly do. I would look at working with libraries to turn them into public community centers where young people come in and they've got programs much like they have in the States. You got early reading programs to get kids hooked at reading, and you've got programs maybe for teenagers that are more focused on technology or something like that. Building the reputation of the libraries themselves as a community resource would be a big stuff (36D, 31:56).

3. Launching public-private partnerships to enhance libraries and train librarians.

In Mexico we have a partnership that includes a national library system in Mexico and the Gates Foundation where they were helping provide funding for the enhancement of the library centers, access centers, and the library system there. We came in using our technology curriculum to train library staff on how to deliver trainings there. There are a number of places in Mexico where our curriculum is just delivered through library access centers (14E, 13:34).

4. Bringing together institutions with overlapping services to share knowledge and resources that advance national development goals.

There are public libraries that provide free access to the Internet and then there are multiple types of centers—multipurpose community centers, teacher resource centers, youth centers, culture centers, school libraries, et cetera. They do not necessarily always work in a good, united way. That is why we worked in one specific region of the country, where we brought all these centers together, to see how they can better work together, share resources and even ideas in terms of what each one of them can do to work towards a knowledge society—which was at that stage one of the development objectives of the country [...]. For example, we found out that nobody knew that there was one center that specialized in Braille reading materials (20D, 16:20-21).

5. Identifying linkages between program goals and capacity needs to provide the right types of training.

One of the programs we've had in Africa has been around information capabilities and promoting access to high quality evidence-based research that's in the public domain. In order to do that, we've focused on information literacy training and the methodology for information literacy training—to some extent, training the trainers to help people discover information and make good use of search tools and other techniques for finding research on the internet, and knowing where to look, and how to assess the quality of materials. The focus of our work there has been primarily with people working in libraries and research institutions and building up their skills in order that they can share those with others. That's all focusing in terms of information literacy. But alongside that, we've also focused on good management of IT equipment and making sure that the bandwidth is well-managed, that anti-virus and archiving and other activities are all done well. Often the security and maintenance of equipment and everything else is equally important, and if those things aren't managed well and people don't have the skills to understand how to do those things, then information literacy training alone is going to have a limiting effect. So as I said, it's more than just the equipment (47E, 27:23).

6. Assessing the information needs of specific communities to share information more effectively.

There are many development agencies, bilateral and multilateral, that are interested in distributing information but it's often done in a very dump way—if I can use that word—in the sense that things are downloaded on people, and they say "here are things" but it's not driven in terms of the information needs of specific communities. The work that we've been doing is to develop an information society action plan based on a survey we did on the users, the infrastructure, and the staff of these different centers. Based on that we determined which kind of information each one would find advantageous, and what kind of needs exist, and how can they better work together (20D, 16:21).

7. Recognizing strategic potential of library collections and archives, particularly in the area of governance.

We're starting a new product line. The demand, to be honest with you right now, is a little bit stronger on the archive side than it is on the library side, primarily because the countries are trying to deal with issues of good governance and transparency and freedom of information, and access to information. In order to be able to do those things, they have to have their evidence ready. And what is evidence? Evidence is records. And where are the records held? Records are in the archives, or they're in the national register, or the health system, or in the ministry of public service or in the ministry of finance. So, we have started a new product line to help national governments with their information needs in the same way that we work with ministries of health or ministries of agriculture. We also want to work with either public service or the ministry of ICT, or the ministry of communication— whichever ministries the library of archives are under— to provide those governments with direct assistance in the same way that we do in any of the other sectors (3E, 23:4).

8. Finding ways to make technology work for users and host organizations.

There are information needs regarding employment that can actually be easily solved because especially in remote rural areas people don't have necessarily access to newspapers. So in one area, for example, we started with Newspaper on the Wall project. Newspapers were approached to ask if they would be able to send extracts of the newspapers to some of the centers. They send it in PDF, the centers would print some of the pages and put it on a wall and people can actually have the news of yesterday where they used to have it once a month. So that is the kind of initiatives that you use technology but it's not necessarily through technology that people access the information. So it becomes a conduit for delivering information but then in a paper or another format (20D, 16:24).

9. Delivering information in a way that attracts and engages target groups.

There was a project we had specifically for multipurpose community centers where we focused on aspects of our agenda such as, specifically, what were women's needs in terms of information and services. We also worked with partners to develop and repackage information that was safe for young people. On HIV and AIDS, it wasn't just brochures put down their throat, but music, games and videos that were repackaged in electronic format, but offline. Once we know, for example, that there is a need for health information, we approach, say, WHO for information that they might have for the specific target audience (20D, 16:55).

From development leaders: additional partnership opportunities

10. Working with individuals in international organizations who want to get involved and helping them make their case to organizational leadership.

We are getting more and more - we're getting demands for this request. We recently held sessions with our staff in North Africa, and one of the requests that were put to us was: "Please get involved in library development in this country. We need help in the area, especially in the public libraries. We need you to help train and develop our librarians so they can go out into the world and help their citizens." As we said, we don't have a mandate for that; we don't have the funding for that. What we're trying as much as possible to see if there are partners both within the institution and outside the institution that we can work with (3E, 23:5).

11. Enrolling support from, and bolstering the capacity of, library associations and other advocates that can promote library sustainability.

I give credit to Gates with the marketing and advocacy they've done. But maybe they haven't dealt with library associations enough. What is a library association but an advocacy group--a membership organization that has the interest of the membership in mind? It advocates for libraries to the government and also outside as to what's important. I think it's really important.... You're a donor. You go in for a certain amount of time and you leave. What do you leave with? Governments change. But if you have a strong, viable library association you have basically created a homegrown advocacy movement to move it forward. The association goes on to help with the long term administrative infrastructure (34E, 30:44).

12. Increasing support among local officials.

I think there can be support if officials can understand the potential and advantages of transforming libraries. Because there can even be funding for them. It's just a fact that to improve the libraries we need incentives and local government... There is a special education fund which can offer good

support to libraries. But I think libraries are becoming less of a priority because of more urgent needs like, even classroom chairs (7C, 27:46).

13. Providing resources for local community groups and activists.

So you take someone that's a Roma activist, and all they have is a cell phone. We bring in technologies that really help them galvanize their local community, like a citizen journalism site that's set up with a blog, and people can send videos of abuse. That activist can now load them up and make those public. If they don't have access to a computer, but they can use a local library as a resource, that's really powerful. If that becomes almost their base of operations to do the mission of their NGO, I think that would be the best case. How realistic that is, I mean, I haven't done enough research to find out, but it just intuitively makes sense to us (13E, 2:43).

14. Building a body of evidence on the impact of successful projects.

We don't have any projects where we're actually helping a library as a legitimate project. We don't have any of them like that. We're desperate for one because we want to demonstrate how beneficial it would be. A study like yours, which made a clear link between sustainable livelihoods and access to information of any other kind, would turn the tide for us (3E, 23:10).

Library Leaders

1. Bringing a strong value proposition to partners striving toward the same measures of success.

We have libraries that have joined with the youth centers, with the Ministry of Youth. We are trying to cooperate with the Ministry of Youth because we also feel that we have a high dropout rate in our high schools and we would like to encourage youth who have dropped out to do online distance studies (9B, 10:40).

2. Scaling programs to meet the needs of a greater number of people.

We got a project from the American Embassy meant to help unemployed young women. We decided to offer services to any age of women that want to be employed. So we serve them with free computer skills courses—free for them--and also interactive courses—writing a CV, going to an interview, how to behave in an interview, what to say (28A, 20:43).

3. Delivering information in local languages.

With the support of the [country name] Library Foundation, we are getting support from the open learning exchange. They are developing local language open sources. Most of the information in the Internet is English-

based, and our users are not familiar with English. They are developing one program for the [local language]... and we are using this, too (4A, 24:39).

4. Bringing stakeholder groups together to create new products, flagging successes, and scaling what works.

We got a public library innovation program grant. We proposed a program of having teachers work in teams with some of our kids and some of our artists—who developed incredibly beautiful computer graphics on the One Laptop Per Child laptops—and they came up with 700 lessons, a hundred in each of the seven [country name] languages. When we presented it to the government they were just blown away. They said they'd always thought of our library as providing access, but it's actually improving the quality of education in this country. So that's what we've just proposed to a bilateral aid agency, to take those lessons and improve them so that the sounds of each word is spoken, which is important in learning to read. They can be run on any platform. This was generated by our libraries, but it's by no means limited to libraries (19A, 5:55).

5. Building bridges with schools and universities and recruiting volunteers.

There is a beautiful program called Reading Rainbow. It's done in coordination with several schools, adolescents who help foster reading in children. They get motivated and at the same time, they instill the love of reading in children (46A, 46:13).

As long as we can make accurate, strategic alliances, we can really provide the resources to train people. An example is the partnership between the libraries and the University of [country name]. Through a project for university community work, people are training communities how to use technologies. They can surf the Internet, but we also need to be able to give them an introduction to what information is. They learn to discern which information they really need to read, and that promotes knowledge because not everything on the Internet is valuable (44B, 44:14).

6. Garnering support of public officials at the state level to help secure support from international funders.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Vocational Training has said that community libraries fit with their priorities. They want us to move forward with their national library service because we actually construct libraries and work with communities and provide training. In order to finance that, they want to turn to bilateral and multilateral donors and private sector donors to finance this. So perhaps these donors might have funded building schools or training teachers, and of course they still will, but now the government is trying to ask them to also fund development of these public access libraries with children and the youth. That's actually a big effort (19A, 5:8).

7. Building expertise in program evaluation to clearly demonstrate the impact of libraries.

We have recently gotten a grant from a foundation in Southern Africa to conduct an evaluation of our library model and the impact of our libraries. We will have a person arriving to run our program who is a monitoring and evaluation professional, as well as a library information professional. That's going to take the organization forward to further our work with the government and with the donors and try to promote this model to get more support to be able to build more libraries. Evaluation is very important to get support from international development organizations (19A, 5:9).

8. Training the trainers and reaching people in rural areas.

[A library association in Europe] is giving us money for an ICT advisor and an ICT technician. They are going to train our staff members on how to teach ICT so that they can become ICT literate themselves and to pass their knowledge on to community members (9B, 10:73). I would say we can only succeed if we can have intensive programs to train the trainers. That would really bring the digital divide closer, because then we could have mobile libraries where we can go around the villages. You can drive the van into a village, you can call the community members at the water hole and say 'come, today is your access day. Send email to your children or just type something. Let me teach you how to type this. Let me teach you how to do this for yourself' (9B, 10:72).

9. Securing a role in digital inclusion initiatives by working with multiple ministries.

The Ministry of Culture has a partnership with the Ministry of Communications to make sure that each library that we install in a town has a telecenter. That's how a very important partnership among government organizations can happen. There are many possibilities and we need to articulate them as often as possible (38B, 38:63).

10. Supporting small-scale digital inclusion initiatives led by local officials.

Some local government officials decided to put the telecenters within the libraries. The library is host to the telecenter and the mayor has allowed anyone to use the telecenters as a public calling station to their relatives abroad—using IM, gmail, Google Talk, video calls, all kinds of available technologies over the Internet. In some cases, they have VoIP installed free for anyone (10B, 11:23).

11. Seeking support from private partners like technology companies.

We got a project from iPhone for agriculture. We have a mobile library on wheels. And now we are helping farmers, to bring the information to their yards, to their villages, because they need the information but don't know how to get it from a computer or from literature. We are doing education for agriculture. We will create AgroCorner, a website that will bring all the

information about sub sites, about European reforms and they will be immediate for the farmers (28A, 20:44).

From library leaders: additional partnership opportunities

12. Building awareness and garnering support from officials.

The government can do a lot in terms of policy, enacting policies that make it more comfortable for other players to get on board. But there's got to be enough awareness within the government itself on the potential of libraries before that can happen (26A, 19:51).

13. Developing local content and making collections widely available.

We want to develop local content and digital libraries relevant to the population here. Our national archives are digitizing historical documents and photos of this country's independence struggle. At some point we want them to be available on the Internet also (25A, 8:48).

The richer and technologically advanced library works with its partners to explore and document the rich oral tradition, learning culture, indigenous knowledge and practices of the host (26A, 19:54).

We can build up a collection from these research papers [from the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Mines and Energy, Ministry of the Environment, etc.], and make them available in our libraries so that people can get access to them. In most cases, nobody knows what is available or what has been published in their ministries (22B, 17:58).

14. Building the capacity of libraries to find and apply for grants and other opportunities.

Organizations can also help with networking with similar organizations of funding agencies, and you know, trying to make that connection for resource sharing, funding agencies, and also helping the public libraries network. Communicate with one another and pointing them in the direction of where they can get support, and then helping them develop proposals. For instance, it would be for some capacity building programs, training programs, or a volunteer coming to work for a period of time (16B, 14:52).

15. Creating more opportunities for librarians to learn about best practices in other countries firsthand.

Honestly, this is on a serious note: I don't know why librarians cannot do exchange programs, like with Peace Corp volunteers. But instead of Peace Corp volunteers, who are generalists, we can have volunteers who are librarians, who just come to us, to [country name] to work in [country name] libraries and help us provide services optimally (9B, 10:67).

The exposure is also very much needed because being in this country only is like that frog in a pond. It's very limited. We need to learn about the

possibilities of what can be done. I mean, I got a chance to go the US, being involved with the Gates Foundation. By being involved with them, I just see the possibilities. There are ample opportunities (42B, 42:38).

16. Creating opportunities for libraries and technology companies to work together.

I was thinking of speaking to the mayor. Maybe 6 tablets, like with the iPhone or iPad. I'd say I need at least 6 tables to get started. I have to go to the parent company, the distributor in [country name] to convince them that this is a way of promoting their business. We are going to promote the tablets at this library, with the amount of visitors we get, and this will increase their tablet sales. Teach the young people how to use them, see the benefits of a tablet at the same time, use it to turn them into readers and attract the young population (45A, 45:8).

We want to go together with our partner to the big cell phone company to look for direct funding, to see if they will give us this Wi-Fi access to the Internet and thus be serving people freely through these libraries. Internet access, I think it'll be tremendous PR for them because everyone hates those companies because they're so rich. And we do see ICTs as being of central importance to perceptions and moving forward with libraries (19A, 5:74).

With the private sector, there are challenges in finding entry points to begin a partnership, and then helping them understand how supporting libraries benefits them (32A, 34:79).

17. Reaching remote locations through mobile library services or new community outlets.

We have community learning and development centers. They were supposed to be in places where we didn't have community libraries, so they were set up as branches of community libraries. But now we are trying to expand them also to go to the villages so that they can serve the new literates (9B, 10:24).

Summary of examples of successful partnerships

DEVELOPMENT LEADERS

- Projects that make purposeful information more easily accessible and engaging appeal to development leaders.
- Libraries benefit from public-private partnerships that enhance program effectiveness.

- Programs are most effective when partners' goals are clearly aligned and articulated well.
- Partners should assess and appropriately respond to library capacity concerns when designing programs.
- Development leaders saw opportunities for public libraries to find allies within international organizations, library associations, public agencies, community-based organizations, and the research community.

LIBRARY LEADERS

- Successful partnerships enable libraries to deliver better services and reach more people.
- Strategic alliances benefit both partners and work toward the same measures of success.
- Partners work with libraries to stake a claim in digital initiatives at the local and national levels.
- Partners bolster library capacity by helping libraries to train staff, update curriculums, learn best practices, recruit volunteers with ICT skills, and reach out to rural areas.
- Partners support library outreach efforts by developing materials in local languages and supporting appropriate mobile technologies.
- Library leaders see opportunities to work with partners on improving public perceptions, making local content widely available, connecting with private sector partners, and learning best practices such as how to secure new sources of funding.

9. Conclusion

The fact that they are there is great. I think it's already a start (6C, 26:57).

There seems to be a greater awareness of the potential of libraries for community development amongst international development organizations and foundations than we find locally (26A, 19:49).

Can public libraries play a more prominent role in development? In the views of 51 stakeholders in ten developing countries and at organizations engaged in global development, our conclusion is a clear yes. Development leaders see potential in libraries and are interested in exploring partnerships. As the first quote above states, public libraries exist. Libraries provide an institutional base in nearly every country for development programs to reach local communities.

As for aligning the work of libraries and development organizations, we find libraries offer many positive strengths to build upon, as well as challenges that would need to be addressed. Most revealing is that several characteristics of libraries are simultaneously viewed as a strength and a challenge, as opposed to two distinct lists. For instance, library staff are seen as an asset for reaching local communities, yet they are also seen as an obstacle because they are not trained to implement outreach programs. Similarly, the library's place in the local community is viewed positively with regard to their understanding of people's needs and connections to local organizations, and negatively in terms of public perception and lack of community outreach. Such overlaps of strengths and challenges reveal key opportunities for development organizations and libraries to tailor partnerships in ways that maximize library resources.

From the perspective of development leaders, the current role of the public library in the community may be one of the most significant challenges. When libraries are perceived as no more than repositories of books, by both library and development leaders, we see the need for a mindset change. Library leaders must look not only outward to forging new partnerships, but also inward to assess their readiness to engage with the development sector, by asking important questions: What role would the library like to play five or ten years into the future? How will they get there? And how far can their current policies and customer service outlook take them?

Fortunately, stakeholders provided dozens of examples of how libraries play a positive role in community development efforts, on their own and in partnership with others. This report lists many of these, along with views of what made these programs successful.

The findings presented in this study raise a fundamental question: do we wait for libraries to become viable partners, or should governments and other organizations make concerted efforts and investments to involve libraries,

challenges and all, in development initiatives? Having studied the impacts of public libraries with ICTs, trained librarians and modern services, adopting the latter offers a potentially virtuous circle for the development community. Working with public libraries can increase capacity, thereby drawing greater attention and buy-in from governments and local organizations, changing perceptions of the library's role among both the staff and community, enhancing their legitimacy, and paving the way for future partnerships. The cumulative effect of multiple initiatives can make the libraries stronger, thus attractive for other development partners. As institutions with a public mission, public libraries are a logical institution to concentrate efforts that involve access to information.

11. Appendix 1: Country sample tables

Figure 12. Country selection criteria

Country	Region	HDI quartile	PL Count (#1)	PL Count (#2)	PL/ 100,000 people (#1)	PL/ 100,000 people (#2)	Public Library Count Notes & Sources ⁶⁷
Bangladesh	Asia	Low	68	1119	0.05	0.74	(1) IFLA 2010 (2) Landscape Study
Brazil	South America	High	6545	5097	3.44	2.68	(1) IFLA 2007 (2) Landscape Study
Costa Rica	Central America	High	58	57	1.40	1.38	(1) IFLA 2005 (2) Landscape Study
Macedonia (FYR)	S Europe	High	33	-	1.61	-	(1) IFLA 2010
Namibia	Saharan and Sub-Saharan Africa	Medium	65	56	3.16	2.72	(1) IFLA 2010 (2) Landscape Study
Nepal	Asia	Low	800	100	2.77	0.35	(1) IFLA 2010 (2) Landscape Study
Nigeria	Saharan and Sub-Saharan Africa	Low	36	-	0.03	-	(1) IFLA 2007
Philippines	Asia	Medium	1124	1156	1.23	1.27	(1) IFLA 2010 (2) Landscape Study
Thailand	Asia	Medium	919	2,116	1.41	3.25	(1) IFLA 2007 (2) IFLA 2010
Zambia	Saharan and Sub-Saharan Africa	Low	16	-	0.14	-	(1) IFLA 2007

⁶ IFLA World Reports (2005, 2007, 2010) available at: <http://www.ifla.org/en/publications/iflaifaife-world-report-series>

⁷ More information about the Public Access Landscape Study here: <http://tascha.uw.edu/projects/public-access-landscape-study/>

BEYOND ACCESS: PERCEPTIONS OF LIBRARIES AS DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

	Bangladesh	Brazil	Costa Rica	Macedonia	Namibia	Nepal	Nigeria	Philippines	Thailand	Zambia
Population (in thousands)	148,692	194,946	4,659	2,061	2,283	29,959	158,423	93,261	69,122	12,926
Population density (people per sq. km)	1142	23	91	82	3	209	174	313	135	17
Urban living %	28	87	64	68	38	18	50	66	34	36
Adult literacy %	56	90	96	97	89	59	61	95	94	71
Literate females:males (% 15-24)	104	101	101	100	104	88	84	102	100	82
Total school enrollment, primary (% net)	89	95	90	93	90	74	63	92	90	92
Duration of secondary education	7	7	5	8	5	7	6	4	6	5
Labor participation %	71	71	63	54	57	72	56	64	73	69
Life expectancy at birth	68	73	79	74	62	68	51	68	74	49
Mortality under 5	48	19	10	12	40	50	143	29	13	111
GDP/capita	675	10,710	7,691	4,460	5,330	438	540	1,383	2,713	432
PPP \$1.25/day	50	4	1	0	49	55	64	23	0	.
% GDP spent on public education	2	5	6	3	6	5	1	3	4	1

	Bangladesh	Brazil	Costa Rica	Macedonia	Namibia	Nepal	Nigeria	Philippines	Thailand	Zambia
Telephone lines/100 people	1	22	32	20	6	3	1	7	10	1
Mobile cell/100 people	46	104	65	105	67	31	55	86	101	38
Secure servers/1 million people	0	41	108	24	14	2	1	7	13	1
kWh/capita	252	2,206	1,813	3,442	1,576	91	121	593	2,045	635
% population w/ electric access ⁸	41	98	99	.	34	44	51	90	99	19

⁸ Source: World dataBank, World Development Indicators & Global Development Finance database. <http://databank.worldbank.org/ddp/home.do>

12. Appendix 2: Stakeholders

Figure 13. List of organizations by stakeholder category

Stakeholder Category	Organization	Country
(A) Library Innovators	Rede Brasil Bibliotecas Comunitárias	Brazil
	Public Library, Goicoechea	Costa Rica
	Public Library, Palmares	Costa Rica
	Public Library, "Braka Miladinovci" Radovis	Macedonia
	Regional Public and University Library, Goce Delchev-Stip	Macedonia
	Namibian Library and Archives Service	Namibia
	Kathmandu Valley Public Library	Nepal
	READ Nepal	Nepal
	The City Library, FCT Education Resource Centre	Nigeria
	Fantsuam Foundation	Nigeria
	Lubuto Libraries	Zambia
(B) Library Planners	National System of Public Libraries	Brazil
	National Libraries System	Costa Rica
	Ministry of Education	Namibia
	National Libraries and Archives of Namibia	Namibia
	READ Nepal	Nepal
	Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria	Nigeria
	Information Resource Centre	Nigeria
	Edo State Library Board	Nigeria
	National Library of the Philippines	Philippines
	University of Zambia	Zambia
(C) National Information Access Planners	Bangladesh Telecentre Network	Bangladesh
	National Association of Centers for Digital Inclusion	Brazil
	CDI LAN	Brazil
	Ministry of Science & Technology	Brazil
	Ministry of Science & Technology	Costa Rica
	ICT Alliance	Namibia
	Xnet Development Alliance Trust	Namibia
	High Level Commission for Information Technology	Nepal

	National Information Technology Development Agency	Nigeria
	Commission on ICT, National Computer Center	Philippines
	Foundation for Media Alternatives	Philippines
National Development Practitioners (D)	BRAC Education Programme	Bangladesh
	Relief International	Bangladesh
	UNDP	Bangladesh
	UNESCO	Brazil
	Paniamor Foundation	Costa Rica
	UNESCO	Namibia
	The Asia Foundation	Thailand
Global Development Practitioners (E)	IDRC	Canada
	Institute of Development Studies	UK
	World Bank, Education Program	USA
	USAID, Bureau for Europe and Eurasia	USA
	World Bank, Library and Archives	USA
	US State Department, Office of eDiplomacy	USA
	Intel	USA
	Counterpart International	USA
	Nokia	USA
Independent Consultant	USA	

13. Appendix 3: Interview questions

Library innovator (A)

1. What is the mission of your library?
2. What are the library's current priorities? List up to three.
3. What is your role?
4. What do you think are the government's top three challenges that it aims to address? (e.g. youth unemployment, a health issue, minority populations, primary education, etc.)
5. In your country, are information and communication technologies (computers, internet, mobile phones) being used to address the types of challenges you mentioned above? Please provide up to 3 examples.
6. For people who do not have home or work access to computers and the Internet, what types of places provide people with access to ICTs? Please list.
7. To what extent do you think any of these places are helping people meet their information and communication needs?
8. Compared to 5 years ago, has the importance of these places increased, decreased, or stayed the same?
9. Does your country have a digital inclusion strategy (or something similar)? If so, do places that provide public access to computers and the Internet have a specific role? Which places?
10. If you had to summarize your perceptions of places that provide public access in three words, how would you describe: cybercafés? Telecenters? Libraries?
11. Following is a list of statements about libraries. Please indicate how much you agree with each statement: strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree, or don't know.
 - a. People in rural areas have access to libraries
 - b. People in urban areas have access to libraries
 - c. Librarians have the skills to help people find what they need
 - d. People of all ages use libraries
 - e. People come to the library to solve their everyday problem
 - f. Libraries provide access to the Internet and computers
 - g. The government strongly supports libraries
12. What is the current state of public libraries in your country (e.g. where are they located, who uses them, for what purposes)?
13. How does your library use computers and the Internet to address the information needs and priorities of your community? Please provide examples of current projects.
14. Going forward, what do you see as the biggest opportunities for libraries to provide public access to ICTs?
15. Going forward, what is the likelihood of a partnership with the following types of organizations? A partnership is defined as when the other organization provides funding, in-

kind support, expertise, or some other kind of assistance. The choices are: Very likely, Somewhat likely, Not very likely, Definitely unlikely, or Don't know

- a. Government agencies (outside of the one that oversees libraries)
 - b. International development organizations and foundations
 - c. Community-based NGOs
 - d. Technology corporations
 - e. Other: _____
16. What would a successful partnership with any of these types of organizations look like? What assets (e.g. resources, expertise, services) would the partner contribute?
 17. What assets or strengths would the library contribute to a partnership?
 18. Are there any obstacles or challenges to implementing partnerships? If so, what are they?
 19. Is there anything else you want to add about digital inclusion strategies in your country or the potential of libraries?
 20. Do you think your views about the potential of libraries are similar to or different from your colleagues? How?
 21. What is your age range? 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s or older
 22. If you have children, what are their ages?

Library planners (B)

National information access planners (C)

National development practitioners (D)

1. What is the mission of your organization (or division)?
2. What are the organization's/division's current priorities? List up to three.
3. What is your role?
4. What do you think are the government's top three challenges that it aims to address? For example, youth unemployment, a health issue, primary education, etc.
5. In your country, are information and communication technologies (computers, internet, mobile phones) being used to address the types of challenges you mentioned above? Please provide up to 3 examples.
6. What do you think is the best strategy for providing the public with access to ICTs and electronic information?
7. For people who do not have home or work access to computers and the Internet, what types of places provide people with access to ICTs? Please list.
8. To what extent do you think any of these places are helping people meet their information and communication needs?
9. Compared to 5 years ago, has the importance of these places increased, decreased, or stayed the same?
10. Does your country have a digital inclusion strategy (or something similar)? If so, do places that provide public access to computers and the Internet have a specific role? Which places?

11. If you had to summarize your perceptions of places that provide public access in three words, how would you describe: cybercafés? Telecenters? Libraries?
12. Following is a list of statements about public libraries. Please indicate how much you agree with each statement: Strongly agree, Somewhat agree, Somewhat disagree, Strongly disagree, or Don't know.
 - a. People in rural areas have access to libraries
 - b. People in urban areas have access to libraries
 - c. Librarians have the skills to help people find what they need
 - d. People of all ages use libraries
 - e. People come to the library to solve their everyday problem
 - f. Libraries provide access to the Internet and computers
 - g. The government strongly supports libraries
13. What is the current state of public libraries in your country (e.g. where are they located, who uses them, for what purposes)?
14. To what extent do libraries provide access to computers and the Internet?
15. What is the likelihood of your organization contributing to a program that involved a partnership with public libraries? Very likely, Somewhat likely, Not very likely, Definitely unlikely, or don't know.
16. If your organization were to involve public libraries in a digital inclusion project, what strengths (e.g. expertise, services, community outreach) do you expect libraries would offer?
17. What are the weaknesses of libraries, and what challenges would you expect in working with public libraries?
18. Given these strengths and weaknesses, what would a successful partnership with public libraries look like?
19. Is there anything else you want to add about digital inclusion strategies in your country or the potential of libraries?
20. Do you think your views about the potential of libraries are similar to or different from your colleagues? How?
21. What is your age range? 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s or older?
22. If you have children, what are their ages?
23. When was the last time you visited a public library?
 - a. 1 month ago or less
 - b. 1-6 months ago
 - c. 7-12 months ago
 - d. 1-3 years ago
 - e. Over 3 years ago

Global library practitioners (E)

1. What is the mission of your organization (or division)?
2. What are the organization's/division's current priorities? List up to three.

3. What is your role?
4. What are the big trends or major opportunities for using ICTs for development? And what is your organization/division doing to engage with these trends?
5. What types of projects are not working in the field of ICTs for development? Why?
6. To what extent do you think places that provide the public with access to the computers and Internet (such as cybercafés, telecenters, libraries) are helping people meet their information and communication needs?
7. Compared to 5 years ago, has the importance of these places increased, decreased, or stayed the same?
8. Which countries that you work in have a digital inclusion strategy (or something similar)? In those countries with digital inclusion strategies, do places that provide public access to computers and the Internet have a specific role? Which places?
9. Can you provide an example of where you think public access to technology has been successful?
10. Can you provide an example of a failure?
11. What are the important factors that contribute to the success or failure of a public access program?
12. If you had to summarize your perceptions of places that provide public access in three words, how would you describe: cybercafés? Telecenters? Libraries?
13. Has your organization ever implemented a program that involved libraries? If yes, what was the experience?
14. Going forward, what is the likelihood of your organization supporting a program that involved a partnership with public libraries? Very likely, Somewhat likely, Not very likely, Definitely unlikely, or don't know.
15. If your organization were to involve public libraries in a digital inclusion project, what strengths (e.g. expertise, services, community outreach) do you expect libraries would offer?
16. What are the weaknesses of libraries, and what challenges would you expect in working with public libraries?
17. Given these strengths and weaknesses, what would a successful partnership with public libraries look like?
18. Is there anything else you want to add about digital inclusion strategies or the potential of libraries?
19. Do you think your views about the potential of libraries are similar to or different from your colleagues? How?
20. What is your age range? 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s or older?
21. If you have children, what are their ages?
22. When was the last time you visited a public library?
 - 1 month ago or less
 - 1-6 months ago
 - 7-12 months ago
 - 1-3 years ago
 - Over 3 years ago

