

## GLOBAL ROLES OF LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS

Michael Dowling and Keith Michael Fiels

Library associations at the local, national, regional, and international levels are of great importance to libraries, the profession, and society. This chapter provides a brief overview of the general roles of library associations and a look at how associations are organized and challenges they face. It includes a review of the development of national, regional, and international associations, and examples that describe some of the ways national library associations engage in international activities. It concludes with a focus on the global activities of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA).

The global community is a reality in the twenty-first century. Many of the issues that were national issues for libraries, such as copyright and technology standards, are now international issues. Decisions made in international venues can now have a dramatic impact on how libraries in a specific country are able to function, and determine what services they can provide. Therefore, library associations around the world need to work together, share experiences, and ideas on initiatives beyond their borders.

The information age has brought opportunity for libraries to exponentially expand the information and services provided to users through the Internet, digitization of collections, and new technologies. Libraries and librarians must be forward thinking in adapting and implementing new technologies and services. Without improving services to keep pace with the demands of users, libraries will find themselves on the fringe of the information age.

As Narayanan Rakunathan aptly describes:

“Library associations provide an opportunity for librarians to meet and share experiences and learn from each other. They offer a range of services to members and look after their interests. For outsiders, interested in dealing with the profession, they act as the ideal contact point. Although library associations do serve the needs of their members, ultimately, the long-term benefactors are the end uses of the services these members provide.”<sup>1</sup>

### Roles

Library associations provide the opportunity for members of the profession to work together toward common goals of improvement of the profession, libraries, and library services. Whether at the local, national, or international level, the roles of library associations are similar. Here are some of the major roles of library associations, which are very much interconnected.

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<sup>1</sup> Rakunathan, Narayanan, “Library Associations,” [www.ifla.org/VII/s40/pub/rakunathan.pdf](http://www.ifla.org/VII/s40/pub/rakunathan.pdf)

### **Networking**

Associations allow interaction to occur between members of the profession. All the other roles of library associations follow from individuals getting together to share experiences, knowledge, and ideas. Networking leads to the improvement of each individual and provides an opportunity to share visions and work together on collaborative activities for the greater good. Imagine how isolated a librarian on a small atoll of the Republic of Kiribati in the Pacific is. But through the Pacific Islands Association of Libraries and Archives (PIALA), he or she is able to connect with others in the region through conferences and trainings, and through PIALA to the rest of the library profession.

### **Leadership**

Leadership is also what a library association brings to the profession and the world beyond libraries. Working together as a collective organization provides opportunities to improve the development of libraries and the profession. The Uganda Library Association (ULA) provided the leadership necessary to achieve passage of the National Library of Uganda Act of 2003, which established the National Library of Uganda and provided for the depositing and preserving of publications, and the creation of an information referral service.<sup>2</sup>

### **A Voice**

Individually it is very hard to achieve recognition and to meet goals, and nearly impossible to make an impact on society. One voice is easily lost, but an organization representing hundreds or thousands, provides a unified voice representing all, a voice that can be heard, especially by those outside the library community on such issues as the importance of literacy, the need for information policy, and equal and equitable access to information. The voice of the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) helped get the state of New South Wales to establish library workers in a focus group on pay equity evaluation. This led to the recognition of professional status for librarians and pay increases.<sup>3</sup>

### **Education and Professional Development**

Library associations are a key to continuing the development of the profession within this rapidly changing world. Librarians need to be educated to understand and adapt to new ideas, new technologies, and new services. Associations provide educational opportunities through conferences, workshops, publications, etc. The Association of Information Specialists in the Republic of Georgia provides much

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<sup>2</sup> Ikoja,-Odongo, J.R., "Public library politics: the Uganda perspective"  
[www.ifla.org/IV/ifla69/papers/171e-Ikoja-Odongo.pdf](http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla69/papers/171e-Ikoja-Odongo.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Teece, Phil, "Raising Library Salaries in New South Wales, Australia,"  
[www.ifla.org/IV/ifla71/papers/180e-Nicholson.pdf](http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla71/papers/180e-Nicholson.pdf)

needed computer training for librarians at its training center in Tbilisi. Associations can also be influential in the development of standards of education for the profession. The American Library Association is responsible for setting up the guidelines and accrediting library schools in the United States and Canada.

### **Standards and Best Practices**

Library associations draft and adopt standards, guidelines, code of conducts, and best practices, etc., thereby codifying and improving the profession. Many associations, such as Korean Library Association, have created codes of ethics that serve as a foundation for the profession.<sup>4</sup> The Anglo-American Cataloging Rules were a combined effort of the Canadian Library Association, the Australian Library and Information Association, the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals in the United Kingdom, and the American Library Association.

### **Advocacy**

Library associations work to increase the visibility of libraries and librarians in society, to encourage the general public to advocate for libraries, and also to advocate directly to legislators and policy makers to pass laws and fund libraries. Like many others do to promote libraries, the Armenian Library Association organizes a National Library Week, which gains national publicity and puts the spotlight on libraries.<sup>5</sup> The Federacion Espanola de Sociedades de Archivistica, Biblioteconomia, Documentacion y Museistica (FESABID) created a “No Al Prestamo de Pago” campaign to fight the legislative efforts of authors and writers to receive royalties from the public lending of materials through libraries and institutions.<sup>6</sup>

### **Partnerships**

Library associations build strategic relationships and partnerships with others interested in libraries, such as foundations, corporations, government entities, non-governmental organizations, and schools. These partnerships can be valuable to associations, which usually do not have enough resources on their own to achieve some of their goals and objectives. For example, IFLA’s Advancement of Librarianship Programme (ALP) has been supported with cooperation by the Nordic Library Association by funds provided by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).

### **Organization and Challenges**

Library Associations follow similar organizational structures, but vary funding support, staffing, and eligibility of members. Most library associations are set up

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<sup>4</sup> [www.ifla.org/faiife/ethics/klacode.htm](http://www.ifla.org/faiife/ethics/klacode.htm)

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.ala.am/eng/index.asp>

<sup>6</sup> <http://noalprestamodepago.org/>

as independent non-governmental organizations, but in some countries, such as China or Cuba, there is a strong connection with the government. Even some independent library associations, such as the Danish Library Association, are eligible to receive direct financial support from the government for specific activities.

Each library association determines its membership based on its mission. Some associations limit their membership to just librarians. In others, institutions make up the membership. Some are strictly individual membership associations, while there are some that allow both personal and institutional membership. Some allow the membership of those outside the profession as well, such as the library vendor community, library supporters, and library staff.

Library associations around the world face similar challenges. Foremost is sustainability. Library associations, at any level, need resources, both human and financial, to survive and thrive. Human capital comes in two forms: members and staff. Library associations are not strong if they do not have members actively engaged in the association. Many associations are too small to pay for staff, and so they rely on the volunteer efforts of their members to run the association. For sustainability, library associations need to work hard to recruit new members in order to create and maintain initiatives.

Library associations need financial resources as well. Most library associations rely predominately on membership dues and conference revenue for their funds. In many cases, especially in the developing world, these revenue sources may be minimal. Other possible areas of revenue for library associations are publications, trainings, and grants.

Despite these challenges, there are very successful library associations around the world, even those with no staff and very little money.

### **National Associations**

As might be expected, the development of national library associations has more or less mirrored the general historical development and transition of countries around the world. The creation of national library associations began in North America and in Europe near the end of the nineteenth century. In 1876 Melville Dewey, creator of the Dewey Decimal System, and others founded the American Library Association. The following year, in 1877, the Library Association (United Kingdom), now called the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), was established.

Library associations began forming in countries across continental Europe, including the Vereinigung Österreichischer Bibliothekarinnen und Bibliothekare in Austria in 1896; the Association des Bibliothèques et Bibliothécaires Suisses in 1897; and Association des Bibliothécaires Français (ABS) in 1906.<sup>7</sup> With the

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<sup>7</sup> *World Encyclopedia of Library and Information Sciences*, Third Edition, 1993, American Library Association, various country reports.

breakup of the Soviet Union, many new national library associations were reconstituted. The Lithuanian Library Association, originally founded in 1931, was re-established in 1990, and the new Russian Library Association was organized in 1995.<sup>8</sup>

In addition to these national associations, library associations for specific disciplines were also being created in the United States and Europe. These include the American Association of Law Libraries in 1896, the Medical Library Association in 1898, the Special Libraries Association in 1909, and the Finnish Research Library Association in 1929.<sup>9</sup>

In Asia and the Pacific, the Japanese Library Association was the first national library association outside of the U.S. and Europe, founded in 1892. Other early national associations in the region included the New Zealand Library Association in 1910, and the Philippine Library Association in 1922. It took a little longer for the formation of national library associations to develop in Latin America with the first being the Asociación Mexicana de Bibliotecarios, A.C. (AMBAC) in 1924. Other national library associations in the region were not founded until the 1950s and later.<sup>10</sup>

The first national library association in Africa, the South African Library Association, was created in 1930 and became an all-white organization under apartheid in 1962. In 1964 the African Library Association of South Africa for black library workers was created. In 1997 a new national library association was formed through mergers of separate associations, called the Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA). The founding of what is now the Egyptian Library and Archives Association was in 1946. National library associations in other countries started with independence from colonial rule in the 1960s. The Zimbabwe Library Association was originally founded as the Library Association of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1959. The Nigerian Library Association was founded in 1962.<sup>11</sup>

The Indian Library Association was funded before independence, but the Pakistan Library Association was not created until 1967. National library associations that have been founded in Eurasia, such as the Uzbekistan Library Association, have formed after 2000. Library associations began to form in the Middle East region in the 1950s and 1960s with the Israeli Library Association 1952, the Lebanese Library Association in 1960, the Iranian Library Association in 1966, and the Iraqi Library Association in 1968.<sup>12</sup> Development of national library associations

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<sup>8</sup> *IFLA Membership Directory*, 2002-2003

<sup>9</sup> *World Encyclopedia*, various country and association reports

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*

in the Gulf region is just beginning with the Kuwait Library Association being established in 2005.

### **Regional Associations**

In addition to national library associations, many regional library associations have formed so that librarians, libraries, and library associations can work together. Some work on a variety of issues, whereas others provide networking opportunities within their region. The European Bureau of Library, Information and Documentation Associations (EBLIDA) is an independent umbrella association of the national library, information, documentation and archive associations and institutions in Europe. EBLIDA concentrates on European information society issues, including copyright and licensing, culture and education, and EU enlargement. They promote unhindered access to information in the digital age and the role of archives and libraries in achieving this goal.<sup>13</sup>

In comparison, groups such as the Nordic Library Associations meet yearly to discuss matters of current interest, to inform each other of national developments, and to work together on various advocacy and professional activities.

In Africa, the Standing Conference of Eastern, Central and Southern African Library and Information Associations (SCECSAL) derives its origins from the East African Library Association (EALA), founded in 1957.<sup>14</sup> It organizes a biennial conference that provides networking and professional development. The West African Library Association (WALA) was established in 1954 and serves in much the same capacity as SCECSAL.<sup>15</sup>

The Congress of Southeast Asian Librarians (CONSAL) was founded in Singapore in 1970 in response to a growing sense of Southeast Asian identity, fostered particularly by the formation of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). CONSAL represents 10 countries, holds a conference every three years, and promotes cooperation in the fields of librarianship, bibliography, documentation, and related activities.<sup>16</sup>

Regional associations are crucial to collaboration in the Caribbean and the Pacific Islands. The Association of Caribbean University Research Institutional Libraries (ACURIL) was established in 1969 and holds an annual conference.<sup>17</sup> The Pacific Islands Association of Libraries and Archives (PIALA) was created in 1991 to organize the librarians and archivists of the seven separate political juris-

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<sup>13</sup> [www.eblida.org/](http://www.eblida.org/)

<sup>14</sup> [www.scecsal.org/](http://www.scecsal.org/)

<sup>15</sup> [www.nla-ng.org/aboutus.html](http://www.nla-ng.org/aboutus.html)

<sup>16</sup> [www.consal.org](http://www.consal.org)

<sup>17</sup> [www.acuril.uprrp.edu](http://www.acuril.uprrp.edu)

dictions of Micronesia.<sup>18</sup> PIALA also holds an annual conference focusing on different training issues.

### **International Activities of National and Regional Associations**

Whether national or regional, these library associations are the vital backbone of international librarianship. They make up the membership of IFLA, and include those who engage in international pursuits on their own. Most national and regional associations do have some international membership. The Special Libraries Association, though primarily a U.S.-based association, has members in 80 countries and chapters in regions around the world. Associations, such as the China Society for Library Science and ALA, have staff time dedicated to fostering international activities. Those who do not have staff undertake their activities through international committees. Many international activities of national library associations are supported through government or foundation grants.

National associations can help facilitate librarian exchanges or visits to and from their country. Some national associations have also partnered directly with other national associations to provide support and assistance. The Finnish Library Association works with the library associations of South Africa (LIASA) and Namibia, through scholarships and trainings. With a grant from the Carnegie Corporation, ALA has provided training for associations in the Caucasus region. Associations in France, the Netherlands, Denmark, and the United States pay the membership dues of other countries in IFLA.

National library associations also work to have representatives on their countries' various international delegations. For example, the Danish Library Association has an official voice in the Danish UNESCO National Commission. *It is critical for all national library associations to get a representative at as many tables as they can.*

National associations also provide international assistance in times of crisis. The Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia (Library Association of Malaysia) has led the fundraising and support effort to help rebuild libraries in Aceh Province, Indonesia devastated by the tsunami in December, 2005.

Regional association conferences provide opportunities for IFLA-sponsored training and workshops to take place. Regional associations also serve as resources for exchange opportunities.

### **International Associations**

The first transnational association was the Fédération Internationale de Documentation (FID), founded in 1895 for national organizations in the field of documenta-

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<sup>18</sup> [www.mangilao.uog.edu/rfk/piala/piala.html](http://www.mangilao.uog.edu/rfk/piala/piala.html)

tion. Its mission was to “provide encouragement for the study and of classification in general and to promote a uniform system of classification in particular.” FID worked on the development of the Universal Decimal Classification (UDC), first published in 1905. FID’s Universal Bibliographic Repertory, a database, grew to more than 11 million entries. It also established an international loan service, operated through the mail, in which 1500 requests were being received each year by 1912.<sup>19</sup>

For much of its existence, FID was really a regional organization with only seven members outside Europe as late as 1958. FID disbanded, ceasing operation in 2001 due to financial issues. Financial solvency is especially an issue for international associations whose objective reach is great, but whose budgets and staff support are often quite small.

With the proliferation and development of national associations in the early twentieth century, many believed that the time had come to create an international association of library associations. As a result, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) was established in 1927 in Edinburgh, Scotland. IFLA’s development and activities are explored later in this chapter.

The International Council of Archives (ICA) was founded in 1948 by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organizations (UNESCO) to establish a worldwide organization for the archive profession. It was “created to improve worldwide standards of archival administration and practice and to advance archival theory.” ICA has a global network of more than 1,400 institutional members in 190 countries, with current priorities being advocacy and promotion, automation and electronic records, disaster prevention and preservation, and education and training.<sup>20</sup>

Mirroring library-specific associations in countries, a number of such international associations have been created. Here is just a sampling of some of these organizations.

- The International Association of Music Libraries Archives and Documentation Centers (IAML) has about 2,000 individual and institutional members in some 45 countries throughout the world. It was founded in 1951 to promote international cooperation and to support the interests of the profession.<sup>21</sup>
- The International Association of Law Libraries (IALL) was founded in 1959, and now has over 600 members in more than 50 countries on five continents. The members represent all types of legal collections, ranging from academic law libraries of all sizes to corporate libraries, and from national and parliamentary libraries to administrative agency and court libraries. IALL has an

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<sup>19</sup> World Encyclopedia, FID article

<sup>20</sup> [www.ica.org](http://www.ica.org)

<sup>21</sup> [www.iaml.info](http://www.iaml.info)

annual budget around \$100,000. It hosts an Annual Course, as opposed to a conference, which focuses on a specific area of legal librarianship (e.g., its “Legal Information in Multiple Legal Systems” was held in sites around the world in 2008).<sup>22</sup>

- The International Association of School Libraries (IASL), inaugurated in 1971, provides an international forum for those people interested in promoting effective school library media programs as viable instruments in the educational process. IASL provides guidance and advice for the development of school library programs and the school library profession. IASL works in cooperation with other professional associations and agencies. In 2008, there were 730 members from 76 countries. IASL also has a very small budget of \$50,000 annually.<sup>23</sup>

### **International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)**

Founded in 1927, IFLA is the leading international body representing the interests of library and information services and their users. IFLA’s aim is to:

“Promote high standards of provision and delivery of library and information services; Encourage widespread understanding of the value of good library & information services; Represent the interests of our members throughout the world.”<sup>24</sup>

During its formative years, IFLA was a European- and North American–centric organization, as much of the rest of the world had not established library associations. By the 1930s, IFLA had recruited 41 members from 31 countries, including members in China, India, Japan, Mexico, and the Philippines.

IFLA’s first 45 conferences were held in either Europe or North America. It was not until 1980, in Manila, that a conference was held elsewhere. The first IFLA Conference in Africa was Nairobi in 1984, and it did not meet in Latin America until 2005, in Buenos Aires.

Where to hold the IFLA conference can impact who can attend. When it was held in Jerusalem in 2000, the conference was not attended by any librarians from other Middle Eastern countries. When held in Havana in 1994, the conference was difficult for U.S. librarians to attend, and hard for Cuban librarians to attend in Boston in 2001.

In 2003, Kay Raseroka, Director of Library Services at the University of Botswana, became the first non-European/North American to be elected president-elect of IFLA. By 2008, IFLA’s membership had risen to 1700 members from 150

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<sup>22</sup> [www.iall.org](http://www.iall.org)

<sup>23</sup> [www.iasl-online.org](http://www.iasl-online.org)

<sup>24</sup> [www.ifla.org](http://www.ifla.org)

countries. As with many international organizations, IFLA has a global reach, but that does not mean it has a lot of resources. In fact, IFLA's annual budget is only around 2 million euros and has a staff of only 11. Headquarters staff is assisted by only three colleagues, who oversee core activities, such as the library development program, and by the generosity of host institutions. IFLA has seven official languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Russian, and Spanish.

IFLA's headquarters is located in The Hague at the Royal Library of the Netherlands (which provides free space). Three regional offices provide support in different parts of the world. They are at the National Library Board of Singapore, Biblioteca Pública do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and the University of South Africa. IFLA's website is hosted by Institut de l'Information Scientifique et Technique (INIST) in France.

## IFLA'S GLOBAL ACTIVITIES

At the end of 2004, IFLA adopted its 3 Pillars: *Society, Members, and Profession*. These three pillars encompass the major roles of library associations mentioned previously: networking; leadership; a voice; education and professional development; standards and best practices; advocacy; and partnerships.

### The Society Pillar

IFLA in the past was very much focused on internal activities within the library community. All IFLA's core activities were related to internally improving the profession. It has now, however, expanded its mission to reach out to those outside the profession.

### Copyright and Other Legal Matters

Issues once considered the domain of nations, such as copyright and intellectual property, are now international issues. International organizations [e.g., the World Trade Organization (WTO) and World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)] construct treaties and agreements that will impact how libraries and library users around the world will be able to access information.

To ensure libraries' interests are represented, IFLA, in 1999, created a Copyright and Other Legal Matters Committee, with representatives from around the world. IFLA then applied for and achieved observer status with the ability to send accredited representatives to WIPO, WTO, and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

IFLA monitors the activities of these organizations and provides input through position papers and statements, such as "Library Related Principles for the Inter-

national Development Agenda of the World Intellectual Property Organization” (2005) and “The IFLA Position on Copyright in the Digital Environment” (2000).

IFLA has established good working relations with a variety of other bodies with similar interests, providing an opportunity for a regular exchange of information and views on issues of mutual concern. IFLA has Formal Associate Relations with UNESCO, observer status with the United Nations, and associate status with the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU). IFLA has offered consultative status to a number of non-governmental organizations operating in related fields, including the International Publishers Association (IPA), which, despite opposite views on some issues, has worked together with IFLA on joint statements in areas they agree upon.

### **Freedom of Access to Information and Freedom of Expression**

In 1999, IFLA created the Freedom of Access to Information and Freedom of Expression Committee (FAIFE) to defend and promote the basic human rights defined in Article 19 of the United Nations “Universal Declaration of Human Rights.”

IFLA, through FAIFE, furthers free access to information and freedom of expression in all aspects, directly or indirectly, related to libraries and librarianship. FAIFE monitors the state of intellectual freedom within the library community worldwide, supports IFLA policy development and co-operation with other international human rights organizations, and responds to violations of free access to information and freedom of expression.

FAIFE provides trainings on intellectual freedom, especially related to IFLA’s “Internet Manifesto (2002),” which promotes unhindered access to the Internet by libraries and removal of barriers to the flow of information that lead to inequality. IFLA and FAIFE now produce “The World Report Series” that offers timely and detailed summaries of the state of intellectual freedom and libraries worldwide.

### **World Summit for the Information Society (WSIS)**

Activities of CLM and FAIFE provided the base for IFLA’s involvement in the United Nations World Summit for the Information Society (WSIS), a two-phased summit in Geneva, 2003, and in Tunis, 2005. IFLA, with support of the Swiss Library Association, was active in ensuring that the voice of libraries and society were represented at WSIS. Under the banner of “Libraries @ the heart of the information society,” IFLA made the case for libraries in the information society in areas such as information literacy and lifelong learning, digital memory, the global information commons, equal access, and intellectual freedom.

Through IFLA’s efforts, libraries were recognized as having a role in the Information Society in the WSIS Principles and Action Plan. IFLA is engaged in the follow-up meetings that are continuing after the summits, and has created “Librar-

ies and the WSIS Action Lines: Guideline for international, regional and local advocacy for Libraries in relation with implementation of the WSIS by Action Line 2005–2015.”

### **International Committee of the Blue Shield**

Following the mass destruction of cultural property at the start of the Iraq War, IFLA became one of the co-founding organizations, along with other international cultural associations (e.g., the International Council of Archives and the International Council of Museums) on the International Committee of the Blue Shield (ICBS). ICBS is designed to serve as a cultural Red Cross, which protects cultural heritage by supporting the UN’s International Committee for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, established under the Second Protocol of the 1954 Hague Convention.

## **THE PROFESSIONAL PILLAR**

Under its Professional Pillar, IFLA focuses on its long-established core activities to improve practices in the profession and to help libraries and information services assist users in the rapidly changing global environment.

### **Development of Libraries and Library Associations**

Through its Action for Development of Libraries Program Associations (ALP), IFLA works to further the library profession, library institutions and library and information services in the developing countries of Africa, Asia and Oceania, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

ALP, which is supported by funding from the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), funds conferences, seminars and workshops, pilot projects, and publications. By providing continuing education and training, ALP facilitates the establishment of new library associations, supports the functions of libraries (e.g., services to the general public, information literacy, lifelong learning, and combating functional illiteracy), and promotes the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and the creation of electronic resources.

Within IFLA, there is the Section on Management of Library Associations (MLAS), which works to address the needs and promotes interests of all types and sizes of library associations. MLAS tries to foster and improve leadership skills, to share experiences, and to work in cooperation with ALP to develop useful seminars and workshops at regional meetings for association development. MLAS oversees the Global Library Association Development Program (GLAD), a mentor/mentee program designed to strengthen the skills and competencies of library association officers to help them operate their associations. MLAS also has cre-

ated guidelines for library associations on developing policies and procedures, financial management, operation, government relations, and more.

### **Establishing Standards and Guidelines**

IFLA and Conference of Directors of National Libraries (CDNL) through the “IFLA-CDNL Alliance for Bibliographic Standards” known as ICABS, assures the ongoing coordination, communication, and support of key activities in the areas of bibliographic and resource control for all types of resources, related formats and protocol standards. ICABS accomplishes its goals in collaboration with UNESCO and the International Standards Organization (ISO).

ICABS aims to maintain, promote, and harmonize existing standards and to advance understanding of issues related to long-term archiving of electronic resources, including the promotion of new and recommended conventions for such archiving. ICABS organizes seminars and workshops to enhance communication on these issues within the library and archive community.

In 2003 IFLA established the UNIMARC Core Activity (UCA) with the responsibility for maintaining, developing, and promoting the Universal MARC format (UNIMARC), which facilitates the international exchange of bibliographic data. UNIMARC is now a set of four formats: Bibliographic, Authorities, Classification, and Holdings.

IFLA was also contracted by UNESCO to create the “UNESCO Guidelines for Establishing Digitization Programs in Libraries and Archives.” These guidelines serve decision makers as well as library and archives managers, particularly in developing countries, when planning digitization projects.

### **Preservation and Conservation**

IFLA’s Preservation and Conservation Core Activity (PAC) has as its major goal that significant library and archive materials, published and unpublished, in all formats, will be preserved in accessible form for as long as possible. PAC, with help from its regional centers, raises awareness to make information and heritage professionals, governments, and the public conscious of the fundamental position occupied by preservation in the management of an institution.

PAC achieves this transfer of knowledge through training staff and technicians, producing and disseminating information to raise awareness of preservation issues, assessing needs through surveys, and promoting national and international standards and guidelines as well as best practices in the field.

## **THE MEMBERSHIP PILLAR**

### **The World Library and Information Congress**

As with all library associations, the IFLA must work together to ensure it remains vibrant, attractive, and beneficial for members throughout the world, providing needed services to its members. IFLA provides the vehicle for the international library community to network. Every August between 3,000 and 5,000 delegates attend the IFLA World Library and Information Congress (WLIC). Each is held in different cities around the globe. The delegates meet to discuss professional issues, share experiences, review new products and services, and strategize.

## **CONCLUSION**

Library associations are crucial to the development of libraries and the profession locally, nationally, and internationally. They represent libraries, the profession, and the needs of users to those outside the library community, advocating for and promoting positions on issues that impact everyone. It is important for those entering the profession to understand the value of library associations and the need to join and participate. Library associations need new members to provide energy and ideas, and future leadership to continue to succeed.

