

Environmental Audit Committee

Sustainable Development Goals in the UK

Submission from the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP)ⁱ

Executive Summary and Recommendations:

In this response we recommend:

- The creation of a Cabinet Committee to oversee and drive UK progress towards delivering on the 2030 Agenda
- The foundation of a National Development Plan as recommended by the UN setting out how the UK will attain the SDGs by 2030
- The development of a National Knowledge and Information Skills strategy within the National Development Plan as an essential basis to ensure active participation at all levels in the implementation of the Goals.
- An investment programme in the UK's knowledge, library and information services to ensure that all people can access information about the SDGs and organisations are enabled to deliver them successfully

CILIP is the leading body representing the library, knowledge and information professions in the UK. There are 87,000 library, knowledge and information workers in the UK¹ and an estimated 20,000 service points which provide a gateway to resources for learning.

CILIP hold the Ethical Principles² around freedom of access to information and it is this that accounts for the level of trust invested in us by the general population.

[Target 16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements under Goal 16 Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for

¹ Hall, H., Irving, C., Ryan, B. (2015). *A study of the UK information workforce mapping the library, archives, records & information management and knowledge management related professions in the United Kingdom*. CILIP & ARA.

² CILIP Ethical Principles <http://www.cilip.org.uk/about/ethics/ethical-principles>

sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels]

This level of trust gives us reach, especially into disadvantaged and emergent communities in the UK and offers us opportunities for extending our reach further. 265m visits were made to the public library sector alone last year.

CILIP are supportive of the work government is doing to achieve the SDGs by 2030 and have signed up to the UK Stakeholders for Sustainable Development Initiative (UKSSDI).

We are making the SDGs a major plank of our Action Plan and would welcome the opportunity to engage with government over its plans to deliver on the Goals.

We develop our recommendations in our response and give supporting evidence and references to further evidence.

Introduction

1. CILIP is making this submission because libraries and information services, and the skilled professionals who manage them, make a vital contribution to sustainable economic development and are key building blocks of prosperous, inclusive and open societies that enjoy good governance.
2. Our members work in a range of sectors including industry & commerce, government and healthcare and the third sector as well as schools, further and higher education and the public sector. Our profession adds value across more than 20 industry sectors.
3. Libraries across all these sectors offer a unique contribution in helping the UK deliver on its commitment. Because of our reach we can also be points of data collection.
4. High quality library, knowledge and information services, and the professional staff who manage them, help guarantee access to information and assist individuals to learn the skills and knowledge required for full participation as UK citizens and organisations to prosper.
5. An investment in the UK infrastructure would increase the capacity to deliver the types of literacy programmes (Health, financial and digital) that are already going on in the national network of libraries and we would ask that CILIP and our constituency of information and library services should be included in any funding opportunities that might arise for UK organisations (including social investment funds relating to the SDGs).

6. Universal literacy and access to information and the skills to use that information are enablers of the transformational change necessary to achieve the 2030 Agenda and they are the currency of library, knowledge and information services.
7. As part of our current Action Plan 2016-2020 *Securing the future* CILIP has committed to put information and library skills and professional values at the heart of a democratic, equal and prosperous society. Supporting our members to deliver the SDGs will be a challenging way of meeting our objective

How the CILIP community supports the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals

- Social inclusion
- Economic development
- Literacy and numeracy
- Digital literacy
- Equality of opportunity
- Health and wellbeing
- Learning and education

Library and information services deliver...



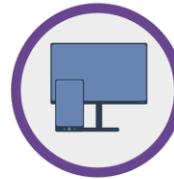
Trusted places
20,000+ locations embedded in communities, schools and businesses



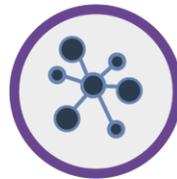
Quality resources
Libraries among the providers most trusted by the public



Skilled people
A workforce of 87,000 skilled Information Professionals



Digital access
68m+ hours of internet access delivered via 30,000 PC's and 99% free wifi coverage



Universal reach
265m visits by diverse audiences to Public Libraries alone in 2015

Active, literate citizens



Helping to create...



Resilient communities

Fig 1. How the library & information sector supports the SDGs

Response

Question: What are the potential costs, benefits and opportunities to the UK of delivering the Goals domestically?

8. In our view a UK that is engaged fully in implementing the SDGs at a national level will:
 - Affirm UK's part in the international community
 - Improve performance against goals in the UK and so too the prosperity and well-being of society
 - Share good practice, expertise and knowledge in addressing challenges of realising the SDGs
9. But the SDGs won't happen without investment in library and information services. An investment in the knowledge infrastructure and ensuring access to SDG-related and wider social investment programmes would optimise the value of our knowledge resources and ensure enough capacity and resilience into the future.
10. Alongside universal literacy, access to information and the skills to use that information constitute essential building blocks to the achievement of all the SDGs. Our sector already makes a big contribution in helping to meet the SDGs including those listed below.

“Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages” [Goal 3].

❖ Better health outcomes

11. People who are able to access health information are better able to help themselves to a healthier life. A third (34%) of those learning basic digital skills made fewer visits to a doctor after learning about online health resources such as NHS Choices.³ The Universal Health offer available in public libraries reaches 265m people across the UK and is a scheme that can be accessed via other library services in schools and communities.
12. *Knowledge for healthcare: a development framework* highlights the impact and cost savings made to health services due to evidence based practice. The knowledge and information which supports evidence based practice is delivered by health librarians working across NHS.

³Tinder foundation's NHS Widening Digital Participation programme

“Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation [Goal 9]

❖ **Future Innovation**

13. Future innovation in the UK will be dependent upon a skilled workforce. The Enterprising Libraries business centre network helped to create 1,692 new businesses and 4,178 jobs (29% in Northern Powerhouse) £38m GVA created a payback of £4.50 for every £1.00 of public money spent.

Evidence Box 1

Devon Libraries, UK have been instrumental in setting up a Fab Lab, where 3D printers and technology enable people to develop new skills. Fab Lab Exeter is adjacent and complementary to the Library’s Business and Information Hub, which provides business information and intellectual property (IP) support for local businesses. It enables users to develop or refine a product or object from first idea to a formed and working prototype. Advice and further business support is also available to help develop the business proposal to ensure a route to market.

IFLA. (2015) *Public libraries support development through access to information* [Online] Available from <http://www.ifla.org/files/assets/hq/topics/libraries-development/documents/public->

“Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” [Goal 4]

14. Libraries, especially those in the academic and public sector offer access to equitable and inclusive learning opportunities throughout a person’s life. When looked at holistic the resources to support lifelong learning for all are immense.
15. Those libraries in the public sector have printed, electronic and online resources and offer a second chance at learning for those who have missed out on formal education. School libraries, further education college libraries and university libraries offer the resources to support and extend quality learning opportunities throughout a person’s formal education.

Evidence Box 2

Library as an economic enabler, Carnegie UK Trust, (2016).

<http://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/carnegieuktrust/wp-content/uploads/sites/64/2016/02/pub1455011401.pdf>

Library as a learning hub, Carnegie UK Trust, (2016).

<http://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/carnegieuktrust/wp-content/uploads/sites/64/2016/02/pub14550114001.pdf>

Universal Learning Offer in public libraries – As well as homework and coding clubs this offer also encompasses learning opportunities around advanced technology such as 3D printing.

Universal Reading Offer in public libraries - 800,000 children take part in the Summer Reading Challenge each year

16. School libraries contribute to this goal through developing and delivering various programmes which promote equitable learning opportunities. See *Libraries All*

Party Parliamentary Group, (2014). The beating heart of the school. CILIP. For examples and case studies.

Question: The costs of delivering the goals domestically

17. We have shown how our community is already contributing to the 2030 agenda. Ensuring that libraries and information services are able to access funding related to the SDGs (as well as social investment more generally) would yield immense benefits and optimise UK's capability of meeting the Goals. Increased capacity to deliver the types of literacy programmes (Health, financial, digital) already going on in the public library sector and the network of all libraries in the academic, health and commercial sector would allow a greater and richer contribution from our national resources.

Question: Which Goals are the most relevant to the UK? Where is UK domestic performance believed to be strongest and weakest?

18. The question is not so much which goals are most relevant but what is needed to enable the achievement of all or indeed any of the Goals. A UK Information Skills Strategy to complement the National Data Strategy and Information Economy Strategy is a necessary element in any National Development Plan if we are to harness the value and potential of the UK's resources.

19. Below we highlight the Goals which have a particular relevance to our sector. Most of the Goals listed are enabling Goals; essential to progress on if people in the UK are to engage positively with all the other SDGs.

❖ Universal Literacy

“By 2030 ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy” (Goal 4:6)

20. *The National Literacy Trust*ⁱⁱ suggest that less than 1% of adults in England are completely illiterate but around 16% - 5.2 million adults – are functionally illiterate with literacy levels at or below those expected of an 11 year old.

21. Literacy is the learned ability to communicate and acquire knowledge through the integration of listening, speaking, reading, writing and critical thinking/understanding. Good literacy skills enable citizens to be informed, productive and part of community life, which in turn leads to lifelong learning and sustainable futures.
22. Libraries promote and sustain literacy, especially school and public libraries. As well as skilled staff they provide a wide range of reading material with items to suit the capabilities and interests of all users. [See Evidence Box 3].
23. The ability to read and write is also essential to the acquisition of so-called “higher literacies” which include information literacy, digital literacy, health literacy and financial literacy. These skills are important in unlocking the potential of the SDGs. By helping people better understand the Goals they are more able to contribute to their achievement.

❖ **A fully digitally literate UK population**

24. As evidenced in a report commissioned by Tinder: *The economic impact of basic digital skills and inclusion in the UKⁱⁱⁱ*, the need for a fully digitally literate UK population touches upon at least three of the SDGs: Goal 3, Goal 4 and Goal 9.

“Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” [Goal 4], “Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation [Goal 9], “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages” [Goal 3].

25. It is estimated that there are currently 12.6 million adults in the UK who lack basic digital skills. A further 5.3 million have never used the internet. Digital exclusion correlates with other forms of social exclusion including low educational attainment, low income, disability and poor health. Digital illiteracy compounds these disadvantages, limiting access to online routes to communication, learning, health information, and employment. Libraries across all sectors - education, health, public and commercial are trusted institutions and provide a ready network of expertise that can help UK deliver on these agendas.

❖ **Investing in connectivity**

“Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation [Goal 9]

26. The importance of universal and affordable access to the internet must be recognised as a key enabler of growth but as stressed earlier connectivity will not on its own create a digitally literate UK population. We need to invest in digital

literacy in our schools and colleges and in the workplace. Despite progress there is still a digital divide or rather digital divides, which represents a cost to the UK.

27. Latest ITU figures⁴ also suggest a gender gap in using/ accessing the internet in Europe as well as in the LDCs. Internet penetration rates are higher for men than for women in all countries. In Europe the ratio is 82.00% to 76.3%. This is an important figure to confront as those using the internet benefit across all social indicators and national indicators of well being - important levers in helping achieve on the SDGs. Libraries of all kinds in schools, colleges and public libraries provide trusted public access points to supporting networks and ICT - a vital means of accessing information in today's society.

❖ Access to Information

“Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms in accordance with national legislation and international agreements” [Goal 16:10]

28. The acquisition, organisation and supply of relevant information is a key component in addressing the challenges of every Strategic Development Goal.

Information Management is the “collecting, organising, storing and exploiting information, data, expertise and other knowledge assets which are held within an organisation or network of organisations, ensuring that these assets remain available for future use”.

Information Management Alliance (2015) For further information on the IM Alliance contact CILIP

29. Timely, relevant information will provide the evidence base for action on the SDGs. The often quoted Cap Gemini report⁵ from 2008 suggests that poor utilisation of information assets equates to an annual £46 billion missed opportunity for private sector profits, and £21 billion in administrative costs across the public sector.

30. A CILIP commissioned research report on information management literature: Berube, L., (2015). *Information management: mission critical* suggests there has been little advancement in appreciation of the need to treat information as a

⁴ ITU, (July, 2016). *ICT Facts and Figures 2016*. ICT Data and Statistics Division. [pdf]. Available at <http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/facts/ICTFactsFigures2016.pdf>

⁵ Harji, R., (2008). *The Information opportunity report*. CapGemini UK. <http://www.eurim.org.uk/activities/ig/voi/capgemini.pdf>

strategic asset. Investment in a Knowledge and Information Skills Strategy would address this.

❖ Open Data

31. The UK has led the world in promoting the development of Open Data and harnessing it as a resource for innovation and development as well as an important element of accountability. The UK came second in the [Global Open Data Index](#) this year after two years of claiming the top spot. The idea of a data revolution was first mooted in the report of the [High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons](#) (2013) which included the then UK Prime Minister David Cameron. It noted the need for a “...data revolution for sustainable development, with a new international initiative to improve the quality of statistics and information available to citizens” (2013, Executive Summary).
32. High level skills are required in developing and managing such data, much of which would fall into the category of big data. Data analytics is regarded as an area of skills scarcity even within the UK, but other skills (not sufficiently promoted even within the UK) such as Information Management are required too.

Evidence Box 4

Open Government Partnership

Libraries are contributing to action plans in Open Government Partnership member countries, a platform between government, civil society and business to drive commitments to open government and accountability. This includes the role of libraries in providing access to information

IFLA (2015). Toolkit: libraries and the post-2015 development agenda. p27. [pdf]. IFLA. Available at: <http://www.ifla.org/files/assets/hq/topics/libraries-development/documents/ifla-post-2015-a2i-libraries-toolkit-v2.pdf>

33. This will be an important element in making sure that governments, their agencies and companies are accountable for their actions and enable all people

“... to have capacity to input into and evaluate the quality of data and use them for their own decisions, as well as to fully participate in initiatives to foster citizenship in the information age” (Data Revolution Group, 2014, p18).

What structures, governance mechanisms, resources and lines of accountability are required within Government nationally and locally to ensure that efforts to deliver the Goals will be meaningful and achieve real change? Who should be providing leadership on this agenda?

Role of other government departments and agencies

34. As the main policy engine of government the Cabinet Office should have a chief coordinating role in overseeing a UK plan to deliver the Goals. We would recommend a Cabinet Committee to give true Government leadership on the various programmes across Departments including the Department for International Development.
35. All Government departments should understand the SDG's within the context of their own policies and programmes. Most UK Government departments and agencies, including those in the devolved nations, can play a role in proactively supporting the SDGs. However we identify below those which have especial relevance to the enabling agenda within the SDGs as set out in this submission.
36. ***Universal Literacy*** – Clearly the Department for Education has the main responsibility for this. However the Government Digital Service (GDS) , with responsibility for the UK Digital Inclusion Charter has expertise in encouraging digital literacy
37. ***Access to information*** – No single department has responsibility for this. The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) shares responsibility with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) for the information economy and the associated skills agenda with Matt Hancock Minister of State for Culture and Digital Policy. The British Library is well-placed to advise on the value of information in supporting many of the SDGs and its recent Strategy, “Living Knowledge”, looks at how it will support research, business, culture, learning and advancing knowledge and mutual understanding across the world.
38. ***Open Data*** – The Cabinet Office has responsibility for the reform and transparency agenda within government, including the use of data. The National Archives advises Government departments on information management and runs
39. ***Local Information Infrastructure*** – Again no single Government department will have responsibility for this as the infrastructure will include public libraries and library, knowledge and information services in schools, further and higher education, health and social care and provision in the third sector and private sector. The British Library will have an over-view and Arts Council England (in its role as a public library development agency in England) with DCMS has responsibilities for the public library network in England. Broadband Delivery UK is responsible for delivering the broadband and mobile communications technology that will underpin the information infrastructure.

40. **Follow-up and Review** – We assume the implementation of the SDGs in the UK will be coordinated by the Cabinet Office advised by other departments including the Department for International Development.

Question: How are other countries implementing the SDGs domestically?

41. Scotland has already committed to the sustainable development agenda and will be measuring their progress against the SDGs in their National Performance Framework^{iv} and their National Action Plan on Human Rights^v.

Question: What examples of best practice are there that the UK can learn from?

Evidence Box 5

Domestic Best Practice

Libraries Change Lives is our annual award which showcases innovative practice in UK libraries

2016 Shortlist

Norfolk libraries *healthy libraries initiative*

Renfrewshire a specially adapted mobile library which works with schools to encourage early years and well being

Sefton Library services reminiscence project run in partnership with other third sector organisations

<http://www.cilip.org.uk/advocacy-campaigns-awards/libraries-change-lives-award/2016-shortlist-announced>

2015 Winner

North Ayrshire libraries Digital learning and e-safety programme for pre-schoolers and parents.

Previous winners have included projects on enterprise hubs for would-be entrepreneurs, a domestic abuse victim support programme and a prison library project supporting prisoner literacy.

<http://www.cilip.org.uk/cilip/advocacy-awards-and-projects/awards-and-medals/libraries-change-lives-award/past-libraries>

For examples of how libraries internationally contribute to the SDGs see *Access and opportunity for all*, (2016). IFLA. pdf.

<http://www.ifla.org/publications/node/10546>

Question: How can performance against the Goals be measured and communicated in a way that best engages policy makers, local government, businesses and the public and allows effective scrutiny of the Government's performance by Parliament and civil society?

42. We agree with the recommendation in the International Development Committee's report *UK implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals* that departments should be assigned specific responsibilities for making progress on the SDGs to ensure ownership and clear lines of responsibility. Also there are a number of agencies outside government, including CILIP that would wish to be involved. Libraries across all sectors are well placed to communicate information and encourage engagement with the SDGs.

Question: How should measurement against the SDG indicators be integrated with existing measures of sustainable development performance, such as the Sustainable Development Indicators and the Well-being measures?

43. At this stage we are not ready to report on this. However we welcome the work being done by the ONS and would like to feed in to this work. This should form a starting point for discussion in the UK. Some suggested international Indicators for an Access to Information Target are given as an appendix at the end of this document. They have been compiled by the International Federation of Library Associations and institutions (IFLA)

44. Whilst these indicators can be used to measure levels of access they do not necessarily measure the impact of such access. That said, how progress will be measured and the indicators within the targets chosen should be internationally agreed ones.

45. In general more could be done to provide definitive basic data sets across a number of areas. These are useful if not a vital planning tool for national and local government, civil society, and all other stakeholder groups.

Question: How can performance best be communicated in a way that involves businesses, the public and local government in achieving the SDGs within the UK?

46. Libraries of all kinds can disseminate information about the SDGs and national development priorities within their communities. Public libraries alone in the UK welcomed 265m visitors last year. As the library and information network is much broader than the public sector this is a conservative estimate of the potential reach. This year BBC radio stations partnered up with public libraries to run UK wide book clubs. This has provided our sector with the opportunity for even greater reach and potential impact for its programmes. As well as providing a ready network to communicate public information libraries also have the potential to collect information that will help national decision makers achieve their goals.

Recommendations:

- The creation of a Cabinet Committee to oversee and drive UK progress towards delivering on the 2030 Agenda
- The foundation of a National Development Plan as recommended by the UN setting out how the UK will attain the SDGs by 2030
- The development of a National Knowledge and Information Skills strategy within the National Development Plan as an essential basis to ensure active participation at all levels in the implementation of the Goals.
- An investment programme in the UK's knowledge, library and information services to ensure that all people can access information about the SDGs and organisations are enabled to deliver them successfully

47. We trust that the Environmental Audit Committee will find merit in these ideas and recommendations and feel able to include them in its report.

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Appendix

Indicators for measuring impact

1. Some suggested international indicators for an Access to Information Target:
 - Literacy rate of Youth and Adults, urban and rural literacy rate. Literacy is a basic requirement to access information in all formats. Existing literacy data is collected annually by UNESCO Institute for Statistics^{vi}
 - Ownership of a Smartphone or other internet-enabled devices per 100 people. Data on phone and broadband access is collected by the ITU
 - Media and Information Literacy (MIL) competencies. As by the Global MIL Assessment Framework, UNESCO Communications and Information Sector (2013)^{vii}

2. Suggested international Indicators for increase in universal and affordable access to ICTs through indicators including:
 - Number of broadband subscriptions (per 100 people). Data collected annually by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) in the World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Database^{viii}
 - Cost of fixed broadband subscriptions as a percentage of monthly Gross National Income (GNI). Data collected annually by International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and UN Broadband Commission in the World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Database
 - Proportion of public libraries with broadband Internet access. Data collected in relation to the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Statistical Indicators^{ix} (Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development, 2011) for Target 4 ('Connect all public libraries, museums, post offices and national archives with ICTs'), Indicator 4.1
 - Proportion of public libraries providing public Internet access. Data collected in relation to WSIS Statistical Indicators for Target 4 ('Connect all public libraries, museums, post offices and national archives with ICTs'), Indicator 4.2

References

ⁱCILIP is the leading body representing the library, knowledge and information professions in the UK. We believe in a literate, knowledgeable and connected society. Our members work in a range of sectors including higher education, schools, public libraries, health, and commercial organisations and across government. We also play our part in the global information society mainly through an active membership of IFLA (The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions).

ⁱⁱ National Literacy Trust, 2015. *Adult Literacy*. [Online]. Available at: http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/adult_literacy/illiterate_adults_in_england [Accessed 3 September 2015]

ⁱⁱⁱ Centre for Economics and Business Research, (2015). *The economic impact of basic digital skills and inclusion in the UK. A report for Tinder Foundation & Go On UK*. CEBR. [pdf]. http://www.tinderfoundation.org/sites/default/files/research-publications/the_economic_impact_of_digital_skills_and_inclusion_in_the_uk_final_v2.pdf [Accessed August, 2016].

^{iv} Scotland's National Performance Framework
<http://www.gov.scot/About/scotPerforms/pdfNPF>

^v Scotland's National Action Plan on Human Rights
<http://www.scottishhumanrights.com/actionplan>

^{vi} For further information on UNESCO Institute for Statistics see
<http://www.uis.unesco.org/Pages/default.aspx> [Accessed 30 April 2015].

^{vii} UNESCO Communication and Information Sector, 2013. *Global Media and Information Literacy (MIL) Assessment Framework*. [pdf]. UNESCO. ISBN: 978_92+3_001221_2. Available at: <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Communication/Documents/media-and-information-literacy-assessment-framework.pdf> [Accessed 30 April 2015].

^{viii} For explanation of ITU statistics see: <http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/default.aspx> [accessed 30 April 2015].

^{ix} Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development, 2011. *Measuring the WSIS targets: a statistical framework*. [online]. International Telecommunications Union. Available at: <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Communication/Documents/measuring-wsis-targets-statistical-framework.pdf> [Accessed 30 April 2015].

Carnegie UK Trust, (2016). *Library as an economic enabler*
<http://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/carnegieuktrust/wp-content/uploads/sites/64/2016/02/pub1455011401.pdf>

Carnegie UK Trust, (2016). *Library as a learning hub*
<http://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/carnegieuktrust/wp-content/uploads/sites/64/2016/02/pub1455011401.pdf>