LTR-PROJECT: IFLAs ROLE IN DIFFUSING PROFESSIONAL NORMS

The group of respondents forming the basis for the different regional/national reports should consist of:

- Respondents with a background from practical librarianship, representing different kinds of libraries, i.e. public libraries and special libraries
- Respondents with a background from governing bodies/political bodies responsible for formulating and implementing national library policies.
- Respondents with a background from library associations
- Representatives with a background from LIS-education and research

That probably means that the country reports should be based on not less than 15 interviews to cover the categories and variables of interest.

The qualitative interviews be undertaken as individual interviews or in the form of focus group interviews. That is up those responsible for the national interviews and reports to decide.

I.   Qualitative interviews – interview guide.

1. Background information on the respondents and his/her relationship to and experiences with IFLA

2. First we would like you to say some words about your background: What is your present position?

- What kind of library or library-related institution do you work in?
- What is your main responsibility in this institution?

3. Are you an experienced IFLA participant or would you describe yourself as a novice – I mean: How many conferences have you participated at?

4. Are you a member or an officer of any body in IFLA, i.e. a standing committee, round-table, division etc? If yes: What kind of position do you have in which body?

5. What would you say that you personally gain as a library and information professonal from taking part in the IFLA acitivities? Try to be as concrete and specific as possible. Can you, for example, point at professional ideas, standards, methods etc. which have been important in your professional life and where IFLA-activities have played a role as a source of inspiration?

The general effects of IFLA in spreading in spreading professional norms and standards and in developing librarianship.

6. Every year 3-4000 library and information professionals meet at the IFLA-conferences. Considerable resources are spent which, alternatively, could have been used for other purposes, for example concrete literacy projects etc. If someone maintains that the millions of dollars spent on the yearly IFLA-conferences better could be used alternatively, how would you meet such an argument? What, if anything, does the library community in general and the library community in your country in particular according to your opinion gain from IFLA and IFLA-activities that can defend the resources spent?

7. As professionals we get professional impulses from a variety of sources, e.g. research in LIS, national and international networks of which we are members, professional journals, others bur related professional and academic field, seminars, further educational courses, exemplary and innovative libraries nationally and abroad, national governing bodies and policy organs etc. IFLA is one possible source of professional inspiration.

    -   How do you, generally, evaluate, IFLA as a source of professional impulses and inspiration compared to other sources? Is IFLA and important source of professional impulses compared to the other mentioned or a relatively marginal one?
    -   Could you reflect a bit on what kind of impulses IFLA is particularly capable of diffusing, e.g. concrete ideas concerning service production, the role and purpose of librarianship, methods and techniques in management, new professional trends such as Knowledge Management, standards in classification and cataloguing etc.

8. Can you identify new ideas, services, methods, techniques etc. that have been implemented in your country over the last decade that can be traced back to IFLA or where IFLA has played a significant role in diffusing the innovation or idea in question? If yes, specify the kind of innovation(s) or idea(s) and he role that you think can be ascribed to IFLA..

    IFLA and (information) literacy

9. Information literacy is a complex concept. We would like you to elaborate what you believe to be the most important dimensions of this concept.

10. Which dimensions of this complex concept do you think IFLA should give priority in the organisation's work to promote lifelong literacy? Are there specific dimensions of this problem-area which you regard IFLA as particularly capable of working with and where, accordingly, IFLA can be an efficient instrument?

11. Obstacles to information literacy are many. They consist, among oher things of literacy in the narrow sense, i.e. the lack of reading and writing capability, lack of access to

technology – ICT or printed material, lack of ability to understand a message, lack of access to relevant and understandable content, lack of the ability to identify, select and evaluate information, lack of access to a supportive and stimulating environment etc. -----

- Which are, according to your opinion, the most important hindrances to life long literacy in your country?

- Which role could IFLA play in overcoming those barriers and hindrances?

12. Many issues in information policy are conflict ridden. Groups representing different interests or values oppose each other. The issue of copyright versus open access is one example. Free borrowing versus fee is another. What about the issue of literacy? Is that also conflict ridden, or is it an issue or is it an issue where all parties can agree and join forces for the sake of a common good? If you see conflicts, please specify what kind of interests and values which according to your opinion are standin against each other.

   Should IFLA take a stand in these conflicts, or should IFLA focus upon those parts of the issue that are not conflict ridden or try to be as neutral as possible?

13. Many institutions and organisations, international as well as regional and national, are working in order to promote information literacy, for example. How do you evaluate the role of IFLA?

   - Is the role of IFLA a major one or a more marginal one compared to other organisations and institutions?
   - Does IFLA has a specific role to play that would not have been covered properly had not IFLA been there, or is the role of IFLA to add strength to a common choir without having a specific role to play which is different from other participant. If you believe IFLA has a sppecific role to play, we would like you to elaborate a litlle on that.

14. Are there any other questions or topics concerning IFLA and information literacy that you would like to add?

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

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