

Danmarks Biblioteksforening, December 2020

## **Voluntary National SDG Review 2021 - DENMARK**

### **The Public Library - Citizens' local Gateway to the SDG's**

Denmark strives to be a pioneer in terms of sustainability, climate and in implementing the UN's 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

**Legislation and public investment** solve only parts of our common SDG related challenges while implementing the goals requires broad support – at both national and local level. Public Libraries, as the most visited Danish cultural institution (37.4 million visits, DS2019), constitute already a natural focal point for all citizens when it comes to civic engagement, access to knowledge and facts to act on as well as culture to change habits and patterns of action.

**With a Public Library-system** in place in every one of the 98 Danish municipalities, the libraries form a unique platform in order to contribute to common societal solutions in collaboration with other bodies/agents - and in cooperation with local citizens.

**The Danish Library Association works** together with Danish libraries to promote a 2030-focus at local level. Currently more than half of the Danish Public Libraries are involved in 2030 Activities according to official statistics (DS 2019) and more are following and developing local SDG strategies and policies.

**To illustrate the importance of libraries** in the process of implementing the SDG's four cases have been chosen:

- A. National DB2030 Network.** By The Danish Library Association
- B. The World's Best Solutions Live!** By Ballerup Public Libraries
- C. Library 2030 Certification.** By Svendborg Public Libraries
- D. SDG Library.** By Aarhus Public Libraries

Copenhagen December 2020/For further information kindly contact Michael Steen-Hansen, Director, The Danish Library Association – [msh@db.dk](mailto:msh@db.dk) .

## A. National DB2030 Network

**1. Library Org.:**

The Danish Library Association (Danmarks Biblioteksforening)

**2. Project Title:**

DB 2030 Network

**3. Related to SDG Goal(s):**

04 Inclusive Quality Education and Life-Long Learning

11 Sustainable, Strong Communities

16 Promote peaceful and Inclusive Societies for Sustainable Development

17 Partnerships

**4. What:**

A National 2030 Network of cross-disciplinary character including both Libraries, NGOs etc. Working to stimulate 2030 activities in the library environment and related to Danish municipalities thus supporting 2030 initiatives at both national and local level.

**5. How:**

After a kick-off Meeting in May 2019 the DLA2030 Network (DB2030 Netværk) was established as an informal network

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/706609713106254/> - now counting more than 210 members on a national scale.

Since Spring 2019 a number of meetings/conferences creating awareness about and/or supporting the SDG's – either for the network itself or for others - have taken place in 2019 and 2020 and will take place in the 2021 plus the following years. For the benefit of both society's development and individual citizens' lives.

**6. Outcome (expected):**

A strong 2030 focus in the work of the public libraries in Denmark wherever relevant. Internally – in the organization of the library itself.

Externally – towards municipalities, local schools and other institutions as well as local associations and individual citizens.

**7. Contact Person(s):**

*Michel Steen-Hansen*, Director, [msh@db.dk](mailto:msh@db.dk)



“The public library's strategic identity – is much more than books and lending out books. It is now a matter of translating the SDG goals into a Danish context, relevant to municipalities and libraries!”

The DB2030 kick-off Meeting 14th May 2019, Odense.

Steen Hildebrandt, president of Danish Government's 2030 Panel (2017-2020), Professor Emeritus - Aarhus University.

Photo: Kim Haugaard/*Danmarks Biblioteker* nr. 3, 2019.

## **B. The World's Best Solutions Live!**

### **1. Library:**

Ballerup Public Libraries (Ballerup Bibliotekerne)  
Banegårdspladsen 1  
DK-2750 Ballerup

### **2. Project Title:**

The World's Best Solutions Live! (Verdens Bedste Løsninger Live)

### **3. Related to SDG Goal(s):**

SDG 4 - Education: festival for citizens and public education institutions on UN17 SDGs presenting a critical, but optimistic approach to solving the SDGs.

SDG 11 and 17 – strong local societies and collaborations: Facilitating collaboration between local citizen groups, local, national and global educational institutions and “green” NGOs.

### **4. What:**

In 2019, the Ballerup Library held a two days festival on the SDG goals. The concept for the festival was inspired by Sunday Papers Live in London.

It was crucial to get the involvement of the local high school and the Technical University of Denmark (DTU), to explore the potential for collaboration of the two in the “neutral” setting that the library presents. The library collaborated with PLIX - Public Library Innovation Exchange at MIT and DTU in building Cube satellite models sessions together with citizens and students from the local high school in the library makerspace.

On the first day of the festival 400 students attended. On day two of the festival, 250 citizens, volunteers, staff, keynote speakers and contributors spend a day eating, talking and learning about SDG goals.

(This was a fine higher attendance in Danish Public Libraries of The project was partly funded by the Danish Agency for Culture and Palaces (in Danish: Slots- og Kulturstyrelsen).

### **5. How:**

The festival was held in the library's space between the bookshelves. An idea to transform the normal library knowledge from the traditional books to the format with learning from being presented with different citizens' point of view and getting a critical but optimistic approach to solving the SDG goals. The stage and surroundings were decorated with old lamps (secondhand), small light balls, plates and pillows, sofas and armchairs, to make it a homestyle relaxed environment.

At the festival, students from DTU presented their latest replacement, lunch from the local organic farm, children making SDG hats, music from the music school and local citizens collecting rubbish outside the library.

On stage, keynote speakers gave lectures inspired by the format of TED TALK, stand-up and Sunday Papers Live. There were key people from Danish green organizations, celebrities with a green agenda, a chef who presented vegetarian food that tastes like meat and presentations about plastic in the oceans, sustainable clothes and much more.

The format was deliberately flexible, so that other libraries / cultural institutions easily could copy the concept.

The festival was primarily promoted locally via Facebook, Instagram, the local newspaper and posters / flyers at the libraries.

The satellite sessions

The CubeSat program was developed by PLIX - Public Library Innovation Exchange (MIT). Their idea of working with satellite technology could provide an understanding of how we monitor the globe from space - ice melting, forest death and so on.

In collaboration with PLIX, we ran the sessions in two different versions; one for the public and the other for high school students.

For the public. We choosed to arrange three 2-hour sessions. We invited the members of the Coding Pirates – the local "programming club" consisting of children and volunteer parents who meet every week together with citizens and volunteers from the library's makerspace. In the version for the high school students, we collaborated with DTU Space with their special knowledge of satellites.

## **6. Outcome (expected):**

Ballerup Library held another version of the festival - an event with speakers on the theme UN17 SDGs. This time the audience was keypersons and leaders from the Danish public libraries in Denmark, other professionals working with culture in Denmark, green NGOs and representatives from educational institutions. We invited them to share knowledge and methods to make a difference as a library in Denmark in contributing to SDGs with focus on the "why" and "how"?

The feedback from citizens were that they felt empowered and ready to go out and make a difference. The festival had shown them that things can be done locally as well as nationally.

Ballerup Library has now decided to organize the festival every year and work to involve more citizens to volunteer and be part of the development of the festival.

The library staff has become aware of bringing the SDGs into play in their activities. The local community and politicians now know that the library can provide knowledge, inspire people to action and be a part of the joint task of solving the SDGs.

## 7. Contact Person(s):

*Thomas Sture Rasmussen*, Innovation and strategy developer, [tsr@balk.dk](mailto:tsr@balk.dk).

*Ravinder Kaur-Pedersen*, Director, [ravk@balk.dk](mailto:ravk@balk.dk)



Photo: Connie Hedegaard, former Danish Minister and former European Commissioner for Climate Action and as host Minister of the 2009 UN Climate Change, debating with moderator David Trads at the Ballerup Festival the 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2019. Photo: Ballerup Public Libraries.

## C. Library 2030 Certification

### 1. Library:

Svendborg Public Libraries (Svendborg Bibliotek)  
Svinget 1  
DK-5700 Svendborg

### 2. Project Title:

2030 Certification of Svendborg Public Library (Certificering af Svendborg Bibliotek)

### 3. Related to SDG Goal(s):

SDG 17 – Partnerships for action  
SDG 3 – Good health  
SDG 4 – Education  
SDG 12 – Responsible consumption

### 4. What:

By the help of the company Green Network, Svendborg Bibliotek has become certified Sustainable Business Partner. This means, that Svendborg Bibliotek has completed a CSR capacity measurement, which confirmed the required knowledge about sustainability and CSR tools. The CSR training by Green Network consisted of lessons in: Basics, analytics and strategies.

### 5. How:

Because of this certification, Svendborg Library has created a strategy for sustainability with the following focus points:

- To be a sustainable workplace
- To be a house of knowledge and development of sustainability
- To have healthy, competent and creative employees

A strategy where we commit ourselves to specific actions. We have developed plans for actions in the three areas above.

Working with sustainability is a conversion, that you have to give time – you might ask yourself, if working with biodiversity is actually a job for libraries. And the short answer is YES!

We all have to take part in working with sustainability to achieve the 17 goals.

As an example we are currently, working on transforming the green areas surrounding the library into a giant buffet for insects, and an outdoor space for contemplation, mental health, well-being and much more.

### 6. Outcome (expected)

Success criteria:

- We have to contribute to a shared responsibility
- We have to enlighten about the shared responsibility
- We have made success criteria for our actions i.e. how and what we are measuring, so that we know, if we have achieved our goals.

- All employees are implementing sustainability in the everyday work

7. **Contact Person(s):**

*Diana Bøgelund Rosholt*, Coordinator, [Diana.bogelund.rosholt@svendborg.dk](mailto:Diana.bogelund.rosholt@svendborg.dk)



Photo: Svendborg Bibliotek.

## D. SDG Library

### 1. Library:

Aarhus Public Libraries

DOKK1

Hack Kampmanns Plads 2

DK- 8000 Aarhus C

### 2. Project Title:

SDG Library

### 3. Related to SDG Goal(s):

Primarily SDG 17, Partnerships and SDG 11, Sustainable, strong Communities – but as a platform for working with any SDG and/or combination of SDG's

### 4. What:

The SDG Library is an expansion of the library space and the library DNA; The essence of "circularity" based on sharing, trust, equality, recycling and co-creation. This connects the essence of the library directly to the Brundtland definition of sustainability as a conglomerate of social, environmental and economic factors.

In the SDG Library Aarhus Public Libraries are co-creating a space with partners and citizens that will hold a living indoor/outdoor library. Here partners, citizens, children, schools, universities, NGO's, local clubs can meet, share tools, knowledge, inspiration and lifehacks that help us all turn the SDG's into everyday-life goals. This is a space to create a new community of practice related to the SDG's.

The physical space is made of recycled and crowdfunded materials and the goal is that it will become an SDG Toolbox for the community. Here you can find anything from nets and microscopes for looking at algae in the harbor to kitchen-gear for community cooking with food waste, crowdsourced scrap for building prototypes, courses in humanity centered design, lectures on windmills by NGOs in partnership with the university, exhibitions on inequality created by homeless etc.

**Indoor** you find shared tools, spaces for reflection, meeting, networking and spaces for building, creating and tinkering.

**Outdoor** you find a community stage: anyone can take the stage for theater, concerts, stand up or use the frame for displaying visual art. The stage provides free and equal access to expression and art as a tool for SDG-action. Outdoor you also find a community space – an ancient construction of stones in a circle shaded by trees. This space provides equal access to dialogue and community as a tool for SDG-action. By providing opportunities for art, expression and dialogue as tools the outdoor SDG space transcends its physical structures and becomes a verb – something we *do* together for humanity and the planet.

### 5. How:

The Library focuses the process on Space, Relations and Tools to support SDG action

**The Space:** a co-created indoor/outdoor SDG space

**The Relations:** Anyone in the community working with SDGs can contribute and participate. The list so far holds: NGO's, Theatres, universities, schools, museums, artist, citizens and designers.

**The Tools:**

**Method:** Humanity Centered Design, Library as a Verb and community action

**Actual tools:** Pots and pans, screwdrivers, microscopes, podcast-microphones, a boat, books, links, movies: anything needed to work with SDG's as a crowdsourced expansion of the library service.

**Materials:** Mostly recycled materials such as waste, discarded books etc.

**Micro funding:** one experiment is to create a "Every Book is a Seed"-library fund from the semi-annual reselling of discarded books. This fund will hand out small grants to make the library greener and more sustainable.

**6. Outcome (expected):**

A transformation of the SDG action from being a corporate logo to an actual platform for action anchored in everyday lives though a living co-created SDG Library.

The SDGs are high on the libraries' strategic agenda, both nationally and internationally. With this initiative we will systematically and strategically investigate opportunities to support the SDGs in Aarhus Public Libraries. The 17 SDGs are in many ways already a fundamental part of the libraries' DNA. We are already working with elements of it and have several of the building blocks, but the language, knowledge, methods, partnerships and strategic planning in relation to the SDGs must be rethought and developed.

**7. Contact Person(s):**

*Helene Schvartzman*, Development Consultant & Project manager, [hsc@aarhus.dk](mailto:hsc@aarhus.dk)



DOKK1, Aarhus Harbour Front. Photo: Aarhus Public Libraries.