

In the beginning I would really like to address my sincere thanking to IFLA for offering me such a valuable chance to attend IFLA conference for the first time in my professional life.

Attending IFLA conference 2010 was an opportunity to meet other people like me. That is to say, to meet people doing something similar to what I am doing. At the same time, those people are not doing exactly the same thing, as they are all coming from other places.

The conference was:

- A unique opportunity to discuss best practices within the libraries.
- A good opportunity to get a variety of viewpoints can help us see where we can change or improve our own ideas and processes.

Attending the conference in person was really important for me, some of the attendees mentioned their professional loneliness, or isolation. Many of us recognized that we are good at what we do and that we know where to find information on how to do things a little differently or where to find resources to help us learn something new.

The human interaction of discussing these issues, however, made us clearer and gives us a variety of new ideas that we don't necessarily receive by merely looking for information in non-human resources.

When we specifically look for information in printed and electronic sources, we have an idea what we'll find. When we discuss something with a number of other people, they sometimes bring new perspectives to the question we're asking. We determined that interaction with other humans at the conference-and elsewhere-was invaluable, and this is exactly what IFLA 2010 provided us for.

I can add that we might know a number of people simply as a result of e-mail contact, but I can really rely in some issues on people I met at the conference, this is simply because we had a human interaction, have experienced many things together and had too much to share as well. I deeply pass my gratitude in providing me such a chance to know such professionals.

As for the IFLA theme this year Open access to knowledge - promoting sustainable progress, it was actually very important and fitting to the activities we do in my library. We do keen in my library Bibliotheca

Alexandrina on providing open access to knowledge to our users. Since Bibliotheca Alexandrina is not only a library, but it is also a very huge learning center, it was really important for me to attend many of the IFLA committees' meetings and seminars.

I would also like to mention, that one of the main successful reasons for the IFLA guarantees for this year to experience the sessions in a good way, was the newcomers session. In this session we had an overview about how the ILFA conference goes on, and the right way we should follow in order not to be confused, especially that IFLA conference is a very big conference!

I learned from IFLA many things which will have a real influence on my professional and personal life:

- In IFLA people speak very loud and very slow, because not all attendees are English native speakers.
- Together we are much stronger.
- Not everyone knows everything, but someone knows something.

I had a good opportunity to know and to share experiences from other colleagues, who are Liberians and who are working in information literacy as well.

Moreover, I got the opportunity to widen my knowledge about some libraries' issues, like documents supply system in different libraries, which has something for sure to do with open access to information. In addition, I knew about some important issues in libraries; such as advocacy, global learning, collection developments, evaluation and statistics in libraries.

DRM was also a very new term for me to know, "Digital Right Management"; it is really a very important term for me, because we don't have a document supply system in my library yet. We are planning to have it in the near future, so it was really important to know about the legal issues, which we might not know as librarians.

It was also great to share the happiness with the Veria library in Greece when they received their award for this year from "**Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation**".

To summarize and to conclude, i would really like to say that IFLA 2010 was not only just a conference for me, but it was a real chance to attend seminars, lecture and to know some professionals from all over the world as well.

IFLA gave us "the Guarantees" and the practitioners the chance to refresh our skills and keep abreast of new tools and methodologies. IFLA provided us a real opportunity to network with others in the discipline.

Thank you IFLA

Mona Hegazy
Reference Librarian
Bibliotheca Alexandrina