

# What drives public library innovation?

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(EIFL-PLIP)

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# EIFL: Who we are



Founded in 1999, EIFL is an international not-for-profit organisation dedicated to **enabling access to knowledge** through libraries in more than **60 developing and transition countries** in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America

# EIFL PUBLIC LIBRARY INNOVATION PROGRAMME (EIFL-PLIP):

## ADVANCING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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In just 1 year,  
EIFL-PLIP grantee  
libraries helped over  
10,000 people build  
new skills and  
improve access to  
knowledge





# EIFL-PLIP take-up study

- commissioned by the EIFL-PLIP in 2014/15
- aimed to find out how innovation travels, and what inspires public libraries in developing and transition countries to innovate
- 4 surveys involved 120 public librarians (mainly library directors or librarians in charge of innovative library services) from Africa, Europe and Latin America.
- 4 in-depth interviews with public library sector leadership (directors of library systems or networks; leaders of library associations)
- Full report available at <http://bit.ly/1B2uPtP>

# What motivate librarians to innovate

- Willingness to make the library more relevant to the community
- Personal satisfaction of being useful to the community
- Opportunity for library infrastructure advancement / Additional funding for the library

*Library leaders: Main motivation to innovate is a need to be up-to-date. Service innovation strengthen libraries, increase it's visibility and recognition, and mobilizes the staff to work more and embrace changes*

# Librarians inspire each other

## ...by communicating through

- **Websites**
- **Social media** (mainly Facebook and Twitter)
- **National library events / conferences**

Library leaders: *Same channels, complemented with live, face-to-face events.*

## ...by networking

- **Visiting other libraries**
- **Attending national library conferences / events**
- **Training and capacity building workshops**
- **Joint projects**

Library leaders: *To “inspire” – international conferences, to “disseminate for replication” – visits, national events, workshops.*



# Stakeholders who encourage innovation in libraries

- **Library authorities**
- **NGO's**
- **Local governments**
- **Local public institutions** (e.g. hospital, school)

Library leaders: *Main stakeholder is library authority or library association. Others are perceived as friendly but not always encouraging innovations.*

# Barriers / challenges to innovation

- Lack of funding and resources
- Lack of staff to implement the service
- Lack of understanding and support from their management and authorities

*Library leaders: Agree with three main barriers and add low library reputation and weak participation in local issues.*

# EIFL-PLIP spark innovation far beyond grantee libraries

- grantee libraries had **inspired other libraries** to innovate, and had shared ideas in their countries
- In addition, grant calls had generated energy and **sparked innovation in public libraries whose grant applications were declined**



What drives  
the community  
development?

The key question is  
NOT ,What drives  
public library  
innovation?'

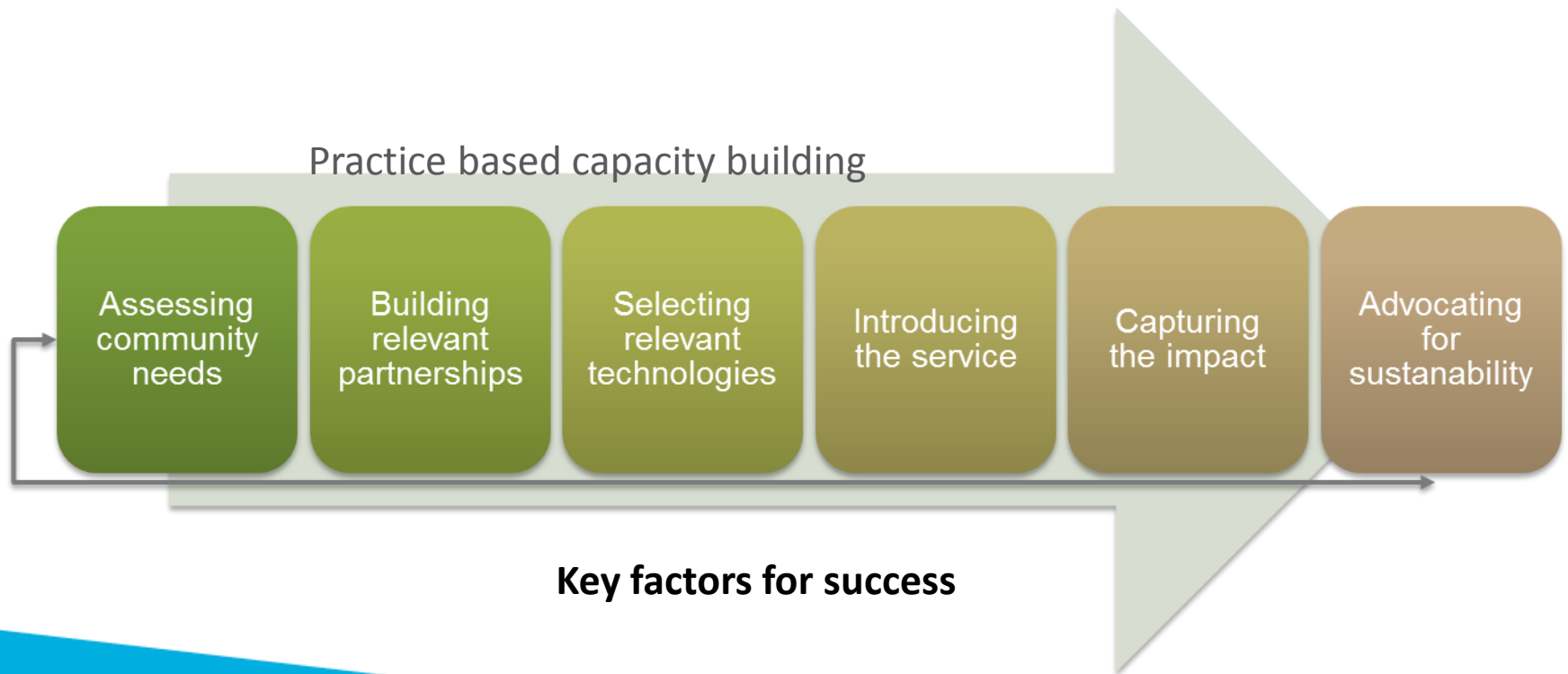
What makes a  
better library  
service?

# It's all about the right focus...

- ‘You don’t need to talk about innovation, it’s what others will talk about when you generate significant new value. In the meantime let’s talk about exactly **what is happening to make better products, better companies, and happier customers**, and beware of the trap of saying “*we’re going to innovate*”!’
- ‘[...] what truly innovative firms are doing today, is **creating a network of initiatives and capabilities** - importantly not called innovation - **which are collectively driving results, and transforming organizations.**’

*Why You Shouldn't Call It Innovation by Tim Woods at the Hype Innovation Blog on Sep 21, 2015 - <http://bit.ly/1P5dSmL>*

# EIFL-PLIP Library Service Development Model





# Thank you!

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WITHOUT  
BOUNDARIES