

SDG Certification of Libraries

Kristine Fjord Tolborg
Chora 2030



About me

- Managing Director of Chora 2030
- Partner with Danish Library Association
- Project lead on several library projects
- Trainer and facilitator of capacity building
- Danish SDG Award winner in 2025
- MA in Comparative Literature



Certification as a tool

- Co-developed by libraries
- Includes an organizational and a citizen-oriented perspective
- A way to rethink the role of the library



Background



2019

School certification
programme

Pilot

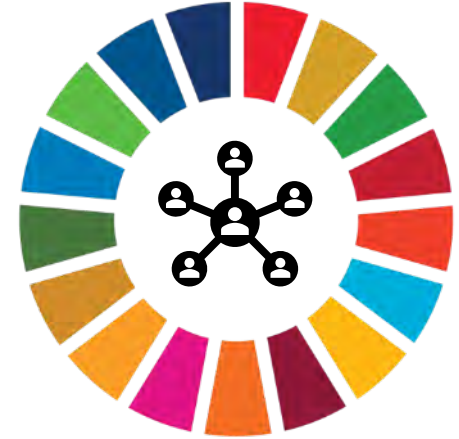


2021

Pilot project with
20 Danish libraries

Funded by: External funding

Programme



2026

43 libraries participate
42 certified

Funded by: Participants



SDG CERTIFICATION

INTERNATIONAL SDG CERTIFICATION OF LIBRARIES

The SDG Certification is a joint framework for libraries working with sustainability. It has been co-developed by libraries and includes both an organizational, operational and a citizen-oriented perspective.



3 Challenges

1. Institutional Anchoring
2. Knowledge Isn't Enough
3. License to Operate

Challenge 1:

Institutional Anchoring





1 AFKÆB
FATTIGDOM

11 BÆVEREDELSE
OG SUSTAINABLE
BYGGERI

3 GODTVEKST
OG VELVÆRE

15 LIVET
PÅ LAND

4 KVALITETS
UDANNELSE

7 AFFØRSELSE
OG RENS
ENERGI

17 PARTNERSKABER
FOR VÆKST

13 KLIMATILPASNING
OG SUSTAINABLE
BYGGERI

9 AFFØRSELSE
OG SUSTAINABLE
BYGGERI

5 LIGELYNDIG
KØN

2 RENT
VAND
OG SANITÆT

14 LIVET
UNDERSK
I HAVET

6 RENT
VAND
OG SANITÆT

6 RENT
VAND
OG SANITÆT

9 AFFØRSELSE
OG SUSTAINABLE
BYGGERI

8 AFFØRSELSE
OG SUSTAINABLE
BYGGERI

16 FRED
OG
SUSTAINABLE
BYGGERI

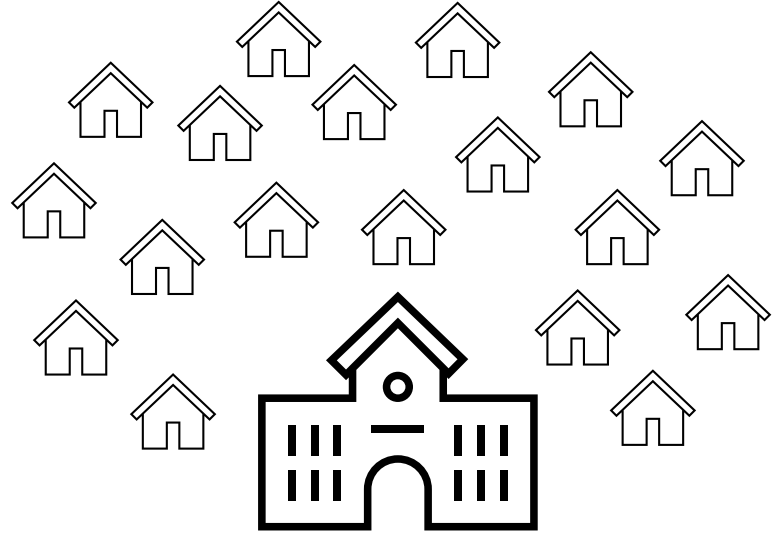
14 LIVET
UNDERSK
I HAVET



98 municipalities

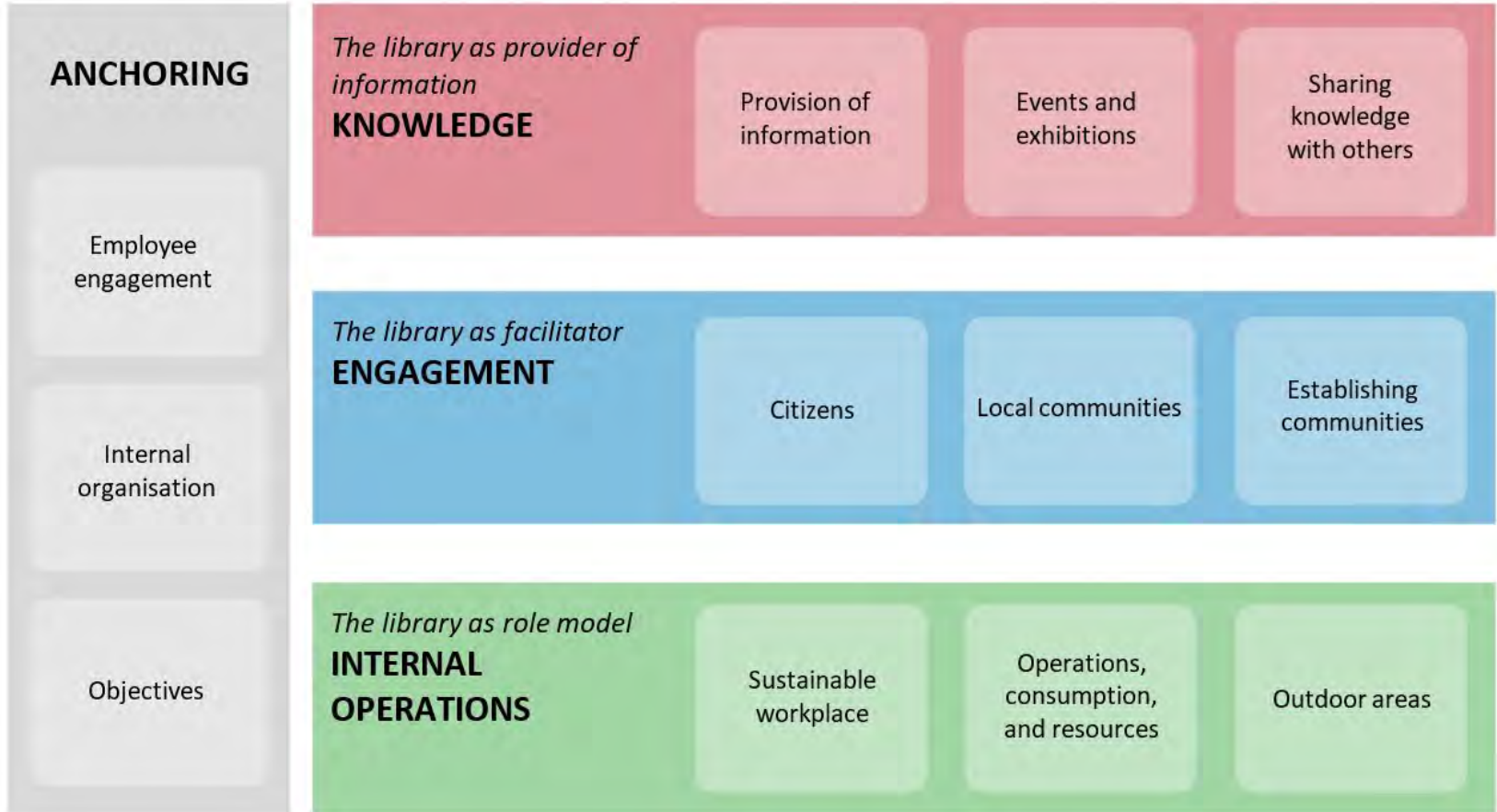


Dragør
Population: 14,500
1 location



Aarhus
Population: 360,000
19 locations

Model for SDG certification



Think about a library...

KNOWLEDGE: Exhibitions and events

ENGAGEMENT: Citizens and local partners

INTERNAL OPERATIONS: Resources

1. What is already happening?
2. Which new initiatives could support the objective?

5 steps

1. Part of library strategy
2. Introduction
3. Involvement of employees
4. Action plan
5. Local activities



Feedback from library staff

Projects are sometimes considered annoying. But this has been allowed to spread throughout the organization, and everyone feels they have a hand in the game and can see the point of it.

It has created a really cool conversation in house - also discussions and disagreements. It has moved from reluctance to shared mission. And it has brought about concrete changes in our house.

Challenge 2:
Knowledge isn't enough



Eurobarometer

Public Opinion in the European Union



Key findings

Europeans continue to take climate change seriously

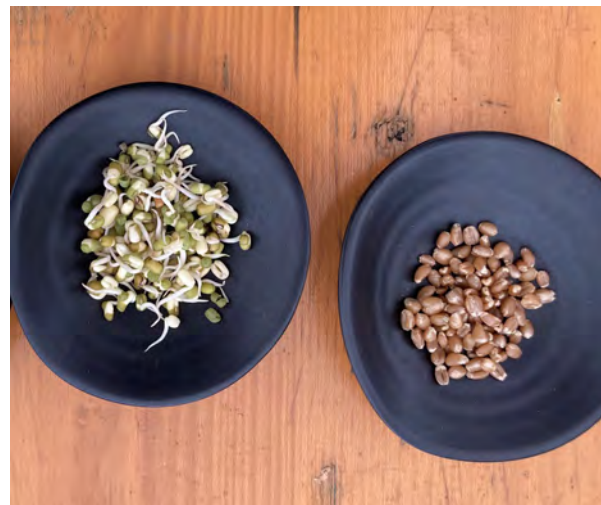
- 85% of respondents consider climate change a serious problem for the world.
- Climate change is seen as the most pressing issue in several Member States and among the top three concerns in most others.



Pluralistic Ignorance and the Silent Majority

Creating room for collective action and community







Challenge 3:

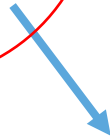
License to operate



Knowledge
Facts
Literature



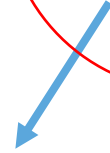
Strategy
Analysis



Art
Culture
Fiction and poetry



Narrative
Motivation



Action
Skills


Exercise

Discuss in pairs:

- How do you see the role of the library in the green transition?
- Which challenges do the library face in fulfilling that role?





A vibrant outdoor community event, possibly a farmers market or festival, is shown. In the foreground, a group of people is seated at a wooden picnic table, engaged in conversation and eating. The table is set with several green beer bottles and plates of food. A man in a white shirt stands behind the table, leaning in to talk to the seated women. In the background, other people are seen walking and browsing, with a building and trees visible. A blue recycling bin is positioned to the right of the table.

A local test room for citizen involvement and sustainable action

We have become the ones the rest of the municipality looks to as the good example when it comes to sustainability.

Moving forward



Sustainable Development Goals & Libraries

Inspirational examples



Med støtte fra
TrygFonden

Library:

- Use model to structure and examples to get inspiration
- Join WEEK17 to get started
- Join the SDG Certification programme
- Share your knowledge and experiences

National association:

- Spread information and resources
- Support knowledge-sharing by creating national SDG network



Thank you for your attention!

kristine@chora2030.dk

