

# Libraries as catalysts for community engagement in crisis. Safeguarding curiosity, creativity and community in crisis situations.

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Maktaba Children's Library



المكتبات في الصدارة  
**LIBRARIES LEAD**

QNL Annual Forum  
for Library Professionals



مكتبة قطر الوطنية  
Qatar National Library

## Libraries and UN SDGs:

“Ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.” (United Nations, 2015. Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)

“A library in the middle of a community is a cross between an emergency exit, a life raft, and a festival.” (Moran, 2012, p. 92).



This is our lane:

## Libraries, UN SDGS and 1949 UNESCO Public Libraries Manifesto

- SDG 5 “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”  
**The public library should offer children, young people, men and women opportunity and encouragement**



- SDG 4 “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.”  
**To educate themselves continuously**



This is our lane:

## Libraries, UN SDGS and 1949 UNESCO Public Libraries Manifesto

- SDG 16 “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.”

**To maintain freedom of expression and a constructively critical attitude towards all public issues.**

**To be better social and political citizens of their country and of the world**

- SDG 3 “Ensure healthy lives and promote well being for all at all ages“

**To use their leisure time to promote personal happiness and social well-being.**



## “I think I can, I think I can”

How Maktaba mobilized to deliver informal education solutions to Afghan evacuees in Qatar by leveraging skills, institutional partnerships, and community support.

**Skills:** What we lack in resources we view as an opportunity and not a challenge.

Our human resources are our most valuable resource.

**Partnerships:** We actively seek partnerships with like minded organizations.

We focus on partnerships that are mutually beneficial. How they help us deliver on our mission but equally important how can we help them deliver theirs.

We think local.

**Community Support:** We depend on the “hive” to source creative ideas.

We reflect our community in the choices we make in about resources and programming.

## The Afghan Evacuation: Lessons Learned

**Act immediately.** Crisis situations present immediate needs so the response must also be immediate. It's not about delivering the perfect program it's about getting boots on the ground.



## The Afghan Evacuation: Lessons Learned

**Be flexible:** Not every idea will work and often that's when the magic happens



## The Afghan Evacuation: Lessons Learned

**Engage the population in crisis.** Listen to what they need, meet those needs and bring your ideas to the table as well.



**Allow others take the lead:** Any population in crisis will have specialists among them. Let them take ownership, guide programming.



# Thank You

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## References

UNESCO The Public Library A Living Force For Popular Education, Paris 1949

United Nations, Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

