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Article

Empowering Collections-Based Organizations to Participate in Agenda 2030: The "Our Collections Matter Toolkit"

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Abstract: Collections-based organizations (CBOs) can play a crucial role in addressing sustainable development (SD), but their aspiration to become more sustainable, as seen in policies and guidelines, is confronted with several challenges in practice. To facilitate a sustainability transition, this process of change needs to be managed and adequate tools adopted and implemented. Many tools exist to support this transition; however, a scarcity of centralized resources available to CBOs might negatively affect the integration of sustainability practices in their work. With the aim to address this gap, ICCROM launched the project "Our Collections Matter" (OCM) and developed an online toolkit (OCMT) to centralize resources and help CBOs align their work to the UN Agenda 2030. Recently, a workshop was organized with professionals in the field to discuss shared challenges and aspirations and to test the OCMT. This study reflects on how such centralization of resources can contribute to overcoming existing challenges and support the sustainability aspirations of CBOs, fostering change in the field. To do that, the workshop outcomes are analyzed and discussed from a change management perspective, looking at the impact that the OCM project and its activities can have on fostering change, and the role that ICCROM can play in facilitating the sustainability transition of the field.

Keywords: collections; cultural heritage; sustainable development; SDGs; Toolkit; our collections Matter; change management; ICCROM

1. Introduction

"Imagine a world without cultural heritage collections: no more libraries, archives, museums, treasured artifacts in temples, cultural centers, and communities. How big a difference do you think this would make in your life?".

In 2019, the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property-ICCROM asked this question of its network and over 1500 people worldwide (64% of the respondents) answered that the absence of heritage collections would have a huge impact on their lives [1]. The work of collections-based organizations (CBOs) such as archives, libraries, museums (including outdoor museums, eco-museums, and other "living museums"), community-owned heritage collections, religious collections, online collections, seed banks, and biobanks is fundamental to conserve heritage artifacts and knowledge, and to manage heritage resources, preserving their

relevance for society and facilitating their use. In doing so, CBOs can play a crucial role in contributing to sustainable development (SD) objectives.

In the last three decades, there has been a progressive shift in the field of heritage conservation, moving from a traditional, material-based approach to value-based, people-centered approaches, encompassing a broader understanding of the multiple values and users of heritage, and their reciprocal influences [2–4]. Contextually, the heritage and sustainability field emerged, exploring the links between heritage practices and SD objectives, looking at their mutual impact [5]. However, the integration of culture into the SD discourse is an ongoing and longstanding process. Since the 1980s, the cultural sector has continuously stressed the need for more advocacy and research on the potential role of culture in the sustainability discourse for its effective integration into policies and practices [6]. Many documents, reports, guidelines, campaigns, and events have been produced by international and local organizations and networks to advocate for culture as an independent dimension of sustainability and more holistic models of SD, beyond the traditional three dimensions of social, environmental, and economic sustainability, in preparation for the development of more inclusive agendas after the United Nations (UN) Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2000–2015 [7–14].

The UN Agenda 2030 was published in 2015 and adopted by 193 countries worldwide in 2016 (Figure 1). The words "culture/cultural" directly figure throughout the text in relation to cultural diversity and intercultural understanding (introduction para. 8, 36), education (SDG 4.7), creative economy and tourism (SDG 8.9, 12.b), and urbanism (SDG 11.4); they figure indirectly when addressing issues of literacy, creativity, food security, natural and cultural landscapes, peace, and justice [15]. However, it has been argued that this still does not fully represent the potential role of culture and cultural practices in addressing the broader goals of SD [5]. Therefore, while UNESCO further investigated, regulated, and developed cultural indicators to attempt to measure the impact of culture and world heritage practices on selected SDGs and sustainability dimensions [16–20], other organizations also explored linkages between heritage and the SDGs [21], such as from the perspective of cultural heritage [5], natural heritage [22], guidance for local governments [23], museum practices [24], libraries [25], and archives management [26].

Figure 1. UN SD Goals.

CBOs have articulated the potential impact of their practices in policy statements [24], advocacy guides [25–28], and practical tools [29–32]. However, the widely shared aspiration to become "more sustainable", as seen in policies, reports, and guidelines, is confronted in practice with a number of challenges. Among the greatest challenges for CBOs' contributions to SD is a change in content creation; preservation; sharing of information; unstable public, private, and individuals' support systems; rapidly changing technology; and differing requirements and aspirations of different social groups [33].

The sustainability challenges for CBOs lie on different levels: the "container" (the building), the "content" (the collection), and their users. In relation to the former, the building envelope of museums, libraries, and archives needs to ensure environmental stability and optimal preservation conditions for the collections—such as controlled levels of temperature, relative humidity, light, UV radiation, and airborne pollutants [34–36]—

while also providing a suitable setting for collections to be used. For what concerns the "content", collections-based institutions are confronted by challenges related to the management of specific types of collections, such as material waste or reuse [37–40], decolonization [41–43], social and environmental injustice [44–46], and accessibility—physical or digital—of the collections [47–49]. Ensuring that people can access collections, on the one hand, enables museums, libraries, and archives professionals to conserve, maintain, and restore them, and on the other hand, it allows the public, researchers, and technicians to acquire, share and generate new knowledge for the benefit of society [48–50]. Despite these challenges, many CBOs are successfully working towards the fulfillment of their SD aspirations; for instance, by increasing the adoption of "green practices" [47,51], such as recycling [42,43,52], and improving their current practices and processes [53], focusing on organizational sustainability, more conscious management of digital resources [54], the offer of innovative educational programs [55], and much more.

A transition towards more sustainability-oriented practices in CBOs by a variety of professionals and stakeholders requires transformations at multiple scales, from new systemic field dynamics to a single organizational and individual change. Change management theories and models have been introduced in business-related studies and practices since the second half of the twentieth century [56], and in the last two decades, the field has grown to include other domains that are also addressing the work of CBOs [57,58]. A specific branch of change management research looks at how organizational change models and tools can facilitate a sustainability transformation across sectors and scales, stressing the importance of leadership, but also of the strong weight of the human factor on a successful organizational transformation, and the consequent need to facilitate individuals' change [56,59–61]. Among the most-used change management theories and tools, which mainly look at transformations at an organizational level [62], the Prosci-ADKAR model is rooted in the belief that any transformation starts with the change of single individuals [56]. In heritage studies, these models are not commonly adopted; however, most research that investigates the factors affecting the change of practices towards more sustainability-oriented and people-centered approaches, has mainly focused on the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders, such as communities [63,64], cultural brokers [65], governmental and political actors [66], and the development of inclusive tools and methodologies to support the fulfillment of their role and facilitate the transitions towards more sustainability-oriented heritage practices [67,68].

Many tools and methods have been developed for CBOs and individual collections professionals to make concrete contributions towards sustainability. Some of these were created to control and track the actions related to climate changes [69–72], reduce greenhouse gas emissions [73,74], and address the environmental impacts of tourism [75,76] while framing the concept of "green economy" [77] and "green museums" [78]. Moreover, some tools have been developed to support museums in adopting disaster risk reduction approaches [29,79], organize their stored collections [80], and guide researchers in dealing with ethical issues [81], among others.

Despite the existence of useful tools and methods, the scarcity of centralized resources and guidance might disperse the efforts of CBOs and professionals and affect the long-term integration of sustainability-oriented practices in their work. How could the centralization of resources—through the development of a toolkit—contribute to overcoming existing challenges and facilitate the fulfillment of sustainability aspirations of CBOs, fostering a sustainability change in the field?

To address this question, an interdisciplinary team from different institutions (Ahmadu Bello University, Nigeria; ApoyOnline; Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI); Canadian Heritage Information Network (CHIN); Centre for Global Heritage and Development, The Netherlands; International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA); National Library of New Zealand; Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage (KIK-IRPA), Belgium; Southeast Asian Regional Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts (SEAMEO SPAFA); The National Archives, UK; Universidad de los Andes,

Colombia; and Universitat de València, Spain.), led by ICCROM, has engaged in a multi-year project called "Our Collections Matter" (OCM) to accelerate, increase, and amplify activities that support SD within the context of collections-based work [82]. The end goal of this program is to empower organizations in charge of heritage collections to make a genuine difference in securing a more sustainable future. This transformation will be facilitated through the development of an online toolkit and a program of workshops and training to tackle the aspirations and challenges of dealing with SD in collections-based institutions and empower those who work with collections to be effective actors in SD. The aim of this study is to critically reflect on the role that the development of such a toolkit can have in the process of fostering a sustainability transformation in the CBO field. Through the organization of a workshop with international collections professionals, this research looks at the main SD aspirations and challenges faced by the participants, the tools they use to address them, their usability experience with the OCM toolkit, and their feedback on how it could support them in overcoming SD-related challenges and fulfill their aspirations while contextualizing these results into the perspective of sustainability change management, reflecting on the role that an international organization like ICCROM can have in this transformational process.

2. Materials and Methods

In March 2020, ICCROM launched an online survey in five languages, asking collections-based professionals (e.g., collection managers, directors, conservators, archivists, and curators) if and how they address SD in their work, and what methods and tools they use. The aim was to preliminarily investigate the awareness, predispositions, and existing initiatives of professionals in the field on sustainability and to collect relevant resources. Combined with extensive desk research, those resources represented the knowledge basis for the development of a toolkit (OCMT), with the aim of offering a centralized collection of resources to support organizations in aligning their practices with SD objectives.

On June 16, 2021, the Centre for Global Heritage and Development—a research centre based in Leiden, the Netherlands, and member of the OCM network—organized an online participatory workshop [83] in collaboration with ICCROM to further understand current challenges and opportunities faced by collections-based institutions and test the usability of the OCMT. Participants were invited through the network of OCM's partner institutions and, after a short introduction to the project, were divided into four smaller groups to enable a more inclusive discussion on selected topics [84]. Each group was led by a facilitator who asked a series of questions and gathered responses from the participants, who could join the conversation or leave comments through the Mentimeter software throughout the whole workshop.

Two main discussions took place in the four breakout rooms; these developed around the following questions:

A.1 Why are you here today?
A.2 How are you working with SD in your organization?
A.3 What are your SD aspirations or challenges when working with collections?
A.4 What kind of tools would you find most useful to meet these aspirations and challenges?
B.1 What is your feedback on the usability of the OCMT?
B.2 How can the OCMT help you with your SD aspirations and challenges?

The breakout rooms were not recorded; therefore, the data analysis is based on the notes taken by each facilitator and the participants' contributions gathered via Mentimeter and the Zoom chat. A quantitative approach was used to define the profile of participants, while the gathered data were analyzed qualitatively, by performing an inductive content analysis [85] (p. 18). Results are presented by following the structure of the six leading questions, exploring the most frequently mentioned challenges and aspirations in relation to working with SD, and the use of the toolkit.

3. The OCM Toolkit

Among the 473 respondents to the survey launched by ICCROM in 2020, only 15% answered that they already address sustainability in their work within their organization, 20% answered that they do not, and the remaining 65% did not reply to this question. Moreover, only a few methods and tools were indicated by the respondents as being useful to make concrete contributions towards SD. Extra tools were identified through desk research, and selection criteria that they should be (1) replicable/useful in different contexts and settings; (2) likely to lead to high quality, relevant results; (3) open access (freely available without any condition); and (4) practical rather than simply theoretical. For each tool, a standardized comparative framework was completed as a source of information for the online toolkit; the relevant connections to SD, policies, and conventions, and specific links to SDG targets were completed. The OCMT currently includes over 160 tools developed by/for the heritage sector, or borrowed by other fields, and is meant to grow to include more.

The OCMT is made accessible through a free online platform [86]. The collection of tools can be accessed through four entry points: first, the 5 Ps of Agenda 2030 (people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership); second, by selecting from a list of common activities that collections-based institutions undertake; third, by selecting an SDG; and fourth, by selecting a particular SDG target. The four entry points help access the same set of tools. For each tool, the overall aim of the tool is given, along with the SDGs it relates to. A more detailed view provides an additional explanation of how the tool supports the SDG targets. Furthermore, as the "official" SDG indicators are often of limited use to collections-based institutions (being geared more for national reporting), a bespoke set of indicators has been developed for the project. These provide indicative activities and milestones that CBOs can use to help them measure and monitor their progress towards specific SDG targets. The selection of collections-relevant SDG targets for each tool help access the relevant indicators from the bespoke list.

4. The OCM Workshop

4.1. Participants Profile

Fifty people participated in the workshop from several countries, with a majority (90%) from western countries (Europe, the United States, and South America) and the rest (10%) from Southeast Asia and Central Africa. The participants were divided into four equal groups.

People participated because they were interested in SD and they wanted to find out how to incorporate the sustainability agenda into collections-based work. Moreover, they wanted to share experiences and learn from each other about sustainability, the SDGs, and the OCMT. Some said they were already working on some SD-related areas of action, including adopting more sustainable practices in their general operations (e.g., waste reduction, carbon footprint reduction, and lower environmental impact). In these cases, however, collections-based work is not yet part of the effort ("collections are out of the picture"). One organization indicated that "the SDGs are central to its activities" and provided the following examples: building up participatory practices by engaging communities with (digital) heritage, reducing pollution/environmental impact by using digital means to access heritage, and improving wellbeing by providing access to cultural heritage. Because of COVID-19, recent emphasis has been on supporting communities through events around cultural crafts and intangible cultural heritage. More tangible actions on collections involved the use of alternative materials for the exhibitions and storage, teaching students the best strategies to work in conservation, using risk management tools, adopting climate standards in the collection management, minimizing the waste production, and trying to implement the 3Rs (reduce, reuse, and recycle).

Others have been aware that they want to implement some SD actions but have not yet done so. They are aware of the SDGs and the need to become more sustainable, but so

far there have been no concrete conversations/actions towards that. The 20% of workshop participants provided only a vague list of general actions that were not contextualized as it was during the workshop. In comparison to the answers collected from the survey, it was immediately clear that some of the practitioners who participated in the workshop could provide a list of SD-related actions and intentions both in their general operations and collections-based work.

4.2. Challenges

Among the main challenges of integrating sustainability solutions in collection-based work that were discussed by participants across all the groupswere: accessibility, path uncertainty, finding a balance between different sustainability solutions, raising funding to implement changes, defining priorities, and engaging with different actors.

The accessibility of collections both to practitioners and a larger audience is considered a challenge because, on the one hand, it is important to enable the use of collections to maintain their social relevance, while on the other hand, it puts the material conservation of artifacts at risk, raising challenges to their preservation.

Finding a good balance between the respect of conservation standards, such as climate control requirements, and the alignment with more environmentally friendly solutions, for instance when addressing energy consumption, is also a challenge shared by many CBOs.

It is not always easy to identify the right steps to take to find adequate solutions and a balance among them. This creates uncertainty, discouraging people from exploring opportunities for change, and inhibits CBOs from taking action.

Engaging colleagues within ones' organization, external actors across the value chain, and partner institutions with sustainability-related challenges in daily tasks are considered difficult by many participants. Capturing collaborators' trust, ensuring that rules are followed, and implementing change can be challenging, as well as introducing and prioritizing sustainable practices in places where other pressing issues are considered more urgent, such as the lack of trained personnel, access to energy, and systemic lack of funding, etc.

The lack of financial resources to support the transition towards more sustainable collection-based practices is the most common perceived challenge across the groups, often presented as the main reason for not taking action in the first place, even though—according to some of the participants—this is a false belief.

4.3. Aspirations

The main aspirations of working with sustainability shared by CBOs and professionals are: raising awareness of climate change, contributing to climate action, improving accessibility, and fostering participatory practices.

Raising awareness of climate change through exhibitions and educational programs by effectively using collections as teaching tools is considered of great importance by many participants. However, it emerged from the discussions that these aspirations are not always supported by actions and that partnerships between institutions and organizations are crucial to leveraging the education potential of collections.

Other aspirations mentioned concerned the implementation of the 3 Rs: reduce, reuse, and recycle. The discussions in all virtual rooms touched upon the need to reduce waste and rethink the use of more sustainable materials in the conservation and transport of collections and the preparation and presentation of exhibitions. Institutional engagement is considered necessary to sustainably implement changes and support the work of those conservators and curators who perceive the need to contribute to climate action through their work. However, not all of the participants felt that support yet.

What was perceived as a challenge by some participants was presented as an aspiration by others (Figure 2). For instance, many organizations aspire to make public and private collections widely accessible not only for scientific purposes, but also for the public

to enjoy, share knowledge, and learn. Collections are acknowledged by many as an important resource to acquire valuable knowledge to guide actions to achieve the SDGs.
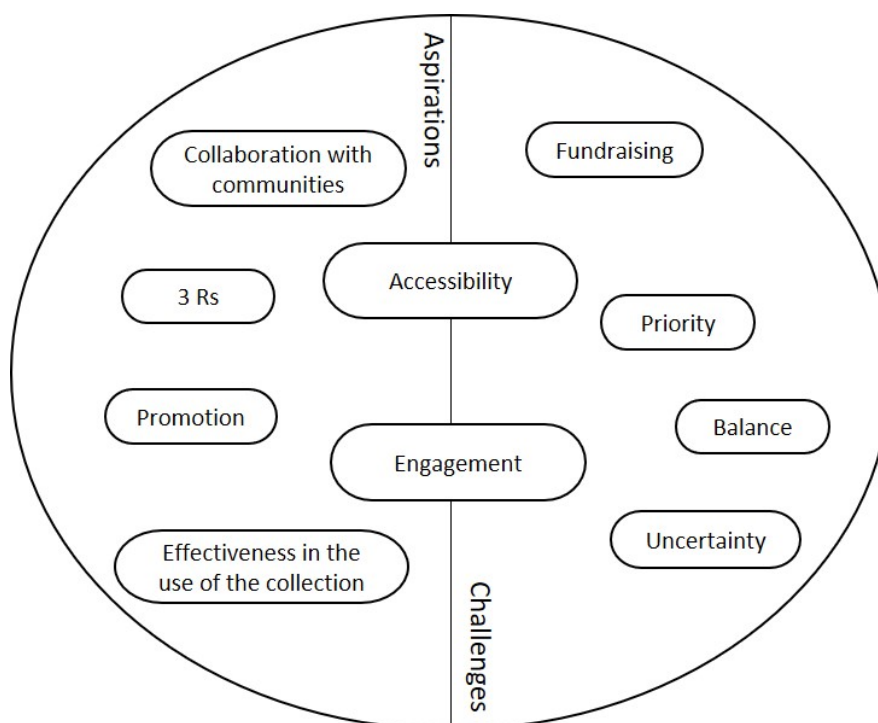

Figure 2. Overview of the perceived challenges and aspirations.

Another challenge turned into aspiration is the willingness to collaborate with different actors and stakeholders to improve the sustainability work of CBOs. This is deemed particularly important to make CBOs more inclusive and equitable, engaging with all relevant communities, groups, and individuals. For instance, some participants working in libraries discussed the need to represent Indigenous people and minorities in their collections, to acknowledge, respect, and address diversities through their work, and to provide more effective services to their users.

4.4. Tools

After having shared challenges and aspirations, the participants were asked to share some examples of tools and methods they found useful to address these same challenges and aspirations (Figure 3).
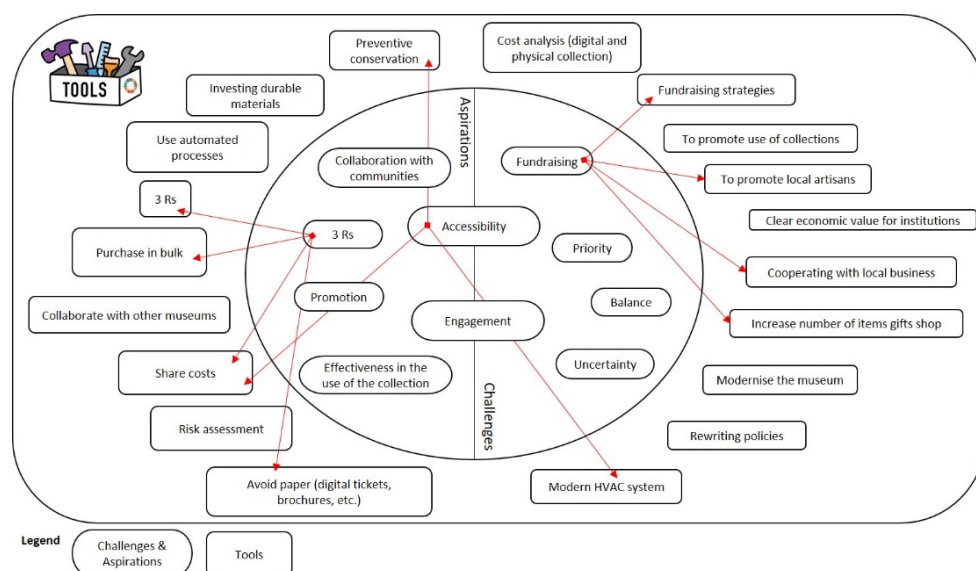
Figure 3. Tools connected with challenges and aspirations.

Some use short textbooks and/or concise manuals as support for teaching students. Others have found a translation of the SDGs for collection practitioners useful [29] and ICCROM's RE-ORG method for organizing storage facilities [80]. The majority did not have a clear name for a utilized tool or method, but more generalized good practices used in collection management. Three groups recognized the need for long-term care for the objects in terms of storage/display environment, space, preservation, and conservation treatment as the most important practice to deal with. In the fourth group, fundraising strategy and making clear what the economic value of the institution is for the community was the focus of the discussion. In all groups, recycling and reusable solutions and materials, such as moveable walls to alter an exhibition space; the digital transformation of tickets and payments; communications through online meetings; and online booking to avoid paper consumption, were the most mentioned themes.

4.5. Usability and Potential of the OCM Toolkit

Eventually, participants were asked to give feedback on the OCMT and its usability. Overall, the participants showed excitement and curiosity and were eager to learn more about it. Many said that having such a resource is an important "stepping stone" for the advancement of research and work of CBOs.

In particular, the teachers and educators among the workshop participants appreciated the fact that the OCMT is accessible as a free online platform, which makes it an extremely interesting resource for educational purposes. Others were interested in the toolkit as a source of publications, methods, and guidelines on SD to direct changes in their organizations. For instance, some saw its potential for fostering interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral collaborations, developing internal sustainability strategies, and setting realistic plans. In particular, many participants actively discussed their interest in deepening their knowledge of disaster risk management by exploring the tools connected to the action "security, disaster preparedness, and risk reduction" of the toolkit.

Some participants didn't have a smooth usability experience when approaching the OCMT. The fact that the same resources could be found by choosing different paths or entry points (e.g., through the five Ps, the SDGs, the targets, and actions) was perceived as misleading by some, while others found it practical.

Some of the tools previously mentioned by the workshop participants are already included in the OCM Toolkit, highlighting their potential connection to the SDGs (see Figure 4).
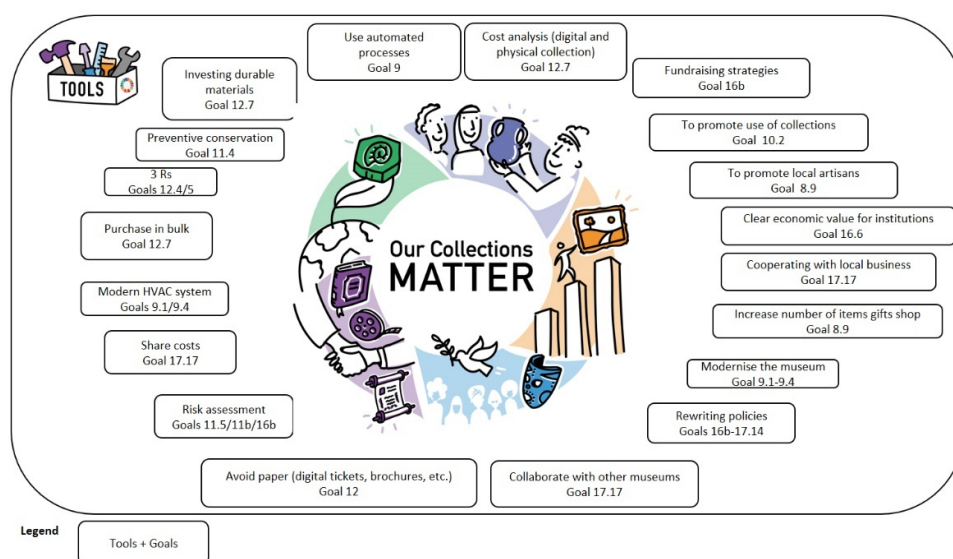
Figure 4. Typologies of tools already present in the OCMT, linked to their SDGs.

To provide an example of how linkages can be identified between the challenges, aspirations, and tools mentioned by the participants and the SDGs, the 5 Ps, and the list of actions offered by the OCMT, the case of "accessibility" can be observed.

As previously discussed, accessibility was among the most discussed challenges and aspirations of CBOs and professionals across all groups during the workshop. Preventive conservation was often mentioned as a possible approach to tackling the challenge of accessibility and facilitating its implementation, being described as a good practice used in collection management (see Section 4.4. tools and Figure 5). Particularly, preventive conservation could provide support in finding a balance between adopting adequate conservation standards while accordingly managing the physical and intellectual access to collect artifacts and knowledge, with the aid of digital and analog resources. By searching in the OCMT, one example of a tool that addresses the challenges and aspirations of "accessibility" and "preventive conservation" is RE-ORG. This method is intended to guide CBOs, step-by-step, throughout the process of planning and implementing a storage reorganization project [80]. It is linked to four of the 5Ps (people, planet, prosperity, and peace), seven actions (protecting and safeguarding cultural and natural heritage, energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, learning and educational opportunities, governance and management, support research, security, disaster preparedness, risk reduction, employment-recruiting, training, and safety) and eight SDGs (1, 4, 8, 10, 11, 13, 16, and 17), showing the potential impact on SD objectives that CBOs could have when improving the accessibility to their collections by using RE-ORG as a preventive conservation tool (Figure 5).
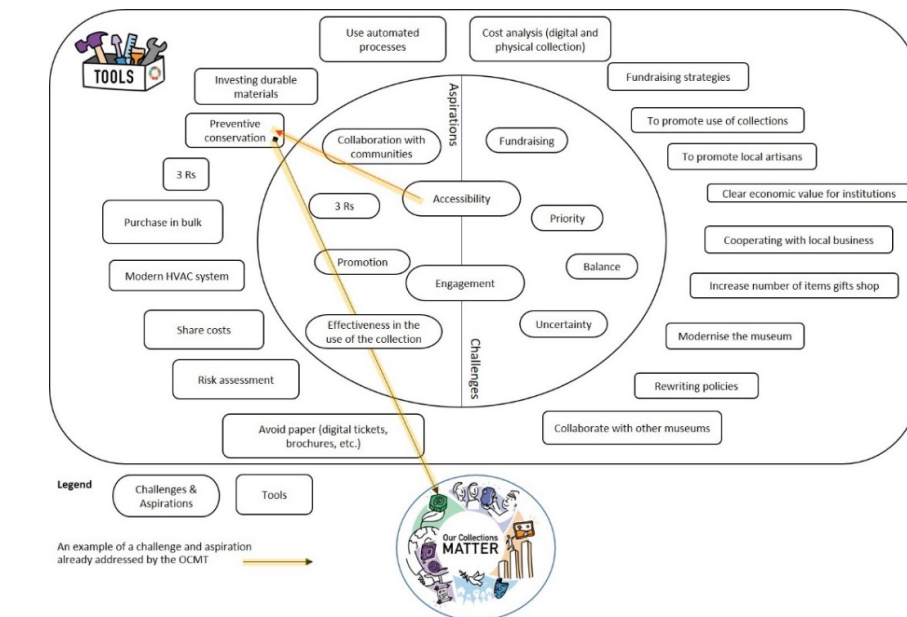
Figure 5. Example of the connection between one of the challenges and aspirations mentioned by the workshop participants (accessibility) and a specific tool from OCMT [80,86]. Below is a snapshot of the RE-ORG method summary page in the OCMT.

5. Discussion

The groups' discussions hinted that, although CBOs share aspirations in working with sustainability, there is an uneven knowledge distribution among professionals on the necessary change to fully address SD objectives and the existing tools and resources that are available. Some participants were already working towards SD objectives even without the support of their organization, while others show skepticism. The OCM Toolkit was well received by most of the participants who were able to navigate it through the different input points, while few could still not fully grasp how to leverage the full potential of collections to address multiple SDGs. On the other hand, common challenges were extensively debated in the breakout rooms, revealing the importance of creating similar forums of discussion and the need to continue supporting and fostering a sustainability shift in the work of all actors in the field. For such change to be successful, it needs to

be managed. Therefore, looking at the workshop's results through the lens of change management could offer additional insights on the potential impact of projects like OCM of tools like the OCM Toolkit, initiatives like the OCM Workshop, and actors like ICCROM.

Particularly, the Prosci-ADKAR model—which is rooted in the belief that any transformation starts with the change of single individuals [56]—can be suitable to guide this reflection over the role of CBOs and the OCM Toolkit and activities. This model offers a twofold approach that encompasses a five-step individual change management model in combination with a three-phase organizational change management process. The former entails (1) raising awareness on the need for change, (2) enhancing the desire to support and participate in the change process, (3) developing and sharing the knowledge to enable change, (4) fostering the ability to implement the acquired skills, and (5) reinforcing knowledge and skills to sustain the change [87]. Through the latter, these individual activities are then integrated into an organizational process aimed at (a) preparing change by defining success, impact, and approaches; (b) managing it by planning and acting, tracking performances, and adapting actions; and (c) reinforcing change by collecting feedback, managing resistance, and implementing sustainment solutions [88]. The combination of these two models results in an integrated individual-organizational approach that can offer a suitable framework to reflect on how OCM initiatives support actors in the collections management field in this process of change (see Figure 6).
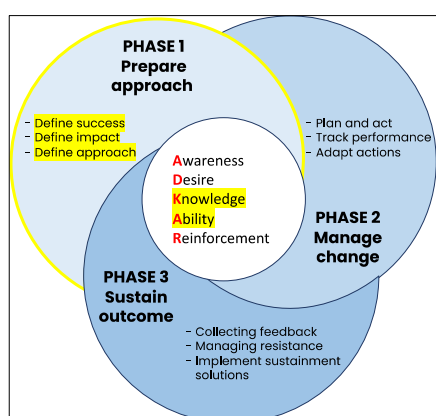

Figure 6. Adaptation of the Prosci-ADKAR model with the OCM initiatives' contributions to the organizations and individuals' changes towards sustainability-oriented collections practices is highlighted in yellow [89].

The OCM toolkit can assist the development of the necessary knowledge to implement change and the sharing of tools across related disciplines and regions, offering a variety of resources to build the ability of collections professionals and organizations to adapt that knowledge, acquire new skills, and implement change in their work. Moreover, the organization of OCM workshops can facilitate the optimal use of the toolkit, connect actors in the field, and provide further guidance while creating opportunities for enriching the toolkit itself through knowledge sharing among the participants. This acknowledgment places the OCM initiative in the very first phase of the transformational process, as theorized by the Prosci-ADKAR method. The development of the OCM Toolkit can inform the definition of the necessary changes in the field, offer resources for organizations and professionals to identify the appropriate approach to achieve them, and reveal the potential impact of its implementation by highlighting the links among tools, actions, indicators, and relevant SDGs.

In this scenario, ICCROM presents itself as an international leader of change in the field of CBOs for the integration of more sustainability-oriented practices, in line with its mission: "to provide Member States with the best tools, knowledge, skills and enabling

environment with which to preserve their cultural heritage in all of its forms, for the benefit of all people" [90]. Its partnership with the Centre for Global Heritage and Development and Curating Tomorrow enables the development of specialized research and resources. Such a role is fundamental to fostering an effective transformation as stressed by the most prominent change theories and models [56,59–61]. However, to make the process of change successful and sustained, mobilization and action are required at the local level. On the one hand, at an individual scale by raising awareness, enhancing the desire to commit to change, and setting up dynamics for the reinforcement of knowledge, skills, and the establishment of new processes; and on the other hand, at the organizational scale by managing change, planning, acting, monitoring and adapting actions, and by ensuring the sustainment of the outcomes, collecting feedback, managing resistance, and empowering actors of change.

6. Conclusions

This research has highlighted some of the challenges and aspirations shared by collections professionals, mainly from Europe, the United States, and South America, reconfirming the ambivalent nature of some of them, such as in the case of accessibility and engagement. Through the OCM workshop, a space was created for professionals in the field to discuss their common challenges, aspirations, and useful tools, leveraging the network of ICCROM, the Centre for Global Heritage and Development, and Curating Tomorrow, to foster dialogue, create synergies, and inspire change. It also offered the first opportunity to test the OCMT as a developing free platform of tools that collection professionals can explore, adapt, and implement to find the most suitable solutions for their CBOs.

The discussions suggested the potentially important function of the centralization of resources through a toolkit in sharing the necessary knowledge to enable change and develop the abilities and skills to implement it, which are fundamental to overcoming challenges and fulfilling SD-related ambitions. However, based on the feedback received on the usability of the OCMT, the importance of organizing activities, like the OCM workshop, to improve the toolkit, enrich its resources, and train professionals to use it also emerged. Therefore, the role of ICCROM and its partners is fundamental in supporting this knowledge sharing and development through the organization of activities like the OCM workshop.

Contextualizing the OCM initiatives into a field-wide process for change reveals the important and complementary role of all these three factors—the toolkit, the workshop, ICCROM, and its partners—in preparing organizations for change through supporting the sharing and development of knowledge, the definition of shared goals, and the needed changes, adequate approaches, and their potential impact. These organizations place themselves as leaders of change in the field, enabling an environment where CBOs and professionals can acquire knowledge, share ideas, and become promotors of a sustainability transformation.

In this perspective, this study contributes to the existent research on factors affecting the change of heritage practices towards more sustainability-oriented and people-centered approaches. On the one hand, it furthers the knowledge of how existing tools, methodologies, and approaches can support the sustainability-work of heritage stakeholders [67,68] by exploring the potentialities and limitations of the use of the OCMT. On the other hand, it reflects on the role that different actors in the field can have in fostering a sustainability transformation [63–66] by discussing the role of collection-based professionals and organizations, and their network—within the context of the OCM projects—in supporting this change, through the development of tools, the organization of activities, and being leaders of change in the field.

This study has set the basis for further research to explore the impact that activities like the OCM workshop and the use of a centralized source of tools like the OCMT can

have on facilitating the change of practices in local CBOs more in-depth. This would inform the necessary steps for ICCROM and the OCM project to support the sustainability transformation of the CBOs field in the future.

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