Open science, repositories, and the LIBSENSE public health initiative

Enhancing the Visibility and Impact of African Public Health Research

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COAR Annual Meeting 2024 - Anticipating the Repository of the Future
Bringing together RENs and academic library and research communities to **strengthen open access and open science in Africa** with a bottom-up approach.

**Outcomes**

**Institutional**
- Institutional OS Policy
- Development and Capacity Building Workshops

**National**
- National Open Science Roadmaps
- National shared Open Science access repository and publishing platforms

**Regional**
- Regional collaborations with university leadership
- Workshops in collaboration with UNESCO and DORA.

**Continental**
- La Referencia /RedCLARA
- Continental Shared Agricultural Data and Publications Platform with RUFORUM
- eduID.africa T&I framework
LIBSENSE Infrastructure Initiatives I

- National Infrastructure Services
  - Shared Repositories
    - Focus on international interoperability
      - Weko3 and InvenioRDM
      - Shared Publishing Platforms - Journals and Preprints
    - Open Peer Review Platform
  - Continent-wide Open Data Repository (Agriculture)
  - Persistent Identifier Service (ARKs) - launching in June
    - Management Dashboard available in June/July
LIBSENSE Infrastructure Initiatives II

The mixed system (Bianca Kramer et al)

Preprint servers and repositories

Peer review platforms

Kotahi

divergent workflow pathways

notify

COAR

integrate repository systems and other platforms
Goal: To enhance the visibility and impact of African public health research on both African and global stages through a sustainable open access (OA) publishing ecosystem

Key Collaborators:
- WACREN / LIBSENSE
- PublicHealth.Africa (PHA)
- AFREhealth
- West African Institute of Public Health
- Peoples-Praxis

New Momentum to Amplify the Impact of African Public Health Research Through Open Publishing - WACREN
Challenges Faced by African Public Health Researchers

Initial Findings:

- PublicHealth.africa-LIBSENSE collaboration revealed significant challenges faced by African scientists in publishing their research.
  - Open access publication of public health research in African journals. Insights: the UKSG journal, 36(1), p.6. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1629/uksg.605
  - Open publishing of public health research in Africa: an exploratory investigation of the barriers and solutions, Insights: the UKSG journal, 37(1), p. 6. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1629/uksg.635

Key Findings: Barriers to Publishing

- High Article Processing Charges (APCs)
- Limited indexing of local journals in global databases
- Insufficient knowledge and capacity for open publishing

Impact

- Visibility gap; Perception of low-level contribution to global public health knowledge
Coalition for OA publishing of Public Health in Africa

• Focus on building a sustainable open access (OA) public health research publishing ecosystem.
• Driven as an "Alumni Research Network" under the AfricaConnect3 project.

► Network Objectives
• Establish a robust network of capacity-building beneficiaries.
• Develop and evaluate collaborative research programs.
• Create an online educational course to showcase the methods and benefits of this collaborative approach.
• Assist in local data collection for WACREN and test new services.
Key components of the initiative

- A repository for public health preprints
- Peer review and open publishing course
  → Pilot across six countries
- A mentorship platform for authors, editors/publishes and reviewers in public health in Africa
- Exploit WACREN/EIFL/AJOL project to promote no-fee Open Access publishing in Africa (Wellcome Support).
Thank You!

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