

The Dakar Declaration on Scholarly Publishing in Africa and the Global South

The *Dakar Declaration on Open Access in Africa and the Global South* represents an urgent call to action by institutions and governments in Africa and the Global South, and it is informed by the understanding that the combined power of scholarly information in the service of the public good in Africa has not been widely comprehended or fully harnessed. During the CODESRIA Fourth Conference on Electronic Publishing, a Panel was constituted by CODESRIA, UNESCO and CLACSO to draft the Declaration. The Panel also included eminent scholars: Professor Abel Idowu Olayinka, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria's oldest university, and Professor Beban Sammy Chumbow, the former Vice Chancellor of the University of Yaoundé 1 in Cameroun and Eve Gray of the University of Cape Town in South Africa.

The Dakar Declaration

Preamble

The pattern of knowledge production in the world always suggests that Africa and the rest of the Global South make little contribution to the global knowledge stock. Evidently though, the outflow of knowledge from the developing regions is hampered by the dominant tradition of knowledge valuation and exchange which attributes poor quality and low value to research and other information from these regions. At home, there is obvious low investment in knowledge production and dissemination, poor accessibility and use of local research information as well as low level of consciousness about the social, economic and political potentials of scholarly information.

People from the Global South are responding to this intolerable situation by intensifying their struggles for participation and recognition in the global knowledge space. Evidence of increasing adoption and use of open access publishing model is an essential attestation of the struggle of the people of Africa and the Global South to change the trajectories of knowledge flows.

We, the participants in the Fourth CODESRIA Conference on Electronic Publishing titled Open Access Movement and the Future of Africa's Knowledge Economy and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), and the Latin American Social Sciences Council (CLACSO), **recognising** the dare need to raise the global



value attached to research information from the Global South, *observing* the poor access to scholarly outputs from the South and *identifying* the critical potentials of research information sharing and exchange in the overall wellbeing of our people, are *convinced* that Open access to scholarly research information is required to redress the historically rooted deficit of Africa and the Global South in the global knowledge domain.

We met in Dakar Senegal during March 29 to April 1 2016 to give Global South accent to the open access movement and set standards that would guide the practice of open access publishing in the regions.

We thus hereby adopt the *Dakar Declaration on Open Access Movement Africa and in the Global South* on this 1st day of April, 2016.

May this Declaration be a guiding light for scholars/researchers and students, and, policymakers and other stakeholders in the Global South to assert their resolve to undertake research and share their research findings for improved quality of lives.

WE:

- EXAMINED the key challenges facing the advancement of OA in Africa and the Global South,
- REVIEWED intra- and inter-regional cooperation and collaboration opportunities for OA development and capacity building and enhancement,
- IDENTIFIED strategies and mechanisms to strengthen intra- and inter-regional cooperation and networking on Open Access activities,
- OUTLINED key lessons, success stories and challenges to OA in Africa and the Global South, and
- AGREED on basic principles for promoting OA in Africa and the Global South.

We observed:

- The NEED for greater recognition of the role and significance of scholarly communication in the development agenda in Africa and Global South,
- The NEGATIVE influence of the increasing commercialization of scholarly publications and information,



- INADEQUATE levels of awareness and understanding of the benefits of OA in Africa and Global South,
- INSUFFICIENT infrastructure and funding support, as well as incentives for OA in Africa and the Global South,
- The IMPORTANCE of the involvement of policymakers at the institutional and national levels in the promotion and implementation of OA in Africa and the Global South,
- The ABSENCE of and/or inadequate OA policies,
- CONCERNS about the impact of Article Processing Charges (APC) on research outputs,
- The INORDINATE weight of the journal impact factor on the recognition, promotion and reward systems, and,
- The NEED for greater South-South communication and collaboration on OA.

WE Recommend that:

- ✓ Publicly funded research in Africa and the Global South should be made freely available to the public through the World Wide Web.
- ✓ Multi-stakeholder mechanisms for collaboration and cooperation should be established to amplify and increase the voice and influence of research from Africa and the Global South.
- ✓ Institutions and governments in Africa and the Global South should urgently develop open access policies and initiatives to promote scholarship as well as acknowledge production and dissemination.
- ✓ Institutions and governments in Africa and the Global South should provide the enabling environment, infrastructure and capacity building required to support open access.

