



DAKAR DECLARATION ON OPEN ACCESS IN AFRICA AND THE GLOBAL SOUTH

Preamble

Open Access (OA) to scholarly publications and information is transforming global relations and means of knowledge production, dissemination and use based on the power of information technologies to enforce free of scholarly content. It is facilitating direct linkages between scholars/authors and the public, and enabling a free flow of ideas vital to the process of scientific inquiry, and the ability of individuals and communities and institutions to address economic, environmental and social development issues, both regionally and globally. Open Access leverages the combined power of scholarly information and technology to serve the public good, but it has not been fully harnessed in Africa and the Global South.

At the Fourth Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) Conference on Electronic Publishing and Dissemination held in Dakar, Senegal, during March 30 to April 1, 2016, which focused on Open Access in Africa and the Global South, scholars and experts including a South-South Panel convened by CODESRIA, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), and the Latin American Social Sciences Council (CLACSO):

- 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.

The Conference 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 impact factor on the recognition, promotion and reward systems, and,
- The **NEED** for greater South-South communication and collaboration on OA.

From the meeting, emerged the following recommendations:

- ✓ Make publicly funded research in Africa and the Global South freely available to the public through the World Wide Web.
- ✓ Establish multi-stakeholder mechanisms for collaboration and cooperation 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.

Adopted in Dakar, Senegal, on Friday, April 1, 2016