African Universities and Open Research

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Africa’s Development

Africa is suffering from under-development

Africa needs Research and Knowledge
Challenges with Knowledge in Africa

• African Researchers are not visible enough.
• Funding is limiting scope and type of research
• Knowledge generation is low
• Access to knowledge is limited
• Collaboration and partnerships are weak
Promotion of Open Research in Africa

Possible Solutions
WHAT IS OPEN RESEARCH

• Open Research refers to the practice of making research outputs, such as publications, data, and educational resources freely available to the public.
Objectives and Benefits of Open Research

• Promotes increased access to knowledge
• Accelerates scientific progress
• Promotes visibility of research work
• Removes barriers to research collaboration—Fosters collaborations
• Promotes transparency and innovations in research processes
Key Elements of Open Research - I

1. **Open Data:** involving:
   - Data sharing – Researchers share their research data openly and allow others to have access, to re-use and build upon the data to advance scientific knowledge.
   - Data Repository - Where data are deposited in data repositories to ensure long term access and preservation.

2. **Open Science Practices**

Which includes:
   - Open Research Processes: where Researchers share their study protocols, methodologies and analysis script to enhance the transparency and reproducibility of their work.
   - Open Peer Review: where the peer review process is conducted openly with the reviewers' comments and authors responses being made publicly accessible.
Key Elements of Open Research - II

3. Open Access Publications
Which includes”

(a) Open Access Journals – Where researchers publish their work in peer-reviewed journals that make articles freely accessible to the public without subscription fees.

(b) Open Access Books: When there are no financial, legal or technical barriers to accessing published books - anyone can read, download, copy, distribute, print, search for and search within the information, or use it.

4. Open Access Educational Resources
Where:

- Educational content such as textbooks, lecture notes, multi-media resources are made freely available for teaching, and learning purposes.

- Open-Source Software: where Platforms like GitHub provide a space for hosting and sharing open-source code projects.
Benefits of Open Access Research to researchers

- Research outputs made available to a wide landscape of stakeholders, including policy makers
- Attracts more citations to researchers work.
- Promotes visibility
- Makes it possible to advance research works
- Makes collaboration and partnership possible
African Universities committed to Open Research

- Providing access to research outputs and promoting sharing of knowledge
- Encourages researchers to share their work openly
- Have institutional repositories with open access.
- Collaborating with the Pan African Open Science Platform
Factors Limiting Adoption of Open Research Practices in Africa

1. Lack of awareness and understanding about Open Research.
2. Institutional policies and cultural norms
3. Lack of institutional funding to support access to online resources
4. Limited access to the Internet and Research Databases.
5. Lack of adequate Infrastructures and Technologies for Open Research
6. Low collaborations and Poor networking attitudes
7. Perceived concerns – Quality, Intellectual property rights
8. Attitude – Research for money making and not for impact
What We Need to Do to Promote Open Research
In Africa
Actions: I

1. More public awareness and education about the benefits and processes of Open Research.
2. Capacity Building for researchers, librarians and other stakeholders
3. Development of Institutional repositories
Actions: II

4. Quality Assurance – Adherence to ethical standards, peer-review processes, and development of criteria for evaluating open access outputs

5. Funding – To support policy advocacy and public awareness.

6. Collaboration – To share best practices and pool resources together
The Association of African Universities and Open Research
AAU

• Is responsible for enhancing the quality and relevance of higher education in Africa and strengthening its contribution to Africa’s development.

• Remains the leading advocate for higher education in Africa, with the capacity to provide support for its member institutions in meeting national, continental, and global needs.
A Champion and Advocate for Higher Education in Africa

✓ Advocates for Higher Education for the development of the Africa that we need and the Africa that we want.
✓ Builds the capacity of HEIs to be competitive and relevant to national development needs;
✓ Promotes and facilitates collaboration and networking among universities across the continent;
✓ Nurtures leadership and governance of African HEIs to be adaptive and responsive to emerging conditions and needs.
AAU FOR OPEN RESEARCH IN AFRICA

THROUGH

✓ Advocacy
✓ Capacity Building.
✓ Collaboration and Networking
✓ Leadership and Governance of Open Research
Thank You