

# Open Access Publishing and Access to Development Information in Africa

## - The Expectation



By

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# OVERVIEW

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- ❑ Introduction
- ❑ Issues For and Against OA
- ❑ Unresolved issues on Sustainability
- ❑ Current Obstacles for Access to Scholarly Publications in Africa
- ❑ Importance of OA for Researchers and other users in Africa
- ❑ Expectation for OA in Africa
- ❑ Conclusion.

# INTRODUCTION...

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- ❑ OA is subject of discussions in recent times among stakeholders
- ❑ Several definitions but commonly used one is the Budapest Open Access Initiative
- ❑ OA has come in to save the situation of lack of scholarly information in libraries –high cost journals and reduced budgets of libraries.

# INTRODUCTION...

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- Currently about 10% of peer reviewed journals, about 2500 are OA journals.
- However OA is seen by some as economically unsustainable, whilst others do not agree.
- Various business models have been devised to make OA sustainable.

# INTRODUCTION...

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- Swan discusses the following business models:
  - Community
  - advertising supported
  - grant-aided or sponsored
  - article processing charges
  - Institutional membership

# INTRODUCTION

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- Willinsky discusses other initiatives or variations of OA as Nine flavours :
  - e-print archive
  - unqualified
  - Dual mode
  - Delayed open access
  - Author fee
  - Partial open access
  - Per capita
  - Abstract
  - Co-op.
  
- The debate on the life or death of OA is still on.

# Issues For & Against Open Access...

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- ❑ OA is beneficial as research results are made easily accessible and not restricted in commercial journals.
- ❑ A Solution to journals subscription crisis of libraries
- ❑ OA has built in structures like for subscription journals, to ensure high quality reviewing.

# Issues For & Against Open Access...

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- ❑ The author pay model is too expensive for an individual to pay, unless payment is through research grants.
- ❑ OA does not invest heavily in technological development, so no regular innovations.
- ❑ Professional societies or associations find OA unsustainable but it is a good way of making publishing by its members visible.



# Issues For & Against Open Access...

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- ❑ Institutions with great research output pay more in the author-pay model while others with more emphasis on teaching pay nothing for using the information.
- ❑ More research publications in OA Journals means more payment by the institution and likely reduction in Library's budgets.
- ❑ OA articles are not really free since some payment is still made at some stage to get it published.

# Issues For & Against Open Access...

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- ❑ OA needs a lot of marketing so that will increase cost of processing.
- ❑ OA will neutralize the high quality expected of peer-reviewed articles because, of the ability to pay and get published model.
- ❑ OA will not protect the rights of authors, but it is an effective means to make authors works very visible, more cited and not plagiarized. Who is therefore protected by the restriction?

# Issues For & Against Open Access

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- ❑ OA model will not sustain the archival record of Science, but currently OA articles are automatically deposited in several archives without the trouble of seeking permissions.
- ❑ [Open Access Now](#) provides interesting responses to critics of OA

# Unresolved Issue of Sustainability...

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- Some OA survive on grants or institutions paying, so then ...
  - What happens to the journals when grants are withdrawn?
  - What is the guarantee that author fees will not eat into the research grant itself?

# Unresolved Issue of Sustainability...

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- If institutions are paying...
  - are Libraries ready to give up part of their limited funds to support 'author-pays' model?
  - are libraries ready to bear the increased costs of maintaining subscription as well as the 'author-pays' model?
- OA still has some work to do to inform the public about its viability.
- If 'author-pays model' is used, only 40% - 60% of the cost will be covered. If all articles are on OA, how will the difference be raised?

# Current Obstacles for Access to Scholarly Publications in Africa...

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- ❑ Avalanche of publications so librarians don't know number to subscribe.
- ❑ Even when they know, no storage space.
- ❑ High cost of journal subscription and dwindling library budgets.
- ❑ Most scholarly journals are published overseas and problem of foreign exchange.

# Current Obstacles for Access to Scholarly Publications in Africa...

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- ❑ Paper disintegrates with age.
- ❑ Uncertain longevity of emerging technologies for access.
- ❑ Lack of uniform electronic communication data.
- ❑ Lack of hardware and internet connectivity.
- ❑ Author-pay's model discourages researchers from publishing in OA.

# Importance of OA for Researcher and Other Users in Africa...

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- ❑ African researchers depend on free information sources from the north because of Poor library budgets, few world acclaimed scholarly journals, and limited research funding in Africa.
- ❑ Open Access publishing useful in Africa
  - fills gaps in non-subscriptions
  - provides full text articles
  - allows immediate dissemination and access for all to freely use
  - allows for long term access to scholarly materials



# Importance of OA for Researcher and Other Users in Africa

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## □ Open Access ...cont'd

- enables small libraries and those with small budgets to have access to greater amount of scholarly materials.
- enables research carried out in the south to be made visible globally, and for collaboration.
- bridges the digital divide.
- Assists faculty and researchers to increase their impact and visibility.
- Improves the research profile of the institution.

# Expectation for OA in Africa...

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- ❑ OA concept not widely known and its ideals not greatly accepted in Africa.
- ❑ Most of those who know are skeptical about its sustainability.
- ❑ Negative attitude of 'old brigade' towards computers and their output.

# Expectation for OA in Africa...

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## Where:

- ❑ African scholars will see OA as fastest and easiest means for pushing African research results into the world.
- ❑ All OA journals will be peer-reviewed, indexed and of general high quality.
- ❑ Institutions will accept OA articles as peer-reviewed and of high quality and give them same weight as subscription ones.
- ❑ There will be some OA publications in the stable of commercial publishers.

# Expectation for OA in Africa ...

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## Where:

- ❑ Strong economic support for OA from Universities and funding agencies will be present.
- ❑ No personal financial costs to authors in order to get published.
- ❑ OA will fill scholarly journal gaps in libraries.
- ❑ Strong academic links (south-south and south – north) between researchers will be fostered.

# Expectation for OA in Africa...

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## Where:

Adequate planning is made before plunging into OA publishing.

- OA Cooperatives will be developed and strengthened.
- Many commercial publishers will release their hold on author's right after publication to a comfortable period, if not scrapping it.

# Expectation for OA in Africa...

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## Where:

- ❑ Stakeholders in the development information sector will agree on a sustainable model for free access.
- ❑ Companies/Industries will fund OA journals to enable researchers with high quality material but no funding to publish.
- ❑ Transition period (paying for subscriptions and 'author pays' OA model) will not affect library's budget negatively.

# Expectation for OA in Africa

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## Where:

- ❑ The public will use OA profusely and so demand for more of them.
- ❑ African Institutions will develop their own OSS for their OA journals having in mind their indigenous languages and materials.
- ❑ Universities, research institutes, libraries and librarians in Africa will work together to create a central fund for sustainable OA publishing.

# CONCLUSION...

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- ❑ Several misgivings about OA but it is still alive and growing stronger.
- ❑ OA ideals laudable especially for developing countries.
- ❑ OA costs need to be built into research grants.
- ❑ Institutions should set aside funds to support OA 'author pays' model for their staff, aside library's budgets.



# CONCLUSION

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- ❑ Institutions should give OA articles more weight as for subscription ones for advancement of their staff.
- ❑ Institutions should set up transition fund for the development their OA publishing.
- ❑ Govts should legislate that public funded research should be published in OA journals.
- ❑ Stakeholders should fashion out a more sustainable OA publishing model.

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Thank you for listening !!