

## Research4life and OA: Impact on access to e-resources in Africa

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Access to scientific literature has been a major impediment to research in Africa. Libraries in many African universities stopped subscribing to journals in the 80's following the structure adjustment program imposed by the IMF and World bank which led to reduced funding to institutions of higher learning. Subscription to hard copies of journals at University of Nairobi, Kenya, for example stopped in 1989. This created a gap in scientific information access between the haves and the have not. As a result, scientist from developing countries were unable to engage in state-of-the-art research to solve the myriad of challenges their society is facing and contribute to global knowledge. This prompted a number of initiatives geared towards improved access to scientific literature mainly led by non-governmental organization including the United Nations. One of the major initiatives in this connection is the Research4life program which is developed through a public private partnership. Through the resarch4life program currently scientist in majority of African countries have access to over 100,000 journals and books for free. The other avenue though which access to scientific has tremendously improved is the open access initiative. Despite these initiatives African researchers still have challenges in accessing literature as there are still many publishers who have not joined the research4life or the open access initiatives. The Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) has not only made one hundred five (105) of its journals available through the research4life program but also removed open access publication charges provided the corresponding author is from Africa. Several reports indicate as a result of these initiatives scientific output from the continent has improved. Despite the number promotional work done by the research4life program and others awareness about this program is still low in the continent. With support from the RSC and the DAAD (German academic exchange service), I have conducted training and awareness workshops in universities across Kenya and some in Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda and the Sudan. During the presentation the impacts of the research4life and OA programs on access to scientific literature in Africa will be discussed.