Access to Global Research Information: Collaboration for Research – The Arcadia Study

Agatha N. Kabugu
University of Nairobi Library
akabugu@uonbi.ac.ke
The Study

• Done by ACU on behalf of Arcadia end of 2009, early 2010

• Participating institutions
  – University of Dar es Salaam
  – University of Nairobi
  – National University of Rwanda
  – Chancellor College, University of Malawi
Participating Institutions
The samples

- 240 researchers and postgraduate students
- 23 librarians and ICT staff
The Issues

• Access to quality peer reviewed journals by researchers in African institutions is poor
• Affordability and sustainability of journals by participating institutions not assured
• Technology – access to computers and good networks still a challenge
• Awareness and skills to discover the available resources low
• Low levels of research
Availability of journals

• High quality peer reviewed journals available to researchers in all the participating institutions

• Consortia in each of these countries eg KLISC, MALICO, COTUL
  – PERii Programme with more than 30,000 journals
  – Research4Life programmes of HINARI, AGORA, OARE
  – EIFL Programme with discounted journals scheme
Availability of Top 20 Ranked Journals in the four Universities

79% Available
21% Unavailable

Source: Arcadia Report 2010
Affordability of journals

- Not all researchers felt that their areas were well covered
- Sustainability of the journals not guaranteed due to funding issues
- Librarians collaborating with other institutions, publishers and access programmes to sustain access
Technology and connectivity

• Cited as a problem by majority of the researchers
• Students especially disadvantaged in access to computers
• Poor management of bandwidth across the institutions
• Institutions are now investing more in ICTs
• Undersea cable has improved connectivity
Total Bandwidth Across the Institutions at Time of Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chancellor College</th>
<th>University of Nairobi</th>
<th>NUR</th>
<th>University of Dar es Salaam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.7 Mb/s</td>
<td>45 Mb/s</td>
<td>6 Mb/s</td>
<td>10 Mb/s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Time Taken to Download Article Across Case Study Institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Time Taken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chancellor College</td>
<td>45 minutes for 80% download then timeout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Nairobi</td>
<td>3 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUR</td>
<td>4 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Dar es Salaam</td>
<td>4 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Arcadia Study 2010
## Student Computer Access at Case Study Universities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chancellor College</th>
<th>University of Nairobi</th>
<th>NUR</th>
<th>University of Dar es Salaam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total No of Students</strong></td>
<td>3,015</td>
<td>37,000</td>
<td>9,948</td>
<td>19,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total No. of Student PCs</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1,850</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>Unavailable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Computer/student ratio</strong></td>
<td>1:30</td>
<td>1:20</td>
<td>1:21</td>
<td>Unavailable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Computers in the Library</strong></td>
<td>65</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Awareness and skills

• Awareness and skills to identify available resources still low among the participants. Only 40% reported a good level of awareness.

• Searching skills greatly undeveloped and 73% of those interviewed rely on Google.

• Some training is offered by these institutions but only 22% of those surveyed had attended e-resources training.
# Reported Unavailability vs Actual Availability of Journal Titles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Titles Reported Unavailable</th>
<th>Actually Available</th>
<th>Actually Unavailable</th>
<th>Availability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chancellor College</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Nairobi</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Uni. Of Rwanda</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uni. Of Dar es Salaam</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>373</strong></td>
<td><strong>270</strong></td>
<td><strong>103</strong></td>
<td><strong>72%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some thoughts for the future

• For Librarians
  – Need for libraries to focus on usage of what is available
  – New approaches required by the library to engage students, researchers, lecturers
  – More involvement with the teaching and learning processes
  – Enhancing of skills to provide leadership in information delivery
  – Engage with ICT to provide a holistic approach to the provision of e-resources
  – Advocacy at institutional level for the necessary support and funding
  – Managing available resources better to encourage their discovery by users
Some thought contd......

• For ICT Departments
  – Ensure that funding is available for investing in equipment and networks to access resources
  – Work closely with libraries to provide the necessary skills
• For Collaborators and funding agencies
  – Need for closer and long term collaboration with universities and libraries in the support and enhancement of research capacity building
  – Support librarians in Continuing Professional Development and networking activities
• For University Managers
  – Ensure policies are in place to encourage researchers to engage in research and utilise the available resources and technologies
  – Provide the necessary funding for ICT development and continued development of library to ensure sustenance of subscriptions (and also training of Librarians)
  – Support libraries in national and regional collaboration efforts
References

  http://www.acu.ac.uk/growing_knowledge