

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

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# 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

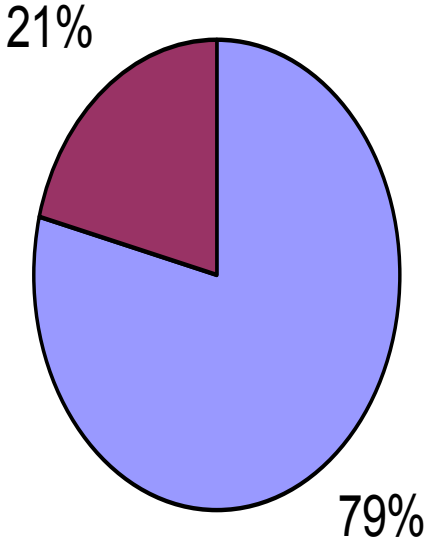
# The Issues

- 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



Unavailable



Available

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

Chancellor College	University of Nairobi	NUR	University of Dar es Salaam
1.7 Mb/s	45 Mb/s	6 Mb/s	10 Mb/s

*Source: Arcadia Study 2010*

# Time Taken to Download Article Across Case Study Institutions

Chancellor College	University of Nairobi	NUR	University of Dar es Salaam
45 minutes for 80% download then timeout	3 minutes	4 minutes	4 minutes

*Source: Arcadia Study 2010*

# Student Computer Access at Case Study Universities

	Chancellor College	University of Nairobi	NUR	University of Dar es Salaam
Total No of Students	3,015	37,000	9,948	19,650
Total No. of Student PCs	100	1,850	365	Unavailable
Computer/student ratio	1:30	1;20	1:21	Unavailable
Computers in the Library	65	200	56	30

# 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

	<b>Titles Reported Unavailable</b>	<b>Actually Available</b>	<b>Actually Unavailable</b>	<b>Availability</b>
Chancellor College	180	128	52	71%
University of Nairobi	106	73	33	69%
National Uni. Of Rwanda	64	53	11	83%
Uni. Of Dar es Salaam	23	16	7	70%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>72</b>

# 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

- Harle, Jonathan (2010) Growing Knowledge: Access to research in East and Southern African universities. London, Association of Commonwealth Universities, 2010  
[http://www.acu.ac.uk/growing\\_knowledge](http://www.acu.ac.uk/growing_knowledge)