Home

LIBSENSE is building communities of practice and strengthening local and national services to support open science and research in Africa.

Open science is an international trend aimed at sharing the results of research widely. Open science is transforming the way research is done, and increasing its value and impact by accelerating the pace of scientific discoveries and expanding the adoption of research outcomes for everyone. Although global in nature, there are important local and regional aspects of how open science and open access are implemented. It is important that the policies and infrastructures created to support open science are designed and delivered to meet the needs and requirements of the research communities in different regions.

The LIBSENSE initiative was launched in 2016 to bring together the research and education networks (RENs) and academic library communities in order to strengthen open access and open science in Africa. LIBSENSE provides a venue through which different stakeholder communities can work together to define priority activities, share knowledge, and develop relevant services together.

LIBSENSE is led by the West and Central African Research and Education Network (WACREN) in collaboration with sister regional African RENs (ASREN and UbuntuNet Alliance). Other participating partners include several national RENs, libraries, library associations, universities and research communities in Africa, in conjunction with COAR, EIFL, University of Sheffield, National Institute of Informatics (Japan), GEANT, and OpenAIRE.

From November 2018 - April 2019, LIBSENSE conducted workshops in each of the three major regions in Africa bringing the library and NREN communities together to define a shared agenda for progressing open science and open access in these regions. Each workshop, which contributed to priority setting in each region, also built upon the outcomes of preceding discussions.

To date, there have already been several concrete outcomes of the LIBSENSE initiative, including:

- Terms of Reference for NREN-Library collaboration in African countries
- Metadata guidelines for repositories
- Plans for a regional repository hosting service
- National and institutional policy templates

Three working groups were set up, on open science policies, governance and leadership; infrastructure - open access journals, repositories for publications and data and open discovery services; and capacity building - communities of practice and training. In addition, region-specific and language-specific discussions are taking place as Arabic (North Africa) and French (West and Central Africa) working groups.

LIBSENSE will continue to assist countries and regions in Africa to undertake new activities and act as a forum for information exchange across the continent and amongst the different stakeholder communities. It is included as a dedicated work package in the latest iteration of the AfricaConnect project.

If you are interested in participating in these activities, please get in touch with the LIBSENSE program managers by email to libsense@ren.africa