Report of

The Regional Latin American and Caribbean Consultation on

Open Access to Scientific Information and Research – Concept and Policies

Knowledge Societies Division
Communication and Information Sector

UNESCO

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INTRODUCTION

Some 40 experts and policy specialists from 23 Countries Argentina, Bahamas, Belize, Brazil, British Virgin Islands, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador El Salvador, Guyana, Grenada, Jamaica Mexico, Peru Suriname, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and Grenadines, St. Martin and Venezuela gathered in Kingston from 5 to 8 March 2013 to develop strategies and a road map to implement Open Access (OA) policies in the Latin American and Caribbean Region.

UNESCO in collaboration with Ministry of Ministry of Science, Technology, Energy and Mining, Ministry of Information, Government of Jamaica, University of West Indies and UNESCO National Commission for Jamaica organized the first Regional Latin American and Caribbean Consultation on Open Access to Scientific Information and Research. The funding support for the consultation was provided by the Government of Japan and by Regular Programme IFAP funding.

UNESCO AND OPEN ACCESS[1]

Open Access (OA) is a term widely used to refer to unrestricted online access to articles published in scholarly journals. Since the events that took place in Budapest and Berlin in early 2000s, it has remained as one of the most passionately discussed topics among the scientific and scholarly community. It is an ongoing movement with many advocates and proponents unfalteringly championing the cause. OA movement is aligned with the overarching Millennium Development Goals (MDG) with its focus on bolstering human capital and the World Summit on the Information Society's goal of building open and inclusive knowledge societies. To achieve the goal of open and inclusive knowledge societies, different approaches and strategies have been adopted by UNESCO.

UNESCO supports OA for the benefit of the global flow of knowledge, innovation and equitable socio-economic development. Its constitution, written much before the advent of electronic publishing, mandates: *UNESCO should 'maintain, increase and diffuse knowledge, by assuring the conservation and protection of the world's inheritance of books, works of art and monuments of history and science'* (Constitution, art, 1.2 c). UNESCO's open suite strategy (now referred as Open Solutions) primarily includes the Open Educational Resources (OER); Open

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[1] **Additional Information:** UNESCO Open Access: http://tinyurl.com/82px4gy; Global Open Access Portal http://www.unesco.org/ci/goap; WSIS Open Access Community http://tinyurl.com/7gtlkmp; Open Access Brochure; http://tinyurl.com/85q8g49

Access to scientific literature (OA); Open Training Platform (OTP) and Free and Open Source Software (FOSS).

Access to scientific information is a major problem, especially due to a high and increasing cost of peer-reviewed journals and fluctuations in the exchange rates. OA is the provision of free access to peer-reviewed, scholarly and research information to all. It envisages that the rights holder grants worldwide irrevocable right of access to copy, use, distribute, transmit, and make derivative works in any format for any lawful activities with proper attribution to the original author.

The 187th session of the Executive Board approved UNESCO's strategy for promotion of Open Access to scientific information and research, which was also adopted by the General Conference at its 36th session. In the framework of the overarching objective of "building inclusive knowledge societies through information and communication" (34 C/4), the strategy focuses on policy development, capacity building, standard setting, partnerships and collaborations, and on playing the role of a clearing-house on OA as a forum for international cooperation, exchange of dialogue and reflection. OA activities of UNESCO have been divided into the following three core areas:

- Provision of upstream policy advice and building partnerships
- Strengthening capacities to adopt Open Access
- Serve as a clearing-house and informing the global OA debate

OBJECTIVES OF THE REGIONAL CONSULTATION:

The consultation examined how OA can add to the productivity, visibility and accessibility of the research and research outcomes. The overall objective of the workshop was to create a platform to discuss the context of OA in the region and create a collective vision to promote and strengthen OA for the creation of knowledge societies in the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) Region. The specific objectives were to:

1. Strengthen awareness of the participants on the potential of OA in scientific knowledge sharing that can be dramatically accelerated by ICTs;

2. Provide analysis for anticipating foreseeable trends and emerging challenges in order to enable stakeholders to develop strategies and policies for implementation of OA;

3. Develop a partnership and collaboration among interested stakeholders as an enabling mechanism to improve access to and sharing of scientific information and research through OA.

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

- **Inauguration of Regional OA Consultation:**

This session involved high-level presentations, overarching presentation, and was used to set out structure of the Consultation. Welcoming the participants **Hon. Lisa Hanna, Minister of Youth and Culture and Chairperson, Jamaica National Commission for UNESCO** hoped that the consultation will open new vista to achieve Openness in the region. She hoped that appropriate strategies would be taken to follow-up and implement the outcomes of the consultation.

Dr. Indrajit Banerjee, Director, Knowledge Society Division, CI Sector, UNESCO noted the role of Knowledge in the development dialogue and highlighted the need to address "Knowledge challenge" as the global economy is becoming increasingly dependent upon the ability to efficiently produce, disseminate and use knowledge. He hoped that the outcomes of the consultation would receive support of the concerned National Governments to drive the Agenda for OA forward. He thanked Government of Jamaica for hosting the consultation and noted his appreciation to the Government of Japan for providing a generous support to UNESCO. He hoped the Government of Japan will continue its support so that the outcome of the consultation can be implemented in this part of the world.

Mr. Koji Tomita, Charge d'Affaires ad interim, Embassy of Japan for Jamaica, Bahamas and Belize noted that the knowledge and information-based world is increasingly influenced by digital technologies and thus people need to be connected to the global

information platform. This required capacity building and raising the information literacy levels of everyone who needs access to research and keep pace with ground-breaking developments in scientific and technological information. Mr. Tomita expressed his appreciation to the meeting and expressed his satisfaction on how the regional consultation was organized. He pledged his support and noted that the Government of Japan will continue to support UNESCO to implement the outcome of the meeting..

Address the gathering **Professor Eon Nigel Harris, Vice Chancellor of the University of West Indies** expressed his appreciation to UNESCO for organizing the consultation and noted the knowledge wave that OA movement is capable of creating. He particularly noted his appreciation to the Government of Japan for funding the Consultation.

In his inaugural address **Hon. Julian Robinson, Minister of State for Science, Technology, Energy and Mining,, Jamaica** noted that accessible innovation and inclusive

development are the two keys to development. He noted OA's role in expanding the knowledge horizons and its role to maximize the return on research investment. He asserted that Jamaica is trying to catch the scientists of the West Indies early and for this an early exposure to OA will be really useful. He added that OA is providing a remedy for a very low subscription to journal in the developing world and advocated the need for a national as well as regional strategy to move things forward. He appreciated organization of the Consultation and reasoned that beyond the research community OA move would also provide a key to the development of other areas of the society and economy.

Mr. Everton Hannam, Secretary-General, Jamaican National Commission for UNESCO thanked UNESCO and the generous support of the Government of Japan.

- **Setting the Scene and keynote presentations on Open Access Policy and mandates:**

  This session involved keynote presentations, inter alia, on policy for OA, key approaches taken in the region and beyond, highlight successes, key achievements, OA journals, and management and maintenance of repositories.

  Prof. Ronald Young, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, University of West Indies introduced the need and context of OA in the Caribbean. Advocating the relevance and need of OA, Prof. Young noted "that the prices of Journals increased by some 215% between 1990 and 2005, and continue to rise, to the point where many libraries, particularly those in developing countries, are unable to afford subscriptions". He also provided a comprehensive account of the initiatives in the Caribbean in general and University of West Indies in particular.

  Dr. Bhanu Neupane, Program Specialist with the Knowledge Societies Division of UNESCO introduced the concept and underlying principles of UNESCO's Strategies for OA, on-going activities of the organization and Open Access Policy.

  Mr. Abel Packer, Director of SciELO presented a succinct account on the development of SciELO, highlighted the current barriers and strategies and noted future for SciELO. He extended his support to develop SciELO type journal publishing system in Caribbean.

  Dr. Dominique Babini, Coordinator Information Area at Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales, CLACSO, provided an elaborate context of OA in the Latin American Region. She noted that comparatively Latin America is fairly advanced in terms of OA; however, the countries needed policy development support.

- **Discourse on Regional Situation of Open Access**

  This session provided an opportunity to the participants to make brief interventions on situation, available mandates and/or policies and the current status of OA in the region. These presentations included an overview of the state of institutional repositories, national-level mandates, and policies by funding agencies; successful practices in OA and lessons learned. .

- **Group Discussions to strategize a vision for Open Access in the LAC Region**

  This session provides an opportunity to the participants to make brief intervention on situation, available mandates and/or policies and the current status of OA in the region. The participants were split in 2 or 3 groups and were requested to discuss several issues, primarily based on the country-level presentations, and report it back to the plenary.

  To conclude the consultation on Open Access a roundtable discussion on policy for Open Access was organized, where UNESCO summarized the outcomes and an outline of the consultation reporting (this document) was presented.

- **IFAP Session**

  UNESCO's standard-setting work is addressed primarily to Member States, i.e. their governments. The IFAP Template fully endorses the multi-stakeholder approach to the development of the Information Society, however, and acknowledges that the role of other stakeholders (especially entrepreneurs, network, service and content providers, but also, of course, civil society and NGOs) is as (if not, in some cases, more) important as that of governments. Nevertheless, this depends on the specific circumstances, and also on the stage of the process of developing the Information Society, in any particular country. The emphasis in this Template is primarily on what governments and the civil service should do and this was a deliberate choice, in keeping with the approach adopted in the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, given that the document may be most useful in countries where the role of government policy and of the public sector is especially important.

  Mr. Eric Nurse, Vice Chair, IFAP introduced programs and priorities of IFAP. 8f'¨G gUbU:]bei Y]Ýj]W facilitated an interactive session on "Approaching an Information Policy".

- **Concluding Session**

  The concluding session was organized with special note on the Role of Women in Building Knowledge Societies, essentially to commemorate the International Women's Day

Speaking on behalf of the participants, Dr. **Dominique Babini** highlighted the key outcomes of the meeting.

In her Key-note Address, **Hon. Sen. Sandrea Falconer Minister for Information** noted that resistance on access to knowledge had detrimental impact on how the knowledge could benefit societies. She highlighted how openness could enhance access and contribute to the building of knowledge societies. Minister appreciated the UNESCO and noted her thanks to the donor for enabling the Consultation to be organized in Kingston. Minister Falconer noted the role of Women in building knowledge societies and noted the role of OA in empowering women, ensuring livelihood and enhancing capacities to take a better control of the family and nation's affair. She opined that the integrated learning is important and the role of women is important in the process of integration. Minister Falconer noted that there is a need to leverage women's potentials to change form a state of being "access denied to open access"

In his concluding Remarks, **Dr. Arun Kashyap, UNCT Coordinator, Jamaica** noted that the United Nations was very proud of the valuable initiative led by UNESCO to support Open Access of information and enhance inclusive opportunity for all to benefit from the global flow of knowledge. He further noted that "allowing unrestricted access to knowledge origination from state-sponsored/publicly-funded research in the public domain was arrived at as a conscious decision by authorities both within the developed and the developing countries". He committed support of the UNCT in advancing the agreed actions during the consulatation.

In his remarks **Mr. Everton Hannam SG, Jamaica National Commission for UNESCO**, thanked UNESCO and hoped that the conclusions reached would be implemented in the region. He committed support of the National Commission.

In his closing remarks and Vote-of Thanks, **Mr. Robert Parua, Director-in-charge, UNESCO Kingston Cluster**, expressed his thanks to all the participants and hoped to receive support from the respective governments in implementing the agreed action plans.

JOINT STATEMENT OF THE CONSULTATION

We, the participants of the Regional Consultation on Open Access to Scientific information, met at Kingston, Jamaica to exchange knowledge and experiences on the issues related to Open Access to scientific research and scholarly communication and observed and recognized that:

1. OA has benefits to advance sciences, innovation processes and scholarly communication processes

    a. It allows public access to knowledge, promoting democratization, equity and symmetry in access to local and international research results for generation of new knowledge to search improving quality of life for individual and societies ·

    b. It allows visibility to research results from the region, which today is invisible in mainstream indexes ·

    c. It improves research output in the region: reducing times of research process, efficient and timely access to literature, building on existing knowledge, strengthen interdisciplinarity and multidisciplinarity in research, avoids national duplication of investment in the same subjects

    d. It facilitates regional and international research cooperation: each country can add research from other regions to its own research agenda, establish research networks

    e. It allows complementary sharing of international investment in similar research topics, and encourages exchange of scholarly information between and amongst countries, thus generates a common playing field for the scientists and scholars to be available to see what other countries of the region produce and be able to cooperate

    f. It allows transference of research results for evidence-based opinions for policy and for building citizenship

    g. It enhances LAC research contribution to the global agenda and also allows LAC to participate in the determination of global agendas

2. There are a few problems and barriers to promote OA in the region which require concerted and joint attention. These barriers include from as simple issue such as the lack of awareness to complex policy-linked issues.

    a. While OA has rapidly gained popularity since the beginning the 21st century, the past decade has shown that the change towards broader access to scientific knowledge will not happen overnight.

b. The vast majority of scientific knowledge is still spread via the traditional subscription-based model.

c. Around 20 percent of all scientific publications worldwide are published in OA format today. For the LA region it is higher, however very few publications in the English Caribbean are published and shared using OA route.

d. In order to progress on the road towards OA, the shared interests of all stakeholders must be taken into account. Taxpayers, readers, authors, funders, publishers and editors should all agree that providing broad access to knowledge is not enough.

e. In the quest for OA, the quality of the material available is equally important thus new approaches for peer review, relevance and determination of impact factor are essential.

3. There is a need to raise awareness about the OA publishing, OA Sharing and Open Contents. In order to do so, there is a need to undertake a staged, country-specific awareness strategy. Specifically, there is a need to:

a. Develop image, procedure and significance of quality associated with OA.

b. Disseminate best OA practices from the region and worldwide.

c. Build a regional and national communication strategy for OA promotion

d. Build public opinion about OA, essentially by working with journalists and social networks

e. Organize National and Regional plans for OA awareness. Such events should target officials, decision-makers, editors, journalists, and evaluators of research in funding agencies

4. There is a need to develop and conceptualize policies and mandates for OA in the Region. Such policies and mandates should consider the following issues:

a. OA national legislation for State funded research results should be incorporated in OA digital repositories (these are in discussion in the Congress in Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and Peru)

b. OA institutional mandates should require, more than recommend, deposit of state funded research results in OA Repositories.

c. OA has to be part of the national research infrastructure and budget;

d. There is a need to develop specific policy for OA e-books with research results;

e. OA initiatives in the region should also address OA research data. Hence there is a need to expand the scope of OA to include issues of Open Data and Open Cloud.

5. It is essential that State funded research results, viz.: Peer-review scientific and academic journals and articles; Postgraduate thesis (master and doctorate); Academic and research books: Research reports; and Research data are all made available through OA routes.

6. Both Gold and Green routes are suitable form of OA for the region.

   a. For Green routes, inclusive and cooperative OA solutions should be promoted to avoid new enclosures on knowledge access and dissemination.

   b. Regarding Gold route, and considering that – i) only 30% of OA journals in the world presently require article processing charges (APCs); ii) APC are mainly fixed by international publishers and entrepreneurs, and fixed at international prices which are unaffordable for the average developing country; iii) research in Latin America and the Caribbean is mainly government funded; and iv) the region has a decade of experience with OA regional gold initiatives (SciELO and Redalyc) with more than 1.000 journals with no APCs - it is therefore recommended that the Gold OA route in the region continues its present emphasis on sharing costs.

7. There are many critical roles that UNESCO should play to advance OA agenda in the region. Not only that there is a need to contextualize agreed strategies at the country level, but there is also a need to coordinate with other key players in the region to avoid duplication. In particular, UNESCO should:

   a. Influence governments from the region to adopt OA policies. Provide OA awareness materials in local language, technical and policy support, capacity building and promote partnerships to raise funds.

   b. Strengthen South-South cooperation between the Caribbean and Latin America to promote OA in the region.

   c. Consider developing SciELO Caribbean as a journal publishing and archiving systems with the help of SciELO and other regional OA Champions.

   d. Generate awareness among high officials of governments and research agencies about importance of OA for scientific development and its contribution to national development.

   e. Support and influence the member states of the LAC countries to develop a Regional common OA policy, as has been developed by the European Commission.

   f. Strengthen regional cooperation and interoperability among existing OA regional programs.

g. Work with La Referencia, as the regional representative of the green route, to strengthen its activities and promote membership from other countries of LAC.

h. In the regional gold road, UNESCO should endorse and support activities such as those promoted by SciELO, Redalyc and Latindex, to improve quality of scientific and academic journals.

i. Include LAC OA best practices and experiences when advocating OA in the international context and promote OA South-South cooperation.

j. Coordinate activities with other agencies working on OA issues in LAC, ex. OECD, INASP, IDRC, IADB, etc.

k. Lobby to include OA discussions in the high level policy meetings linked to the WSIS 2015

8. UNESCO will implement following activities to address issues as identified above. We understand that these projects will be implemented based on the willingness of country, and activeness of the host organization/institute in the country:

   a. Support to enhance awareness about Open Access in the country and the region.

   b. Support to prepare Open Access Policy

   c. Support for the implementation of Open Access Policy

   d. Support to build capacity on Open Access

   e. Support to facilitate the work of existing Regional Mechanisms (such as La Referencia, SciELO, Redalyc, Latindex, among others) to better serve the scholarly community in the region.

Post Script

9. We would like to thank Ministry of Ministry of Science, Technology, Energy and Mining; and Ministry of Information, Government of Jamaica, University of West Indies and UNESCO National Commission for Jamaica for hosting the Consultation. We also appreciate the UNESCO cluster office in Kingston and its staff for making necessary arrangements.

10. We would like to Thank the respective national commissions and governments for sending us here and providing us with an opportunity to learn, develop capacities, and network in the area of Open Access.

11. We would like to thank the Government of Japan for providing financial assistance to UNESCO to organize the Regional Consultation.

AGREED ACTIONS AND WORK PLAN

Result to be achieved	Actions	Modality
a. Finalization of the report of the consultation and groundwork	• Creation of mailing list • Create strategy for organization of Webinars	• Request signing up in WSIS KC platform • Circulate the document
b. Enhance awareness about Open Access in the Region	• Develop a brochure for the LAC region • A PowerPoint presentation, • Small Videos and promotional packages, which will be mostly self-explanatory • Preparation of both promotional materials both in Spanish as well as in English • Support to organize "Open Access week" (5 small grants will be made available • All Latin America and Caribbean country's pages will be on developed on Global Open Access Portal	• A small expert group will be formed to "Caribbeanize" the awareness raising materials. • Request information for GOAP and/or utilize what was presented during Kingston meeting
c. Support a few selected countries in the preparation of Open Access Policy	• Two countries in the Caribbean and one country each in Latin America supported for policy/ mandate development • Feasibility to be conducted based on the expression of interest	• In the country expert team will be formed • UNESCO to provide consultant support, drafting, meeting etc.
d. Support for Policy Implementation	• One country from the Latin America Cluster • One country from UNESCO Cuba Cluster	• Countries to be determined and to be based on expression of interest form the countries
e. Capacity building	• Curriculum development • Self-Directed Learning tool will be developed (and funds permitting translation in Spanish?)	• Webinar to concretize the curricula (and other actions) • Implementation modality to be further

Result to be achieved	Actions	Modality
	• One pilot university or a group of library is to be included in the testing phase • SDL tool to be populated in at least 4 universities in the region	refined • Two consensus participants to be invited to physical meeting and to participate in the actual drafting process
f. Support to regional organizations/scholarly communication mechanisms	a. Preparation and Publication of a case study on SciELO b. Organization of UNESCO sponsored sessions during special events of regional organizations/scholarly communication mechanisms (ex. SciELO 15th. anniversary in Sao Paulo) c. Feasibility and support to create Caribbean SciELO d. Development of an online tool to evaluate journal publication software e. Support mobile tools for journal publication f. Study of possible indicators of OA success	• Discussion with the regional organizations and scholarly communication mechanisms • Formation of an inclusive expert group • Organization of Webinars to discuss the actions proposed

PHOTOGRAPHS

Regional Consultation Banner

Minister Hon. Lisa Hanna, Minister of Youth and Culture and Chairperson, Jamaica National Commission for UNESCO, Delivering Welcome Address

Hon. Julian Robinson, Minister of State for Science, Technology, Energy and Mining, Jamaica addressing the Opening Session

Mr. Koji Tomita, Charge d'Affaires ad interim, Embassy of Japan for Jamaica, Bahamas and Belize, Addressing the Opening Session

Dr. Indrajit Banerjee, Director, Knowledge Society Division, CI Sector, UNESCO introducing the Consultation

VIPs (from L-R) Dr. Indrajit Banerjee, Director, Knowledge Society Division, CI Sector, UNESCO, Hon. Julian Robinson, Minister of State for Science, Technology, Energy and Mining, Jamaica, Hon. Lisa Hanna, Minister of Youth and Culture and Chairperson, Jamaica National Commission for UNESCO; Mr. Koji Tomita, Charge d'Affaires ad interim, Embassy of Japan for Jamaica, Bahamas and Belize; Mr. Robert Paruwa, Officer-in-Charge, UNESCO Cluster Office in Kingston

Participants of the Regional Consultation

Consultation in Progress

Concluding session with special note on the Role of Women in Building Knowledge Societies: Commemorating International Women's Day Sitting on the Dias are (from L-R) Hon. Sen. Sandrea Falconer Minister for Information, Dr. Arun Kashyap, UNCT Coordinator, Jamaica, Mr. Evert Hannam SG, Jamaica National Commission for UNESCO and Mr. Robert Parua, Officer -in-charge, UNESCO Kingston Cluster

Hon. Sen. Sandrea Falconer Minister for Information of Jamaica, Delivering her Closing Statements