

VAKA  
YIKO

inasp 



ONLINE SOURCES OF  
EVIDENCE FOR POLICY  
RESEARCHERS IN AFRICA



INASP is an international development organization working with a global network of partners to improve access, production and use of research information and knowledge, so that countries are equipped to solve their development challenges.

#### INASP

2/3 Cambridge Terrace,  
Oxford OX1 1RR, UK

t: +44 (0)1865 249909

f: +44 (0)1865 251060

email: [info@inasp.info](mailto:info@inasp.info)

web: [www.inasp.info](http://www.inasp.info)

[blog.inasp.info](http://blog.inasp.info)

[www.facebook.com/inasp.info](https://www.facebook.com/inasp.info)

[www.twitter.com/INASPinfo](https://www.twitter.com/INASPinfo)

Charity No. 1106349

Company No. 04919576

© International Network for  
the Availability of Scientific  
Publications (INASP), 2015



**VakaYiko** is  
part of the DFID  
programme  
Building Capacity  
to Use Research  
Evidence (BCURE)





*INASP has been negotiating directly with publishers to win waived or reduced subscription fees on behalf of library consortia in Africa, Asia and Latin America, resulting in thousands of journals becoming freely available to researchers across the globe.*

# RESEARCH ACCESS AT INASP

INASP works with publishers to enable affordable and sustainable access to online resources to developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

National library consortia select appropriate resources for their research needs and budgets. In a process mediated by INASP, publishers then provide discounted (sometimes free) access through their own platforms. Resources are offered on a country-level licence to eligible institutions, including:

- universities
- not-for-profit research institutions and centres
- teaching hospitals
- professional training schools and institutes
- NGOs and CSOs
- parliamentary libraries
- government ministries, offices and agencies.

In order to gain access, these institutions need to be members of the consortium.

Each national consortium makes an annual selection from the resources available to them – this is based on the needs of their research community, collection development decisions and the budget available.

If you are not sure whether you are eligible to access a resource, please contact your Registration Coordinator. Their contact details, along with the list of subscribed resources, can be found on your country page on the INASP website:

**[www.inasp.info/en/network/country](http://www.inasp.info/en/network/country)**

**OVER** the past two decades, the amount of information available on policy-relevant issues in low and middle income countries has vastly increased. This is in large part thanks to the Open Access movement, formalised in the early 2000s through a series of statements made at global summits, and expanded over the next several years across the global research and community.

In parallel, organisations such as INASP have been negotiating directly with publishers to win waived or reduced subscription fees on behalf of library consortia in Africa, Asia and Latin America, resulting in thousands of journals becoming freely available to researchers across the globe.

Along with the increase in access, the rapid growth of the monitoring and evaluation sector led to an explosion in the number of evaluations commissioned on development projects at all levels, and the consequent rapid growth of a rich body of practice-informed evidence available on the internet. Meanwhile, think tanks and research centres around the world run large scale international research programmes on issues such as poverty, trade, gender, infrastructure, climate change, health and education. Hundreds of donors, from multilateral bodies to private foundations, produce steady stream of reports, as do civil society organisations, consultancies, and monitoring bodies. A commitment to transparency and recognition of the need for information sharing within the aid world has led to even greater efforts to make all these documents freely available online. All major multilateral organisations, donors and international NGOs now have e-libraries or publications sections on their websites.

Contrary to popular belief and thanks to the efforts of many organisations around the world, much progress has been made in access to information and research in developing countries. Now, a main barrier to use is lack of awareness of what is available and how to use it. Many people are not aware of the plethora of different initiatives which exist, or of how to navigate all the different databases and websites available.

# ONLINE SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

Access may vary depending on your institution and where you are searching from. To find out more about what is available in your country, visit the INASP website: [www.inasp.info](http://www.inasp.info), go to 'Access Research' and find your country in the list.

The colour code below shows the access options for all the resources listed below.

## PEER REVIEWED EVIDENCE

- **African Journals Online** the world's largest online collection of African-published, open access peer-reviewed scholarly journals [www.ajol.info/index.php/index/browse/alpha/index](http://www.ajol.info/index.php/index/browse/alpha/index)
- **African Journal of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development** is an open access journal that publishes articles dealing with agricultural economics with special focus on people living in rural areas. [www.internationalscholarsjournals.org/journal/ijaerd](http://www.internationalscholarsjournals.org/journal/ijaerd)
- **British Library of Development Studies** Europe's largest library on development studies with an extensive e-library including open access resources. <http://blids.ids.ac.uk/blids-collection/e-library>
- **Directory of Open Access Journals** online directory that indexes and provides access to quality open access, peer-reviewed journals. [www.doaj.org](http://www.doaj.org)
- **International journal of MCH and AIDS** is a US-based open access journal that focuses on the intersections between MCH and HIV/AIDS around the world, specifically in low and middle-income countries. [www.mchandaids.org/?page\\_id=1323#Articles](http://www.mchandaids.org/?page_id=1323#Articles)
- **JSTOR African Access Initiative** provides free access to the entire archive for any African institution (including government). A major digital library of academic books, journals and primary sources. 2000 journals across 50 disciplines. <http://about.jstor.org/libraries/african-access-initiative>
- **Open Access Journals Search Engine (OAJSE)** allows you to search for open access journals in a range of disciplines [www.oajse.com](http://www.oajse.com)
- **Open Science Directory** has about 13, 000 scientific journals. Aims to enhance the access of open access/special access collections by creating direct links to the journals. [www.opensciencedirectory.net](http://www.opensciencedirectory.net)
- **PLOS (Public Library of Science)** is a non-profit publisher and advocacy organization founded to accelerate progress in science and medicine by leading a transformation in research communication. [www.plos.org/publications](http://www.plos.org/publications)

- **Research4Life** a partnership of the WHO, FAO, UNEP, WIPO, Cornell and Yale Universities and the International Association of Scientific, Technical & Medical Publishers. African government offices are eligible for free registration. Research4Life consists of the following organisations:
  - **AGORA: Access to Global Online Research in Agriculture**, run by FAO. More than 3000 journals in agriculture and related biological, environmental and social sciences. [www.fao.org/agora](http://www.fao.org/agora)
  - **ARDI Research for Development & Innovation** Innovation 17 publishers provide access to around 20,000 journals, books, and reference works for 117 developing countries and territories. [www.wipo.int/ardi](http://www.wipo.int/ardi)
  - **HINARI Access to Research in Health**, set up by WHO together with major publishers, one of the world's largest collections of biomedical and health literature. Up to 13,000 journals (in 30 different languages), up to 29,000 e-books, up to 70 other information resources are now available to health institutions in more than 100 countries. [www.who.int/hinari](http://www.who.int/hinari)
  - **OARE Research in Environment** up to 5710 peer reviewed journals and 1119 online books, and other information resources. [www.unep.org/oare](http://www.unep.org/oare)
  - **SAE International** cover all areas relevant to ground vehicle and aerospace engineering technology [www.store.sae.org/saejournals](http://www.store.sae.org/saejournals)
  - **Science Direct** journals, articles, books and other open access content [www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com)
  - **Scopus** the largest abstract and citation database of peer reviewed literature. It has smart tools, so that you can track, analyse and visualise research. You or your institution need to sign up to this database to get access. [www.scopus.com](http://www.scopus.com)
  - **Social Science Research Network** Almost 60,000 social science articles, with 40,000 available to download. Includes focused networks in specific disciplines including politics and economics. [www.ssrn.com](http://www.ssrn.com)
  - **Springer Open** 160+ peer-reviewed fully open access journals across all areas of science ranging from very specialized titles to Springer Plus, an interdisciplinary open access journal that covers all disciplines. [www.springeropen.com/about/open-access](http://www.springeropen.com/about/open-access)
  - **Wiley Open Access** publishes peer reviewed journals across a wide range of disciplines [www.wileyopenaccess.com/view/journals.html](http://www.wileyopenaccess.com/view/journals.html)



## SYSTEMATIC REVIEWS DATABASES

- **The Campbell Collaboration Library** is an international research network that produces systematic reviews of the effects of social intervention in Crime & Justice, education, international development and social welfare. It is located at the University of Pennsylvania, US. [\*\*www.campbellcollaboration.org/lib\*\*](http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/lib)
- **The Cochrane Collaboration Library** is a collection of six databases that contains different types of independent evidence to inform health care decision-making. [\*\*www.thecochranelibrary.com\*\*](http://www.thecochranelibrary.com)
- **The Collaboration for Environmental Evidence** is an open community of scientists and managers seeking to synthesize evidence on environmental policy and practice. [\*\*www.environmentalevidence.org/Reviews.html\*\*](http://www.environmentalevidence.org/Reviews.html)
- **The EPPI Centre** based at the Institute of Education, UCL aims to inform policy and practice with evidence through systematic reviews and support for research use (social policy, health promotion, international development) [\*\*http://eppi.ioe.ac.uk\*\*](http://eppi.ioe.ac.uk)
- **The International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie)**'s systematic review database covers diverse topics related to public policy in developing countries [\*\*www.3ieimpact.org/evidence/systematic-reviews\*\*](http://www.3ieimpact.org/evidence/systematic-reviews)
- See also their database of impact evaluations [\*\*www.3ieimpact.org/en/evidence/impact-evaluations\*\*](http://www.3ieimpact.org/en/evidence/impact-evaluations)

## MULTILATERAL AND BILATERAL BODIES

- **African Development Bank Library & Information Services** offers online access to a wide array of digital resources including statistical databases, online full text achieves, electronic scholarly and professional journals, newspapers, business intelligence sources, official documents, and links to relevant Web sites. [www.afdb.org/en/knowledge/african-development-institute/information-and-library-services](http://www.afdb.org/en/knowledge/african-development-institute/information-and-library-services)
- **African Union Library** specializes in acquiring, organizing and disseminating historical and current information on Africa. Users may access, free of charge, over 13,000 journals online. [www.pages.au.int/auclibrary](http://www.pages.au.int/auclibrary)
- **Commonwealth iLibrary** features discussion papers, research and other publications easily searchable by theme and country. [www.oecd-ilibrary.org](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org)
- **COMESA Information Resources Centre** depository of all recorded knowledge on COMESA, designed to facilitate all citizens of the Member States access to printed and electronic information resources. [http://programmes.comesa.int/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=99&Itemid=118](http://programmes.comesa.int/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=99&Itemid=118)
- **ECOWAS Documents Online** website includes legal documents, reports and other publications. [www.documentation.ecowas.int](http://www.documentation.ecowas.int)
- **International Trade Centre** extensive publications about trade and industry available online. [www.intracen.org](http://www.intracen.org)
- **SADC Documents & Publications** online access to all publicly available SADC publications. [www.sadc.int/documents-publications](http://www.sadc.int/documents-publications).
  - See also **SADC Online Library** it provides services to the staff of SADC Secretariat and SADC institutions. [www.sadc.int/documents-publications/sadc-library-database](http://www.sadc.int/documents-publications/sadc-library-database)
- **OECD iLibrary** is the online library of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) featuring its books, papers and statistics and is the gateway to OECD's analysis and data. [www.oecd-ilibrary.org](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org)
- **United Nations** there are too many UN bodies to list here-the below are those which may be most relevant. In addition to these agency sites, the UN also hosts two think tanks, UNRISD and UNU-WIDER (see under 'Think Tanks'). Much of the agencies' work overlaps so it's worth checking several different agencies' websites. In addition to these agency sites, the UN also hosts two think tanks, UNRISD and UNU-WIDER (see under 'Think Tanks'). Much of the agencies' work overlaps so it's worth checking several different agencies' websites.

- **FAO** focuses on food security, agriculture, forestry, fisheries etc. [www.fao.org/home](http://www.fao.org/home)
- **UNICEF** focuses on children's rights, also health and education (pre-primary, primary and secondary). [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)
- **WFP (World Food Programme)** focuses on fighting hunger (food assistance). [www.wfp.org](http://www.wfp.org)
- **WHO (World Health Organization)** focuses on a broad range of global health issues. [www.who.int](http://www.who.int)
- **UNAIDS** joint UN programme on HIV/AIDS [www.unaids.org](http://www.unaids.org)
- **UNECA (UN Economic Commission for Africa)** macroeconomic policy, social development, regional integration & trade, and other topics. [www.uneca.org](http://www.uneca.org)
- **UNCTAD (UN Conference on Trade & Development)** Focuses on providing policy-relevant analysis for economic policymakers. [www.unctad.org](http://www.unctad.org)
- **UNEP (UN Environment Programme)** focuses on climate change, environmental governance, chemicals and waste, and other topics. [www.unep.org](http://www.unep.org)
- **UNESCO (UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)** focuses on education at all levels (including higher education & research) as well as broader social issues around science, knowledge and technology. <http://en.unesco.org>
- **UN-Women (Joint UN Programme on Women's Equality)** joint UN programme on women's equality. Work on women's economic empowerment, violence against women, public policy planning for gender issues, and other topics. [www.unwomen.org](http://www.unwomen.org)
- **World Bank Open Knowledge Repository** The World Bank's official Open Access repository for its research outputs and knowledge products. [www.openknowledge.worldbank.org](http://www.openknowledge.worldbank.org)
  - Also see **World Bank Research Working Papers** Search through available research outputs, such as Policy Research Working Papers, journals and datasets, or go directly to topic areas for available research on a specific topic. [www.worldbank.org/en/research](http://www.worldbank.org/en/research)
- **World Trade Organization (WTO) Documents Online** contains over 100,000 official documents from the WTO, available in pdf and Word. [https://docs.wto.org/dol2fe/Pages/FE\\_Search/FE\\_S\\_S005.aspx](https://docs.wto.org/dol2fe/Pages/FE_Search/FE_S_S005.aspx)

## OTHER RESOURCES

- **African Bibliographic Databases:** collection of Africana social science titles, presented in one easily accessible location on the internet. [www.africabib.org](http://www.africabib.org)
- **Africa Capacity Building Foundation:** a globally recognised knowledge hub on capacity development in Africa. The publications in its virtual library are free to download. <http://elibrary.acbfact.org>
- **African Economic Outlook** is a collaborative project between the African Development Bank, the OECD Development Centre and the United Nations Development Programme. The website provides comprehensive and comparable data and analysis of 54 African economies. [www.africaneconomicoutlook.org](http://www.africaneconomicoutlook.org)
- **Africa Portal Library:** an online library collection of over 4,000 books, journals, and digital documents related to African policy issues. The entire repository is open access. [www.africaportal.org/library](http://www.africaportal.org/library)
- **Connecting Africa** a gateway to African research information and materials produced worldwide. It provides access to 54731 publications from 92 repositories. [www.connecting-africa.net](http://www.connecting-africa.net)
- **Eldis** provides free access to relevant, up-to-date and diverse research on international development issues. Content from over 7, 500 development partners. Useful 'Research Guides' to key topics as well as links to related literature. [www.eldis.org](http://www.eldis.org)
- **Evidence on Demand** is an international development information hub, providing access to quality assured resources relating to climate & environment, infrastructure and livelihoods. Includes peer-reviewed Topic Guides containing an overview of the subject, a list of current best reads, plus pointers to where you can get further information. [www.evidenceondemand.info/homepage.aspx](http://www.evidenceondemand.info/homepage.aspx)
- **Global Transport Knowledge Practice** features the latest information on road infrastructure and transport. Case studies, research papers, publications, reports, presentations. Free to register. [www.gtkp.com](http://www.gtkp.com)

- **IRC WASH Resources** 40 years of documents on the water, sanitation and hygiene sector in developing countries <http://www.ircwash.org/resources>
- **National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE)** provides guidance and advice to improve health and social care in the UK. [www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk)
- **National Guidelines Clearinghouse** is an American agency for healthcare research and quality. [www.guidelines.gov](http://www.guidelines.gov)
- **Open Grey** is a bespoke search engine dedicated to grey bibliographical references produced in Europe and allows you to export records and locate the documents. [www.opengrey.eu](http://www.opengrey.eu)
- **Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST)** is the UK Parliament's in-house research team which produces short peer-reviewed summaries of scientific evidence called 'POST Notes', available for free download on its website [www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/offices/bicameral/post/publications/postnotes](http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/offices/bicameral/post/publications/postnotes)
- **PolicyArchive** a comprehensive digital library of public policy research containing over 30,000 documents [www.policyarchive.org](http://www.policyarchive.org)
- **Popline** 370 000 documents related to family planning and health [www.popline.org](http://www.popline.org)
- **Research Papers in Economics** is a decentralized bibliographic database of working papers, journal articles, books, books chapters and software components. Over 200,000 economics articles, fully searchable, with about half of the listed articles available for downloading. [www.repec.org](http://www.repec.org)

## THINK TANKS

- **Afrobarometer** African-led series of national public attitude surveys on democracy and governance on the continent. [www.afrobarometer.org](http://www.afrobarometer.org)
- **African Economic Research Consortium** produces economic policy research. Most publications are policy-relevant research papers, policy briefs and working papers. [www.aercafrica.org](http://www.aercafrica.org)
- **Africa Institute for Development Policy** African-led, regional non-profit policy think tank, was established to help bridge the gaps between research, policy and practice in the areas of *population change, public health, and the environment* in Africa. Based in Nairobi. [www.afidep.org](http://www.afidep.org)
- **Africa Research Institute** aims to share knowledge on what has worked in public policy on the continent. Policy voices, briefing notes, research papers etc available on website. [www.africaresearchinstitute.org](http://www.africaresearchinstitute.org)
- **Brookings Institution** has a key focus on Global Economy and Development. Hosts various initiatives including the African Growth and the Center for Universal Education. [www.brookings.edu](http://www.brookings.edu)
- **Center for Global Development** focuses on specific, practical policy issues across the developing world. Wide range of policy briefs, working papers, and reports available on website. [www.cgdev.org](http://www.cgdev.org)
- **Chatham House** has an extensive Africa programme. A range of resources on the website including research work, commentaries and audio-visual resources. [www.chathamhouse.org/research/regions/africa](http://www.chathamhouse.org/research/regions/africa)
- **Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA)** Founded in 1973 and based in Dakar, Senegal, it was the pioneer African social research organisation. Offers a wide variety of full text, open access research on African development issues. [www.codesria.org](http://www.codesria.org)
- **Future Agricultures** A consortium of research organisations seeking to provide timely, high-quality and independent information and advice on agricultural policy and practice in Africa. [www.future-agricultures.org/publications](http://www.future-agricultures.org/publications)
- **GIGA Institute of African Affairs** focuses on political and economic development issues in Sub-Saharan Africa. Founded 1963. [www.giga-hamburg.de/en/iaa](http://www.giga-hamburg.de/en/iaa)

- **Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC)**, South Africa's statutory research agency. All research outputs provided free of charge. Focus on large scale, policy-relevant, social science research in Africa. [\*\*www.hsrc.ac.za/en\*\*](http://www.hsrc.ac.za/en)
- **International Development Research Centre (IDRC)** focuses on generating and applying new knowledge to meet global development challenges. [\*\*www.idrc.ca\*\*](http://www.idrc.ca).
- **International Institute for Sustainable Development** focuses on economic law & policy, energy, resilience, water, and knowledge for integrated decisions. [\*\*www.iisd.org\*\*](http://www.iisd.org)
- **Institute for Security Studies (ISS Africa)** produces independent research on governance and security, expert policy analysis and advice, and practical training and technical assistance. [\*\*www.issafrica.org/publications\*\*](http://www.issafrica.org/publications)
- **Institute for Poverty, Land, and Agrarian Studies** A research and teaching centre focusing on the issues of land and agrarian reform, poverty, and resource management in the southern Africa region. [\*\*www.plaas.org.za/publications\*\*](http://www.plaas.org.za/publications)
- **Overseas Development Institute (ODI)** is an independent UK think tank on international development issues. Wide variety of publications available online. [\*\*www.odi.org\*\*](http://www.odi.org)
- **Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA)** A regional membership-based and donor-supported research. You can access their publication on their website. [\*\*www.publications.ossrea.net\*\*](http://www.publications.ossrea.net)
- **South African Institute of International Affairs** South African think tank with useful publications on topics such as economy, governance and development. [\*\*www.saiia.org.za/tag/Publications\*\*](http://www.saiia.org.za/tag/Publications)
- **UN Research Institute for Social Development** an autonomous research institute within the UN system that undertakes multidisciplinary research and policy analysis on the social dimensions of contemporary development issues. Publications and multimedia resources available on website. [\*\*www.unrisd.org\*\*](http://www.unrisd.org)
- **UNU-WIDER: World Institute for Development Economics Research** a major global centre for research and policy analysis. Working papers, policy briefs, and other literature available online. [\*\*www.wider.unu.edu\*\*](http://www.wider.unu.edu)

## DONORS

- **Agence Française de Développement (French Development Agency)** is a financial institution and the main implementing agency of France's official development assistance
  - For research & knowledge [www.afd.fr/lang/en/home/recherche](http://www.afd.fr/lang/en/home/recherche)
  - For geographic & thematic publications [www.afd.fr/lang/en/home/publications/Publications-thematiques-geographiques](http://www.afd.fr/lang/en/home/publications/Publications-thematiques-geographiques)
- **DFID (UK's Department for International Development)**
  - **Research for Development (R4D)** Repository of over 40,000 outputs from DFID funded research. This contains document records and DFID research articles. [www.dfid.gov.uk/r4d](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/r4d)
- 3. **GIZ publications database (English)** contains more than 38, 000 documents. [www.giz.de/en/mediacenter/publications.html](http://www.giz.de/en/mediacenter/publications.html)
- 4. **JICA**
  - **JICA publications** Annual Reports and publications on specific topics. [www.jica.go.jp/english/publications](http://www.jica.go.jp/english/publications)
  - **JICA Research Institute** focus on policy-oriented, academically solid studies that address the important issues faced by developing countries. <http://jica-ri.jica.go.jp/index.html>
  - **USAID Results & Data** including evaluations. [www.usaid.gov/results-and-data](http://www.usaid.gov/results-and-data)
    - See also the Development Experience Clearinghouse <https://dec.usaid.gov/dec/home/Default.aspx>
  - **SIDA Publications Database** contains publications on SIDA's work over the past decade. [www.sida.se/English/publications/Publication\\_database](http://www.sida.se/English/publications/Publication_database)



## LEADING INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY RESEARCH CENTRES

- **African Studies Centre, University of Leiden** Publishes nine different series on African issues including books, policy papers etc. [\*\*www.ascleiden.nl/content/publications\*\*](http://www.ascleiden.nl/content/publications)
  - See also African Studies Abstracts Online [\*\*www.ascleiden.nl/content/asa-online\*\*](http://www.ascleiden.nl/content/asa-online)
- **Development Policy Research Unit (DPRU)** at UCT has been actively engaged in policy-relevant socio-economic research since 1990 in the fields of labour markets, poverty and inequality. [\*\*www.dpru.uct.ac.za/dpru/publications\*\*](http://www.dpru.uct.ac.za/dpru/publications)
- **Institute of Development Studies (IDS)** Broad range of development issues including economics and social policy. Working papers, research reports and briefs are all available online and via free email subscription. [\*\*www.ids.ac.uk\*\*](http://www.ids.ac.uk)
- **School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) Centre for Development Policy and Research** publishes Development Viewpoints, Policy Briefs and Working Papers. [\*\*www.soas.ac.uk/cdpr\*\*](http://www.soas.ac.uk/cdpr)
  - See also **SOAS Research Online** a free, publicly accessible repository of the research outputs of the UK's leading centre for the interdisciplinary study of Africa. [\*\*www.eprints.soas.ac.uk\*\*](http://www.eprints.soas.ac.uk)





**[vakayiko@inasp.info](mailto:vakayiko@inasp.info)**

---

**[inasp.info/vakayiko](https://inasp.info/vakayiko)**

---

**[#VakaYiko](#)**