

External report

Needs Assessment

*Strengthening Indigenous Academic
and Digital Publishing in Tanzania*

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1 Background

On January 7, COSTECH (Commission for Science and Technology), VSO Tanzania, PATA (Publishing Association of Tanzania), BAMVITA (Book Development Council of Tanzania), INASP (International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications) and DTBI (Dar Teknohama Business Incubator) signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the launch of the project “Strengthening Indigenous Academic and Digital Publishing In Tanzania”.

The goals of the project are:

1. To cultivate a knowledge-based society to enhance development
2. To promote and strengthen indigenous academic publishing focusing on enhanced digital publishing.

These goals will, amongst others, be reached by setting up a Consortium of Academic Publishers under the umbrella of PATA (the Publishing Association of Tanzania) and through training organised in different areas of academic and digital publishing. This report gives an overview of the first phase of the project; the needs assessment and recommendations for training to be given.

2 Introduction

Following the recommendations of a previous VSO volunteer and the result of the research project ‘Exploring Opportunities for Academic and Digital Publishing in Tanzania’¹, in total 28 publishers (22 university publishers and 7 commercial publishers) have been approached to complete this needs assessment. Please see the complete list below:

Mkuki na Nyota	Sokoine University of Agriculture
Oxford University Press	Mzumbe University
Read it Book	Muslim University of Morogoro
Mkonko Publishers	St. John’s University of Tanzania
Law Africa	University of Dodoma
E&D Vision Publishing	Institute of Rural Development and Planning
Dar es Salaam University Press	St. Augustine University of Tanzania
	Bugando Health University
University of Dar es Salaam	Nelson Mandela Institute of Technology
TATAKI of the Institute of Kiswahili Studies	University of Arusha
Ardhi University	Mount Meru University
Hubert Kairuki Memorial University	Tumaini University of Makumira
Open University	Zanzibar University
International Medical and Technological Univ.	State University of Zanzibar
Muhimbili Univ. of Health and Allied Sciences	University of Iringa

The University of Bukoba was approached as well but could not be contacted. Most of the universities have a Directorate of Research and Publications. These are found in each university under slightly different functions and names, but established for the same purposes. These departments are usually responsible for strengthening the university’s research output, the journal publications and the institutional repository.

Strengthening the research output and wider dissemination of the research results is high on the universities’ agenda’s and all universities are keen on joining the Consortium to strengthen academic publishing. This finding is also supported by the recently published report on the Swedish Research

¹ From May-August 2012, this project was conducted by two MA students from the University of Leiden in the Netherlands to determine the state of the publishing industry in Tanzania and to establish the status quo of digital publishing in Tanzania. The report is available on: http://www.let.leidenuniv.nl/wgbw/research/Weel_Articles/Embassy_Report.pdf

Cooperation with Tanzania from 2009-2013². The objective of this programme was to strengthen the national research capacity and improve the quality of research conducted in Tanzania. In the report, it is mentioned that the 3 selected universities (University of Dar es Salaam, Ardhi University and Muhimbili University for Health and Allied Sciences) all support publishing activities on a policy and practical level. This means that universities encourage active publishing through incentives such as salary increases, travel funding, and changed status and work duties. The emphasis on the importance of publishing is also seen at other universities, for example through the intention of the Open University to set up a Publishing Unit.

The number of commercial publishers that were approached is not that high. At a PATA meeting where 14 publishers were present, it was evident that not many commercial publishers focus on academic publishing nor are interested in joining the consortium. Even though it was made clear that all publishers willing to make academic publications are welcome to join the consortium.

For the visits to the publishers, the needs assessment questionnaire, as developed by INASP, was used. Read it books and Mkonko Publishers have completed the questionnaire through e-mail, as well as the University of Iringa and Mzumbe University. For several other publishers, the forms were not completed or only partly completed for some journals because of difficulties in approaching the correct person and time constraints.

To assess the current state of digital publishing, content available on the publishers' websites, the universities' websites and AJOL (African Journals Online) was taken into account as well. Costech also has an online library. The website contains some issues of three journals but is not up-to-date yet. On this page there is also one book available.

3 Main findings

Because of the differences between the commercial publishers and the university publishers, this chapter has been divided into these two kinds of publishers. Academic book titles are published by commercial publishers and the Dar es Salaam University Press, whereas scientific journals are published by the university publishers.

3.1 Commercial Publishers

There are big differences amongst the book publishers, not only in the amount of academic book titles they publish (some have not published any academic book titles yet) but also in publishing experience in general. Mkuki na Nyota and Law Africa undertake, for example, a lot more marketing activities, and their books can be purchased online through African Books Collective and are printed on demand as well.

Academic book titles are being published in different scientific fields: politics, law, anthropology, ecology and economics. All books are peer-reviewed, usually by 1 or 2 reviewers. Most commercial publishers offer a wide range of publishing services, including language and copy editing. All titles have ISBNs. When asked about their contracts, most publishers reply that they have standard royalty contracts. Sometimes the copyright remains with the author, in other cases authors are asked to transfer the rights.

The average print run of the books varies between 500-3,000 copies. Mkuki na Nyota recently purchased a POD machine and is currently receiving training to use this machine. Other publishers have heard about POD possibilities but find this option too expensive and are concerned about the quality.

The majority of commercial publishers don't have any ebooks in ePub format available yet and they are all very interested in all aspects of digital publishing. They are looking for opportunities to digitize content, although some express their concerns about plagiarism.

² For the full report, see: <http://sidapublications.citat.se/interface/stream/mabstream.asp?filetype=1&orderlistmainid=3754&printfileid=3754&filex=5485449821904>

Marketing campaigns for books include: visits to universities at the launch of a new title, sales events at universities, review copies being sent out, marketing campaigns at the university's bookshop and conferences and exhibitions are attended, although not many. Oxford University Press mentions the yearly book fair organized by Bamvita. Some of the publishers undertake social media activities as well and are keen to learn more about marketing possibilities to reach the complete East African market.

Two of the publishers expressed their concerns about the reading culture in general and the tertiary publishing market in Tanzania. Even though the number of school books published for primary and secondary level is increasing, schools are not stimulating their students to read high quality books. The same goes for universities; receiving high quality submissions is very difficult because of lack of English language skills, time constraints and heavy teaching loads of researchers. Publishing titles for tertiary level is even more difficult because of the limited print run and high prices. It is also difficult to recruit editors at this level because at that stage of their careers, they have many other duties.

3.2 University Publishers

Reflecting the commercial publishers, there are big differences amongst the university publishers. Some do not publish any journals, others only one and some a lot more. The most journals published by a university is 19. The other 21 universities reviewed, on average, produced 1.4 journals each.

At several universities, there are intentions to launch new journals. Almost all of the journals that are being published have experienced lapses due to different reasons: financial problems, not enough submissions, not enough quality submissions, delays in the reviewing procedure and time constraints.

All of the journals published by university publishers are peer-reviewed, most of them by two reviewers and some of the review processes are double-blind. Articles include abstract/summary, keywords, the email address of the corresponding author and the affiliations of all authors. Usually there is no received/accepted date (or online first date). Names of editorial board members, affiliations of editorial board members, instructions to authors and an ISSN (print) are included in all journals. Sometimes the copyright notice in a journal is missing, and the copyright notice is never included for separate articles. The copyright notice should be included for each article when articles are available online for separate download.

When articles or complete issues are available online on the universities' websites, there are usually no download statistics, although some publishers mention that content available on AJOL, AJOL does follow up with download statistics. Usually the online archives are incomplete, i.e. there are no back issues and/or content is not up-to-date. This also goes for content available on AJOL; some back issues are not available or content is not up-to-date. Overall, the impression is that online publishing needs to be more structured. Only one of the publishers uses an online submission system. Most publishers require submission by e-mail and the workflows are not digitized. Almost all publishers would like to learn more about DRM, rights in general, digitization of workflows and all other aspects of online publishing. Very few undertake sales and marketing activities. They do visit conferences but this is very limited due to time constraints.

None of the publishers/university publishers receive any government support specifically for publishing. A remark often heard is that universities should recognize publishing in a Tanzanian journal and not only give credit for publishing in international journals. This also goes for Online First publication as this is often not recognized as an 'official' publication. Some universities have a list of (international and Tanzanian) journals in which they would like their staff to publish their papers, but it is not clear what criteria are used for this list.

4 Recommendations

Training is recommended in different aspects of general and digital publishing. Details of the types of training that should be offered are given below.

4.1 General Publishing

4.1.1 *Acquisition and commissioning*

There is a need for skills in how to evaluate Tanzanian academic publishing opportunities and how to attract Tanzanian researchers to submit their manuscripts, especially for the book sector. Books are being published by commercial publishers but they are experiencing difficulties in reaching researchers to submit good-quality book proposals. They also want to increase their knowledge on doing market research to create possibilities in reaching an international audience with their books.

For the university publishers, skills and knowledge on market research are needed as well. It seems there are many journals being initiated covering the same topics, or aiming at a very broad audience. It might be possible to explore possibilities to have some universities working on combined journals. This will also reduce submission-to-publication-time, a complaint often heard by researchers that it takes too long before their article is published in a Tanzanian journal.

Part of the training could also be to develop standard documents for publishers, such as manuscript questionnaires and author questionnaires, or good submission guidelines that can support authors in submitting proposals and help publishers in their marketing activities.

4.1.2 *Peer review and quality control*

In general, the publishers would like to have more knowledge on the abc's of peer review and quality control. In order to shorten the submission to publication time, better tracking of submissions throughout the process is needed. More knowledge on how to build up a network of reliable reviewers and create an international editorial board is needed as well. Some journals have an editorial board consisting of members from various Tanzanian institutions or even international members but for some journals almost all editorial board members are just from one university.

The reviewing procedures often take too long as editorial board members do not have time or simply do not respond. Knowledge of electronic submission systems might speed up the submission process (better infrastructure) as it is easier to keep track of the process and to send reminders out to reviewers. The reviewing time can be reduced when reminders are sent on a regular basis. None of the journal articles have received/accepted dates; by including these (and the online 1st dates when this service is offered) the submission to publication time becomes more visible which will be good for potential authors. Better communication with the authors and reviewers throughout the reviewing process is needed as well; authors need to be informed when there is a delay in the reviewing process. The importance of managing the statistics (number of submissions/rejections etc) should be emphasized during training as well. This way, publishers can build on the reputation of the journal by publishing in time and eliminate publishing lapses. To improve the overall quality of the journal content, strengthening proofreading and copy-editing skills is essential.

4.1.3 *Copyright and contracts*

Training to strengthen the knowledge of copyright laws and intellectual property rights is needed, for example: What is copyright exactly? How do you include the copyright notice in the printed journals and for separate articles? When do you speak of plagiarism? What should be included in a contract? How do you obtain permission to re-use other materials (not only for journal/book content but also how to obtain permission for the inclusion of articles in the Institutional Repository)? What is third-party licensing? In addition to developing standard documents, as mentioned earlier, developing and creating copyright transfer statement forms and contracts could be part of the training.

4.1.4 Marketing and sales

Most of the university publishers do not undertake any marketing and sales activities. They do visit conferences, but not very often. The commercial publishers sometimes visit book fairs/conferences, but lack of staff and time is making this difficult. In addition to this, skills on how to develop materials for conference exhibits should be strengthened. The knowledge on media relations and publicity and social media opportunities should be improved as well. For example, some journals do have a Facebook site but it seems that content is posted/updated rarely. Another essential part of the training is to increase the online visibility of publishers and their publications, for example by search engine optimization. The journals that are online are very hard to trace.

Skills on how to plan and create strategies for the future and how to conduct market research are needed, targeting Tanzania, East Africa and worldwide. The Sokoine University, for example, publishes *The Journal of Continuing Education and Extension*. This journal contains a "From the Field" section, which they would like to strengthen. They are looking into possibilities to create a broader audience for this section and to strengthen their knowledge to have this distributed throughout Tanzania and East Africa. To further develop these ways of disseminating research results, skills on how to conduct market research to disseminate research results (farming techniques/health information) to the general public should be strengthened. In the SIDA report it is mentioned that the University of Dar es Salaam translates research results into Kiswahili before they are sent or disseminated to people.

Knowledge on how to get journals included in international abstracting and indexing services should be improved as well.

4.1.5 Design and production

Skills on how to effectively plan and schedule the publication process should be strengthened to avoid delays in publishing. Other production issues that need to be addressed in training are DOI registration and production quality control. Physical distribution of print copies of the journals should also be included as a point of attention. The availability of journals in other university libraries is very poor. Knowledge on print-on-demand possibilities should be strengthened as well, especially for journal publishers.

4.1.6 Different formats

Many university publishers have shown an interest in increasing their knowledge of publishing books, reference works and edited volumes as they do not publish them yet.

4.2 Digital Publishing

4.2.1 Digitization of the workflow

Knowledge on software technology (which kind of tools will be viable?) for the different stages in the publication process (review /production processes etc) should be increased. Skills on how to effectively plan and schedule the publication process should be strengthened to avoid delay in publishing.

4.2.2 Online formats

Knowledge and skills are needed on all online possibilities, for example, in the different Ebook formats/mobile app development/online first publication.

4.2.3 Digital Rights management

Skills and knowledge on rights management for online journal issues, ebooks, online (1st) articles and chapters should be developed and the knowledge on DRM software to fight copyright infringement should be strengthened. Knowledge of the different creative commons licenses should be improved (CC-BY/CC-BY-SA/ND/NC etc).

4.2.4 Online platforms

Knowledge and skills are needed on website hosting (keeping content up-to-date); content alerting services, integration and tracking metrics (altmetrics); increased knowledge on AJOL and how to create viable sales platforms in order to reach readers. ICT skills are required as well; this training could be scheduled with DBTi and Tanzict (the information society and ICT Sector Development Project in Tanzania³). The platform's server should be mirrored to ensure continued access during power cuts and/or poor internet connections.

Universities are also keen to learn more about strengthening/initiating their IR. Knowledge is needed on how to obtain permission from other publishers and how to keep the IR up-to-date/findable.

4.2.5 Digitization of content

Knowledge and skills on all aspects of digitization of content are required: Ebook development, generate good metadata, readability of complex material on e-devices and computers, search engine optimization, integrate and track metrics (altmetrics), digital archiving. Knowledge on how to enhance the user experience is needed. At present, the availability of online content seems very random and/or online material is not scanned properly or very hard to find through, for example, the university's website.

4.2.6 Online Business models

Knowledge on the different online business models should be increased: subscription model/purely on author fees/hybrid models etc and improve skills on how to initiate a sustainable business model. During the training, the different payment systems should be a point of attention and paying through the Mpesa service⁴ might be a good option.

4.2.7 Open access

Knowledge on different open access models (gold/green etc), licensing options, embargoes, funds for open access publishing etc. is needed. Universities want their journals to be available online free of charge but knowledge on how to make this sustainable is lacking.

5 Next steps

5.1 Formulate Advocacy Approach

After the consortium has been established, the advocacy strategies will be formulated to create the most positive effect on research output in Tanzania. Amongst others, this will be done in liaison with the Ministry of Education, Science & Technology, COSTECH, TCU, COTUL and all other stakeholders involved. We will look into possibilities in connecting with the Dutch embassy in Tanzania, also because of the involvement of the Dutch publisher Elsevier within the project.

5.2 Training

Training will be planned and set-up in close collaboration with INASP and Elsevier. A preliminary scheme of the scheduled training has been set up:

Project Training 2014

[1] Journals

³ TANZICT is a collaboration project between the Ministry of Communications, Science and Technology of Tanzania (MCST) and Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. Currently they are revising the National ICT policy and have established a Buni Hub at Costech, for more information see: www.tanzict.or.tz

⁴ Mpesa is a well developed mobile payment system in Tanzania (credit cards are not being used widely).

October – 1 Elsevier Trainer (Journals Publisher) - 4 weeks

Combined journals training together with Susan Murray (AJOL) and colleagues and 1 Elsevier journals publisher.

Content: AJOL (Susan Murray); Peer review & Quality Control, Set-up of a new journal, acquisition and submission (not technical), editing by Elsevier Trainer.

[2] Books and Reference Works

November – 2 Elsevier Trainers (Book Publisher) - 4 weeks

Content: Acquisition and Subject Areas, Submission (MQs, etc.), Peer Review & Quality Control, Types of Publication (monographs, edited volumes, book series, reference works), editing and production process, contracts (see below).

[3] Copyright and Contracts

Mid-November – Mid-December (4 weeks)

1 Elsevier Trainer (Rights and Contracts Manager) and Maaiké, representative of COSOTA and COSOZA (= Copyright Associations of Tanzania and Zanzibar) and TIPASIC (Tanzania Intellectual Property Advisory Services and Information Centre)

Partly overlapping with Books training.

Content: IP and Copyright, Contracts, Licenses, Permissions, Open Access and CC, Plagiarism and Piracy.

Project Training 2015

[4] Digital Publishing I: Production

Mid-January – March (6 weeks)

2 Elsevier Trainers (E-Production Manager, E-Development Manager) with staff from DTBi

Content: digitization of the work-flow, XML, online formats (content for mobile phones!), metadata, digitization of (back)content and archiving.

[5] Digital Publishing II: Business Models and Online Platforms

March – mid-April (6 weeks)

2 Elsevier Trainers (Online Business Development Manager, Open Access Publisher) with staff from DTBi

Content: online business models and pricing (include payment through mobile banking: MPesa), DRM, Open Access.

[6] Marketing and Communication

May – mid June (6 weeks)

1 Elsevier Trainer (Marketing Manager)

Content: Basic marketing and promotion skills (writing marketing plans, etc), market research, branding, A&I, promotional material, marketing through social media, media relations.

[7] Sales and Account Management

May – mid-June (6 weeks)

1 Elsevier Trainer (Sales Account Manager)

Content: Pricing, discounts, account management, customer care.