

UbuntuNet CONNECT | 2017

Contribution ID: 1

Type: **Reviewed Presentation**

NRENs, library consortia and government: Nexus for democratic access to scholarship

Thursday 2 November 2017 14:30 (20 minutes)

The propagation of NRENs in Africa is transforming the knowledge infospheres through providing internet connectivity to enhance research collaboration and shareability of research output among researchers irrespective of chromemic and spatial limitations. NRENs serve as special vehicles for facilitating access to scientific research and collaboration for socio-economic development. This article will seek to scrutinize how NRENs, library consortia and government can collaborate to support research and education. It will examine how the helical collaboration between NRENs, library consortia and government supports education and research. It will examine how the collaboration between NRENs and library consortia are contributing to the virtualisation of learning teaching and research with regards to collaboration and unlimited access to information. It will seek to highlight how users are benefitting from cooperation between libraries, library consortia and NRENs. The article will explore the challenges and opportunities of NRENs and library consortia collaboration. It will examine the patterns of collaboration at different organisational and inter-organisational levels. The article will also seek to explore the opportunities for collaboration beyond national boundaries. It will study how cooperation amongst academic libraries has helped to provide for the epistemic landscape in Zimbabwe. The researchers will also examine how collaboration with other institutions outside the country is contributing towards widening access to scholarship. It will also make recommendations on how Zimbabwe can benefit from intra African collaboration with regards to research and education. The article will also examine how collaboration between NRENs, library consortia and government are working together to overcome connectivity challenges.

Summary

The papers uses a praxis oriented approach to explore the collaborative initiatives between NRENs, library consortia and government with regards to widening access to scholarship to support research and education in Zimbabwe

Key words: collaborations; education and research; library consortia; internet connectivity

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Session Classification: Session 2 - Libraries, Access to Information and Research and Collaboration

Track Classification: Stimulating intra-African collaboration