

Introducing the African Access to Knowledge Alliance (AAKA)

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and

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SARUA/AAKA Leadership Summit –

Gaborone, Botswana - 20-21 November 2007

Need for co-operation in SADC

- Attempts to amend the SA Copyright law – 1998 & 2000
- SAUVCA/CTP Task Teams challenged proposals – withdrawn by Govt. in 2002
- SADC countries – laws outdated or updated without legal flexibilities

Need for co-operation in SADC (cont'd)

- Pressure on SACU countries to sign FTA with 'TRIPS-Plus' IP Chapter
- No copyright co-operation in region
- Different jurisdictions/copyright laws
- Impact on exchange of information and cross-border resource-sharing

Birth of AAKA

- Meeting at SADC, Botswana - June 2004
- Presentation at SCECSAL - Uganda, July 2004
- “African Copyright Forum” - Uganda, Nov. 2005
- “African Copyright and Access to Information Alliance” – established Nov. 2005

AAKA - a legal entity

- Ugandan Chapter – registered - Kampala, 2006
- Name changed to “African Access to Knowledge Alliance” - 2006
- Pan-African Alliance – registered Trust - Gaborone, Jan 2007
- Interim Executive Board – March 2007

Overview of AAKA activities in Botswana

- Negotiations leading to the hosting of AAKA Secretariat by the SADC-CDE
- Nomination of the Interim Committee to jump start the AAKA business
- The registration of the AAKA as a Trust to coordinate activities of AAKA Chapters in the rest of the continent of Africa

Interim Board of Trustees

- President – Mr.Thulaganyo Thutoetsile, Director, SADC-Centre for Distance Education
- Vice-President – Dr.Boemo Jorosi, Lecturer, University of Botswana (UB)
- Mrs.Kgomotso Radijeng – Resource Centre National Coordinator, Botswana National Productivity Centre (BNPC)
- Mrs. Naniki Maphakwane – Librarian, Botswana College of Distance and Open Learning (BOCODOL)
- Mr.Letshwiti Tutwane – Lecturer, UB
- Mr. Augustine Ntuma – Editor, BOCODOL
- Mrs. Bongiwe Magocha – Librarian, Botswana Accountancy College (BAC)
- Mr. Lekopanye Tladi – Multi-Media and Production Manager, BOCODOL
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Ugandan Chapter

- 9 members of Executive Board
- Chairperson: Dr. Elisam Magara, Director, East African School of Library and Information Science, Makerere University
- Promotion of Institutional Repositories and Open Access initiatives
- Have offered training programmes targeting managers of information resources in educational institutions
- Chapter inspired and involved in the Publishing and Alternative Licensing Models for Africa (PALM) Project

Short Term Objectives of AAKA

- To introduce AAKAT to institutions of learning throughout Africa
- To promote the formation of country Chapters of AAKA
- To engage in a massive recruitment drive for membership
- To convene a constitutional continental AAKA General Assembly

Long term objectives of AAKA

- To promote & advocate for laws and policies that promote and encourage access to information and knowledge for sustainable socio-economic, cultural, and political development in Africa;
- To build capacity of members in areas of advocacy for equitable access to information and knowledge laws and policies at different levels;
- To engage in sector-level reviews and research on various topics to be an evidence-based organisation;
- To promote dialogue among African delegations in various fora to ensure consistency of African views in issues concerning information and knowledge laws and policies;
- Collect and receive all monies and other assets, objects or buildings becoming available to it as a result of any appeal for funds and to utilize from time to time such income as the Board may determine for the purposes of the Trust.

Membership of AAKA

Two Categories:

- Full Membership

Organizations seeking full membership should have operations in Africa but not necessarily be based here.

- Associate Membership – observer status

Identified challenges

- Poverty, illiteracy and unemployment
- Poorly resourced educational institutions and libraries
- Excessively priced books and journals
- High tariffs and exchange rates on imported educational material
- Copyright laws and practices in African countries
- Absorption by/privatisation by conglomerates
- Licensing schemes

Leadership Summit & OA Research Project

- SARUA Open Access Leadership Summit –
20-21 November 2007
- SARUA Open Access Research Project –
“A2K Southern Africa Project”.

African Copyright and Access to Knowledge Project (ACA2K)

- Joint project with Wits Link Centre
- Comparative/descriptive analysis of copyright regimes in Egypt, Ghana, Senegal, South Africa & Uganda.
- Project objectives include –
 - Building research capacity & an Africa-wide network of researchers around copyright & access issues;
 - Building a corpus of publications;
 - Building awareness & policy advocacy-capability

eIFL Projects

- eIFL Model Copyright Law – input from AAKA members
- AAKA members – country representatives for eIFL.IP project – South Africa (D.R. Nicholson) and Uganda (D. Kawooya)

How can AAKA achieve its objectives?

- To improve access to knowledge in Africa
- To build a network of AAKA Chapters
- To secure support from international funding agencies
- To engage in empirical research & other projects
- To harmonize & secure more appropriate copyright laws in Africa.....

AAKA needs YOUR support!

AAKA needs YOUR institution
as a partner!

AAKA and YOU
can make a difference in Africa!

Thank You!

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(see: 'Copyright' under 'Services')

