

# LIBSENSE Impact Report Brief

## Summary

This brief summarises the LIBSENSE Report: **Impact Evidence and Stakeholders' Testimonials from 2016-2024**, which assesses the impact of the LIBSENSE project from 2016 when it was initiated until 2024 as it concludes its latest funding cycle. The stories of impact are reported by 13 key stakeholders who have been active in the project over time. The report identified **7 key areas of impact**, **6 critical success factors** and **5 recommendations for the future**,

## LIBSENSE in a nutshell

LIBSENSE (**L**ibrary **S**upport for **E**MBEDDING **N**REN **S**ervices and **e**-Infrastructure), is a continent-wide initiative aimed at supporting research infrastructures for open science across Africa, using strategies and solutions that work in the African context. From its inception to the present day, LIBSENSE has achieved notable impacts, involving a diverse network of stakeholders who have actively contributed to and benefited from the project.

**17 regional capacity building workshops, 26 webinars, 3 regional policy development workshops, 12 national workshops**  
**6 strategic partnerships: LIBSENSE-RUFORUM; LIBSENSE-EIFL-AJOL; LIBSENSE-FCDO; WACREN (LIBSENSE)- (NII); WACREN (LIBSENSE)-CAMES; LIBSENSE- La Referencia**



# Methodology

The data for this research was collected through 13 narrative-type interviews, utilising a storytelling and listening communicative style. This method was chosen to encourage reflective responses to exploratory questions about how the interviewees' involvement in the LIBSENSE initiative has influenced them on both personal and professional levels.

## 7 Key Areas of Impact

### Community Building

LIBSENSE has emphasised the importance of collaboration and interdisciplinary approaches in librarianship and information science.

### Empowerment

LIBSENSE has empowered researchers by building their confidence and enhancing their skills.

### Expanding Knowledge

LIBSENSE has initiated and significantly enhanced the understanding of Open Science among African researchers, especially through workshops.

### Mentoring

LIBSENSE has provided significant mentorship to early career researchers.

### Research Practices

LIBSENSE has influenced researchers' publishing and dissemination decisions as well as its work and research practices.

### Exposure/Influence

LIBSENSE has expanded the exposure and influence of members through networking and financial support.

### Laying Foundations

LIBSENSE has promoted the adoption and implementation of Open Science policies and reshaped the focus and operations of NRENs towards supporting Open Science.



## 6 Critical Success Factors

- Building a community of action
- Sustaining advocacy on open science
- Creating a focal point for discussions/debates around open science
- Empowering and mentoring participants in the network
- Leveraging the power of the network
- Laying the foundation for ongoing change

**“It’s shaped my understanding about open science. I knew about open science, I was involved in a number of initiatives before but I think it just helped shape my understanding of the concepts and principles” - Senior Librarian**

**“I think LIBSENSE really advocated for the need for Open Science and made the case that it’s something that should be practised on the national level. So before it was really like a bottom up initiative of libraries or institutions. At least it became a really, almost, like a national priority” - Open Access Expert**



## Recommendations for the Future...

- 1 Remain within the REN model for implementing open science practice but enhance with best practices globally
- 2 Develop a framework for action based on what works best with the current initiatives that have been undertaken
- 3 Become a standalone entity that has key strategic links to the RENs
- 4 Retain the loose networked structure supplemented with advisory groups and key stakeholders
- 5 Work more closely with supra-African entities to attract larger funding opportunities