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Testimonials from ECR Network Leaders & Evidence from their Initiatives: Responsible Research Assessment (RRA) Reforms Advocacy

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About the Presenter
Who is in the Room with you?

- A Librarian
- Open Access (OA) Advocate
- LIBSENSE Open Access Nigeria Research Assessment Reforms Lead
- LIBSENSE Representative at RRA Coalitions, like Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)

What drives my OA advocacy?

My advocacy is driven by the belief that librarians should be at the forefront of expanding access to knowledge to advance research and development.

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Responsible Research Assessment Reforms

Responsible research assessment is an approach to evaluating research and researchers that moves beyond counting publications or relying on journal popularity, aiming for a complete and balanced picture of quality and impact across all research contributions. (DORA)

THE ISSUES

Research Behaviour is driven by Assessment Practices

Where and *how much* people publish, rather than what they publish, stifles innovation and encourages reliance on large commercial publishing platforms that demand high APCs for Open Access.

The dominance of metrics feeds into a “publish or perish” cycle that a lot of times overlooks contributions to public policy; non-English works; engagement with local communities; rigour, openness, transparency, reproducibility of scientific research; creation of intellectual property and software; mentorship

Open science is gaining traction in advocacy but is not acknowledged in practice.

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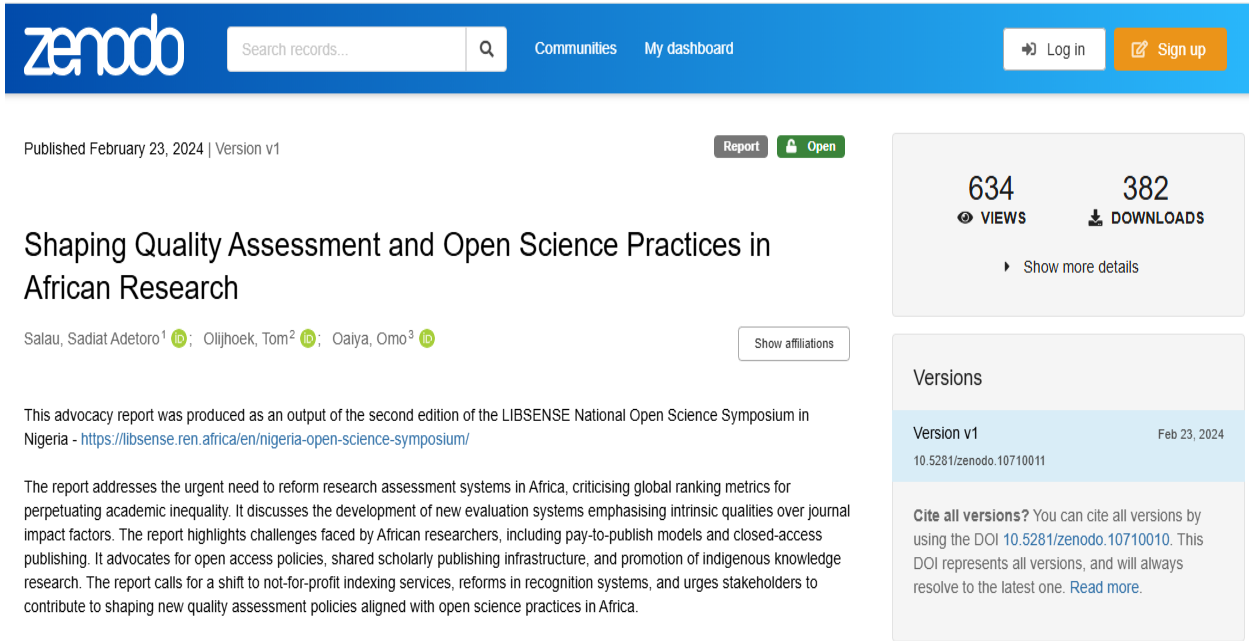
WHAT WE HAVE DONE

1

Published a Research Assessment Reform Advocacy Report in January 2024



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LESSONS LEARNT

- Although the report had its audience, it had to be followed up with other advocacy activities. It was also lengthy; it had to be synthesised into sizable chunks with graphics and illustrations in flyers.

- Go beyond writing to speaking about RRA.

WHAT WE HAVE DONE

2

Made the First Research Assessment Reform Advocacy Presentation at a LIBSENSE National Workshop Co-Created with the 2024 WACREN Conference in March

Shaping Quality Assessment and Open Science Practices in African Research

By

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LESSONS LEARNT

- The advocacy was too assertive, so there was pushback; pushbacks are normal and informative, they can reveal what stakeholders value or misunderstand.

- LIBSENSE connected me with experts from their network of experts. We mapped out key stakeholders and higher education leadership who should listen to the RRA advocacy.

WHAT WE HAVE DONE

3

Co-created a Leadership Engagement Meeting with the Committee of Vice Chancellors, University Librarians and Leadership of Academic Communities (Academy of Science, Academy of Letters, Nigerian Young Academy)

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LESSONS LEARNT

- Change is cultural before it's technical: **People often *trust* familiar indicators even when they know the flaws. (**The alternatives to quantitative metrics weren't familiar; also, the academic community didn't understand how to measure them.

- RRA advocacy shouldn't be carried out in silos. I went online to look for Nigerians in the RRA space.

- RRA Reforms must be structured within the Open Access Activities/Programmes

WHAT WE HAVE DONE

4

RRA Presentations in OA Advocacies in April and October 2025 within the Open Access Books BookHub Project Activities

LESSONS LEARNT

- There are assumptions about Research Assessment Practices for the different stakeholders. (The discussions were mainly based on feedback from the advocacy audiences.)

- RRA Reform is a marathon; its advocacy isn't a one-off campaign. It requires continuous engagement

What I have Gained

- New Research Area
- The stakeholders engagement increased my visibility and opened doors for speaking engagements and funding opportunities
- These activities provided the platform that positioned me within regional and international conversations about Research Assessment Reforms and Open Science

THANK YOU