Editorial challenges and responses in Asia and Africa - The Journals Online Projects and AuthorAID at INASP

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INASP facts and figures…

- Established in 1992 in response to an International Council for Science (ICSU) study on meeting the information needs of scientists in developing and emerging countries
- Registered as a charity in 2004
- 16 full-time staff
- International Board of Trustees
- Works in Africa, Asia and Latin America
  - over 100 eligible countries.
- Funded mainly by 22 partner countries and European governments
- Key programme is PERii
  - supporting research communication cycle
Why research communication?

“It is calculated that some 90% of all scientists that have ever walked the face of the earth are alive right now.”

_Funky Business Forever: Jonas Ridderstrale & Kjell Nordstrom_

“Scientific skills and knowledge enable countries to find their own solutions to their own problems…and, critically, they unlock the potential of innovation and technology to accelerate economic growth, and enter the global economy.”

_Commission for Africa report_
Support areas at INASP

- Publishing Support
- Evidence Informed Policy
- Information Delivery
- Coordination
- Library Development
- ICT Training
General Challenges

- Brain drain/ prestige of publishing in prestigious international journals
- Connectivity/ Power problems
- Lack of networking/support/conferences etc
- Lack of journal visibility
- Poor quality of journals and submissions
- Language issues
- Few publishing training centres
- Political instability
Responses

- Set-up of JOLs
- Support for regional networks
- AuthorAID
- Training
JOLs

- INASP has been collaborating with PKP and using their open source software to set up journal websites for hosting multiple journals. This aims to:
  - to increase visibility of research from regional journals in developing countries
  - to increase capacity of the editors to
    - improve the quality of their journals
    - manage their journals online
- Started with AJOL (1998), now under SA management but with continued funding from INASP
- Now focusing on Asia JOLS
Journals Online Project

Aims:

• to increase visibility of research from regional journals in developing countries

• to increase capacity of the editors to
  – improve the quality of their journals
  – manage their journals online
JOLS General Challenges

- Lack of resources/time
- Getting new content
- Keeping the sites low bandwidth
- In Africa attitudes to open access but not in Asia (97% of articles on SLJOL full text)
- Finding in-country hosting within a four year time period
Training and Support for the JOLs

Capacity building workshops for editors including:

- Initial workshop on loading articles and online publishing strategy
- Subsequent training workshops on using the full online submission system, general training on the roles of the editor, author and reviewer and training on managing an editorial office
- Online publishing training workshops for countries using AJOL
- Support to find in-country hosting
AJOL

350 journals from 26 countries
60,000 visits per month
Asia Journals Online

- Currently five Asian Journals Online databases:
  - VJOL (Vietnam) www.vjol.info
  - NepJOL (Nepal) www.nepjol.info
  - BanglaJOL (Bangladesh) www.banglajol.info
  - PhilJOL (The Philippines) www.philjol.info
  - SLJOL (Sri Lanka) www.sljol.info
BanglaJOL

- Launched in 2007
- Currently 39 journals across a wide spread of subjects
- Online support community for the editors

Key challenges: Power and human resources
NepJOL

- Launched in 2007
- Currently 41 journals across wide spread of subjects
- Online support community for editors

Key challenges:
- Power
- Political instability
- Staff changes
VJOL

- Launched in 2007
- 23 journals
- Bilingual
- Hosting transferred locally in 2009

Key challenges:
- Language
- Finding new content
PhilJOL

- Launched in 2008
- Currently 30 journals across wide spread of subjects
- Online support community for editors

Key challenges:
- University rivalries
- Finding new content
SLJOL

- Launched in 2008
- Currently 16 journals but we hope to have more very soon!
- 97% of articles full-text

Key challenges:
- Political instability
- Staff changes
AsiaJOL

Asia Journals Online is a portal to scholarly journals published in:
- Bangladesh
- Nepal
- The Philippines
- Vietnam
- Sri Lanka
- Indonesia

You can search for information from a single country or from all of them by using the Search facility.

AsiaJOL is supported by INASP

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AJOL Challenges

- Open Access
- Getting the site up-to-date
- Getting content loaded on to the site
- Relationship and funding
AJOL responses

- Training workshops working closely with AJOL
- Working with PKP to get the site up and running
- Training in the full peer review system
Networking and communication

- JOLs newsletters
- D-group discussion lists
- Support for editorial networks – i.e FAME and JEAN
Results

- Increase in submissions
- 22% increase in acceptance in indexes

“I must thank you for your support of our journal through PhilJOL. As soon as we got into PhilJOL, the number of submissions has increased significantly. The increase is so significant, that I am considering suggesting to our publisher that we increase the number of issues per year from 2 to 3. The quality of the submissions has also improved! I know that this improvement is partly due to our visibility in PhilJOL.”
### Evaluating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% increase in number of journals</th>
<th>% increase in number of articles</th>
<th>% increase in number of FT articles</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BanglaJOL</td>
<td>200%</td>
<td>209%</td>
<td>324%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NepJOL</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>106%</td>
<td>187%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VJOL</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>206%</td>
<td>202%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>164%</td>
<td>166%</td>
<td>230%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Future directions

• Development of Central American JOL
• Further development of Asia JOL, including Pakistan JOL
• Search for in-country partners to take over hosting
AuthorAID www.authoraid.info

AuthorAID is a global research community that provides networking, mentoring, resources and training for researchers in developing countries.

Early career researchers: Find out how AuthorAID mentoring can benefit your research career.

Experienced researchers: Find out how you can share your expertise by becoming a mentor.

Join now!

(It’s free and easy to register.)

Recenty Active Members
Publication barriers for developing country researchers

- Limited resources
- Lack of personal mentoring and support
- Language issues
- Lack of writing skills training
- Poor connectivity/bandwidth
Publisher and institutional approach

- a sticking plaster approach.

- Directing authors to editing organisations or web based guides but not giving training in writing skills or the mechanics of getting published or offering one-to-one support

- Some exceptions: Emerald, ISEE (international Society for Environmental Epidemiology), HEP

- More institutions recognising the importance of research writing skills training and support but lack resources
Project background

• Concept was developed by Tony Robbins and Phyllis Freeman who recognized the need to support developing country researchers with the publication process

• Funded as part of PERii programme at INASP with additional funding from Sida

• Begun in 2007 as a carefully evaluated pilot project – 3 years initially
Key Support Areas

- Networking
- Mentoring
- Resources
- Training
Networking

- The AuthorAID website (www.authoraid.info) developed in collaboration with ILRT and Pure Usability Ltd.
- A global research community with 732 members
- Opportunity to communicate with other researchers across the globe
- The intersection of all AuthorAID activities
  - Training and events
  - Online mentoring
  - Resources
  - Blog/news/updates

- Key challenge: connectivity, so a low bandwidth site
Mentoring

Either scientific or editorial
South/South North/South North/North
Manual matching and online
Online mentoring system
• Self matching
• Online collaboration space but not compulsory
• Guidelines and learning agreement
Currently 90 mentoring pairs, maybe more

Key challenge – monitoring and finding mentors
Resources

164 resources in 5 languages:
• English
• French
• Spanish
• Chinese
• Arabic

Vietnamese is forthcoming.

Key challenge - extending reach CD for partner institutions, workshop participants and for organisations with limited connectivity
Resource Library

List: Presentations on the subject of Writing style written in Spanish

There are 4 resources listed

1. Como Citar Referencias (Microsoft PowerPoint presentation, 37Kb) | 06 Apr 2009

2. Como Redactar en Inglés como Lengua Extranjera (Microsoft PowerPoint presentation, 33Kb) | 06 Apr 2009

3. Escribiendo en Ingles como Lengua Extranjera (Microsoft PowerPoint presentation, 30Kb) | 19 Feb 2009

4. Como Citar las Referencias (Microsoft PowerPoint presentation, 35Kb) | 19 Feb 2009
Training

- Workshops on research writing
  - Currently three per year
- Key challenge – extending reach
  - Online teaching packs
  - Cascading workshop methodology
  - Train the trainer workshops
Challenges

• Extending reach
• Finding mentors
• Sustainability
• Finding a new host
• Monitoring and evaluation of online mentoring relationships
Responses

- Stepping up of promotion
- Creating teaching packs
- Creating plug-ins
- Networking
Some other initiatives

- SciELO South Africa
- Sabinet
- Ghana OSPC Initiative
- Revitalisation of FAME
- Bioline
- CSE Editor Link programme
Future developments

- Social networking widgets
- Instant messaging
- Mobile friendly site
- ‘Publisher’s corner’ for calls for papers etc
- Plug-ins

- (Insert social networking icons)
Conclusion

• Editors in Africa and Asia face numerous challenges, many also faced by Latin American editors

• Collaborative projects such as the JOLs and AuthorAID can attempt to address these challenges.

• The creation of networking organisations give editors a voice and the power to create their own solutions
Questions

• How can African/Asian/Latin American cooperation develop?
• What lessons can be learnt from each other?
• Can any technology be shared?