Building communities to strengthen open access and open science in Africa.

Omo Oaiya, Chief Strategy Officer, WACREN | **Open Science – The Way Forward - Tunis -19/07/2022**

What is LIBSENSE?

- Initiated in 2016 by the WACREN with support of sister regional RENs in AfricaConnect2 as a Library - NREN collaboration to build information management capabilities
  - **Lib**rary **S**upport for **E**mbedded **N**REN **S**ervices and **E**-infrastructure) ⇒ the **sensible** thing to do at the time :-)

- Evolved from 2018 into a continent-wide initiative to expand open science in Africa, based on strategies and solutions that work in the African context.

Overarching Goals:

- Support cultural change
- Provide technical support
- Build human capacity
- Develop value-added services

LIBSENSE Timeline (2016-2019)

Initial Activities and Ideas

- Library Open Access Workshop
- Institutional Focal Points Workshop
- Setting the agenda for LIBSENSE
- Informal collaboration btw. EIFL & WACREN
- TUoS Information School joins collaboration

Connecting to AfricaConnect 2 (AC2)

- COAR workshop on repositories for pan-African harvester
- AC2 funds pan African survey/workshops on OAR
- Survey launch in 3 regions commences
- Pan-African LIBSENSE workshops commence

2016

2017

2018

2019

Building the Community

- WACREN LIBSENSE workshops commence
- COAR brought on board as key collaborator
- Pilot survey planned and implemented
- Pilot survey results presented at UA conference

Workshop Activities and Outputs

- LIBSENSE workshops in all regions completed
- Outputs include roadmaps, guidelines, survey reports, workshop reports
- Community activities begin to make impact
- Plans for AC3 LIBSENSE drawn up

LIBSENSE Timeline (2019-2023)

Skills Profiles Webinars
- Skills Profiles for HEI Librarians
- Anglophone & Francophone

Capacity-building workshops
- Open access publishing
- Research data management, repository interoperability, and persistent Identifiers
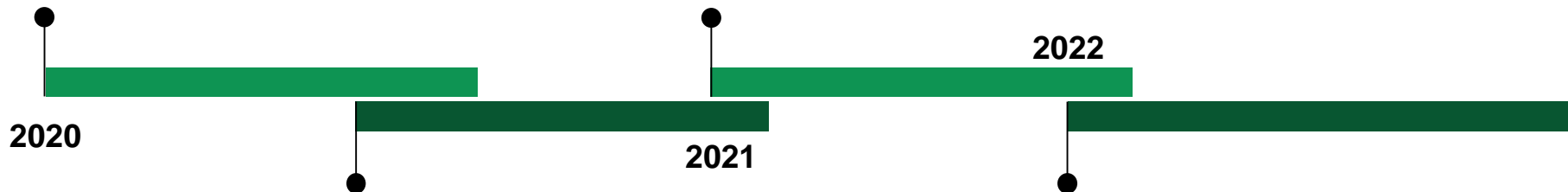
National Open Science Roadmaps
- Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Nigeria, Somalia, Tanzania, and Uganda

National open access repository and publishing platforms
- Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, ...

National Policy Development Workshops
- Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, ...

2022

2020

2021

UNESCO Open Science Partnerships
- Open Science Africa: Principles and Actions for Global Participation

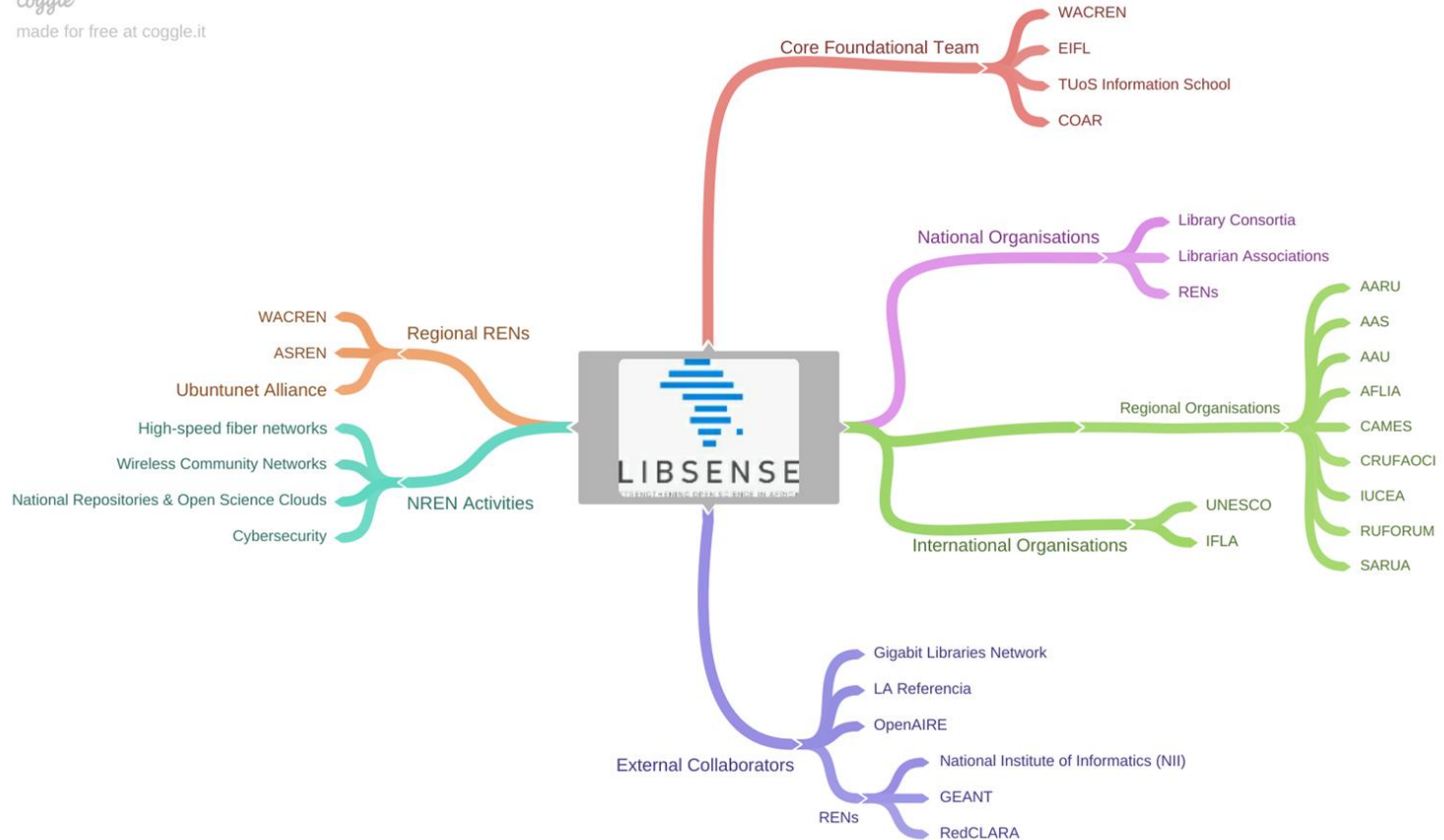**Other Partnerships**
- LA Referencia, RedCLARA
- RUFORUM

AC3 Regional Policy Development Workshops
- Colocated with Ubuntunet Alliance, ASREN and WACREN annual conferences
- Co-organised with regional associations of VCs/Rectors
- Focus on policy implementation - moving from high-level goals to role of institutions in implementing open science
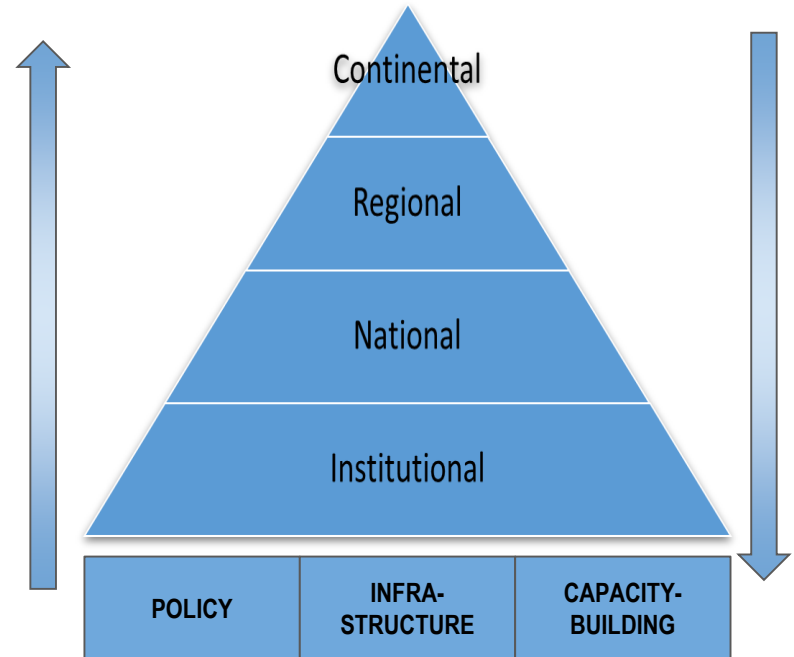
Partners and Networks

LIBSENSE – Strategy & Organisation

Overall Strategy:

- Building communities of practice
- Strengthening local and national services
- Bottom-up, distributed, heterogeneous
- Inclusive -
  - 3 Working languages, Arabic, English and French
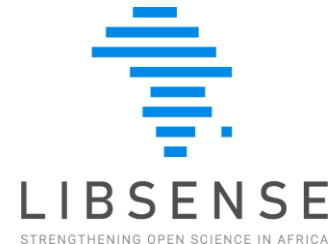 - Indigenous and traditional knowledge

Three Pillars:

- *Policy:* open science policies, governance and leadership
- *Infrastructure:* open access journals, repositories for publications and data and open discovery services
- *Capacity-building:* communities of practice and training

Key Achievements - CONTINENTAL

- UNESCO Open Science Partnerships - Open Science Africa: Principles and Actions for Global Participation

  - https://zenodo.org/record/4017999

- Shared Agricultural Research Data Management and Publications Platform with RUFORUM (regional, multi-institutional level)

- Federated Identity Management for Research and Libraries

  - Identity Management Federation program (eduID.africa) for secure access (continental level) - https://www.eduid.africa/

Key Achievements - REGIONAL

- Capacity-building workshops – regional policy development

  - https://libsense.ren.africa/en/open-science/regional/

    - Skills profiles webinars, open access publishing, research data repositories, repository interoperability, persistent identifiers.

- Emerging framework for REN-based Federated High-Performance Computing Service

  - Leverages African Centers of Excellence (ACE)

- Emergence of the ASREN regional platform for harvesting, validation, enrichment and publication of metadata of scientific production in the Arab region - https://asrenorg.net/?q=ar/node/1014

Key Achievements - NATIONAL

- National Open Science Roadmaps -
  https://libsense.ren.africa/en/open-science/national/

    - Several countries involved. Symposiums towards Open Science action plans held in Uganda, Nigeria, Tanzania and Côte d'Ivoire. Ghana scheduled for October 19 -20

- National shared open access repository and publishing platforms - Pilots in Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria and Uganda; Burkina Faso and Benin in Africa Digital Campus

    - Focus on international interoperability - schema draws from COAR Vocabularies, Datacite, Dublin Core and OpenAIRE guidelines

- National shared platform for Journals, Micropublications and Preprints ⇒ Pilot in Nigeria

LIBSENSE
STRENGTHENING OPEN SCIENCE IN AFRICA

Key Achievements - INSTITUTIONAL

- Institutional Open Science Policy Development Workshops

- Compendium of Open Access/Open Science Policy Case Studies from African Higher Education Institutions - https://zenodo.org/record/6467301

  - Recommended checklist for universities to follow when implementing recommendations on open science is being added to the UNESCO Toolkit

- Model for Open Science Communities on Campus

- Template for Leadership Programme

LIBSENSE
STRENGTHENING OPEN SCIENCE IN AFRICA

Community Governance :-)

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