

# Abstract Information

## Mutual aid and open access publishing in Africa : who benefits? A Kenyan case study

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- **Abstract:** A proper mutual aid partnership in research and publishing is one that bridges the knowledge gap between the developed and developing countries in ways that reduce the inter-regional generational knowledge imbalances. In view of the low purchasing power in developing countries, open access (OA) publishing avails needed reading material for all who have access to the Internet. Foreign sponsored research in developing countries can uplift the living standards of the people in these regions if the results of the findings can influence policy and are made available to the people studied. This study sought to establish if research findings of foreign sponsored research are published in OA publications. The study conducted a survey on leading local medical research institutions in Kenya using secondary data and interviews with key informants in these institutions. The results failed to support the hypothesis that foreign sponsored researchers are published in prescribed journals as a prerequisite by the sponsors. Instead, they indicated that local researchers published in international subscription journals because of their desire for prestige and wide reach. Consequently, the North-South knowledge inequality is perpetuated more by the local elite, whose desire for international recognition overrides social benefits, thereby supporting the hypothesis that foreign funded research on mutual aid in Kenya results in more private than social benefits. There is a need for the local learned society to embrace a paradigm shift towards building reputable local journals and accepting the OA concept.