



Glitter is not forever! Resource sharing and Knowledge sharing as the new sparkle in realizing development goals in Botswana through library resource sharing

Gobonetse Kelebogile Ramotsisi

University of Botswana Library, University of Botswana (P.O Box 211212 Gaborone),
Gaborone, Botswana.

E-mail address: ramotsisikg@ub.ac.bw

Ramotsisi, G. K. (2024, December 2). *Glitter is not forever! Resource sharing and knowledge sharing as the new sparkle in realizing development goals in Botswana through library resource sharing* [Conference paper]. **18th IFLA ILDS Conference: Global to Local – Diversity and Inclusiveness in Resource Sharing**, Baku, Azerbaijan. ADA University.

<https://doi.org/10.60119/ROLP7416>



Copyright © 2024 by Gobonetse Kelebogile Ramotsisi. This work is made available under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License:

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>

Abstract

Botswana like the rest of the world is moving from resource based to knowledge-driven economy. Botswana's economy has for the longest time been heavily dependent on Diamonds as a source of wealth. The country has since realized that that Diamonds are not forever, hence the need to diversify and join the world in creating wealth through knowledge creation and knowledge monetization. This realization has made Botswana to make major changes to its education system to begin to produce a new workforce which will create new knowledge and a new economy in the knowledge –driven dispensation. The government has started installing internet in schools and in small villages. Unfortunately Library budgets have been dwindling, thus restricting Libraries ability to subscribe to scholarly databases like, Emerald, Taylor and Francis, Elsevier and Science Direct among many others which are crucial in any Research institute. The article will examine the extent to which Botswana library consortia has enabled small library that cannot afford expensive databases to serve their clients through resource sharing. The paper will further discuss the impact of EIFL (Electronic Information for Libraries) initiatives in assisting small libraries in Botswana to overcome the burden of paywalls. The article will explore how resource sharing is bridging the gap that has been caused by many factors including the just ended pandemic. It will explore how the consortium

has brought in a new hope for libraries to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development goals and assurance of a knowledge based society

Keywords: resource sharing; Inter-lending, library consortia; inclusiveness.

Introduction

Since its independence, Botswana has achieved impressive economic growth. Over the past four decades, Botswana's real growth rate averaged at 9 percent a year, while per capita GDP rose from US\$250 in 1960 to US\$4,800 in 2008 (in constant 2000 US dollars). Botswana has transformed itself from one of the poorest countries in the world to an upper middle income country. However, progress in human development outcomes has lagged behind. The major driver of Botswana's remarkable GDP growth has been the abundant mineral resources, in particular, diamonds. Since the late-1970s, Botswana's economy has been heavily dependent on diamonds. Prior to the global crisis, diamond exports accounted for 70 percent of total merchandise exports, while nearly half of fiscal revenue came from the diamond sector, allowing large external and fiscal surpluses. As of end-2008, Botswana's international reserves stood at over US\$9 billion (or 20 months of imports). About 40 percent of this amount represented accumulated past fiscal surpluses. Although diamond production in Botswana is expected to continue at high levels for another decade or so, the prospects of mineral revenue accruing to the government are very uncertain. Therefore the Government is actively exploring areas to diversify the economy to ensure a sustainable growth to maintain and improve on all developmental indices for the country (Kojo, 2010).

The country has also taken a deliberate decision to accelerate policies that will move it towards a knowledge-based economy by emphasizing communication, science and technology both in infrastructural and human resource development.

In tandem with progress made above since independence, libraries in Botswana have also grown to provide the needed support in terms of knowledge creation and generation, intensification of research activities across all sectors and access to information. However there are still structural inconsistencies in the management of the library system in the country. Currently the National Library itself is curiously housed and managed under the Minister of Youth, Gender, Sports and Culture and therefore subjected to administrative pressures that will not allow for resources allocation to meet its national development imperatives, including supporting the expansion of library services across all districts. This is demonstrated by the allocation of 70% of Ministerial 2024/25 budget to major projects such as community sport stadia, state theatre and renovations of old structures. School libraries, both at primary and secondary levels have been slow to digitize and digitalize services. This is partly due to the fact that they do not have a sustainable budgetary allocation to meet their needs. Even at tertiary levels, libraries are barely able to meet their service and research obligations to the academic and non-academic communities due to resource constraints. University of Botswana has faced challenges in subscribing to reputable and globally recognised scholarly databases..

The BLC therefore provide a great opportunity to potentially address major constraint in the sharing of its vast resources as a repository of information to uplift the climate and enhance transformation of the country into a viable, sustainable and innovative economy comparable to global standards in the industry.

Botswana has been an affiliate of EIFL since 2005 and has supported the creation of the Botswana Libraries Consortium (BLC), and through this partnership, libraries in Botswana are providing access to a wide range of scholarly e-resources.

Objective of the study

- To demonstrate how resource sharing is bridging resource gap in information and knowledge utilization in a sustainable collaborative model
- To explore how a Library Consortium can act as a catalyst for resource sharing to enhance national development

Research methodology

Desktop review: This paper is based on desk top review to gain insight into how collaboration for resource sharing can positively impact national development using national library system strengthening to enhance knowledge and information through the Botswana Library Consortium and EIFL functional activities as a model.

Literature Review

According to Muthu (2013) consortium is a community (a co-operative) of two or more information agencies which have formally agreed to coordinate in or consolidate certain functions to achieve mutual objectives. It is a joint venture of any group of libraries to fulfill the common goal. Consortia may be formed on a local, regional or international basis; on a functional or format basis; or on a subject basis. Majority of the libraries particularly in developing countries are thinking today about the cooperative purchasing for any group of libraries, consortia should be formed and are often useful for establishing a formal structure regarding resource sharing with formal agreement for each participant library. In this method of cooperative collection development of each and every participant library can easily access to specific collections.

According Moghaddam, G.G & Talawar, V.G (2009) the advantages for libraries if they buy their resources through consortia can include:

- shared access to information sources.
- site wide access for all involved
- smaller libraries can benefit
- possible global impact
- common interface to resources.
- possible ability to attract foreign investment.
- ability to achieve goals.

Singh & Singh (2004) is of the view that resource sharing is considered to be a great advantage of consortia for libraries, as today, the ability for users to access resources is often more important than collection building within a particular library. Through a library consortium, the collective strength of resources of various institutions available to it can be increased. The consortia enable libraries to gain the benefits of wider access to electronic resources at an affordable cost.

Findings from Desk Review

1. Botswana Library Consortium

Botswana Libraries Consortium (BLC) was established in May 2005. There are currently 52 members comprising of different types of libraries and information centers (University libraries, colleges & polytechnics, research libraries, national libraries and special libraries). The consortium was established to:

- promote and facilitate collaborative acquisition schemes among members of the consortium
- work together to build strong libraries and information resource centers and strong co-operative information framework for the people in Botswana
- ensure cost effective availability and dissemination of information in all relevant formats
- facilitate staff development and uptake on new trends and technologies in Libraries
- collaborate with other regional, national and international organizations with similar mandate

Botswana library consortia can enable small library that cannot afford expensive databases to serve their clients through resource sharing:

The Botswana Library Consortium provides limitless access to resources, which ensures that no one is left behind in terms provision of quality education, gender equality, social justice, global partnership for social equity and for all 17 sustainable development goals

It also provides access to databases that are restricted or bonded by legal obligation, shares information on the availability of free resources and provides, supports their trainings

The BLC membership is made up of all types of the library in Botswana. Members are expected to sign a Memorandum of Understanding as a commitment to the Consortium and agreement to abide by all rules of the consortium. All members are to pay subscription fees by April each year.

Botswana Library Consortium is currently subscribing to the following Electronic Resources, EBSCOhost, ProQuest Central and other open access resources recommended by partners.

2. Botswana Library Consortium-EIFL Collaborative

Botswana has been an affiliate of EIFL since 2005. EIFL has supported the creation of the Botswana Libraries Consortium (BLC), and through this partnership, libraries in Botswana are providing access to a wide range of scholarly e-resources. EIFL agreements with publishers also allow authors in Botswana to publish in open access

in hybrid or fully open access journals at waived or discounted Article Processing Charges (APCs).

EIFL has been advocating for research funders and universities to introduce open access policies. EIFL has also raised awareness on library copyright issues through training and a support service that assisted with copyright questions.

EIFL assisted Botswana Libraries Consortium (BLC) to mitigate burden of paywalls by negotiating the following:

a) Agreement with Publishers and Content Aggregators

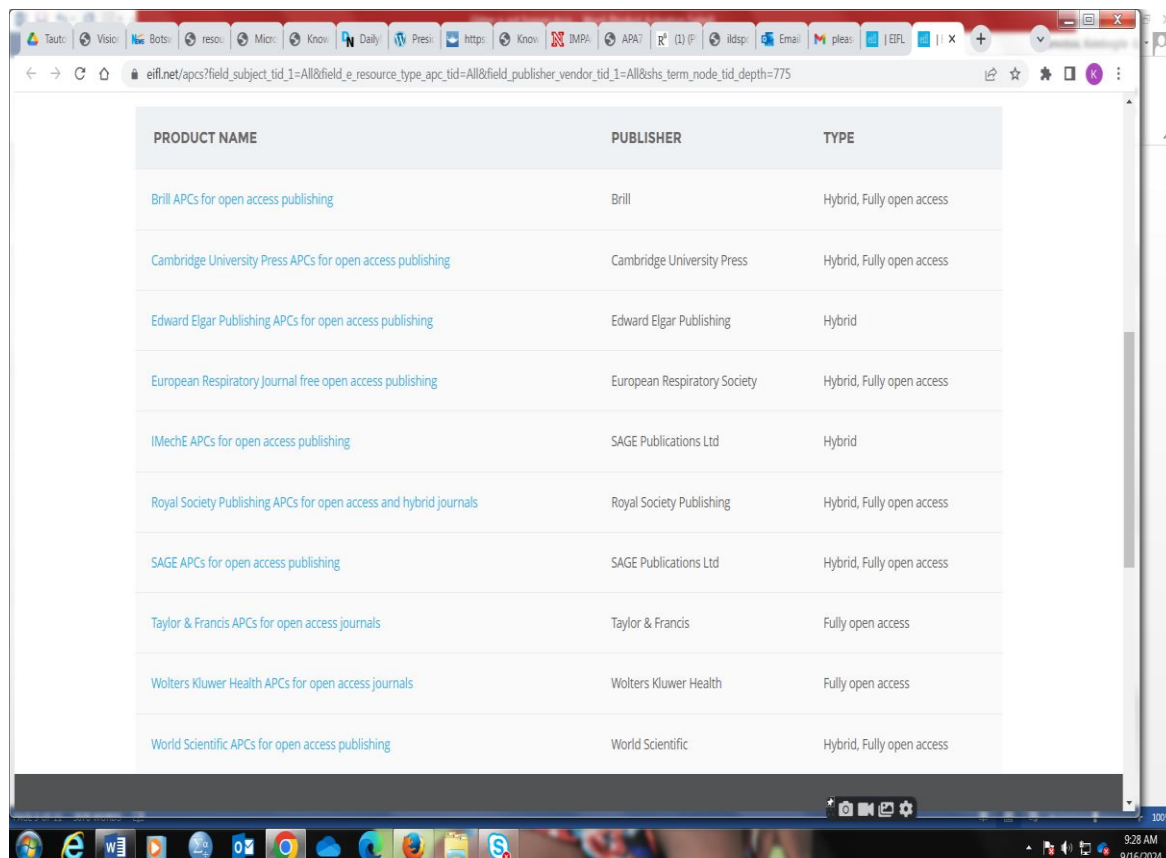
PRODUCT NAME ↑↑	PUBLISHER	TYPE
Brill Journals	Brill	Journals
Credo Online Reference Service, Academic Core Collection	Infobase	Database, E-books
e-Duke Journals Scholarly Collection	Duke University Press	Journals
Euclid Prime Collection	Duke University Press	Journals
European Respiratory Journal	European Respiratory Society	Journals
HeinOnline	William S. Hein & Co., Inc.	Database
JSTOR Archive Journals	JSTOR	Journals
JSTOR Backlist E-books	JSTOR	E-books
Open Book Publishers E-books	Open Book Publishers	E-books
Royal Society Journals Collection	Royal Society Publishing	Journals

Table 1: List of negotiated e-resources for use free or at discounted prices by Consortia.

One can see that there are more than ten databases with links to a number of scholarly journals. Furthermore, EIFL has promoted an awareness on national and institutional level regarding open access and advocacy workshops resulting in a number of open access repositories in the country.

One member of the Botswana Library Consortium (BLC) indicated that their institution has saved significantly since they joined or subscribed through the consortium. The Institution gave an example that in 2018 before they subscribed through the consortium, they EBSCO Package \$44,540 few years later after subscribing through the consortium they paid \$25,654. As such the institution saved \$18,886.

b) Agreements with Publishers for Article Processing Charges

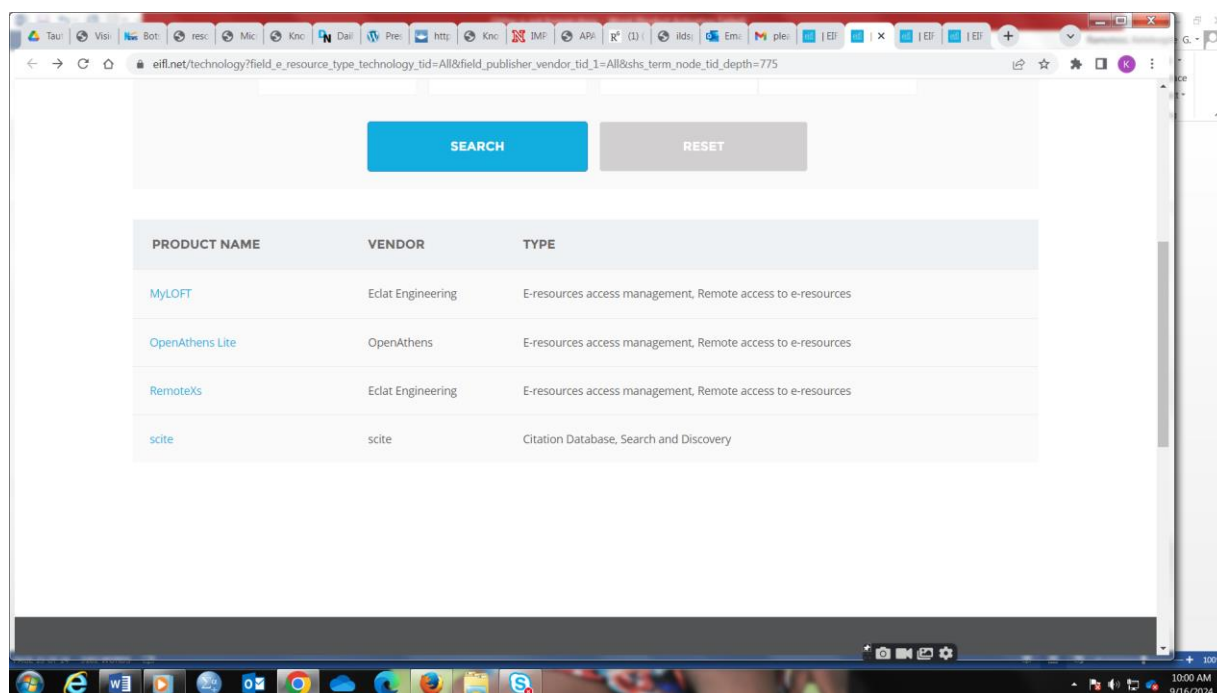


PRODUCT NAME	PUBLISHER	TYPE
Brill APCs for open access publishing	Brill	Hybrid, Fully open access
Cambridge University Press APCs for open access publishing	Cambridge University Press	Hybrid, Fully open access
Edward Elgar Publishing APCs for open access publishing	Edward Elgar Publishing	Hybrid
European Respiratory Journal free open access publishing	European Respiratory Society	Hybrid, Fully open access
IMechE APCs for open access publishing	SAGE Publications Ltd	Hybrid
Royal Society Publishing APCs for open access and hybrid journals	Royal Society Publishing	Hybrid, Fully open access
SAGE APCs for open access publishing	SAGE Publications Ltd	Hybrid, Fully open access
Taylor & Francis APCs for open access journals	Taylor & Francis	Fully open access
Wolters Kluwer Health APCs for open access journals	Wolters Kluwer Health	Fully open access
World Scientific APCs for open access publishing	World Scientific	Hybrid, Fully open access

Table 2: List of Publishers Wavering Article Processing Charges.

EIFEL has successfully negotiated wavers in respect of Article Processing Charges (APCs) to authors from eligible EIFL partner countries through Licensing Programme. Corresponding authors in Botswana have been subsidized up to 80% to publish Botswana in Brill APCs for Open Access Publishing, EIFL has negotiated discounted Article Processing Charges (APCs) for authors in Botswana when they publish in a Brill fully Open Access or hybrid journal, which could not have been possible if there was no consortium, or partnership with EIFL.

c) Research Support Services



PRODUCT NAME	VENDOR	TYPE
MyLOFT	Eclat Engineering	E-resources access management, Remote access to e-resources
OpenAthens Lite	OpenAthens	E-resources access management, Remote access to e-resources
RemoteXs	Eclat Engineering	E-resources access management, Remote access to e-resources
scite	scite	Citation Database, Search and Discovery

Table 3: List of Research Support Services negotiated by EIFEL

The services negotiated facilitate the management of e-resources and improving the quality of research and are now available at discounted prices to library consortia, their library members and authors in eligible EIFL partner countries through Licensing Programme. The University of Botswana has subscribed to Open Athens which is an identity and access management solution that provides remote access to e-resources through a single-sign on. It helps librarians to manage authentication and end-user accounts. It also assist with comprehensive usage statistics which shows how often content is accessed and by which users.

Challenges

Despite all the positive outcome resulting from the collaboration of the two entities, Botswana Library Consortium still faces challenges as it continue to develop and get fully established to meet its mandate. Areas that require consideration include the following:

- A sustainable system to make resources available to meet its subscription obligations
- To expand its infrastructure for additional office space
- To expand its training needs to support the development and retention of its work force
- To explore avenues for improving working relationships with its stakeholders institution in order to maximize its supporting functions and effective contribute to the national developmental agenda

The importance of Consortium and Resource Sharing cannot be overemphasized, Libraries cannot continue to work in isolation as the Libraries get money from the same coffers which is the government of Botswana. The University of Botswana is also a member of SANLIC (Southern African National Library and Information Consortium). They have acquired the following resources through SANLIC: American Institute of Physics (AIP), ASTM Digital Library, Cambridge Journals Online, Citation Connection, Conference Proceedings Citation Index, Encyclopedia Britannica, Institute of physics (IOP), MathSciNet, Oxford University press, Sage, Science Online, Science Classics, Springer, Taylor & Francis, Web of Science Core Subscription and Wiley. The total amount needed to paid for these resources through the SANLIC deal is P11 903 337.74 compared to P144 016 050.30 that the library could be paying outside the consortium. By subscribing through SANLIC the institution saved P132 157 712.56.

Both the small and big libraries who are part of the consortium do benefit a lot, as they cannot afford most of the databases on their own.

EIFL is the backbone of the Botswana consortium training as it affords training for their staff and researchers on Open Access and copyright issues. It also helps researchers to publish in Journals that they would not ordinary be able to publish in as individuals due to the high cost. In addition it assists with negotiations of e-resource management apps

Through resource sharing, libraries will be able to help Botswana realize its dream of having a knowledge based economy by 2036 through commercialization of results of R&D and innovation amongst others

Conclusion

While Botswana continues to revel in its glittering precious stones, it is clear from the foregoing that there is a pressing need to join in the rest of the world in transitioning to a more sustainable future with knowledge as the modern currency that actively propels the economy. The Botswana Library Consortium as an in-country repository source and resource provider, working in close collaboration with EIFL as a global support entity offers a great model that can potentially create an enabling environment and a platform for resource sharing and utilization by the country library system to provide access to knowledge and information towards realizing our aspiration to transform Botswana into knowledge-based economy of the 21st century. This will also ensure that the benefits of development are shared in an equitable and sustainable manner consistent with Sustainable Development Goal Agenda.

References

Galyani Moghaddam, G., & Talawar, V. G. (2009). Library consortia in developing countries: an overview. *Program*, 43(1), 94-104.

Kojo, N. (2010) Diamonds are Not Forever: Botswana Medium-Term Fiscal Sustainability. SSRN Electronic Journal <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1710610>

<https://www.eifl.net/country/botswana>

Mbaakany (31.05.2005) Notarial Deed of Trust Of The Botswana Libraries Consortium Trust; Gaborone

Moghaddam & Talawar (2009) Library Consortia in Developing Countries: An Program electronic library and information systems

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/28810381>

Muthu, M. (2013). Resource sharing in libraries: A vital role of consortia. *International Research: Journal of Library and Information Science*, 3(1).

Singh, S. and Singh, S. (2004), "Need for joining library consortia: a study of Vikram University Library", in Rao, N.L. and Murthy, T. (Eds), *Proceedings of National Seminar on Library Consortia*, 22-23 March, Hyderabad, India, pp. 267-9