

**Report of the
Proceedings of the Launch Meeting
of Society of African Journal Editors (SAJE)**

**Lenana Mount Hotel
15th-18th December 2004**

**Rockefeller Foundation
and Rural Outreach Program (ROP)**
(Other sponsors: ASERECA, INASP, IFPRI and MONSANTO CO. of USA)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iii
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PRESS RELEASE	iv
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The First Day1**SESSION I: INTRODUCTION, OFFICIAL OPENING AND PLENARY PAPERS**

1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Background information	1
1.2 Statement from Rockefeller Foundation.....	2

SESSION II: PAPER PRESENTATIONS 3

2.1. Assessment of Visibility and Prominence of Journals.....	3
2.2 Basic Overview of Production issues including Design, Quality, Efficiency and Timeliness of Journals	4
2.4 Challenges in the work of Reviewers	6
2.5 Challenges in the work of reviewers.....	7
2.6 Funding Research and Researchers through Subsidising on Published Work: A Case of South Africa (S/A).....	9
2.7 The Challenges of Indexing Grey Literature in Africa	10

SESSION III: SHARING EXPERIENCES IN JOURNAL PUBLISHING..... 12

3.1 Nigeria Journal of Health and Biomedical Sciences:.....	12
3.2 ‘SINET’: Ethiopia Journal of Science	13
3.3 Annals of African Medicine; Publishing a Journal with a Continental Coverage	17
3.4 Nigerian Journal of Surgical Research (NJSR): With challenges of publishing with a national coverage.....	17
3.5. African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development.....	19

SECTION IV: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 21**The Second Day 22****SESSION I – PAPER PRESENTATION 22**

1.1 Copyright Issues	22
1.2 Capacity Building for Student Authors and Researchers.....	23
1.3 Views and Comments for SAJE on Capacity Building	23

SESSION II: GROUP PRESENTATIONS 25

2.1 Draft Constitution	25
2.2 Press Release	27
2.3 SAJE Strategic Plan.....	28

SESSION III: ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS 30**SECTION IV: VOTE OF THANKS 31****ANNEXES 32****ANNEX 1: STRATEGIC PLAN FOR SAJE 32****ANNEX 2: THE PAPERS PRESENTED DURING THE MEETING 35****ANNEX 3: SAJE LAUNCH MEETING PROGRAM..... 50****ANNEX 4: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS 52**

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PRESS RELEASE

LAUNCHING OF SOCIETY OF AFRICAN JOURNAL EDITORS (SAJE)

The launching of the Society of African Journal Editors (SAJE) took place on the 16th and 17th December, 2004 at the Lenana Mount Hotel, Nairobi, Kenya. The two-day workshop drew participants who are mainly editors, reviewers and associated collaborators from eight (8) African countries namely Nigeria, Ghana, Botswana, Uganda, South Africa, Ethiopia, the Kingdom of Lesotho and Kenya.

The workshop was organized by the Rural Outreach Program headed by the Hon. Prof. Ruth Oniang'o (Nominated MP) and sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation, International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP), International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), MONSANTO Company USA, Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA) and the Rural Outreach Program (ROP).

The society was formed following a proposal that was put forward during the 1999 Zanzibar conference (Arusha IV) on 'Strengthening Scholarly Publishing in Africa' to form a Pan-African Association of Scholarly journal editors. Following the conference, efforts were made to reach out to the editors of scholarly journals on the continent. The overwhelming positive response from them consequently led to the formation of a ten-member working committee in October 2002. Between 2002 to date, the committee worked towards laying a strong foundation for the formation of the society, which has culminated in a draft constitution with the following objectives:

- i. to facilitate and organize capacity-building activities geared towards improving the editorial and managerial skills of editors of African scholarly journals as well as raising the quality of journals published in Africa;
- ii. to facilitate networking and promote the sharing of information, experience, resources and expertise among African journal editors as well as between them and their colleagues elsewhere in the world;
- iii. to improve the promotion, marketing and distribution of African journals, and contribute to their sustainability;

- iv. to mobilize resources and provide support for the strengthening and growth of African journals;
- v. to promote maximum utilization of African journals in the academia, the development community and among policy-makers; and,
- vi. to enhance international visibility of African journals.

The launching entailed the official inauguration of the Society, paper presentations, sharing of experiences with regard to good practices of journal production, discussions and the formation of an Interim Central Working Committee to oversee the activities of the Society. African editors realized the need to improve the quality and dissemination of scholarly research more effectively continentally and internationally. Some of the recommendations of the society include: Training workshops for editors, reviewers and authors; sourcing of funding; development of policies, ethics and guidelines for quality journals and indexing of published journals; and enlisting as many members as possible. Participation in all sessions of the workshop was enthusiastic and all-inclusive.

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The First Day

SESSION I: INTRODUCTION, OFFICIAL OPENING AND PLENARY PAPERS

Chair. Hon. Prof. Ruth Oniang'o (Rural Outreach Program-Kenya)

1.0 Introduction

The meeting begun by representatives from 8 African countries: Nigeria, Ghana, Botswana, Uganda, South Africa (S/A), Kenya, Ethiopia, Lesotho getting to know one another through formal introduction led by the Chair person Hon. Prof. Ruth Oniang'o. The opening session was graced by representatives of some of the sponsoring organizations specifically Rockefeller Foundation and ASARECA (Association Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa). Other sponsors of this meeting included ROP (Rural Outreach Program), INASP (International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publication), and IFPRI (International Food Policy Research Institute) and MONSANTO Company, USA.

1.1 Background information

Hon. Prof. Ruth Oniang'o who is also the Editor-in-Chief of AJFAND (African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development), formerly AJFNS (African Journal of Food and Nutritional Sciences) informed the participants that Rural Outreach Program (ROP) publishes AJFAND. ROP was formed 10 years ago with the aim, as she put it “to take the University to the people and address African/Kenyan problems”. The objective of the meeting was specifically, to launch the Society of African Journal of Editors, a process that had been going on since 2002, resulting in the production of a draft constitution that was to be ratified during the SAJE launch meeting.

Further, the meeting would elect an interim office to manage SAJE agenda on activities, provide a one-year strategic plan, and select a team to complete the constitution and finalise the logo.

1.2 Statement from Rockefeller Foundation

Rockefeller Foundation Director for Africa Dr Peter Matlon told participants that his organization focuses on capacity building, training and research in agriculture and health. He noted that the biggest problem facing African researchers is the inability to disseminate research findings, both locally and to other interested groups around the world. He noted that research done in Africa, was difficult to publish in International journals because it addresses local problems and applied research, while most international journals prefer publishing basic research.

The Rockefeller Regional Director for Africa pointed out that the following are key problems facing African-based journals:

- Sustainability of African journals is difficult
- Lack of expertise in editorial work
- Lack of innovative marketing
- Lack of appropriate information and target market
- African research and publications have local application and rarely reach the international arena
- Lack of collaboration and partnership with other international journals

Questions and Discussion

- Prof Oniang'o revealed that only a mere 0.1% of what is available globally, in terms of research findings that are published, comes from Africa.
- The participants agreed that a strategic plan for SAJE should be developed to address the above issues.

SESSION II: PAPER PRESENTATIONS

Chair. Prof. Tolu Odugbemi (College of Medicine, University of Lagos)

2.1. Assessment of Visibility and Prominence of Journals

Tankie Khalanyene (National University of Lesotho)

Mr. Tankie Khalanyane from Lesotho gave a brief presentation of how a journal can assess its visibility and prominence. He pointed out that the editors would be advised to look out for the following key indicators to find out how they are reaching out to their target audience:

- ❖ Number of articles received
- ❖ Sources of articles (scope of coverage)
- ❖ Website and internet accessibility
- ❖ Data to show people accessing the journal
- ❖ Professional Societies the journal is affiliated to
- ❖ The issue of intellectual property with regards to published work

Questions and Discussion

- During the discussion, the participants indicated that publishing in Africa is hampered by a number of factors, chief among them being poor reading culture and lack of resources to support budding journals. To address these problems, the editors listed the following as possible solutions:
 - ❖ African journals to utilize internet facilities
 - ❖ Design for both online and printed versions of journals should be appealing and attractive
 - ❖ Exchange of publication with journals in other disciplines
 - ❖ Attendance at exhibitions and book fairs
 - ❖ Development of a data base and indexing the journals

- ❖ Aggressive advertisement and marketing
- ❖ Announcing arrival of new volumes
- ❖ Distributing table of contents for readers who might be interested to access or need to purchase
- ❖ Identification of collaborators and partners to work with, both locally and abroad

2.2 Basic Overview of Production issues including Design, Quality, Efficiency and Timeliness of Journals

Mrs. Margaret Mukulo (Rural Outreach Program (ROP-AJFAND))

Focus on: Editorial Policies of African Journal of Food, Agriculture Nutrition and Development- AJFAND

Margaret Mukulo, the Editorial Manager of AJFAND presented a paper giving the basic overview of production issues including design, quality, efficiency and timeliness in journal publication. She noted that the basic function of any journal is to inform and educate the respective readership. She added that journals are avenues for information exchange among various groups on different issues.

Mukulo told the participants that manuscripts submitted to AJFAND are assessed for scope, in terms of scientific origination, international readership and how they cover aspects on food, nutrition, development and agriculture. Within the scope, the methodology used is also considered.

Mukulo dealt at length on the procedures and protocols followed from the time the manuscripts are submitted, all the way to reviewers' assignment, editorial decision making and generally, how the manuscripts are finally published. She informed the audience that AJFAND has since gone strictly *online*, as it had become difficult to financially sustain printing and publication costs.

The participants were informed that decision making in AJFAND focuses on when and how the manuscripts are selected as well as reviewing of the manuscripts once submitted. At least, two reviewers are assigned one manuscript. The reviewers are expected to be objective, speedy and

justifiable in their work. In addition, the reviewing process is designed to be confidential and courteous. The decision making process is directly based on the reviewers' comments. The AJFAND utilizes the internet communication with the authors. Mukulo further noted that AJFAND website is easily accessible and free to everyone. The material on the website is also freely downloadable.

In terms of challenges, Mukulo told the audience that the biggest problem they grapple with daily in their work is lateness, both on the side of the reviewers and authors. There are cases where authors make resubmission without effecting the reviewers' comments. Other problems included what she called 'bad papers'. Bad papers, as it later emerged, were poorly written papers with many grammatical and typographical errors, besides, the 'weighty' issues of scope and relevance that would equally be wanting. Even more intriguing, Mukulo said, were those reviewers who would recommend the article for publication, without giving any documentary basis for their stand. Communication was noted to be another area where AJFAND finds many difficulties, especially the intermittent faltering of internet facilities and sheer traffic problems that plague the local internet services (This is expected to improve with the recent government licensing of new players in the industry).

Questions and Discussion

- During the discussion, the participants were unanimous on the issue of e-prints. They recommended strongly for AJFAND to consider the use PDF files, particularly for authors who would like to use their published work when seeking promotion.
- The participants were equally in agreement that institutions and organizations, more so universities, should begin to recognize the citation of publications that are strictly *online* for purposes of promoting and encouraging use of modern technology and authorship among their own members.
- The meeting also recommended that where resources allow, hard copy versions should be encouraged, since not everybody can access the internet as easily as it is assumed.
- It was also noted during the discussion that publishers need to give guidelines stating in very clear terms, the timeframe for both reviewers and authors to submit their work. AJFAND, it was

reported, does not give time frame for reviewers and authors when they are expected to return the manuscripts once they are sent out.

- Engaging more reviewers and motivating them were suggested to be some of the ways reviewers can be encouraged to complete the work on time.

2.4 Challenges in the work of Reviewers

Mr. Emmanuel Afoakwa (University of Ghana)

Mr. Emmanuel Afoakwa also shared his experiences with the participants about the challenges of a reviewer. In his presentation, Afoakwa explained that reviewing was basically a voluntary activity, without any monetary gain. In this regard, he said, it taxes the philosophical persuasion as well as the commitment of the reviewer to accomplish the work. Because of the voluntary nature of the reviewer's work, delays are inevitable since editors would be least expected to exert any pressure on the reviewers to hasten the pace at which they are working.

Afoakwa strongly appealed to the journal editors to provide clear time frame for submission of both reviewed manuscripts as well as the corrected articles from authors. By so doing, they would assist both the reviewers and authors to program their work to fit well into the conveyor-belt-like system of journal production.

Questions and Discussion

- In the discussion, it was felt that clear guidelines should be provided as when to reject the manuscript, especially where two reviewers give conflicting positions.
- Moreover, the question as to what is important when deciding rejection should be clarified. Is it purely on the basis of grammar, typographical or mechanistic insights that inform the acceptance or rejection of a manuscript?
- The participants were of the view that reviewers can also solicit support of colleagues with expertise in those areas where they feel, they themselves are lacking in knowledge and understanding.

- Issues of monetary reward and facilitation came up in the discussion too, as a way of motivating reviewers.

2.5 Challenges in the work of reviewers

Dr. Joyce Kikafunda (Makerere University-Uganda)

Dr Joyce Kikafunda from Makerere University in Uganda was also at hand to discuss the challenges of reviewers. Besides echoing the sentiments expressed earlier by previous speakers (Mr. Afoakwa and Mrs. Mukulo), Dr Kikafunda introduced a very interesting aspect about the benefits of reviewing. She was also keen to provide the participants with practical ways of overcoming the now-almost- familiar hiccups in the reviewing process.

Dr. Kikafunda mentioned reading interesting pieces of research findings, the widening of one's field of knowledge, updating oneself with most recent developments in research and technology and the satisfaction arising from the realization that one is contributing to the fountain of knowledge when the reviewed article is successfully published, as some of the benefits reviewers stand to gain from their work..

As for the challenges, Dr Kikafunda outlined that time was a big constraint to most reviewers, since most of them are busy professionals with a lot of other commitments. Kikafunda also brought out the issue of diversity in the fields covered by the manuscripts against the availability of the reviewers. In this respect, Kikafunda suggested that reviewers need to read widely to acquaint themselves with areas where they are inadequately competent to review. She also mentioned obvious grammatical and typographical errors that take a lot of the reviewers' time that would have been spent more appropriately on 'weighty' aspects of content and relevance.

Another issue that came out strongly during Dr. Kikafunda's presentation was the question of language. It was noted that because of the segmentation of Africa, particularly into the English, French and Arabic speaking blocks, some authors find problems communicating clearly in a second language; one in which s/he is not well versed with.

The cost aspect of review work was raised by Kikafunda. She noted that some reviewers are of the ‘old-school’ (including herself) and have to print out hard copies of the manuscripts to be able to review, and this costs money.

Finally, Dr Kikafunda appealed to authors to be more thorough in editing their work before submission. She also suggested to the participants that a clear and a well defined set of review guidelines should be developed by SAJE. This should focus on aspects such as abstract and recommendations, which are not included in the current system of reviewing. In the end, Dr. Kikafunda proposed that training should be undertaken to train those reviewers who are not conversant with electronic reviewing.

- As a way of overcoming the above challenges, she mentioned the following as possible solutions:
- For reviewers if possible, to try reviewing immediately once they receive the manuscripts; alternatively to put a reminder and allocate time to review.
- For manuscripts that are irredeemably flawed, especially for grammar and typographical errors, should politely be sent back to the authors for polishing before they are submitted for reviewing
- Authors should be encouraged to distribute first draft of their manuscripts to colleagues for basic editing before submitting.

Questions and Discussions

- During plenary discussions, the issue of motivating reviewers was once again revisited. In addition, it was also proposed that journals should have stand-by copy editors as an in-house arrangement for journals to try and reduce the work of reviewers.
- There is a need to clearly define the role of a reviewer; s/he cannot be a jack of everything.
- The participants were of the opinion that scientific writing is an art hence, training is necessary. In this connection, SAJE was called upon to consider training for reviewers to supplement what is being done by other groups like ASARECA in scientific writing, as a core mission.

- The need to bring on board the rest of Africa including Francophone, Arab-phone countries and other institutions that could assist the cause of journal publishing in Africa should be embraced by SAJE.
- Finally, members agreed that guidelines are indeed important in streamlining journal publication in Africa to meet international standards.

2.6 Funding Research and Researchers through Subsidising on Published Work: A Case of South Africa (S/A)

Prof. Este Vorster (North-West University-South Africa)

Professor Este Vorster, from North-West University in South Africa in her presentation gave an incisive description of the journal publishing practices in South Africa, the latest African country to enter the commonwealth.

Prof. Vorster stated that South Africans publish only in international and S/A journals. The basis of this trend is because the state subsidizes universities when members publish in vetted journals, which are mostly of international standing and those in S/A. All vetted journals are indexed. In this practice, papers published in the indexed journals earn units and corresponding subsidy. Every single article published in the vetted journal is worth 75, 00 Rand (S/A National currency).

Questions and Discussion

- The meeting proposed that SAJE puts in motion structures and measures that would allow member journals to find an entry into the S/A subsidy program.

2.7 The Challenges of Indexing Grey Literature in Africa

Mr. Eliazer Karani (Kenya Medical Association)

Mr. Eliazer Karani from the East African medical journal was invited to present a paper on the challenges of indexing grey literature in Africa. Karani defined grey literature as scientific and research work that is not published in the internationally recognized journals, what is otherwise known as indexed journals. Karani informed the participants that many African researchers and authors do not have access to indexed journals. This is basically due to the stringent requirements needed for one to publish in these journals. Another reason why many African authors do not publish in the indexed journals is because they do not know the journals that are indexed (there is a need for catalogue information). Sometimes they are ignorant of the need to publish in these particular journals.

Karani told participants that one of the requirements for a journal to be indexed is to have a critical number of personnel to handle the technical and professional details. These details include details of the papers, key words and phrases as well as structured abstracts.

He also mentioned the following to be some of the factors hampering the indexing of grey literature in Africa:

- Computer Programmes which are not user friendly
- Database servers which are biased
- Very few African journals are indexed and therefore inevitably get marginalized.

Karani informed the meeting that a number of initiatives have been started to address the dearth of indexed journals in Africa. These include:

- Africa Index Medicas –AIM
- Africa Journal Online- AJOL
- Bioline International

He lamented that even with these initiatives, many obstacles still remain in the way of indexing African journals; these include:

- For AIM, it is by and large a voluntary activity, there is lack of equipment, funds and skills and computer software that is user unfriendly
- For AJOL, the biggest hurdle is the tight funding which minimizes its activities and coverage, and limited in-house capacity
- The Bioline initiative is not funded because it allows open access; some journals are reluctant to link up, especially where subscription and selling of the journal is the main source of revenue.

In closing, Karani submitted that as a way forward for African grey literature, the following areas need to be addressed:

- Submission of structured abstracts
- Training and capacity building of indexing personnel in scientific publications
- AIM should be institutionalized to allow allocation of resources, specific for this activity
- There is need to source funding to facilitate indexing of African journals.

Questions and Discussion

- During the discussion, the participants appealed to SAJE to spearhead efforts in indexing the African journals.
- However, for many African journals to qualify for indexing, they should, among other things, avoid delays in releasing their issues.
- There should be consistency in the general outlay of the journals.
- Apart from delays, the meeting also resolved that pertinent ethical issues relating to authorship and double publication should be addressed.
- Cases where authors, after receiving corrections from the reviewer, submit the manuscript elsewhere for publication should also be addressed by SAJE.
- The participants agreed that for African journals to enjoy international respect and readership, they should avoid abuse of journalistic ethos.

SESSION III: SHARING EXPERIENCES IN JOURNAL PUBLISHING

Chair. Dr. Ciira Kiyukia (Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology)

3.1 Nigeria Journal of Health and Biomedical Sciences:

Prof. Tolu Odugbemi (University of Lagos)

Professor Tolu Odugbemi from Nigeria presented a paper on sharing experiences in journal running. Prof. Odugbemi shared with the participants the experience of running a journal in Africa. He informed the participants that he started publishing the Nigerian Journal of Health and Biomedical Sciences (NJHBS) in 2002. Prof. Tolu revealed that since its inception, the journal has faced a number of problems which include under-funding, lack of recognition of research efforts, inexperienced writers, reviewers, printers and advertisers.

Prof. Odugbemi outlined the challenges NJHBS has faced for the last two years. They include:

- Private ownership. Going on without government support
- Having a committed Editorial Board
- Ensuring a broad scope of areas to cover
- Having an Editor –in- Chief who is dedicated, committed and experienced
- Multidisciplinary spread of Editorial Consultants/Advisers

He stated that NJHBS has the following scope and aims:

- Meet challenges of health care delivery in the 21st century in Nigeria and similar countries
- Focus on the basic medical sciences, clinical sciences, dental sciences, pharmaceutical sciences, Telehealth/medicine, Clinical and Biomedical engineering

Prof. Odugbemi told the participants that the journal has been able to create an editorial office to coordinate the publication of the journal.

Questions and Discussion

- During discussion time, the participants commented Prof. Odugbemi for his talent in fundraising which has enabled NJHBS to run without experiencing serious financial setbacks
- The support from individuals (mainly Prof. Odugbemi's friends) and organizations was noted to be instrumental in assisting NJHBS to continue publication
- The participants, however, mentioned the need for journal publishers to endeavor to be self-sustaining through aggressive marketing and high quality publications.

3.2 'SINET': Ethiopia Journal of Science

Dr. Abebe Getahun (Addis Ababa University)

Dr. Getahun also shared with the participants the experience of running the *Ethiopian Journal of Science*. Dr. Getahun told the participants that SINET has been in existence since 1978 with 26 volumes having been produced so far. It is a bi-annual journal that comes out in June and December.

Dr. Getahun informed participants that the quality of the journal has been improving with time; many changes has been effected including the size, and the color of the outer covers of the journal. Most of the changes are in many cases reflective of the changes in management of the journal, which happens from time to time. The journal, Getahun revealed, had three permanent staff. The rest of the employees work on part-time basis including the associate editors and Editor-in -Chief.

Getahun said that 'Sinet' (Local name meaning science) is a peer –reviewed journal of science, published by the Faculty of Science, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia. Since its inception in 1978, SINET has been publishing original articles, review articles, short communications, and original feature articles in basic and applied sciences. Manuscripts submitted to the journal are in English and are reviewed by national and international experts.

When SINET started publishing 1978, Getahun added, one issue had only 6 articles and 60 pages. He said that the journal has undergone changes over the years in form and context and currently, publishes 10 articles per issue on average. After celebrating its 25th anniversary, it has started publishing with A4 size thick and glossy papers. He told the meeting that SINET is indexed and abstracted by:

- American Mathematical review
- Biosis
- CAB international
- Environment abstract

In terms of the publication's staff set-up, Dr Getahun stated that permanent staff includes:

- Editorial manager
- Assistant editorial manager
- Office girl

While Part-time staffs are:

- Editor-in-Chief
- Eight associate Editors

As for the source of the manuscripts, Getahun said that the journals receive manuscripts from:

- Universities- 50-70%
- Research institutions- 10-25%
- College and others- 10-20%

On average SINET receives 40-50 manuscripts per year.

Dr. Getahun was candid that SINET does not experience funding problems. This could be attributed to the strong institutional framework of the journal. Sources of funds for SINET come from varied sources but mostly:

- Swedish International Development Agencies (SIDA) through the Ethiopian Science and Technology Commission (ESTC)
- Graduate and Research program office of the Addis Ababa University
- Faculty of Science, Addis Ababa University
- Membership fee

Dr Getahun took the participants through the small details of publishing that are undertaken before the journal is produced, as paraphrased below:

- Manuscripts are sent to the editorial office with a letter stating that the manuscript has not been submitted to any other journal
- The manuscript is then given to the relevant associate editor for preliminary review
- The Associate Editor can:
 - Reject the manuscript if it is not up to standard of SINET
 - Send it back to the author for improvement of some aspects of the manuscript before it is sent to the reviewer
- When reviewing, the response from the reviewers can be:
 - Rejection by majority. A letter will be written to the author with reasons for rejection
 - Acceptance by majority. The associate editor will determine, based on recommendations of reviewers and on his/her judgment the column in which the manuscript will be published. The manuscript then will be sent to the author so that he/she responds to the comments point by point and accommodate them.
- The Associate Editor, upon reviewing the revised manuscript, will check whether or not the comments forwarded by the reviewers are properly addressed in the received manuscript. If the comments are not properly addressed, the manuscript will be sent back to the author. If accommodated, then the manuscript will be processed for printing
- After the manuscript is processed, in the form ready to be published in the journal, it will be sent to the author for proof reading before finally being published
- Finally, all manuscripts will be checked by the Editor-in- Chief and then published.

Some of the constraints that have been noted in running SINET, Dr. Getahun observed, include:

- Getting appropriate reviewers
- Reviewers not responding in time
- Sending manuscripts concurrently to different journals on part of the authors. In some cases, some authors do not respond after reviewers have given their comments and the article conditionally accepted.

Questions and Discussion

- In the ensuing discussion, participants once again looked over the issue of procedures that the article goes through before publication, since it had been exhaustively tackled in the previous presentations.
- However, the meeting also raised the issue of reviewer fatigue. It was noted that editors will always send manuscripts to reviewers who are receptive, and these are few. Consequently, these reviewers get overwhelmed, leading to delay in reviewing or even to sub-standard work.
- The meeting recommended the need to come up with ways and means of motivating reviewers and attracting more individuals to be reviewers.
- The issue of delay was equally addressed at this point by the participants. The meeting felt that it would be ethically appropriate for reviewers to let the editors know in time when they are too busy to review so that the manuscripts can be assigned to other reviewers, instead of keeping the manuscripts for days on end.
- Similarly, still on the issue of ethics, the meeting resolved that in cases where authorship is the combined work of more than one person, especially between a student and his /her lecturer, the authorship should reflect the proportionality of individual input or contribution to the write-up.

3.3 Annals of African Medicine; Publishing a Journal with a Continental Coverage

Prof. Bello Shehu and Prof. Emmanuel A. Ameh (Usmanu Danfidiyo University Teaching Hospital Sokoto Nigeria and Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria, respectively)

Professors Bello Shehu and Emmanuel Ameh, gave a presentation entitled “Annals of African Medicine; Publishing a Journal with a Continental Coverage’. In their presentation, the two professors from Nigeria informed the meeting that the journal was started two years ago (2002). It was clear from their presentations that just like previous presenters, Annals of African Medicine Journal had experienced generic problems as mentioned by earlier speakers.

They mentioned funding, personnel and facilities as issues that they continue to address and require improvement. They noted that they have problems with sorting of manuscripts, some of their readers can only correspond using hard copies which is expensive, also it is difficult to satisfy some authors.

The two professors also decried the dearth of professional publishers in Africa, and Nigeria in particular, saying that those who masquerade as publishers are merely printers. In addition, Shehu and Ameh wanted African journals indexed so as to attract many readers. But the participants wondered what should come first; quality or indexing (the *chicken and egg* dilemma).

3.4 Nigerian Journal of Surgical Research (NJSR): With Challenges of Publishing with a National coverage

Prof. Emmanuel A. Ameh and Prof. Hyacinth Mbibu (Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria Nigeria)

Professors Emmanuel Ameh and Hyacinth Mbibu presented the paper “Nigerian Journal of Surgical Research: Challenges of publishing with a national Coverage”

Ameh and Mbibu told the participants of many hurdles that they experience in trying to publish NJSR. They revealed that their basic problems have been limited funds and lack of interest, especially for authorship among the medical fraternity. They said that sorting out manuscripts has been a big problem to them too. This, they said had led to delays in releasing issues of their journal on time. They also attributed the journal perceived incompetence and lack of consistency on the manuscript sorting issue. To improve visibility and to expand the level of readership and outreach for most African journals, the two Professors outlined the following:

- Distribution/Subscription: Bioline, Africa WW, British and Canadian libraries
- Indexing of the journal is important for recognition

As to the way forward, Professors Ameh and Mbibu suggested that the sustainability of the production of the journal can be achieved through:

- Training of personnel
- Attracting quality articles
- Indexing the journal
- Publishing the hard copies for the die-hard ‘traditionalists’.

3.5. African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development

Hon. Prof. Ruth Oniang'o (African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development-Kenya).

Hon. Prof. Ruth Oniang'o, the convener of the SAJE Launch meeting and Editor –in-Chief of African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development outlined the birth and growth of AJFAND to the participants.

Prof. Oniang'o told the attentive participants that initially AJFAND was both available in hard copy and *online* versions. However, now the journal is strictly *online*. Prof. Oniang'o explained that the main reasons for the 3-year old journal going online strictly are manifold and they include:

- Cost of production and distribution
- Printing hard copies have too many mistakes and correcting is difficult once an issue is out
- Without assured funding, it is difficult to maintain the required pool of qualified expertise

The professor said that the main limitation in terms of the online access includes the open access policy (the journal intends to change to PDF format in order to control open access). She added that there is need to educate people on accessing the journal *online* as many people are yet to appreciate the use of internet in Africa.

Prof. Oniang'o informed the participants that AJFAND has been able to last that far, because of the support of many well wishers who have contributed in cash, and in-kind as editors and reviewers, and indeed as authors.

Oniang'o also observed that her effort to launch AJFAND had the inherent and a deliberate attempt for capacity building, especially in the area of journal production in Africa. She told the meeting that all the editors and reviewers with AJFAND are volunteers; none is on a full-time basis.

Prof. Oniang'o commended INASP for organizing, together with ROP (the NGO which she founded) a training workshop for editors and reviewers of journals in Africa. She noted that AJFAND has a section for students to encourage young and up-coming authors.

To motivate reviewers and authors, Prof. Oniang'o revealed to the participants that AJFAND normally allows a photograph of the authors on their article, while for the reviewers, their profiles are put on the AJFAND web page for visibility and recognition. Similarly, in an effort to bring on board Francophone countries, AJFAND publishes article abstracts both in English and French for the benefit of French speaking clientele in Africa and abroad. Translation is done professionally and this is not cheap.

In addition to the scientific publications, commentaries and obituaries of friends of AJFAND are also included.

SECTION IV: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After the day's presentations and discussions, the meeting arrived at the following conclusions and recommendations:

- Research carried out in Africa in most cases is not acceptable by international journals based outside Africa
- There is urgent need for establishment of a body to promote quality, sustainable production and publication of African based journals
- Many challenges face the African journal and these include:
 - Quality of papers that are published
 - Authors' apathy
 - High cost of production
 - Lack of funding for sustainable production
 - Reviewers' fatigue
 - Lack of incentives for editors and reviewers
 - Most African journals are not indexed, and therefore, are not visible and lack prominence
- SAJE needs to play a pivotal role in addressing the above challenges to ensure that our journals are raised to international standards. The following areas need attention:
 - Training of editors and reviewers
 - Educating the stakeholders on the importance of the worldwide web in improving the quality and visibility of African journals
 - Developing guidelines, policy issues and ethics for editors, authors and publishers
 - Spearheading indexing of African journals to ensure visibility, recognition and prominence at international level.
- SAJE to develop a strategic plan

The Second Day

SESSION I – PAPER PRESENTATION

Chair. Prof. Este Vorster (North-West University, South Africa)

1.1 Copyright Issues

Mr. Tankie Khalanyene (National University of Lesotho)

Prof. Tankie Khalanyane made a brief presentation on the copyright issue to the participants. Khalanyane told the meeting that copyright is part of intellectual property right that protects intellectual creativity. Intellectual property covers copyright, trade marks and utility issues and World Intellectual Property Organizations (WIPO) is the world responsibility body for enforcing this code of practice.

He added that copyright issues protect people who publish and editors are directly affected by these laws. He cautioned editors that all copyright material used in published papers must get permission from respective journals/authors, otherwise they risk attracting court action from aggrieved parties.

Questions and Discussion

- During the discussion time, participants noted that intellectual work is protected to motivate people to be creative. It was, therefore, suggested that SAJE should develop a document and guidelines on copyright issues.
- The meeting was also informed that it is possible for an author to transfer his/her copyright to the editor of the journal. As a precaution, the participants were cautioned that all published information used in a paper must be acknowledged accordingly.
- The participants were encouraged to seek permission from authors since more often than not, the permission is always granted.
- The meeting was informed that all countries have copyright offices and their copyright laws may differ.

- Mr. Khalanyane was requested to come up with a detailed paper on copyright issues and circulate to the members.

1.2 Capacity Building for Student Authors and Researchers

Prof. Joseph Allotey (University of Botswana)

Prof. Joseph Allotey from Botswana underscored the dire need to produce scholars in Africa who can contribute to quality publications. He said that the emphasis should be put on nurturing students to publish in peer reviewed journals.

The professor, however, informed the participants that the main challenges that hinder effective integration of young authors in the main stream journal publication in Africa include:

- Finances to support the training of students
- Responsibility and professional moral commitment lacking in the established scholars
- Gender imbalance in the whole area of scholarly publishing

In this connection, Prof. Allotey implored SAJE to put in place a sustainable training structure that will include students. He added that training should involve key stakeholders in the journal production process.

1.3 Views and Comments for SAJE on Capacity Building

Prof. Joseph Allotey (University of Botswana)

Commenting on operationalisation of SAJE, Prof. Allotey emphasized the need for professional and moral commitment for the dissemination of research findings. He said that one cannot overemphasize the professional responsibilities needed to provide and maintain excellence in scholarly work and in the publication of research findings (incorporating students). In this regard though, Prof. Allotey was of the view that over-strictness by some supervisors has the net effect of discouraging students. It is important to use a skilful and persuasive approach that does not threaten or scare away the students.

In summary, Allotey appealed to the participants and the rest of African scholars to perpetuate good authorship in the world and Africa in particular.

“There is moral obligation for all of us to play a part and work as a team” Allotey observed.

Questions and Discussion

- In response to Prof. Allotey’s twin presentation, the Nigerian participants informed the meeting that a students’ journal exists in Nigeria and students are encouraged to publish.
- However, it was generally accepted in the meeting that students should publish along side the experienced scholars; there should be no seclusion whatsoever, that there is a place for student magazines, and there is a place for scholarly publishing.
- It was also agreed that mentoring should be part and parcel of the whole process of encouraging young authors and scholars.

SESSION II: GROUP PRESENTATIONS

Chair. Prof. Este Vorster (North-West University-South Africa)

2.1 Draft Constitution

Abel Toriola (Tshivane University in South Africa), Joyce Kikafunda (Makerere University in Uganda) and Abebe Getahun (Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia)

The constitution was presented and adopted as a SAJE document. The following comments and amendments emerged:

- Overall impression
- Specific comments
- Recommendations

Overall impression

- The constitution is now a SAJE document
- The document was well written
- It would be ideal to start SAJE at regional, national and continental levels or as chapters but funding could be a problem

Specific Comments:

Preamble: Page 1

The word ‘scientific’ used in the preamble may exclude other scholars/Professionals and was recommended that it should be replaced by ‘scholarly’.

Article 1:

- **Item 2:** The emblem logo should be given to an artist to look at. It is an important marketing tool of SAJE. The emblem exists and was provided to be looked at and evaluated
- **Held as item 3 line 4:** Intellectual editing and writing should be included in this item.
- **Item 5:** General assembly comes first before the executive committee. It was agreed that those present recommend a secretariat and Nairobi was suggested for an interim period of 4 years but there should be Annual General Assemblies to help the society to grow faster
- Broad guidelines on the choice of the city where the secretariat is based should be incorporated in the constitution to include infrastructure, funding and government support.

Article 2: Objectives

- **Item 3:** Need to emphasise the issue of sustainability
- **Item 9:** Define Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) before it is used in the constitution
- Questions: What are the monitoring and Evaluation mechanisms? It was agreed that the Monitoring and evaluation procedures be included.

Article 3: Membership

- General assembly should determine the membership and subscription fee
- Need to reach out to various regions on the continent to include French and Arab speaking countries.

Article 4: Organizational structures

- The proposed structures is ideal but there is need to consider practicability and funding
- **Held as item 3:** Swap a and b so that the composition of the executive board comes before the responsibilities
- Proposed that SAJE starts with a committee structure before hiring an executive director
- The composition of the executive board should have an international (continent-wide) representation
- Need for an internal auditor

- Debate: Consider international spread of the executive board. The president and secretary could be from the same region but other members should be spread throughout the continent.

Questions and Recommendations

- Need for an article on good governance to take care of the disciplinary and related issues
- Need to give the final draft to a lawyer to check the legal implications. Prof. Abel Toriola offered to have a lawyer at his institution look at it
- SAJE needs to register in the country where the secretariat will be based under the category of Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)
- SAJE needs to reach out to all regions of the continent and recruit members
- Expand the document and define the by-laws
- Elect an interim committee to work on the constitution
- French/Arab translation of the constitution was recommended
- The document should be revised, circulated to all members and finalized before registering the society
- The interim committee should consist of 8 members reflecting gender and regional balance, consisting of
 - 1 chairperson
 - 5 regional representatives
 - 2 other members to add value to the committee
- The term “Editors” should be well defined in the constitution.

2.2 Press Release

Emmanuel Afoakwa (University of Ghana), Joseph Allotey (University of Botswana), Tankie Khalanyene (National University of Lesotho) and Mary Abukutsa Onyango (Maseno University in Kenya)

The presentation of the press release was titled ‘**Launching of Society of African Editors (SAJE)**’ and included (see appendix):

- Representation

- Sponsors
- Initiation and Founder of SAJE
- Objectives of draft constitution
- Recommendations from the launch

Questions and Comments

- Good presentation, but there were factual errors
- Founder members – document on the initiation process of SAJE was provided by Prof. Ruth Oniang'o
- ROP was mandated to take the document to press
- Names of participants were to be included
- The title was to be made captivating
- The document was printed and given to all members to add their recommendation and were to be incorporated by the group before submitting to the rapporteurs

2.3 SAJE Strategic Plan

Este Vorster (North-West University in South Africa), Bello Shehu (Usmanu Danfidiyo University Teaching Hospital Sokoto Nigeria) – Nigeria and Emmanuel Ameh (Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria)

Structure and content of the SAJE strategic plan was presented. Goals were defined, and the plan categorized into:

- Short term- 2005- 2006
- Medium term- 2006- 2007
- Long term- 2008

Some activities were found to overlap at different levels of the same time. The structure was in column format (see appendix) focusing on:

- Objectives
- Activities
- Responsibility
- Time frame

Short term goals

- Establish SAJE
- Strengthen the power base
- Promote SAJE
- Mobilize Resources
- Improve the quality of the journals
- To have wide distribution of African journals and develop operational guidelines

Medium term

- Evaluate sustainability of the organization

Long term

- International Indexing

Questions and Recommendations

- Additional column was needed for performance or verifiable indicators
- Need to modify the office bearers as per the changes in the constitution
- There was need to emphasize training aspects especially students and young scholars
- Development of SAJE brochure should be included in the short term
- The participants asked that the mission and vision of SAJE should be included in the strategic plan

SESSION III: ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

Chair: Prof Ruth Oniang'o

The election of SAJE's interim officials was finally held.

Prof Oniang'o stated she wished to chair this particular session since she was not an interested party in any of the posts available. However, the whole group implored her to take the chair, stating that she "could not give birth to a baby and just give it away like that". She reluctantly bowed to pressure, thanked the participants and expressed a desire for each member to do their best for SAJE. She emphasized that she would not have much pressure if all SAJE members worked as hard as they had done during this particular launch meeting.

Name of Committee: SAJE Central Working Committee

Head: Chairperson

Regional representation (5)

1. Southern Africa
2. West Africa
3. Eastern Africa
4. Central Africa
5. North Africa
6. Other member to add value
7. Gender balance was considered

The following 8 members were elected to the committee

- 1. Chairperson: Hon. Prof. Ruth Oniang'o (Kenya)**
- 2. Southern Africa: Prof. Abel Toriola (South Africa)**
- 3. West Africa: Prof Hyacinth Mbibu (Nigeria)**
- 4. East Africa: Dr. Joyce Kikafunda (Uganda)**
- 5. Central Africa: Dr. Marie Sop Kana (Cameroon)**
- 6. North Africa: Prof. Gabriel Ahmed (Egypt)**
- 7. Member 1: Dr. Abebe Getahum (Ethopia)**
- 8. Member 2: Prof. Mary O. Abukutsa Onyango (Kenya)**

SECTION IV: VOTE OF THANKS

Prof. Mary Onyango (Maseno University)

In her speech, Prof. Onyango asked participants to think and formulate ways of creating unity among themselves. She noted that as individual scholars, Africans have continued to receive recognition for their work globally. But as a continent, Africa is way behind other regions in influencing world affairs, especially in research. She quoted the chairperson who had earlier retorted: “How come individually, we make a mark at the global level, get collectively as a continent, we do not feature?”

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: STRATEGIC PLAN FOR SAJE

VISION

To facilitate publishing of high quality African scholarly journals and research papers, complying with the highest international standards.

MISSION

1. To build capacity by training editors, reviewers and authors of and for African scholarly journals.
2. To systematically increase the number of African journals in international indexing systems.
3. To improve communication between editors of African scholarly journals.
4. To bridge the widening gap between researchers in Africa and their colleagues in other countries and continents.
5. To put mechanisms in place that will increase sustainability of African scholarly journals. These include effective mobilization of potential resources and continuous evaluation of actions of SAJE.

STRATEGIC PLAN (Logical Framework)

Objectives	Action/Activity	Responsibility	D-Dates	Verifiable Indicators
Establish SAJE (Short term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve constitution, amendments for survival Select interim committee/HQTR Document existing similar societies. Network/affiliations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All members Interim committee Chairperson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dec. '04 July '05 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved operating constitution Active interim committee An inventory of existing societies
Strengthen power base (Short term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form regional councils Form national councils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and national representative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jan. – Dec. '05 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formed regional and national councils
Promote SAJE (Short term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Press release to popular media Place Editorials in African and international journals Advocacy :NEPAD, Govts, UNICEF, UNDP Develop SAJE brochure Establish SAJE web page 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All members Interim committee Chairperson Chairperson Interim 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jan. – Dec. '05 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Published press release Editorials in African and international journals Communication and agreements from the bodies Published SAJE brochures Updated accessible SEJA webpage
Mobilize resources (Short term to Long term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Source for Sponsorships Recruit members Advertisement for journals Have an Agreement with SA for (subsidy) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interim committee Chairperson Members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jan. 2005 Ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of sponsored persons List of SAJE members MOU between SAJE&S/A
Improve quality of journals (Short term-Long term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training Workshops for editors reviewers and authors Indexing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All: regional, national councils Working groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2005 2006 Ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training manual and list of participants Indexed African journals

Others (Short term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have wide Distribution of African journals • Develop operational guidelines and distribute 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2005 • 2006 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data on the distribution of the journal • Developed and distributed guidelines
Evaluate sustainability (Medium Term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report + evaluation mechanisms • Developed and applied • Re-assessment • Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006 • Ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and Evaluation forms • Evaluation reports
International indexing (Long Term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCI of ISI • IBSS • 25% of all journals • ?n = per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Editors, assisted by SAJE working groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of indexed journals in SCI,ISI,IBSS

ANNEX 2: THE PAPERS PRESENTED DURING THE MEETING

1. EDITORIAL POLICIES OF AFRICAN JOURNAL OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION AND DEVELOPMENT (AJFAND)

Margaret Mukulo (Rural Outreach Program (ROP))

Introduction

Journals are the backbone of scholarly work and serve as the most important medium through which scholars exchange information, explore ideas and stimulate debate. They are also the most established medium for publishing research findings. Hence they constitute a critical link between scholars and application of research for the purpose of human and social development. It is thus inevitable that any society with a weak journal publishing tradition will perpetuate a weak system of scholarship, and human and social progress will become quite slow. It is important that we state in categorical terms that this is one of the major problems affecting African scholarship today. Pertinently, the problem does not affect the educational sector only; its effects traverse the entire socio-political and economic landscape.

The African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development (AJFAND) is published by Rural Outreach Program. It is an internationally peer reviewed journal, which has since, gone *online* strictly and print copies are no longer generated. The journal was established with the vision to provide a platform through which issues and scientific information concerning Africa and its unique problems could be effectively shared and addressed. The Advisory and Associate Editors and the Editorial Board members are appointed by the Editor-in-Chief. The Editor-in-Chief and the Associate Editors meet occasionally to consider manuscript decisions. The policies and practices of the *Journal* are established by the Editor-in-Chief with close consultations with the Advisory Board and Associate Editors.

Scope of Publication

The *Journal* strives to publish original work of the highest quality that elucidates basic scientific information in food, agriculture, nutrition and development related issues, through publishing of research and reviewed articles that link research to programs and policies. Apart from general importance, scientific quality, and rigor, the major criteria for acceptance are: originality; definitive mechanistic information; and interest to a broad readership. The Journal publishes articles that strive to understand integrative functions through innovative experimental studies; conventional theoretical articles will be published only if they deal with subjects that fall within the mandate of the Journal. Methodological articles will be published only if they provide a significant advance in areas where the Journal regularly publishes experimental studies. Articles that are scientifically sound may be rejected because they are felt to lack novelty or breadth of appeal.

Types of Articles

Apart from solicited Commentaries, Perspectives, Editorials, Reviews, and Milestones in development, the *Journal* publishes Regular Articles and Letters to the Editor. Letters to the Editor are short communications that comment upon, criticize, or interpret findings published in the *Journal*. The acceptability of such letters is subject to the same reviewing and editorial procedures that apply to Regular articles. The formats for the respective types of articles are reflected in the ‘Information to Authors’.

All authors should take public responsibility for the content of their paper. The multidisciplinary nature of much research can make this difficult, but this can be resolved by the disclosure of individual contributions. Careful reading of the journal’s guidelines in the section “Information to Authors” is recommended. Authors should be vigilant about allowing their name to be used on a piece of work to add credibility to the content.

Review Process and Editorial Decision Making

Solicited Commentaries, Milestones in journal scope, and Editorials are usually reviewed, only by the Editor and the Associate Editors; Perspectives and Brief Reviews will also have one or more outside reviewers. All other manuscripts are subject to a uniform and rigorous review. After a manuscript is received, it is first evaluated by the editors. Manuscripts that are deemed to be inappropriate for the *Journal*, and manuscripts of poor quality or with serious deficiencies, will be returned to the author(s) after this initial review by the editors. For manuscripts that pass this initial review, a list of possible expert reviewers is drawn up; it may include reviewers suggested by the authors. (Requests to exempt certain potential reviewers may be honored if the grounds appear reasonable.) Manuscripts are then blinded before sending them out for peer review.

The Editor, the Advisory or Associate Editors, or Editorial Board members may from time to time suggest to a scientist that he/she should submit a manuscript on a specific topic to the *Journal*. Such suggestions do not imply that the manuscript will receive a favorable review.

Possible reviewers are generally contacted by e-mail to ascertain their availability as reviewers of the manuscript. Two (sometimes three) expert reviewers are selected, and blinded Microsoft Word copies of the manuscript are sent to them electronically. The reviewers may be requested to send the editors a preliminary evaluation of the manuscript's importance and originality, the quality of its presentation, and the possible amount of time required to review it. If both reviewers give a manuscript a low score, and the editors affirm that evaluation, the manuscript will not be reviewed further, but will be returned to the author(s) with an explanatory letter. Otherwise, the manuscript will be reviewed according to the standards of the *Journal*. This procedure is intended to expedite decisions on manuscripts that are deemed unlikely to compete successfully for space in the *Journal*, and to provide guidance to authors of these manuscripts.

Manuscripts that receive a complete review are carefully evaluated by the editors at the editorial meetings. Decisions are made at the discretion of the Editor-in-Chief and Associate Editors, who are guided not only by their own judgment of, and the reviewers' advice on, the manuscript's scientific merit, novelty, and mechanistic insights, but also by its appropriateness to the *Journal* and by the

number of articles currently under consideration or in press. If reviewers disagree strongly about the scientific merit of a manuscript, the editors may request the advice of an additional reviewer or an Advisory Editor.

Except in special circumstances, manuscripts that fall within the following categories are unlikely to be accepted:

- Purely methodological or theoretical developments (except as noted in Scope of Publication).
- Descriptive reports, in which no specific hypothesis is tested.
- Manuscripts that primarily confirm results already established in other papers, therefore, do not provide new or definitive mechanistic insights.
- Manuscripts which merely amplify a previous brief publication and contain no substantial new information.

Authors are informed of editorial decisions by email. While manuscripts are not assigned to specific editors, decision letters are signed by the person who drafted them, based on the group discussion. All correspondence should be addressed to the Editor-in Chief and copied to the Communications Manager.

Reviewers' comments are usually, but not always, sent to the author. A copy of the editors' letter advising the author that an article has been accepted or declined, or that it may be resubmitted in revised form, is sent to the co-authors.

Reviewers are always encouraged to provide written opinions, with the aim of improving the write-up. They should provide speedy, accurate, courteous, unbiased and justifiable reports. If they suspect misconduct, they should write in confidence to the Editor-in-Chief.

Confidentiality

The peer review process rests on the assumption that all manuscripts will be treated as privileged information, which cannot be divulged to other parties. A reviewer may request additional advice from another party, subject to the general principle of confidentiality and notification of the editorial office.

Reviewer Anonymity

Except when a reviewer explicitly wishes to be identified, the editors will maintain the anonymity of the reviewers. It is similarly, assumed that reviewers will not identify themselves to authors without informing the editors. The editors discourage such disclosures.

Acceptance, Revision, Rejections, and Rebuttals

Articles are rarely accepted without having been revised. Usually, manuscripts are either accepted provisionally, pending suitable revisions; returned for major revisions and subsequently re-evaluated; or rejected. In some cases, authors of rejected manuscripts are invited to resubmit a new or revised manuscript, contingent on their being able to satisfy the major criticisms of the reviewers by revision, or by additional experimentation and consequent rewriting and revision. All revised manuscripts are subject to careful re-examination and may be reviewed again, possibly, by new reviewers. To avoid long, drawn-out negotiations, only one major revision of a manuscript is permitted.

The revised manuscript must be received in the Editorial Office within three months of the date of the decision letter. Revised manuscripts that are received at a later date will be treated as new submissions, unless the Editor has been notified in writing (email is preferable) of the delay and agreed in writing to receive the revised manuscript at a later date.

All revised and resubmitted manuscripts should be accompanied by a letter that details how the manuscript was modified in light of the reviewers' comments. A carefully, crafted resubmission letter that explicitly addresses each of the issues raised by the reviewers will facilitate, and usually accelerate, the review and editorial decision making. The resubmission letter must be signed by the corresponding author, and include a formal statement that all authors have seen and approved the revisions. If one or more authors are added or deleted from the manuscript, all authors (including those deleted) must sign the resubmission letter or in some other way notify the Editor-in-Chief in writing that they agree with this decision. If this information is not provided, the manuscript will be returned unreviewed.

If authors disagree with comments made by reviewers, their reasons should be stated in the resubmission letter. Authors should note, however, that their responses to the reviews are usually

disclosed to the reviewers. If the editors find the authors' response to be inappropriate, the letter and the manuscript will be returned with a request to modify the letter of rebuttal (maybe also the manuscript).

If the authors believe that a serious scientific error occurred during the review, they should write to the Editor and explain the reasons why the editors should reconsider the decision. Usually, the Editor and the Associate Editors will consult with one or both of the original reviewers and with one or more Advisory Editors. In some cases, the final decision will be based largely on the recommendations of the Advisory Editors or original reviewers, in other cases, an additional reviewer is sought.

In case a rejected manuscript is resubmitted without an explicit invitation to do so, the manuscript usually will be returned without further review. In exceptional cases, the original reviewers may be asked whether the revision appears sufficient to overcome their initial reservations. The reviewers will base that determination solely on the resubmission letter and the abstract of the revised manuscript. A positive preliminary determination will engender a full review.

In the case of *Letters to the Editor*, the publication of a letter does not commit the *Journal* to publish a reply.

Communications between Authors and the Editorial Office

Questions regarding the status of a manuscript are handled by the Editorial Office staff. To keep the office functioning smoothly, authors are asked to keep such queries to a minimum, and whenever possible, to communicate via e-mail. In any case, the Editorial Office will provide information only to the designated corresponding author, and will not provide extensive details (such as the status of review process or the expected time of decision).

More complex problems concerning the manuscript should be directed to the Editor through the Editorial Office. Such inquiries should be in writing (e-mail is acceptable). The Editorial Office will maintain a complete file of the communications relating to each manuscript. To ensure consistency and fairness, the Editor usually will discuss the authors' concerns with the Associate Editors, and

possibly also the reviewers and one or more Advisory Editors before responding to the authors in writing or by telephone, as would be appropriate.

Manuscripts Submitted by the Editor or Associate Editors

The editorial meetings are possible only because the Editor and most of the Associate Editors work in adjacent institutions. To avoid concerns of bias in the review of manuscripts submitted by these editors, those manuscripts will be handled by a Guest Editor (usually an Advisory Editor). Manuscripts submitted by close collaborators of the Editor or Associate Editors will be handled in a similar manner. Manuscripts submitted by Advisory Editors or members of the Editorial Board will be treated as any ordinary manuscript.

Time from Submission to Editorial Decision to Publication

The Editorial Office strives to minimize the time from submission to the first decision. Currently, the median time from the date of submission to the date of the decision letter is about 3 months. The actual time varies widely from manuscript to manuscript. The editors note that the review process tends to take longer for large and complex manuscripts, or pairs of manuscripts, and for manuscripts that are poorly prepared (but potentially very interesting). The *Journal* takes pride in the depth and rigor of the reviews, but reviewers do a voluntary service to the *Journal* (and the authors), and the Editorial Office can do no more than remind reviewers when they are tardy.

Articles will be published (uploaded) as soon as possible after acceptance, but not necessarily in the order of receipt of the final version. The editors aim to treat all manuscripts equally. However, manuscript, identified by all reviewers as being of exceptional quality and recommended for publication "to the exclusion of other manuscripts," may be somewhat expedited (by no more than one issue).

Access to Materials and Data

As a condition of publication, authors must make unique materials published in the *Journal*, available to academic researchers and scholars who may use them in their own field for teaching and further research. Materials in AJFAND are easily accessible and freely downloadable.

The journal strives to maintain a high standard of quality control *via* the review process, which will strengthen the reputation of a journal among its readers and contributors.

2. SHARING EXPERIENCES IN JOURNAL RUNNING-SINET: ETHIOPIAN JOURNAL

Abebe Getahun (Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia)

SINET Local name meaning science) is a peer –reviewed, bi –annual journal of science published by the faculty of science, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia. Since its inception in 1978, SINET has been publishing original articles, review articles and short communications in basic and applied sciences. Manuscripts submitted to the journal are in English and are reviewed by national and international reviewers.

When SINET started publishing in 1978, it was only 6 articles and 60 pages. It has undergone changes through the years in form and context and currently publishes 10 articles per issue on average. After celebrating its 25th anniversary, it has started publishing with A4 size thick and glossy papers.

SINET is indexed and abstracted by:

- American Mathematical Review
- Biosis
- CAB international
- Environment abstract

Staff

- Permanent
- Editorial manager
- Assistant editorial manager
- Office staff-Part-time
- Editor-in-Chief
- Eight associate Editors

- Major source of Manuscript
- Universities- 50-70%
- Research institutions- 10-25%
- College and others- 10-20%

SINET receives 40-50 manuscripts per year on average.

Source of funds

- Swedish International Development Agencies (SIDA) through the Ethiopian Science and Technology Commission (ESTC)
- Graduate and Research program office of the Addis Ababa University
- Faculty of Science, Addis Ababa University
- Membership fee

Procedure in processing of manuscript

- Manuscript are sent to the editorial office with a letter stating that the manuscript has not been submitted to any other journal
- The manuscript will be given to the relevant association editor for preliminary review
- The associate can:
 - Reject the manuscript if it is not up to the standard of SINET
 - Send it back to the author for improvement of some aspects of the manuscript before it is sent for review
- When reviewing response from reviewers and if it is:
 - Rejection by majority, a letter will be written to the author with reasons for rejection
 - Acceptance by majority, the associate editor will determine based on recommendations of reviewers and on his/her judgment the column in which the manuscript will be published. The manuscript then will be sent to the author so that he/she responds to the comments point by point and accommodate them.
- The associate editor, when reviewing the revised manuscript, will check whether or not the comments forwarded by the reviewers are properly addressed in the received manuscript. If the comments are not properly addressed, the manuscript will be sent back to the author. If accommodated, then the manuscript will be processed for publishing.

- After the manuscript is processed, in form of the journal it will be sent to the author for proof reading.
- Finally all manuscripts will be checked by the Editor-in Chief and will be published.

-

Problems:

- Getting appropriate reviewers
- Reviewers not responding in time
- Sending manuscripts concurrently to different journals by some authors. In some cases, some authors do not respond after reviewers give their comments and the articles conditional accepted. Sometimes, some authors send their articles to a different journal, having been reviewed by another one.

3. COPYRIGHT ISSUES IN PUBLISHING

Tankie Khalanyane (National University of Lesotho)

- Copyright issues fall under the Intellectual Property Laws
- World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) is an umbrella body which deals with copyright issues, patents, utility models, trademarks and labels
- Copyright law protects the intellectual creativity of all literary works of the authors
- Piracy of copyright materials is illegal and a pirate is liable to be sued
- Many African countries are signatories to the Berne convention on copyright
- In some countries the authors' work is copyrighted for between 50-70 years from the date of publishing
- Copyrighted materials is inheritable by the family of the author or a person of his/her choice
- Photocopying is impacting negatively on copyright materials as more and more people prefer to make copies than to buy books
- A chapter of copyrighted book/material may be photocopied for educational purposes

4. CAPACITY BUILDING FOR STUDENTS AUTHORSHIP AND RESEARCH

Prof. Joseph Allotey (University of Botswana)

Introduction

In view of the need to produce scholars who will contribute to scientific knowledge, leading to the betterment of the quality of life of the African people through high quality research and publications in Journals, capacity building for students in this direction cannot be over emphasized.

Currently in Africa, and as noted by one of the leading scientists on the continent, that there is capacity-building projects involving students at various stages of the process of production except for the **Peer Review Process** (see forward by the Editor-in-Chief, AJFAND, vol. 3 NO. 1, March 2003). There is only one journal of high standing on the continent which has a section for students with the aim to nurture young professionals authorship, and this is the area of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development, and reported in that journal, students are encouraged to send write-ups, of not more than two pages inclusive of references, and particulars to express their opinion on some topics in the main body of the journal or any other aspects of interest.

Questions

1. What are the challenges to capacity building for students aspiring to be authors, editors and researchers in Africa?
2. Are we doing enough to realize our goal of passing on the ‘baton’ to the younger generation?
3. Have students been neglected? Yet they are the future professional. We need to give this important group of people more opportunities and chances to mould them.

Before I continue with possible solutions to the above questions raised, I would like to draw your attention to a concluding remark in a section of AJFAND:

1. “Finally, I would like to thank you who have **not neglected** the **cause of students, I respect you.**
2. For those of you who have **neglected** students, I will not **begrudge you**; I will stick to **my morals** and **not curse you.** Because there is still **time to change.**

3. **Lastly**, to those who have contributed both in **kind** and in **spirit**, I salute you, because you made the whole exercise possible”

Earlier this young author observed “I must confess that the art of **writing** and intricacies of the associated factors are far from simple.

Finally, then for good authorship:

1. Perpetuating **good authorship** in the world is a **moral obligation** we have in order to improve living **standards of generations to come**
2. **To achieve minimum success** in this venture, **co-operation must transcend the boundaries of scientific disciplines** as well as **continental differences**
3. We must compliment each other
4. We must have teamwork to achieve our **objectives**.

5. COMMENTS FOR SAJE IN CAPACITY BUILDING FOR YOUNG AUTHORS AND RESEARCHERS

Prof. Joseph Allotey (University of Botswana)

What are aspiring as African Journal Editors to achieve among others?

1. **Professional and moral commitment** to contribute to the production and dissemination of scientific information and knowledge
 - a) For the **betterment** of the **quality of life** of the **African people**
2. **Professional responsibility to promote and maintain excellence in scholarship**
 - a) and the **dissemination of such information and knowledge**
 - b) resulting from **high quality** research through **publication in journals**.

Write –ups

1. These write-ups will be checked for style, as well as thought and analytical Process
2. In addition, these write-ups, too will be **subjected to peer review** for content
3. To facilitate this, students are encouraged to go through the “Information to Authors” Provided at the back of “AJFAND” Journal, before submitting their articles
4. Special attention should be paid to referencing **requirements**

Challenges in capacity building for students

1. Environmental constraints
2. Role models
3. Professional and moral commitment (editors, reviewers, students, researchers and proceedings)
4. Case studies
 - Attitude of students (personnel experience, encouragement and what have we done so far)
 - Attitude of supervisors
 - Reward system- AJFAND

5. Others

- Gender balance
- Examples from various parts of Africa
 - a) University system (Joyce Kikafunda, Mary Onyango, Ruth Oniang'o) - student trained but left
 - b) Research Institutions
- Running /operation of journals- e.g. Prof. Tolu Odugbemi, “ Passing on the baton”

ANNEX 3: SAJE LAUNCH MEETING PROGRAM

16-17 DECEMBER 2004

PROGRAM

Wednesday, 15th December 2004

1600-1900 Arrival and registration

Thursday, 16th December

0800 Registration open

Chair: Ruth Oniang'o

Introduction

0830 Introduction of participants

0900 Inauguration of SAJE Meeting

1. Welcome address
2. Introduction and objectives of SAJE meeting
3. Introducing ROP
4. Other comments: Peter Matlon-Rockefeller Foundation
Dorothy Mukhebi -ASARECA

1030 Tea Break

Presentations. Chair: Tolu Odugbemi

1100 Basic overview of production issues, including design, quality, efficiency and timeliness- **Margaret Mukulo**

1120 How can the journal visibility be assessed and what are the tools for increasing prominence?-**Tankie Khalanyene**

1140 Challenges in the work of reviewers- **Emanuel Afoakwa/Joyce Kikafunda**

1200 The challenges of indexing grey literature in Africa- **E. Karan**

1220 Funding research and researchers through subsidy on published work: A case of South Africa- **Este Vorster**

1240 Open discussions

1300 Lunch break

Chair: Ciira Kiyukia

1400 **Sharing of experiences in journal running**

1. **Tolu Odugbemi**, Nigerian Journal of Health and Biomedical Sciences
2. **Ruth Oniang'o**, African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development WWW.AJFAND.NET
3. **Abebe Getahun**, SINET- Ethiopian Journal of Science
4. **Emmanuel Ameh and Hyacinth Mbibu**, Nigerian Journal of Surgical Research
5. **Bello Shehu**, Annals of African Medicine

1530 Open discussions

1600 Tea Break

1630 Wrap-up of the day's proceedings- **Mary Onyango**
1650-1700 Discussions
Social Hour

1800-1900 Social hour (Drinks served) Dinner at private arrangement

Friday, 17th December

Chair: Este Vorster
SAJE draft Constitution

0830 Introduction to the day's activities
0900 Copyright issues- **Tankie Khalanyane**
0930 Capacity building of the students- **Joseph Allotey**
0930 Views and comments on SAJE Draft Constitution

1030 Tea Break

Group work. Chair: Este Vorster

1100 Group work: What are SAJE future plans?
1130 Presentation of group work
1230 Open discussions

1300 Lunch break

Elections. Chair: Ruth Oniang'o

1400 Election of office Bearers
1500 Discussions on immediate activities post SAJE meeting

1530 Tea Break

1600 Wrap-up of the SAJE meeting- **Mary Onyango**
1620 Closing- **Ruth Oniang'o**

1900 Dinner "TOGETHER"

Saturday, 18th December

Sunday, 19th December

} **Departure**

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