

# Potential Benefits of OKEs to Developing Countries: the Caribbean Region Experience

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The Caribbean Academy of Sciences, Jamaica recognised that knowledge based societies would only be developed in this region by promoting Open Access to scientific and technological information in digital format. To help fulfil this goal CAS-Ja helped organize several regional workshops in Jamaica on “Open Access and Dissemination of Scientific Information in Central America and the Caribbean” that were fully supported by the Inter-Academy Panel (IAP), the National Academy of Sciences, USA and the Cuban Academy of Sciences, Havana.

One outcome from these successful meetings was the creation of an Open Repository for the Caribbean region under the administration of CAS-Ja. (<http://OKCarib.net>). This was established at the new UWI data centre and was achieved with financial support from UNESCO.

The main objectives of the Repository were as follows:

1. Grant online access to research findings and shared data in repository form
2. Build capacities of librarians, researchers and research assistants
3. Facilitate access by Caribbean researchers to large datasets across the globe
4. Foster sharing of computational capacity and models
5. Raise public awareness about common standards and systems
6. Support the archiving of scientific results
7. Coordination of the many research initiatives in the Caribbean to reduce the costs of duplication of effort.

Once an OKE site is properly developed it would allow the necessary interaction required whereby regional researches could post problems and request collaboration from external researchers.

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