Publishing & Book Culture in Africa: A Literature Review for 2025

Compiled and edited by Hans M. Zell
hanszell@hanszell.co.uk

Contents

The Year in Review

As once again demonstrated by the wide range of articles and other documents included in the 2025 review, the book sector in Africa continues to enjoy a much higher profile than in the past; and a number of leading organizations continue to be supportive of the African book world, such as UNESCO (see below), the International Publishers Association (IPA) https://internationalpublishers.org/ and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO, Division for Africa)) https://www.wipo.int/portal/en/index.html, among others.

UNESCO report

UNESCO's major investigation of the current state into the African book industries, its trends, challenges, and opportunities for growth https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000394048 (Open access) has been the most significant event during the year. It has also been widely cited and reviewed. A full review of the report appears on page 7. There have been a number of interesting rejoinders to the report, as listed in the general section on African publishing and the book sector.

AI and African publishing

There has been a smattering of articles on AI and African publishing during the year, which has merited the addition of a new topic specific heading (see page 21). It is a contentious topic however. Many view it as a serious threat to academic rigour, that compromises knowledge because of its unreliability as a source of verified information; but others see it as a potentially

valuable new tool, whereas some publishers say that AI can be a valuable aid. At the same time it raises complex ethical, legal and technical questions. While others fear that if AI becomes the primary way to track down information, local and traditional knowledge is in danger of being lost.

Book piracy – A serious threat for the African book industries

Although publishing may be flourishing in some parts of Africa, and while the use of digital technology and online platforms has made it much easier to share information, book piracy is now a significant issue and a growing menace, especially in Nigeria and in Kenya, and also in some other African countries. For the most part it is driven by factors like poverty, high costs, and lack of access to bona fide digital distribution channels. Book piracy takes many forms, including illegal printing, unauthorized copying and distribution of e-books, and online sharing of pirated material, which seriously damages the publishing industry as well as the quality of education. Various African countries and organizations are currently taking steps to address the threat, such as anti-piracy campaigns and efforts to improve legal access to digital content.

Self-publishing

Self-publishing in Africa, as indeed in other parts of the world, continues to thrive. From time to time some users of this series of literature reviews have questioned why the topic of self-publishing is not covered. Especially as there is now so much writing on self-publishing, and which offers authors creative control and direct reader access, as well as control over production, editing, and marketing. The answer is that (1) it would be difficult to cover that literature retrospectively; and (2) much of the literature, unsurprisingly, tends to be of a self-promoting nature, rather than critical analysis.

Having said that, it is recognised that there are now also an increasing number of highly professional self-publishing and advertising services/agents in Africa that offer self-publishing solutions, guiding authors from manuscript stage to launch of publication, marketing, and more. See for example https://www.hannahanthony.com.ng/ in Nigeria or https://www.quickfox.co.za/ in South Africa, among several others.

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Introduction

The second in a new series of annual literature reviews, this document identifies over 130 new studies about publishing, book culture, and the book sector generally in anglophone sub-Saharan Africa. Published during the course of 2025, and since the appearance of the third updated and expanded edition of *Publishing & Book Culture in Africa: A Repository of Selected Resources* https://www.hanszell.co.uk/repository.htm, published in January 2024, which remains freely accessible online; as does the 2024 literature review at https://www.hanszell.co.uk/Site/PDFs/Publishing_&_Book_Culture_in_Africa_a_Literature_Review_for_2024.pdf.

It is hoped that all these new records will eventually be cumulated and integrated in a new fourth edition of the Repository, or ideally – and if funding could be secured – transformed into a fully interactive online database. However, and as indicated in earlier literature reviews, it is my hope that this kind of bibliographic research and documentation activities can henceforth be undertaken by an organization or institution that is based in Africa**.** This is now long overdue, and the current 2025 literature review is likely to be my last contribution.

I would therefore very much welcome any views on this issue and, hopefully, an expression of interest to continue the work I have undertaken over the years, by an Africa-based body. To do so please get in touch with me at hanszell@hanszell.co.uk.

How data is collected
In tracking down, and gathering information about relevant new literature about publishing, the book sector, and book history in Africa, the web is periodically and systematically searched under a range of general, topic-specific, as well as number of (anglophone) country-specific headings.

Scope/Type of material included
The literature review includes journal articles, books, chapters in books and edited collections, interviews, opinion pieces, publisher profiles, as well as significant blog postings. Short articles, news items or stories, press releases, etc. are not included. Newspaper articles are also not generally included, unless of substantial length or of special significance.

Postings on X, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and other social media and networking services are *not* included.

Arrangement and classification
Records are grouped under a series of general, topic/subject specific, and country headings as indicated above, listing records in alphabetical order by author. Multiple papers by authors are listed in date of publication order, most recent first.

Symbols used
¶ This symbol indicates a journal article behind a paywall or, for books, access is subject to purchase.
† Indicates a new/late record, not previously included in the earlier 2024 edition of the Repository
https://www.hanszell.co.uk/Site/PDFs/Repository%203rd%20edition%202024.Final.pdf
or the 2024 literature review.

Omissions
Inevitably there will be some gaps in bibliographic coverage of the literature covered for 2025, and I may well have missed a number of studies published during the course of 2025 that would merit inclusion. If so, would the authors or publishers please send details or a file to hanszell@hanszell.co.uk and they may then be included in any updates, and/or included in the next annual edition of the literature review, and new editions of the repository.

Earlier series of literature reviews

The current reviews supersede a series of five earlier annual literature reviews published in *The African Book Publishing Record* for the period of 2015 through to 2019. They can still be accessed (in their pre-print versions) at https://independent.academia.edu/HansZell.

How to search the literature review

While not an interactive online database at this time, searches for literature by author, subject/topic-specific, or country-specific, can be made by using the Ctrl+F(ind) function in the pdf document. Or use the 'Find Text or Tools' function. For example, typing 'Ghana' into the search box/navigation panel will find any text/records in titles of articles, reports, blog postings and other documents, or if part of the annotations/summaries, containing the word 'Ghana'. The same search function can also be used to search for names of authors of articles, or those mentioned in interviews and publisher profiles.

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Hans Zell Festschrift: sixty years of service to African scholarship

In *Africa Bibliography, Research and Documentation* volume 4, 2025, published by Cambridge University Press (Print and online)
https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/africa-bibliography-research-and-documentation/latest-issue
or
https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/africa-bibliography-research-and-documentation/volume/C5AFA399B86A327168EEC728BEBD6FAB

Contributors:

Stephanie Kitchen Hans Zell: bibliographer of African publishing – introduction
Hans Zell: bibliographer of African publishing – introduction

Angus Crichton Hans Zell: a life in the service of scholarship on Africa
Hans Zell: a life in the service of scholarship on Africa

Jean Luc Enyegue, SJ Hans Zell and the Jesuit Historical Institute in Africa: a shared mission
Hans Zell and the Jesuit Historical Institute in Africa: a shared mission

Raphaël Thierry Hans Zell and the organic development of African publishing
Hans Zell and the organic development of African publishing

Barbar Spina & Stephanie Kitchen Hans Zell: select bibliography
Hans Zell: select bibliography

Elizabeth le Roux Publishing history versus publishing anecdote: the importance of data on the book trade in Africa
Publishing history versus publishing anecdote: the importance of data on the book trade in Africa

Mary Jay Working with Hans Zell
Working with Hans Zell

Peter Limb Hans Zell and African studies publishers, librarians, and authors
Hans Zell and African studies publishers, librarians, and authors

Reviews

***Logos* Special Issue on African Publishing**
Kitchen, Stephanie, David Mills, and Anshita Ail, eds. **"Small is Beautiful: Africa's Independent Book Publishers."** *Logos: Journal of the World Publishing Community* vol. 35, nos. 2-3 (2024): 1-78.
https://brill.com/view/journals/logo/35/2-3/logo.35.issue-2-3.xml ¶ [Introductory article, pp. 7-14, freely accessible]
Online ISSN: 1878-4712 Print ISSN: 0957-9656 Publisher: Brill
Review also in *The African Book Publishing Record*, vol. 51, no. 4 (2025): 319-324.
https://www.degruyterbrill.com/journal/key/abpr/html?lang=en ¶
This rich, special issue of *Logos* dedicated to publishing in Africa will be of much interest to all those in any way involved in the African book sector. In his introduction, *Logos* Editor Angus Philips writes: "The papers presented here show a diverse and dynamic publishing scene across a variety of areas, from fiction to academic monographs. The contributions mostly describe a cottage industry powered by enthusiasm. The role of women in starting and running independent publishing houses is emphasized; and women are also seen as the larger part of the market for many books."

In a wide-ranging introductory paper by the guest editors, "Small is Beautiful: Africa's Independent Book Publishers", they ask what the future holds for Africa's independent publishing sector. The special double number brings together informal interviews with 12 independent publishers from across the continent "to talk about their publishing passions", a good number of them women; and to learn "about the challenges of running a dynamic publishing business on a shoestring."

Many of the publishers interviewed share a great deal of common ground. They come from 10 African countries, albeit with an anglophone bias: Cameroon, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Uganda, and Zimbabwe, most of them presented in the form of a series of insightful interviews.

It would be difficult to single out any of these individual contributors for special attention as all the interviews are illuminating, and some quite captivating. However, it might be helpful to analyse, or inventorize, the topics and the most acute challenges faced by most of the contributors interviewed in this collection.

They are:
● Small may be beautiful, but it can also be a lonely and often exhausting business.
● African publishing remains a mission, as well as a business.
● There are still formidable, ongoing logistical challenges.
● Perennial problems with distribution remain.
● Book affordability is still a major factor. Taxing of books in several African countries make books even more unaffordable.
● Much of African publishing output continues to rely on revenue from textbook or school book publishing. Yet profit is not necessarily a priority, and for many small publishers there

is much emphasis in promoting literature and scholarship, and making books widely accessible through libraries and affordable editions.
● Several of the publishers do not see e-books as a major outlet at this time, or it still remains a very small part of their business. Others stress the ongoing importance of print. However, at least one of the publishers now sell as many e-books as they sell hard copies.
● At the same time, it is important for African publishers to be up to speed with technology, with equipment, and other components required for effective production, marketing, distribution, and reader engagement.
● For many, like Colleen Higgs's Modjaji Books in South Africa for example, there is a strong vision to giving women's voices a platform.
● There is, regrettably, still a lack of professional training for the book industry in most African countries, with the exception of South Africa. Although occasional training programmes have been offered by the African Publishers Network (APNET) https://apnetafrica.org/ from time to time.
● Finally, but not least, there is also a strong need for more *collaborative* promotion, networking, and sharing of know-how.

Irene Staunton of Weaver Press in Zimbabwe – who recently announced that, as a result of continuing and currently insurmountable challenges for publishing in that country, they were discontinuing their publishing activities – recalls the publishing heydays in the 1980s and 1990s. When the 'Indabas' at the Zimbabwe International Book Fair repeatedly discussed regional and continental distribution and cooperation: "The African Publishers Network (APNET) https://apnetafrica.org/ was formed, but we are no better off now than we were then", she says.

Nonetheless, despite the formidable challenges, many of the papers convey a good measure of optimism. It can be said that the future of independent African publishing now looks much brighter than it did a decade or two ago.

This is a major contribution to the literature about African publishing. All libraries with African studies collections will want to acquire this special issue of *Logos*, and it will also be of great interest to book professionals in Africa and elsewhere.

Hans M. Zell
hanszell@hanszell.co.uk

UNESCO. The African Book Industry. Trends, Challenges and Opportunities for Growth.
https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000394048
https://doi.org/10.58337/EDUG1920
See also the earlier project description at
https://www.unesco.org/creativity/en/articles/extended-call-proposals-mapping-book-and-publishing-sector-africa
ISBN: 978-92-3-100769-9. Paris: UNESCO, 2025. 249 pp. illus.
Also available in a French version at https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000394051
https://core.unesco.org/en/project/3210551071

There have now been *two* extensive studies about the African book sector in quick succession: One undertaken by the British Council https://www.britishcouncil.org/research-insight/publishing-futures, described as an in-depth study of the trade publishing and literature sectors in these Sub-Saharan Africa countries: Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe, and which "offers market insights into the sectors in each country, with a particular focus on recent developments and the creative individuals working within these fields." (For full details, see the record in the 2024 literature review at https://www.hanszell.co.uk/Site/PDFs/Publishing_&_Book_Culture_in_Africa_a_Literature_Review_for_2024.pdf page 4)

And now we have this major new investigation by UNESCO released in June 2025, that "maps out structural trends, identifies key constraints and presents strategic recommendations to advance the industry's capacity for sustainable growth." It is an extensively documented and wide-ranging study, albeit with a heavy emphasis on educational publishing and the textbook sector, which "is defined by its lucrative educational publishing which comprises approximately 70% of the market." It goes on to say that Africa's book industry faces a significant trade deficit, quoting figures published by a UN Comtrade Database in 2024. It concludes: "In short, by structuring the book's value chain, reducing reliance on foreign publishers and promoting local content, Africa's book publishing industry could emerge as a vital industry for economic development, job creation and cultural empowerment." On an optimistic note, in the report's short summary, "Africa's untapped book industry" it says "Africa's book industry has the potential to reach US$ 18.5 billion per year".

As UNESCO acknowledges, there are however limitations of the study and the focus is on publishing, bookselling, and libraries; and "the report does not, therefore, cover the entire book value chain … aspects not covered are academic, vocational, and technical publishing, and university presses", although there is of course a great deal of vibrant African publishing going in these areas.[1]
The report is presented under four headings:
Part 1: Trends in the African book industry
Part 2: Challenges facing the African book industry
Part 3: Strategic opportunities for growth
Part 4: Subregional and national mappings, the most extensive part of the study, which presents a mapping of the book industry in 54 African states.

Given that the report covers a very wide area of the African book sector, excessive nitpicking about any of its contents would not be appropriate. However, it is probably fair to say that a good number of its recommendations presented here are not actually new, and have been stated, and restated, at major conferences in the past. For example, resolutions at high-level mega conferences devoted to African publishing held in several Africa cities over the last ten or more years, followed by elaborate action plans,[2] most of which are yet to be implemented. These included, for example, a number of flagship initiatives that the Global Book Alliance/USAID https://www.globalbookalliance.org/ was seeking to deploy, to be achieved through a strategy of publishing collaboratives in Africa, that "would involve through African publishers working together, often in international partnerships, to increase the visibility and

reach of African literature, research, and other publications". However, its current status (as at June 2025) is not known and the project may have been abandoned. [3]

So, one might inevitably ask, will positive action follow as a result of this new UNESCO initiative? Hopefully this will be the case on this occasion, but will the powers that be mend their ways on the strength of this new and extensive investigation?

For example, a UNESCO press release (Africa's book industry: UNESCO highlights its economic and cultural potential in a new report, 19 June 2025) writes about the establishment of National Book Development Councils in Africa (NBDCs) as part of the need for strengthening legal and institutional frameworks. A good number of African countries previously had such Councils, but sadly most of those have ceased operations due to funding issues or other challenges. This includes the South African Book Development Council, which did some excellent work over the years, but was forced to close down in 2019. At this time that leaves only the Ghana Book Development Council https://www.gbdc.gov.gh/ as currently being operational. This just goes to show that there are still *huge* challenges in persuading African governments to support their book sectors.

In terms of research methodology and sources, the UNESCO document states that "Despite receiving official responses from national authorities, quantitative data remains scarce for many countries. … To overcome this challenge, the research and drafting process for this report was designed to be highly participatory and collaborative, with 39 regional and local experts in Africa working on the report." Each national mapping "was drafted by a local African expert with access to UNESCO's survey responses for their relevant countries, whereas the regional and continental analysis were drafted by a team of five members consisting of experts from multiple African countries." They point out, however, that in many cases the numbers presented are estimates "arrived at by experts based on their direct field knowledge."

What the study does not address, but which surely would have deserved some attention, is the issue of *visibility* of African publishing output outside of Africa, for example through the activities of the quarterly *African Book Publishing Record* (ABPR) https://www.degruyter.com/journal/key/abpr/html which is currently in its 51st year of publication, and which provides systematic coverage of new African-published books four times a year, with full bibliographic listings by author, title, and publisher, and with each issue also including a lively Notes & News section. Initially ABPR also offered an extensive book review section, but unfortunately that ceased some years ago.

It is equally surprising that the Oxford-based African Books Collective (ABC), established in 1985 https://www.africanbookscollective.com/ (see also its timeline at https://www.readafricanbooks.com/publisher-profiles/african-books-collective-timeline/ and this Wikipedia entry at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_Books_Collective) receives no mention at all in the report as far as this reviewer can see, much less given any credit. Despite the fact that it is an African-owned and governed worldwide marketing and distribution outlet for books from Africa: scholarly, literature, educational, general and children's books, both in print and digital formats. Its digital library for academic institutions, is now home to

over 2,000 digitised titles from 75 independent African publishers. What is the reason for its exclusion?

In its Executive Summary we are told that Africa has "approximately" 13,000 bookstores that sell books as their primary product, while in the individual country profiles it provides very precise figures of the number of publishers, number of titles published, bookstores, public libraries, public libraries per capita, and jobs, in addition to details of population, literacy rate, GDP per capita, urban population, mobile phone subscriptions, and Internet users.

While all this is certainly useful data, the figures provided for the book sector must probably be used with a measure of caution. For example, for Botswana it indicates: publishing houses 49, titles published 370, bookstores 3, public libraries 45. Some of these figures, "2023 estimated data", strike me as substantially overstated and, I suspect, probably include newspaper and magazine publishers. In contrast, for a small country like Sierra Leone it indicates publishing houses 4, titles published 40, bookstores 12, public libraries 4, and which is probably about right. For Zimbabwe, a country once with a flourishing book sector but sadly now in serious decline, it reports: publishing houses 30, titles published 1,000 [!], bookstores 25, and public libraries 17.

Ghana is another country with very high figures: publishing houses 250, titles published 5,403, bookstores 467, public libraries 138, some of which look significantly inflated.

The two countries with the highest book sector figures are Egypt: publishing houses 1,600, titles published 27,498, bookstores 153, public libraries 924; while for South Africa it is publishing houses 200, titles published 10,257, bookstores 300, public libraries 1,949.

For each African country the report also offers historical context, institutional and legal framework, public policies and measures, a publishing roundup, distribution, sales and promotion channels, reading habits and promotion of public reading, imports/exports, training programmes for the book industries, and professional associations, all of which is very useful and relevant information.

Despite expressing a number of reservations as set out above, this is a timely, meticulously compiled and far-reaching study of the book sector in Africa, providing very comprehensive mapping across 54 African countries. Setting out structural trends and key indicators, together with offering a range of strategic recommendations aimed at guiding the formulation of policies and stimulate book industry growth. It will be of great interest not only to publishers and other book professionals on the African continent and elsewhere, but should also be acquired by libraries with African studies collections in Africa and in the countries of the West.

Notes & references:

[1] See for example this review of a special double number of *Logos. Journal of the World Publishing Community* devoted to publishing in Africa.

First published in *The African Book Publishing Record*, vol. 51, no. 4, 2025: 319-321.
https://www.degruyter.com/journal/key/abpr/html

Pre-print version (freely accessible) at
https://www.academia.edu/127943102/Logos_Special_Issue_on_African_Publishing
It brings together informal interviews with 12 independent publishers from across the continent "to talk about their publishing passions", a good number of them women; and to learn "about the challenges of running a dynamic publishing business on a shoestring."

[2] See also "'Action Plans' to Support the African Book Industries: Current Initiatives in Progress, and an Inventory of Earlier Projects". *The African Book Publishing Record*, vol. 50, no. 4 (2024): 312-321.
https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1515/abpr-2024-0009/html
Pre-print version (freely accessible) at
https://www.academia.edu/123143527/Action_Plans_to_Support_the_African_Book_Industries_Current_Initiatives_in_Progress_and_an_Inventory_of_Earlier_Projects

[3] The current Global Book Alliance web pages (as at June 2025) offer no further information about this initiative and it would appear that the project may have been quietly abandoned.
See also an earlier (provisional?) document:
Crabbe, Richard A.B. *Publishing Collaboratives. Research Report.* Washington, DC: Global Book Alliance, 77 pp. [no date, published in 2018, some pages in a draft version] https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00XSKC.pdf [page not currently accessible]

Hans M. Zell
hanszell@hanszell.co.uk

Obituaries

Brittle Paper **Nigerian Publishing Legend Joop Berkhout Passes On, Aged 94.**
https://brittlepaper.com/2025/02/nigerian-publishing-legend-joop-berkhout-passes-on-aged-94/ (Posted 25 February 2025)
An obituary of Dutch born Joop Berkhout (31 March 1930-10 February 2025) who was a pioneer of Nigeria's modern publishing industry. His publishing activities had a significant impact on shaping the Nigerian publishing industry into what it is today. He came to Nigeria in 1966 as the founding Managing Director of Evans Brothers Publishers in what was meant to be a two-year stay. But Berkhout stayed on in Nigeria and founded Spectrum Books https://www.spectrumbookslimited.com/ in 1978, which soon established itself as a leading force in Nigerian publishing. After retiring from Spectrum's board in 2008, Berkhout remained active in the industry as chairman of Safari Books Limited https://www.safaribooks.com.ng/.
Obituaries

Higgs, Colleen **Elisabeth Anderson: A Champion of Books for All.**
https://www.litnet.co.za/elisabeth-anderson-a-champion-of-books-for-all/ (Posted 07 April 2025)
From 1998 to 2007 Elisabeth Anderson (2 July 1942–27 March 2025) served as head of the Centre for the Book https://www.sa-venues.com/attractionswc/centre-for-the-book.php, a specialist unit of the National Library. Working alongside the Book Development Foundation, a nonprofit organisation that funded many projects, she transformed the landscape of books

and reading in South Africa. This tribute focuses on her ten Centre for the Book years. "Elisabeth's enduring legacy encompasses her commitment to promoting local literature, lobbying for adequate library provision and funding for staffing and buying books, promoting books for babies and children, support of mother tongue education for children, activism for books in local languages, and supporting new writers. Her work at the Centre for the Book laid the groundwork for many initiatives that continue to enrich our literary landscape today."
Obituaries

Kwatampora, Karungi **Henry Chakava: A Legacy of Publishing in Africa.**
https://ibuapublishing.com/the-journal/henry-chakava-a-legacy-of-publishing-in-africa/
"It is next to impossible to engage in Africa's publishing sector without running across the name Henry Chakava. Mr. Chakava, who passed away on March 08, 2024, aged 77, was the chairman of the East Africa Educationa Publishers —Africa's first indigenous publishing house, a lifelong advocate for indigenous publishing on the continent, and a champion of its role in preserving African cultures and languages."
Obituaries

Nyamnjoh, Francis B. **Henry Chakava: A Pioneer of Indigenous Publishing in Kenya and Africa.**
Langaa-Voicing African Voices https://www.langaa-rpcig.net/henry-chakava-a-pioneer-of-indigenous-publishing-in-kenya-and-africa/
https://www.langaa-rpcig.net/ (Posted 21 March 2025)
Also at
https://www.readafricanbooks.com/catalogues/henry-chakava-a-pioneer-of-indigenous-publishing-in-kenya-and-africa/ (Posted 28 March 2025)
An obituary of the late Henry Chakava (1946-2024), often hailed as the "father of Kenyan publishing, who played "a pivotal role in shaping the landscape of African literature." His contributions "extended beyond the commercial realm, encompassing a deep commitment to promoting African languages, facilitating translation, and challenging the dominance of multinational publishers." This fitting tribute highlights Chakava's multifaceted legacy, "examining his key initiatives and their impact on the publishing industry in Kenya and Africa." His influence extended beyond the borders of Kenya, "contributing to the global discourse on African literature and publishing. The long-term impact of Chakava's work on the accessibility and diversity of literature in Kenya is profound. His story serves as a reminder of the transformative power of individual vision and dedication in shaping the cultural and intellectual landscape of a nation. He will be missed, but his legacy endures."
Obituaries
Note: for earlier obituaries of Henry Chakava see also *Publishing & Book Culture in Africa: A Literature Review for 2024*, pp. 24-25
https://www.hanszell.co.uk/Site/PDFs/Publishing_&_Book_Culture_in_Africa_a_Literature_Review_for_2024.pdf

Publishing & Book Culture in Africa: A Literature Review for 2025

Part I: General and regional studies on African publishing and the book sector/Book history and culture

Allen, Emily **Africa's Publishing Industry Turns Page as Authors Make their Mark.** https://african.business/2025/06/arts-culture/africas-publishing-industry-turns-page-as-authors-make-their-mark (Posted 04 June 2025)
Africa's book industry and, more specifically, the South African book sector continues to struggle with printing and distribution costs, "but e-books and world-class authors are strengthening publishers. … South Africa boasts one of the most established publishing industries on the continent and is home to many successful independent publishers Johannesburg. … Yet despite the entrenched position of these independent and international players, publishers in South Africa are still grappling with a fragile ecosystem that is plagued by obstacles including high production costs, infrastructure challenges and prohibitive shipping costs." However, "the rise of independent, homegrown publishers, the adoption of digital technologies, and the growth of community-driven literacy initiatives all point to a transformative shift across the continent's publishing and literary landscape. With greater investment and stronger publishing and distribution networks, African stories and voices will be able to be imagined, nurtured, published, and celebrated on African soil and further afield."
General and regional studies on African publishing and the book sector

Anthony, Hannah **Africa's Book Industry [Infographic]: Key Stats and the Roadmap from UNESCO.**
https://www.lolupub.com.ng/blogs/africas-book-industry (Posted 25 August 2025)
An good analysis, accompanied by infographics, of UNESCO's major report on Africa's book industry (see record below) that summarizes its key findings, offering a snapshot of Africa's current book market share, barriers to book access, and the roadmap for Africa to thrive in the industry. The UNESCO report provides a clear roadmap—strengthen laws, build strong domestic markets, and expand access to reading, the author says: "What's needed now is bold action from governments, publishers, educators, and investors to turn potential into reality." And one might add, Amen to that!
General and regional studies on African publishing and the book sector

Bakare-Yusuf, Bibi **African Book Publishing Must Reclaim the Word 'Local'.**
https://www.semafor.com/article/08/11/2025/african-book-publishing-must-reclaim-the-word-local (Posted 11 August 2025)
Some compelling views here by the co-founder and publishing director of Cassava Republic Press https://cassavarepublic.biz/.

"For African publishers, 'connecting local writers to global audiences' shouldn't mean reinforcing a one-way flow of value, where legitimacy is bestowed elsewhere. That is not equity, but soft coloniality. Amplifying voices across geographies must preserve context, nuance, and political complexity. We are all rooted in a place before our ideas travel. The global is not neutral; it is the accumulation of many locals. … Africa needs capital and networks. But above all, it needs to decolonize its imagination and the language used to describe its work. We must choose words rooted in critical tenderness, understanding, and mutual respect. Only then can we build the literary world we claim to want — one where no writer or publisher's value depends on proximity to whiteness, the global minority, or the empire of Englishes. And perhaps then local can return to its original meaning: simply, proudly, of a place — rooted, not reduced or reconstituted in the language of empire."
General and regional studies on African publishing and the book sector

Borghino, José **Some Thoughts from Casablanca.**
https://internationalpublishers.org/some-thoughts-from-casablanca/ (Posted 25 July 2025)
In July 2025 José Borghino, IPA Secretary General of the International Publishers Association (IPA) https://internationalpublishers.org/ attended an African Publishers Network (APNET) https://apnetafrica.org/ conference in Africa held in Casablanca, to talk to them about IPA's partnership with Africa, what's at stake, and how the IPA can support them. Borghino also reported about the current state of play of various IPA initiatives, and their ongoing interaction with African publishers and book professionals. "Our message to you is clear", he stated: "You are not on your own and the IPA exists to support you. But we also need your support. We will fight for you in Geneva, but we need your voice to convince your local governments. … Publishers' associations in Africa need to lead national efforts and actively participate in coalition efforts with the IPA."
General and regional studies on African publishing and the book sector

Dahir, Adi Latif **"In a New Era African Publishing Raises its Profile."** *The New York Times* 21 January 2025. pp. C1, C7.
https://www.nytimes.com/2025/01/19/books/african-publishing.html (Posted 21 January 2025) ¶
An evolving ecosystem of literary spaces: publishers, bookstores, literary magazines and festivals is promoting African writers and changing the stories told about the region, the author says. "For decades, there was one path to becoming a successful African writer: Getting a book deal in the publishing meccas of New York, London or Paris. But a radical shift is underway, transforming the region's literary landscape from within and opening up possibilities unimaginable to previous generations of writers. … Now, a robust publishing ecosystem has grown in the region: African writers and their agents are signing deals with African publishing houses. Those publishers are trading book rights and collaborating on everything from translation to the design of book covers. And those books are finding readers through new bookstores, literary magazines and literary festivals that are fostering transnational reading communities and launching regional best sellers."
General and regional studies on African publishing and the book sector

Durrani, Shiraz **Captured by Capitalism and Imperialism – Class and Ideology in African Publishing.**
https://editorhousefacility.com/news/captured-by-capitalism-and-imperialism-class-and-ideology-in-african-publishing/ [No posting date, 2025?]
Kenyan author and socialist Shiraz Durrani of Editor House Facility in Uganda https://editorhousefacility.com/about/ writes about the difficulties of radical and socialist publishing in the context of class, capitalism, and imperialism in Africa. "Independent publishing of nonconformist and critical fiction and nonfiction is fighting for its life across the continent. Durrani unpicks the issues and proposes some solutions. … The political context of African publishing is not given the attention it deserves. The elephants in the room are capitalism and imperialism which distort every aspect of life in favour of the ruling elite and ensures policies that are against the interest of working people."
General and regional studies on African publishing and the book sector

Harter, Fred **"Talented Writers, But Few Books. Africans Struggle to Access the Continents Best Literature".** *The Guardian* Friday 17 January 2025. p. 29
(Posted 16 January 2025)
https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2025/jan/29/new-nigerian-writers-othuke-ominiabohs-novels-masobe-books (Posted 29 January 2025)
Another version also at
https://masobebooks.com/ng/i-was-told-books-dont-sell-here-i-knew-that-wasnt-true-the-english-teacher-shaking-up-nigerias-publishing-scene/
Africa has no shortage of celebrated writers – so why is it so hard for African readers to get hold of their books? Across the continent books can be expensive and libraries scarce. But growing numbers of tech innovators and independent publishers are working to make African literature available and affordable. "Many more authors from the continent continue to win recognition in Europe and America …Yet most Africans struggle to find either new works or classics by [African] authors. Few countries have industries producing books locally. Many also lack public library systems that not only lend books to readers but nurture the growth of independent publishing by buying up copies of new works. … In South Africa, 43% of homes have no books and just 16% have no more than five." However, there is no information how these percentage figures were obtained, and from what sources.
General and regional studies on African publishing and the book sector

Kansiime, Deusdedit **Why Small Presses are Vital for Local Knowledge Production in Africa.**
https://www.gatescambridge.org/about/news/why-small-presses-are-vital-for-local-knowledge-production-in-africa/ (Posted 30 January 2025)
Publishing and the circulation of ideas, beliefs and knowledge - literary, scientific or otherwise – "is absolutely instrumental in the social and economic development of the countries of the world." Deusdedit Kansiime argues "why we need a new incentive structure to support not-for-profit models in the publishing world. … Whether it is in the spheres of education, innovation, literacy, culture, creative industries and democracy, having functional and accessible publishing systems is a vital component in any development process."
General and regional studies on African publishing and the book sector

Kitchen, Stephanie **Africa: Publishing Autonomy, Censorship, and Endogenous Capitalism - Learning from Henry Chakava's Legacy.**
https://allafrica.com/stories/202510030201.html (Posted 03 October 2025)
Another version also at https://editorhousefacility.com/news/publishing-in-africa-learning-from-henry-chakavas-legacy/
"British colonial publishing expanded in East Africa post-independence in the 1960s and 1970s. But the publishers Henry Chakava and Walter Bgoya established an African industry. Postcolonial Kenyan governments inherited strategies of censoring free publication from the British too. But progressive and radical publishers continue to challenge such restrictions. This blog draws out some lessons from Chakava's legacy in the struggle for publishing autonomy today. … The continent's writers and publishing structures continue to be adversely affected by multinational dominance, state, and donor policies. They are being undermined by censorship and lacking, or compromised, academic and political freedoms … Chakava's legacy is to recognise that the first crucial step in dealing with the enormous, seemingly intractable, challenges - of establishing and financing publishing, of subverting colonial influences and censorship - was to take control. There are many lessons we can learn from his work, as writers and publishers everywhere seek to exercise autonomy in increasingly censorious conditions."
General and regional studies on African publishing and the book sector

Kitchen, Stephanie, David Mills, and Anshita Ail, eds. **"Small is Beautiful: Africa's Independent Book Publishers."** *Logos: Journal of the World Publishing Community* 35, nos. 2-3 (2024): 1-78.
https://brill.com/view/journals/logo/35/2-3/logo.35.issue-2-3.xml ¶ [Introductory article, pp. 7-14, freely accessible]
This rich, special issue of *Logos* dedicated to publishing in Africa will be of much interest to all those in any way involved in the African book sector. In his introduction, *Logos* Editor Angus Philips writes: "The papers presented here show a diverse and dynamic publishing scene across a variety of areas, from fiction to academic monographs. The contributions mostly describe a cottage industry powered by enthusiasm. The role of women in starting and running independent publishing houses is emphasized; and women are also seen as the larger part of the market for many books."
See also ➔ **Review** above of this special double issue of *Logos*, p. 6.
General and regional studies on African publishing and the book sector

Mohan, Urmila **Convivial Scholarship in an Incomplete World: Interview with Prof. Francis B. Nyamnjoh.**
https://www.langaa-rpcig.net/podcast-interview-with-francis-nyamnjoh/ (Posted 16 September 2024) ✝
In this extensive and insightful interview Professor Francis Nyamnjoh, founder and head of Langaa Research and Publishing Common Initiative Group (Langaa RPCIG) https://www.langaa-rpcig.net/, discusses his life and ideas in the context of being both a scholar and a publisher. Langaa's mission is to contribute to the cultural development and renaissance of Africa. "This is achieved by conducting research, providing training in research and writing, and publishing and promoting African scholarship and creative writing. Langaa

is physically located in Bamenda and Buea (Cameroon), although its members and volunteers operate from different parts of the world."
General and regional studies on African publishing and the book sector

Mushakavanhu, Tinashe **African Poetry is Celebrated in a Groundbreaking Publishing Project.**
https://theconversation.com/african-poetry-is-celebrated-in-a-groundbreaking-publishing-project-267772 (Posted 06 November 2025)
Since 2014, the African Poetry Fund https://africanpoetrybf.brown.edu/ has been assembling a formidable archive of writing through a *New Generation African Poets Chapbook Series*. "This ever-growing archive has now published over 100 poets, and offers a window into the diversity of African poetic expression today. … While the series places Africa at the centre of its imagination, its focus is largely diasporic, shaped by Africans living outside the continent. The majority of the poets live in the US or the UK. Poets based on the continent form a minority and are scattered geographically."
General and regional studies on African publishing and the book sector

Nawotka, Ed **African Publishers Battle 'Wakanda Problem' as Market Grows.**
https://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/international/sharjah-book-fair/article/99073-african-publishers-battle-wakanda-problem-as-market-grows.html (Posted 12 November 2025)
"As African book publishers build a literary ecosystem of their own, they say they're fighting a stubborn perception problem, with too many international publishers treat the continent's 54 countries as one homogenous entity. When we listen to audiobooks produced in the West, they have a Wakandan accent," said Eghosa Imasuen, Executive Director of Narrative Landscape Press in Lagos Nigeria https://www.narrativelandscape.com/, "referencing the fictional nation from Marvel's *Black Panther* at a workshop on African publishing at the Sharjah Publishers Conference earlier this month. Nobody talks like that on the continent."
Note: 'Wakanda' is a fictional country, see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wakanda
General and regional studies on African publishing and the book sector

Nyamnjoh, Francis B**. Reimagining African Scholarship. A Convivial Approach Beyond the Single Story**. Bamenda, Cameroon: Langa RPCIG, 2025. 136 pp. https://www.langaa-rpcig.net/ ¶
Distributed outside Africa by African Books Collective
https://www.africanbookscollective.com/books/reimagining-african-scholarship
(Print or ebook) ¶
Extracts (open access) at https://books.google.co.uk/books?hl=en&lr=lang_en&id=-I9YEQAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&ots=k80m_UxZCS&sig=pJgEV_hqdibP_7PulaDK-QEqGn8&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false
Francis B**.** Nyamnjoh, Professor of Social Anthropology at the University of Cape Town, is an African scholar who has written prolifically and eloquently about many aspects of African studies and African scholarship. This new book reimagines African scholarship by challenging the enduring influence of Eurocentric paradigms and advocating for a decisive shift towards decolonised knowledge production. It introduces the concept of "convivial scholarship," an inclusive framework that embraces the inherent incompleteness of

knowledge, the dynamism of mobility, and the power of collaboration across diverse perspectives. The collection provides a comprehensive and critical examination of the African scholarly and publishing landscape, celebrating the voices and intellectual traditions that have often been marginalised: "From analysing the complex politics of knowledge production to exploring the future of African publishing in the digital age, this book envisions and inspires a more equitable, dynamic, and transformative future for African thought."

This new thought-provoking study is structured around three core themes, each representing a "crucial dimension of the ongoing conversation about the future of African scholarship." In part III, Celebrating Pioneers, it pays tribute to one of the pioneers of indigenous African publishing, the late Henry Chakava, a pioneering figure who played a pivotal role in transforming African publishing. Chakava's passing should inspire a new era of concrete action, the author argues, that supports for African literature "into a sustainable publishing ecosystem that empowers writers and provides culturally relevant educational resources for African children"; while elsewhere much of the text is devoted to the achievements of the African book sector, albeit also some failures.
General and regional studies on African publishing and the book sector

Obolo, Pascale, Michalis Pichler, and Parfait Tabapsi, eds. **Reading Ecologies: Transforming Publishing in Africa.** Paris: AFRIKADAA, Berlin: MISS READ, Yaoundé: Mosaïques 2025. 320 pp. [in English and French] ¶
https://missread.com/publication/reading-ecologies-reinventing-publishing-in-africa/
ISBN 978-3-96287-007-2
"Reading Ecologies: Transforming Publishing in Africa calls for insurgent publishing, rooted in the political, aesthetic and epistemic struggles of independent publishers from the African continent and diaspora."
Not examined.
General and regional studies on African publishing and the book sector

Prager, Jackie **Rewriting Economic Success in Africa Through Book Publishing.**
https://edition.cnn.com/world/africa/rewriting-economic-success-in-africa-through-book-publishing-spc (Posted 29 September 2025)
A report and analysis of the major study UNESCO has published to map out Africa's creative economies (see record below, and review on p. 7)
General and regional studies on African publishing and the book sector

Scovian, Lillian **Africa has Vast Publishing Potential. Report Explains Gaps.**
https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20250928202057159&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=AFNL0512 (Posted 02 October 2025)
Another good round up of the major UNESCO study *The African Book Industry: Trends, Challenges and Opportunities for Growth* (see full record below) that provides a continent-wide analysis of publishing systems across all 54 African countries. (See below, and see also earlier other records on this topic). "A notable finding shows how absent African universities are from the publishing landscape. These are the institutions that shape minds, build curricula, and train the next generation of leaders, but hardly play a role in creating the educational content they use.

Most universities depend heavily on content from foreign publishers, drawing attention to the decline of university presses", according to Kiarie Kamau, the Chairman of the Kenya Publishers Association. In my view, he said, "African universities have largely been absent from local publishing conversations because of a lack of a commercial mindset: universities are run by academics who lack the skills to generate revenue. There is a need for a commercial arm in universities to tap into available opportunities. The first practical step that could change this is to set aside ideological issues and focus on strategic business thinking. … African academics and institutions can start reducing their reliance on foreign journals and publishers by strategically investing in locally driven systems that emphasise both quality and reach." While universities and presses "need to offer meaningful incentives to authors, especially academics, through fair, predictable, and timely royalties."
General and regional studies on African publishing and the book sector

Statista.com **Books – Africa**
https://www.statista.com/outlook/amo/media/books/africa (Accessed 01 July 2025)
Offers statistical data on the book market in Africa as at 2025, including revenue figures by market, average revenue per reader by market, readers by market, revenue and user figures, key market indicators, number of readers, and more. "The data encompasses B2C enterprises. Figures are based on the books market, which covers paid publications in printed form and in the form of digital replicas (eBooks). Revenues from the consumer (of general interest), academic (for educational purposes), and professional (on specialized topics) markets are included here." In Africa, revenue in the books market is projected to reach US$2.30bn in 2025. "Revenue is expected to demonstrate an annual growth rate (CAGR 2025-2030) of 0.79%, leading to a projected market volume of US$2.39bn by 2030. Within the books market in Africa, the number of readers is anticipated to amount to 257.0m users by 2030."
It would be interesting to compare these figures with those set out in UNESCO's major new study released in June 2025, **The African Book Industry. Trends, Challenges and Opportunities for Growth**, (based on 2024 figures) see ➔ record below.
General and regional studies on African publishing and the book sector

UNESCO. The African Book Industry. Trends, Challenges and Opportunities for Growth.
https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000394048
https://doi.org/10.58337/EDUG1920 (Open access)
Paris: UNESCO, 2025. 249 pp. illus.
Also available in a French version at https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000394051
https://core.unesco.org/en/project/3210551071
This is a major, meticulously compiled and far-reaching study of the book sector in Africa, providing very comprehensive mapping across 54 African countries, setting out structural trends and key indicators, together with offering a range of strategic recommendations aimed at guiding the formulation of policies and stimulate book industry growth. For each African country the report also offers historical context, institutional and legal framework, public policies and measures, a publishing roundup, distribution, sales and promotion channels, reading habits and promotion of public reading, imports/exports, training programmes for the book industries, and professional associations.
Note: ➔ For an extensive **Review** of this UNESCO study, see p. 7 above.
General and regional studies on African publishing and the book sector

[UNESCO study] Africa Speaks **Unpacking the Africa Book Industry UNESCO 2025 Report - Meeting Recording**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BBCVksC69TY (Webinar, released on 03 July 2025, 1hr 53mins.
Chaired and moderated by Gathuku Kibunga, Executive Secretary of Africa Speaks https://africaspeaks.global/ this recorded webinar brought together some leading voices in African publishing to unpack the groundbreaking UNESCO 2025 Report on the African book Industry, see full record above. Moderated by Africa Speaks, the session features presentations by veteran publisher Buma Kor Dickson from Cameroon and the prominent book development professional Lily Nyariki from Kenya, as they explore and analyse the report's key findings, "including the $18.5 billion market potential, the dominance of educational publishing, and the urgent need for national book policies and cross-border collaboration." The session has an emphasis on the role of the Christian publishing community in Africa today.
The full UNESCO report can be downloaded at this link
https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000394048 See also ➔ record above.
General and regional studies on African publishing and the book sector

van der Sandt, Elitha **Stories are Africa's New Gold. The Book Industry in Africa: Trends, Challenges and Opportunities for Growth (UNESCO 2025).**
https://www.anfasa.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/ANFASA-AGM-2025-Stories-are-Africas-new-gold.pdf (Posted 06 August 2025)
A useful summary of the above UNESCO report (see other records above) setting out its objectives, its limitations, key findings, key recommendations, opportunities, production figures, regional insights, distribution infrastructure, and more.
General and regional studies on African publishing and the book sector

Yan-Tchamsi, Aimé Badjam **Submitting a Manuscript: How to Write a Proposal that Captures Attention?**
https://africanbookscollective.com/submitting-a-manuscript-how-to-write-a-proposal-that-captures-attention/ (Posted 18 August 2025)
A handy set of guidelines, by Aimé Badjam Yan-Tchamsi a writer and Managing Director of Éditions les Souffle in Chad. For example: how to write a proposal, submitting a manuscript, what purpose does the book serve, how to structure a good synopsis, what recommended format, plus tips on method, what *not* to do, and more.
General and regional studies on African publishing and the book sector

Williams, Mark **"The *Guardian* Is At It Again. No, Writers Do Not Need Financial Support. This Victim Mentality Does Us No Favours."**
https://thenewpublishingstandard.com/2025/01/13/the-guardian-is-at-it-again-no-writers-do-not-need-financial-support-this-victim-mentality-does-us-no-favours/?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAAR0SZ8OoCnd0v92-qqoQrlPPDAdoqldSjMDI_i9AM7o6vAgSuiMk5EWSa40_aem_vGxas45G5cyT6E3Le1A1zw
(Posted 13 January 2025)
A dissenting voice about the *Guardian* article above by Fred Harter from Mark Williams, Editor of the *New Publishing Standard* https://thenewpublishingstandard.com/, who says "The

Guardian is at it again. No, writers do not need financial support. This victim mentality does us no favours", and who asserts that "this puff-piece has more holes than a Swiss cheese." … "If the day ends in the letter 'y', you can be sure a *Guardian* journalist somewhere is getting paid a respectable sum to tell *Guardian* readers how hard life is for writers and that being a writer automatically entitles said writer to a comfortable salary."
General and regional studies on African publishing and the book sector

Williams, Mark **Africa's Book Market Value Exceeds TNPS Forecast, But the Best is Yet to Come.**
https://thenewpublishingstandard.com/2025/06/21/ai-african-publishing-growth/ (Posted 21 June 2025)
In his overview of the African book publishing industry the author says "Africa's book publishing industry stands at a pivotal moment, marked by both significant opportunities and persistent challenges. In 2023, the continent accounted for approximately 5.4% of the global book market, generating an estimated US$7 billion in annual revenue, despite representing 18% of the world's population. The industry is dominated by educational publishing, which comprises about 70% of the market, reflecting the continent's large student population and the centrality of textbooks in publishing output."

Examines some of key challenges to Pan-African and global expansion: key industry metrics (based on UNESCO figures), trade imbalance and reliance of foreign publishing, weak institutional and legal frameworks, inadequate distribution and access, data scarcity, skills gap and limited training facilities, digital transformation and infrastructure, and the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in accelerating industry growth. Concludes that, above all "governments and industry stakeholders need to fully understand that Africa's book publishing industry is rich in talent and potential, with the capacity to become a key driver of economic development, cultural empowerment, and global influence."
General and regional studies on African publishing and the book sector

Part II: Topic-specific studies

AI's place in the publishing industry in Africa

(New topic-specific section)

Arhin, Emmuel Ekow **Implications of Artificial intelligence (AI) on Copyright in Book Publishing.** *Ghana Book World,* no. 13 (2024): 15-19.https://gbdc.gov.gh/ghana-book-world-no-13-2024 **†**
"The book publishing industry has undergone significant transformation in recent years, driven by the rapid development of artificial intelligence (AI) and innovative design approaches. Traditional, print-based publishing models have been disrupted by the rise of e-books, online platforms, and interactive content. AI tools, particularly, have not only changed the way content is delivered but also revolutionized the entire publishing workflow, from

manuscript submission to distribution. At the same time, innovative design concepts have played a pivotal role in reshaping the publishing landscape."
AI's place in the publishing industry in Africa

Opong, Ernest **Artificial Intelligence in the Publishing Industry: Opportunities and Challenges**. *Ghana Book World*, no. 13 (2024): 1-14. https://gbdc.gov.gh/ghana-book-world-no-13-2024 ✝
Recent years have witnessed the emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI), leading to remarkable societal transformation, the author says. This article "presents a cluster of opportunities and challenges of Artificial Intelligence to the publishing industry. It connects readers to the developmental stages of publishing and also presents an overview of Artificial Intelligence." The author is the Executive Director of the African Publishers Network (APNET) https://apnetafrica.org/.
AI's place in the publishing industry in Africa

Salani, Justin, and Mass Masona Tapfuma **Artificial Intelligence Transforming the Publishing Industry: A Case of the Book Sector in Africa.** *Frontiers in Research Metrics and Analytics* vol. 10: (2025) Sec. Scholarly Communication
https://doi.org/10.3389/frma.2025.1504415
https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/research-metrics-and-analytics/articles/10.3389/frma.2025.1504415/full (Posted 30 May 2025)
An extensive study that explores the role of artificial intelligence in the production and distribution of teaching and learning materials by educational publishers in Africa. "The disruptive force of AI renders some publishing functions obsolete and transforms the production and distribution of materials, and subsequently, knowledge dissemination. Despite the acknowledged value and potential of integrating especially generative artificial intelligence in the publishing industry, concerns have been raised over integrity, copyright and intellectual property rights in AI-generated content, text and data mining. The impetus of this study emanates from a dearth of literature on the adoption, challenges and opportunities associated with the integration of AI in the production, dissemination and distribution of publications in the book sector in Africa" In their conclusion the authors say that "this expose demonstrated that AI significantly transforms the book publishing landscape and is indeed a double-edged sword, i.e., it has both positive and negative consequences but the benefits outweigh the drawbacks."
AI's place in the publishing industry in Africa

Williams, Mark **Ghana Prepares to Embrace AI in Publishing While Western Luddites Fight to Hold Back the Industry.**
https://thenewpublishingstandard.com/2024/08/13/ghana-prepares-to-embrace-ai-in-publishing-while-western-luddites-fight-to-hold-back-the-industry/ (Posted 13 August 2024) ✝
At the Ghana International Book Fair in August 2024, the Chairman of the African Publishers Network (APNET) https://apnetafrica.org/ Lawrence Njagi emphasised the importance "of integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) thoughtfully into African systems to foster development." Speaking at the Ghana International Book Fair (GIBF) themed 'Books and Culture in the Era of Artificial Intelligence,' "he warned that neglecting this integration could

stifle creativity and innovation in future generations. … He was quick to stress that while AI can complement human efforts, it cannot replace the human brain's complexity. He urged publishers to use AI cautiously, ensuring they synthesise and verify AI-generated information, arguing that despite its challenges, AI can aid in content creation for education, information, and entertainment, but should not be the core of daily operations."
AI's place in the publishing industry in Africa

Woldestsadik, Mulugeta **Why Only 16 Countries Have National AI Policies as of July 2025.** https://mylibrarianship.wordpress.com/2025/08/21/ai-strategies-in-africa-why-only-16-countries-have-national-ai-policies-as-of-july-2025/ (Posted 21 August 2025)
"To be honest about what we're facing, we need to acknowledge areas of disadvantage that affect Africa's AI readiness: Around 62–63% of Africans remain offline, with only 37–38% using the internet regularly. Just 27–28% have access to mobile internet—and even then, reliability and affordability remain major challenges. Advanced digital skills are extremely rare, with most students lacking access to computers and home internet, limiting their ability to build future-ready skills. Africa contributes only a tiny fraction of global AI. professionals, with resource gaps and low readiness scores holding back local AI talent. These gaps reveal why so many African countries have not yet developed or implemented AI strategies. They highlight the urgent need for investment in infrastructure, education, and governance frameworks to ensure AI adoption is inclusive and beneficial."
AI's place in the publishing industry in Africa

Author-publisher relationship/Publishing of African writers and African literature

Jennings, Karen, and Robert Peett **Words on the Page. A Workbook for African Writers.** https://www.hhousebooks.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Workbook-body-cover.pdf Newbury, UK: Holland House Publishing, 2025. 124 pp. ISBN 978-1-0683164-0-1 [Open access]
A handy workbook for African writers (and would-be writers), freely accessible. The authors say "this workbook was created particularly for writers living in Africa (or the diaspora) and focuses on providing links to writing by, and interviews with, African writers". Includes nine chapters and a series of appendixes.
Author-publisher relationship/Publishing of African writers and African literature

Book assistance and donation programmes

African Books Collective **Book Donation Programmes Revisited.** https://africanbookscollective.com/https-readafricanbooks-nomadit-net-opinion-book-donation-programmes-revisited/ [Posted 09 June 2025]
"Book Donation Programmes for Africa: Time for a Reappraisal? Two Perspectives" is a wide-ranging and extensively documented two-part study in English and in French by Hans M. Zell and Raphaël Thierry, published in *African Research & Documentation. Journal of SCOLMA*

– *the UK Libraries and Archives Group on Africa,* no. 127 (2015) [Published November 2016]: 3-137 (part I), 139-215 (part II).
This is a summary of the study, with extracts from its conclusions, and as well as offering some further thoughts on the topic.
Book assistance and donation programmes

Book fairs and book promotional events

Dzwowa, Cecil **The Zimbabwe International Book Fair. A Moment of Pain and Promise.** https://www.esafrica.es/en/culture/the-zimbabwe-international-book-fair-a-moment-of-pain-and-promise/ (Posted 24 October 2024) ✝
The Zimbabwe International Book Fair (ZIBF)was one of the premier book fairs in Africa. Today, "it is a pale shadow of its former self, but in a country with such a deep-rooted reading culture, there is still hope that one day it will retain its past glory. … During its heyday in the 1980s and 90s, when there was no internet or digital technology, the ZIBF was a great once-in-a-year opportunity for different local stakeholders in the book publishing industry to establish linkages and partnerships. Every annual fair used to attract many renowned authors, publishers, and book buyers from around the world. Besides the book trading, the fair was equally famous for its sideshows like reading competitions for children, live literature, poetry, and many other exciting literary events."
Book fairs and book promotional events

Gabi-Williams, Olatoun **London Book Fair 2025: Defining the Future of Creative Content**. https://pan-african.net/london-book-fair-2025-defining-the-future-of-creative-content-review/?fbclid=IwY2xjawJ1oPpleHRuA2FlbQIxMQBicmlkETBXejE2akk2NHY1TTNBejY1AR48ljOJX5tZKwGIeirTyem9uWj-OQulh1ES0SJQEXLtu_vHoks4SpoYpAL9WA_aem_Xu9-uTdIiyQjLvqRaCvZ6w (Posted 15 April 2025)
Another version also at https://www.readafricanbooks.com/catalogues/a-review-of-london-book-faie-2025/
A useful and extensive roundup and review of events, meetings, and talks held at the 2025 London Book Fair by Olatoun Gabi-Williams of Nigeria-based Borders Literature Online https://bordersliteratureonline.net/, who expresses dismay, rightly so, that there was just one session dedicated to African publishing.
Book fairs and book promotional events

Murua, James **Writing Africa: Literary Festivals and Book Fairs for Africans to Look Out For in 2025.**
https://www.writingafrica.com/literary-festivals-and-book-fairs-for-africans-to-look-out-for-in-2025/ (Posted 07 January 2025)
A very comprehensive list of literary festivals and book fairs for African writers and bibliophiles on the continent and the diaspora. For the most part with links to the websites of the organizers of these events.
Book fairs and book promotional events

Book marketing and promotion/African books in the global market place

Editor House Facility (EHF) **African Voices on the Global Stage – An Interview with Stephanie Kitchen.**
https://africanbookscollective.com/african-voices-on-the-global-stage-an-interview-with-stephanie-kitchen/
First published by Editor House Facility, Uganda
https://editorhousefacility.com/news/african-voices-on-the-global-stage-an-interview-with-stephanie-kitchen/
An insightful interview with Stephanie Kitchen, Executive Director of the African Books Collective https://africanbookscollective.com/ who talks about the history of ABC "and how they are making books from across Africa available around the world … and discusses the visibility of African writers and explores additional measures to amplify African voices on the global stage." ABC is a self-financing non-profit organization, distributing print and e-books from African publishers, and remitting 50% of net proceeds back to the publishers themselves. In addition to its extensive book marketing activities, ABC has recently launched the African Journals Initiative in partnership with Pluto Journals, to provide publishing and distribution services for a small number of the continent's academic journals.
Book marketing and promotion/African books in the global market place

Book prizes and awards

A note about African book prizes:
There is now an ever-increasing plethora of African book prizes and awards. Good sources for tracking these down include the Notes & News sections in each issue of the quarterly *African Book Publishing Record* https://www.degruyter.com/journal/key/abpr/html, the Brittle Paper's African literary blog at https://brittlepaper.com/, James Murua's blog Writing Africa.. Archiving African and Black Literature https://www.writingafrica.com/ and these Wikipedia pages at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:African_literary_awards#:~:text=E,Writivism%20Short%20Story%20Prize albeit not all of them still currently operational at this time.

Chika, Chimezi **The Cuttings of 2025: Are African Literary Prizes Out of Touch?**
https://afrocritik.com/the-cuttings-of-2025-are-african-literary-prizes-out-of-touch/ [no posting date]
"In the judgmental corridors of the literary sphere and its many perturbations, the question of whether literary prizes matter is usually asked at strategic intervals, since their advent. Who or what are these prizes for? What do they do in the literary world? What relevance do they hold? Admittedly, many of these questions emanate from responses to being ignored or to the perceived biases in the bestowal of prestige … There is so much work to do in Africa as far as literature goes, especially in the light of the present economic and social conditions. Our continent is far behind others in the establishment of robust literary ecosystems, which invariably nurture all liberal humanities, amongst other things. Anybody living in 2025 is acutely aware of these needs, which is why one is driven to wonder if the people managing these institutions are a bit out of touch."
Book prizes and awards

Ejinkeonye, Ugochuckwu **Chinua Achebe, Nobel Prize and African Literature.**
https://businessday.ng/life-arts/article/chinua-achebe-nobel-prize-and-african-literature/
(Posted 04 May 2025)
While *not* about African book prizes and awards, this is a very interesting and extensive analysis in the Nigerian newspaper *Business Day* about Nobel politics, "of some of the important discussions that have continued to circulate around Achebe, his work and African literature which appear to have even gained considerable weight since his demise and have also distinguished themselves by the largely tantalizing distortions, half-truths and deliberate misinformation that have been carefully injected into them." This account "is for the benefit of students, younger professors and scholars who were yet to be admitted into the African literary household when some of the events stoking these discussions took place and who are innocently gobbling up the horribly deficient accounts being fed them by those who either do not have any better grasp of those aspects of the African literary history themselves or are on a deliberate mission to distribute misleading concoctions."
Book prizes and awards

Gabi-Williams, Olatoun **CANEX Prize for Publishing in Africa**.
https://worldkidlit.org/2025/03/03/canex-a-new-prize-for-publishing-in-africa/ (Posted 3 March 2025)
Borders Literature Online https://borderslitera tureonline.net/ founder Olatoun Gabi-Williams talks to the acclaimed Nigerian writer Wale Okediran about the CANEX Prize, a new award for publishers in Africa, that seeks to be a successor to the Noma Award for Publishing in Africa which run from 1980 to 2009.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Noma_Award_for_Publishing_in_Africa#:~:text=The%20prize%20was%20established%20in,%3A%20literature%2C%20juvenile%20and%20scholarly.
The new prize seeks to promote "a vibrant literary culture across Global Africa and to foster a sustainable business ecosystem in the literary sector. Initiated by Afreximbank in 2020, CANEX serves as a key driver for development and job creation in Africa, recognising the opportunities within the creative and cultural industries. The award evaluates entries based on the quality of writing, editing, and production, with a particular emphasis on books printed and produced in Africa, as well as those published in indigenous African languages."
For more background about the Noma Award for Publishing in Africa see also
https://web.archive.org/web/20121230180155/http://www.nomaaward.org/index.shtml
Book prizes and awards

Kiguru, Doseline **Q&A: Spotlight Interview with Ellah Wakatama, Chair of the Caine Prize for African Writing.**
https://africainwords.com/2025/02/28/qa-spotlight-interview-with-ellah-wakatama-chair-of-the-caine-prize-for-african-writing/ (Posted 28 February 2025)
On the publication of the latest Caine Prize for African Writing https://www.caineprize.com/ short story anthology, *Midnight in the Morgue and Other Stories* (Cassava Republic Press), "our focus on the 2024 edition of the Prize turns to look forward into 2025, the Prize's anniversary year, as we extend our attention to the behind-the-stories, administrative level of this award." In this interview, Africa in Words spoke to the Chair of the Prize, London-based editor and critic, Ellah Wakatama. "Through this conversation, our aim was to extend our discussion beyond the literary text, and explore the different cultural and social contexts that

continue to shape this Prize and platform that has become so significant for contemporary African literary production."
Book prizes and awards

Mushakavanhu, Tinashe **Africa's Newest Book Prize is Named After Andreé Blouin: Who Was She?**
https://theconversation.com/africas-newest-book-prize-is-named-after-andree-blouin-who-was-she-250828 (Posted 28 February 2025)
Andrée Blouin was a hitherto little-known political activist and writer from the Central African Republic who died in 1986. African literary prizes have seen significant growth in recent years, both in number and influence. They play an important role in promoting African literature, offering recognition and financial support to writers, and shaping the literary canon. Now a new annual book award called the Andrée Blouin Prize has been launched in her honour by a South Africa-based publishing house, Inkani Books https://inkanibooks.co.za/. "Its mission is to amplify the voices of African women, cisgender and transgender, writing about history, politics and current affairs from a left perspective."
Book prizes and awards

NIQ Book Data **SA Book Awards: Celebrating 25 Years of South African Literature.**
https://nielseniq.com/global/en/insights/commentary/2025/sa-book-awards-celebrating-25-years-of-south-african-literature/ (Posted 05 August 2025)
"The SA Book Awards (originally named the South Africa Booksellers Choice Award) was established in 2000 to celebrate books written and published in South Africa, as voted for by South African booksellers. The awards were set up by NielsenIQ BookData and its data partner SAPnet with the support of the Publishers Association of SA and the SA Booksellers Association."
Book prizes and awards

Williams, Mark **254 Submissions Chase the $100,000 Nigeria Prize for Literature 2025.**
https://thenewpublishingstandard.com/2025/04/19/254-submissions-chase-the-100000-nigeria-prize-for-literature-2025/ (Posted 19 April 2025)
"The Nigeria Prize for Literature https://www.thenigeriaprizes.org/, sponsored by Nigeria LNG Limited (NLNG), continues to set the benchmark for literary excellence in Africa. The 2025 incarnation, dedicated to prose fiction, has shattered records with an unprecedented 252 entries, marking a significant milestone in the Prize's history. With a cash award of US$100,000, the prize remains one of the most prestigious literary accolades in Africa and among the richest globally." Moreover, the prize has elevated the standards of book production in Nigeria, thus encouraging publishers to prioritise quality editing and design.
Book prizes and awards

Writing Africa **Literary Festivals and Book Fairs for Africans to Look Out for in 2025.**
https://www.writingafrica.com/literary-festivals-and-book-fairs-for-africans-to-look-out-for-in-2025/ (Posted 07 January 2025)
From the Writing Africa blog – a leading archive preserving and promoting African and Black literature – this is a comprehensive list, month by month, all with links to websites, of African and international book fairs and literary festivals to look out for in 2025 (and beyond).

Note: for another list, albeit not as comprehensive as the above, see also this Wikipedia page (last updated 23 March 2022) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:African_literary_awards
Book prizes and awards

Children's book publishing

Edoro, Ainehi **Our Favorite Books Published by Africa-based or African-owned Indie Publishers in 2024.**
https://brittlepaper.com/2024/12/our-favorite-books-published-by-africa-based-or-african-owned-indie-publishers-in-2024/ (Posted 13 December 2024) ✝
"The challenges faced by publishers based on the continent are enormous. In countries where running any business comes with unique hurdles, publishing is even more daunting. Not to mention that in the global space, they have to compete with the 'big-five' US publishers who control much of the publishing in the English-speaking world, including African books." Presents a list of outstanding African-published children's books released during the course of 2024, with short descriptions and images of the book covers.
Children's books publishing

Lee, Jeongmin, Elizabeth Adelman, and Simmons Zuilkowski "**Books That Talk About My Dreams": Understanding Children's Book Access, Preferences, Motivations, and Support at Home and in Nearby Environments in Rwanda.**
Reading Research Quarterly 60, issue 2 (2025): https://doi.org/10.1002/rrq.70010
"Understanding children's motivations to read and preferred materials is key to fostering reading skills and promoting a national reading culture. This study, conducted a decade after the launch of the Soma Rwanda (Rwanda Read) national reading initiative, explores children's access to books at home, their reading preferences, and the motivations driving their reading engagement. … The analysis prioritizes children's perspectives, with parent data providing context on home environments where children's reading experiences unfold. Findings reveal that despite limited home libraries beyond textbooks, children develop and maintain diverse reading interests, from science to biographies to fiction. Their motivations extend beyond academics to include career exploration, cultural identity, and emotional comfort."
Children's book publishing

Wiliams, Mark **Akada Festival: Nigeria's Children's Publishing Sector Comes of Age.**
https://thenewpublishingstandard.com/2025/11/28/akada-childrens-book-festival-2025-nigeria-publishing/ (Posted 28 November 2025)
The 2025 Akada Children's Book Festival (ACBF) https://akadafestival.org/ in Nigeria attracted over 1,500 attendees. "With 34 authors, 27 curated titles, and 38 programmed sessions – including 14 workshops, 11 storytimes, and five book chats – the festival demonstrates the sector's growing commercial viability. The theme 'Book an Adventure' underlined storytelling's role in nurturing curious, confident young readers." However, despite success, structural challenges persist: "Children's books remain expensive to produce, and ACBF relies on free venue provision and a 95% volunteer workforce to maintain free entry. Yet rising demand from parents and educators seeking locally-relevant content suggests a sustainable future for practitioners investing in quality indigenous literature."
Children's book publishing

Copyright and legal deposit/Authors' rights

Anon **Role of the National Library of South Africa in Legal Deposit.**
https://www.studocu.com/en-za/messages/question/12277896/what-the-role-played-by-national-library-of-south-africa-in-legal-deposit (Posted March 2025)
The National Library of South Africa (NLSA) plays a crucial role in the legal deposit system, which is designed to preserve the nation's published heritage. This is a brief guide to the functions it performs.
Copyright and legal deposit/Authors' rights

Diawara, Mamadou **Reconstructing the Future: Taking Ownership of Copyright in Africa.**
Africa. Journal of the International African Institute 94, no. 5 (2025): 637-654.
https://doi.org/10.1017/S0001972024000974
https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/africa/article/reconstructing-the-future-taking-ownership-of-copyright-in-africa/D4082A2C6D36A5073669694698277F09 (Open access)
The author asks, what is the state of copyright in Africa today, when specialists in the field, notably in the USA, are sounding the alarm? Taking this as its starting point this article examines the ways in which copyright is discussed, established and experienced in sub-Saharan Africa. "It questions the relevance of the vocabulary used and asks how Africa can be made intelligible in the context of a heterogeneous world. Since the 1990s, international organizations have promoted and imposed the economic notion of material goods, inventing a new tradition. The result is a heritage, the commons, that is reduced to a resource divorced from any historical or social context. How can we go beyond these rights, which are a source of a 'promise economy' for creators, to promote imprescriptible and inalienable human rights? How can experienced creators resist copyright that takes them back to the Middle Ages?"
Copyright and legal deposit/Authors' rights

University of the Witwatersrand Libraries **Legal Deposit in South Africa: Copyright & Other Relevant Laws.** https://libguides.wits.ac.za/c.php?g=145508&p=953921
Provides information about legislation, application and enforcement of the Legal Deposit Act in South Africa, together with drawing attention to some useful resources for publishers, librarians and others involved in compliance with this legislation.
Copyright and legal deposit/Authors' rights

Journals and magazine publishing (see also ➔ Open access publishing)

Alagbe, Jesusegun **Journals Waking up to African Researchers' Plight to Publish.**
https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20250908104935749&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=AFNL0510 (Posted 18 September 2025)
For many African researchers, publishing in international peer-reviewed journals is not just about contributing to knowledge; it's a career lifeline. However, the journey from manuscript to publication carries a heavy cost, with article processing charges ranging from hundreds to thousands of dollars. In this paper, based on the collective and diverse experiences of African researchers, editors, and funders, the author highlights the plight of fellow African researchers "whose desire to contribute to global knowledge, progress their careers and gain recognition

for their work is hampered by deterring APCs in the face of me††agre resources … In addition, to address this pressing challenge, we offer and call for urgent reforms by governments, local and international funders and donors, and the scientific publishing industry. … African researchers are turning to innovative means to navigate the increasingly commercialised world of academic publishing to get their work seen and contribute to global knowledge production – from banding together to crowdfunding and co-authorship deals to borrowing and moonlighting."
Journals and magazine publishing

Amboka, P. et al **Discoverability of African Journals by Google Scholar and Inclusion in Scopus.**
https://doi.org/10.12688/verixiv.244.1 (Posted 01 November 2024) ✝
There has been steady progress and advancement of research in Africa. However, African researchers face numerous challenges, among them limited international recognition. "This is due to the low discoverability and inclusion of their research outputs by indexers and databases. A lot of initiatives have attempted to address the challenges, however, there is a need for support to enhance the discoverability and inclusion of research outputs from Africa." The authors conducted a desk review of 1,116 journals hosted on the Sabinet journal repository and the African Journal Online (AJOL) platform, "analysing various factors that were considered to influence journals' discoverability and inclusion."
Journals and magazine publishing

Kaganof, Aryan **A New Model for Online Archiving and Journal Publishing.** *South African Journal of Science 121*, nos. 5/6 (2025): 1-3 https://doi.org/10.17159/sajs.2025/21518
Herrie named after Autshumao (also known as Herrie die Strandloper, the Koi leader and interpreter for colonial administrator Jan van Riebeeck) "has been described as an online archive, as a journal, as an e-magazine, and as a digital museum, and, while it happily accepts all of these definitions, it does not allow itself to be limited by any of these definitions. This Commentary is a brief introduction to a new model for online archiving and journal publishing that rejects a print lineage (book or magazine) for online publication but rather embraces a screen-based genealogy, foregrounding both cinematic and gaming approaches to digital design, user experience and navigation."
Journals and magazine publishing

Kanyika, Martin Elihaki, and Eungi Kim "**Continued Struggle: The Growth of Scopus-Indexed Journals in Africa Over the Last Decade**. *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, Online First. 19 February 2025. https://doi.org/10.1177/09610006251319546 ¶
This study seeks to assess journals indexed in Scopus https://www.elsevier.com/en-gb/products/scopus from African countries, drawing on data spanning 2003 to 2023, but focusing on the most recent decade (2013–2023) in order "to examine geographic distribution, rankings, publishers, and disciplines. Data on journals indexed in Scopus were collected and analysed using the SCImago Journal Rank (SJR) portal. The findings revealed a significant under-representation of African journals in Scopus compared to other global regions. Among African countries, Egypt and South Africa had the highest journal coverage in Scopus, with South Africa exhibiting consistent growth across disciplines and journal types." The study concludes that "African scholarly publishing faces complex challenges in achieving Scopus

indexing. It recommends adjusting Scopus indexing criteria to better align with African contexts, which could enhance the representation of African journals."
Journals and magazine publishing

Odhiambo, Wilson **New Journal a Platform for African Ideas by African Voices.**
https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20250727191449300&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=AFNL0503 (Posted 29 July 2025)
Strathmore University in Kenya, in partnership with the Technical University of Kenya (TUK), has launched a new journal "to capture African ideas through African voices exclusively." The journal, *Writing the Arts & Humanities in Africa* (WAHiA), is viewed as "a milestone for African scholars and academics who have long sought to share their ideas through their perspectives." According to the partners, the journal "is intended as a platform to display cultural memory, scholarly rigour, and intellectual reimagination. The journal also reaffirms the leading role that African scholarly work plays in articulating context-specific knowledge and shaping the intellectual future of the continent."
Journals and magazine publishing

Sawahel, Wagdy **Scholarly Publishing System Continues to Marginalise Africa.**
https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20250312172538604&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=AFNL0486 (Posted 13 March 2025)
A review/rejoinder to the paper by Martin Elihaki Kanyika and Eungi Kim *Continued Struggle: The Growth of Scopus-Indexed Journals in Africa Over the Last decade* (see record above). Despite the overall rise in the number of indexed journals over two decades, 2003-23, Africa's representation in the Scopus database remains disproportionately low, suggesting that the current global scholarly publishing system continues to marginalise African research output, even as other developing regions gain greater representation. "The study found that African journals remain grossly underrepresented in Scopus. In addition, while other regions show significant growth in journal numbers over the years, the African continent has seen no growth over the years." One suggestion is an *African Scholarly Index*: "The African continent needs to organise and work together on the development of an African scholarly index which is well supported by different countries and their higher education systems."
Journals and magazine publishing

Tamrat, Wondwosen **Local Journals are Important. Why Government Should Do More.**
https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20250903194753560&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=AFNL0509 (Posted 11 September 2025)
The promotion of local journals can be a useful policy direction for countries that wish to develop these "and recognise the value of local knowledge production and dissemination pursue." Over the past few years, "significant strides have been made in Ethiopia to enhance the growth of local journals through new policy initiatives. The accreditation programme instituted by the Ethiopian Ministry of Education in 2019 has been especially instrumental in recognising such journals and to encourage local research productivity." However, while Ethiopia's current efforts to promote local journals are commendable, "the lack of commensurate government support to such journals is a serious concern and needs to be addressed in earnest."
Journals and magazine publishing

Uwisike, Blessing **African Journals Initiative Launches to Bring African Scholarship to Global Audiences.** https://brittlepaper.com/2025/11/african-journals/ (Posted 14 November 2025)
Pluto Journals and African Books Collective have launched the African Journals Collective (AJI) a three-year pilot project designed to amplify the visibility and reach of diamond Open Access social science and humanities journals published by African universities. Supported by ScienceOpen and JSTOR this new initiative "addresses a longstanding challenge: ensuring that rigorous African scholarship produced on the continent reaches researchers, students, and institutions worldwide, as central contributors to global knowledge production. The African Journals Initiative will support a small but growing community of no-fee Open Access journals, providing services that include enhanced discoverability and indexing, user-friendly submission systems, annual impact reports, and strategic promotion." The initiative's first beneficiaries includes six journals spanning the continent, from Somalia, Tanzania, Ghana, Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Malawi. "Each journal represents decades of scholarly tradition, yet many have struggled with the visibility challenges that plague African academic publishing. AJI's support promises to change that trajectory."
Journals and magazine publishing

Open access publishing

Alkasim Hamisu Abdu, Binta Ladan Farouk, and Karimatu Isa Maisango **"Performance of the Nigerian Open Access Repositories."** *Journal of Librarianship and Scholarly Communication* 13, issue 2 (2025): 1-22. https://doi.org/10.31274/jlsc.18293
"Open access is implemented in two major ways: the gold route and the green route. The gold route entails making research literature freely available on publishers' servers, whereas the green route entails using Open Access Repositories (OARs) to achieve the open access aims. To date, a few OARs have been hosted in Nigeria to communicate the research produced in the country with the rest of the world. Therefore, this study used content analysis to assess the functionality and effectiveness of OARs hosted in Nigeria. Data were extracted from the Directory of Open Access Repositories (OpenDOAR), and, additionally, the contents of Nigerian repositories were analysed. The finding of the study revealed that there is a steady increase in OARs in Nigeria; however, the country lags when compared with its counterparts. It was also discovered that most Nigerian OARs were inaccessible owing to technical problems."
Open access publishing

EIFL Guide: Quality in Diamond Open Access Publishing. Guidelines, Policies and Templates for Publishers of Diamond Open Access Journals.
https://www.eifl.net/system/files/resources/202504/quality_in_diamond_open_access_publishing_guidelines_policies_and_template.pdf (Published April 2025)
A helpful new set of guidelines document designed to support Diamond open access (OA) journal publishers (in Africa and elsewhere), "to enhance the quality and credibility of their journals, and to encourage alignment with established best practices in scholarly publishing." The guide includes: a summary of the essential elements that define a Diamond OA journal. Templates, including a comprehensive Journal Policies Template, as well as templates for

Author Statements, Conflict of Interest Declarations, and Licence Agreements. Technical guidance on: key features for article landing pages and full-text articles, proper display of licensing information, general website and accessibility considerations.
Open access publishing

Githiora, Yvonne **Open Access Publishing for African Researchers.**
https://africaresearchub.com/open-access-publishing-for-african-researchers/ (Posted 13 June 2025)
Open access publishing has become a critical conversation in the academic world, especially for researchers in Africa, the author argues. "With the increasing demand for equitable access to knowledge, the traditional model of subscription-based publishing is being challenged by the rise of open access (OA) journals, which allow readers to access research articles free of charge. For African researchers, the shift towards open access presents both opportunities and challenges. But is open access publishing truly necessary for African researchers? And how can they navigate this landscape effectively? … By understanding the do's and don'ts of open access publishing, African researchers can make informed decisions about where to publish, how to fund their work, and how to share their research with the world."
Open access publishing

Legge, Malavika **Equitable and Sustainable Open Access for Scholarly Books in East Africa: Report from an Online Session.**
https://www.oaspa.org/news/equitable-and-sustainable-open-access-for-scholarly-books-in-east-africa-report-from-an-online-session/ (Posted 24 February 2025)
Organized by the Open Access Scholarly Publishing Association https://www.oaspa.org/ in October 2024, this was a collaborative online session for publishers from East Africa. The organisers of this two-part online event here share the detailed report of the four presentations. The session covered approaches towards equitable and sustainable open access (OA) for scholarly books, and was delivered in two parts: Part 1 was a webinar-style series of presentations exploring impacts, experiences, revenue models and other topics pertaining to OA book publishing, while Part 2 was a workshop-style discussion for all those present.
Open access publishing

McKenna, Jack **Open Access in Nigeria.**
https://blog.mdpi.com/2025/04/29/open-access-in-nigeria/ (Posted 29 April 2025)
"Nigeria has a range of community- and organisation-led open science initiatives. These are working to build infrastructure, develop skills, and promote Open Access in Nigeria, whilst responding to challenges like lack of internet access and linguistic barriers." This article sets out the history of Open Access in Nigeria and its current policies for those looking to submit research or read it. Concludes: "Open Access makes vital information accessible to all readers and researchers and brings together scholars from across the world. Thus, it is ideal for tackling global challenges that require urgent and coordinated attention."
Open access publishing

Ndege, Nora **The Future of Open Access Publishing for Global Development: Insights from the UN Science Technology and Innovation Forum 2025.**
https://blog.inasp.info/the-future-of-open-access-publishing/ (Posted 05 June 2025)

At the 2025 UN Science, Technology and Innovation forum https://sdgs.un.org/tfm/STIForum2025?utm a group of experts from Africa and around the world came together to address a fundamental question: "How can we reshape global research publishing so its inclusive for all? This piece offers further reflections on those discussions, highlighting science diplomacy as a pathway for a more equitable, open publishing system. "

Open access publishing

Note: See also this linkedin.com account at https://www.linkedin.com/posts/inasp_openscience-stiforum2025-sciencediplomacy-activity-7336409060537262081-Fli9/

Onaolapo, Sodiq, Philips Ayeni, and Siphamandla Mncube **Open Access Publishing in an African Context: Notable Improvements and Recurring Challenges**. *IFLA Journal*. June (2025): 1-15.
https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/03400352251351113
Also at
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/392866030_Open_access_publishing_in_an_African_context_Notable_improvements_and_recurring_challenges

Open access (OA) publishing is an essential means of disseminating research findings, and holds significant potential for African scholars, the authors state. However, "despite the growing support for open access publishing globally, little is known about African scholars' engagement with open access publishing and the barriers limiting their open access publishing practices. Using a survey research design, data was collected from 241 researchers from selected universities in Africa, such as Nigerian, Kenyan and South African universities." Although African researchers are embracing open access publishing more now than they were historically, but "barriers such as article processing charges and the prolonged response time from reviewers continue to pose a serious challenge to open access uptake in Africa. This study proposes five recommendations for improving open access uptake in African and Global South countries."

Open access publishing

Papadouris, Maria **Opening Access, Amplifying Voices: Six African Journals Now on JSTOR.**
https://about.jstor.org/blog/opening-access-amplifying-voices-six-african-journals-now-on-jstor/ (Posted 25 April 2025)

Led by Pluto Press https://plutoeducationaltrust.org/african-publishing and the African Books Collective https://africanbookscollective.com/ the African Journals Initiative supports journals affiliated with African universities and university presses. "Each year, six established, high-quality journals will be added to the programme. The initiative is exploring sustainable models for open access publishing, while aiming to raise the global profile and discoverability of African scholarship, drive increased usage and submissions, and create a replicable, scalable model for no-fee open access publishing in the Global South."

Open access publishing

Predatory publishing (➔ see also Journals and magazine publishing)

Bowa Harold, and Susan Veldsman **Combating Predatory Publishing: Insights from the Latest AfricArXiv Open Science Webinar.**
https://ubuntunet.net/africarxiv-open-science-webinar-series/combating-predatory-publishing-insights-from-the-latest-africarxiv-open-science-webinar/ (Posted 27 March 2025)
The AfricArXiv Open Science Webinar series, a collaborative initiative by the UbuntuNet Alliance and Access 2 Perspectives, with support from the Africa Open Science Platform, continues to foster critical discussions around Open Science. Here it reports about a webinar series that aims to advance the principles of Open Access, research integrity, and equitable knowledge dissemination across Africa's research ecosystem. The latest session in the series, attracting over a hundred participants, "delved into the pressing issue of predatory publishing a practice that prioritizes financial gain over scholarly integrity, particularly in Africa … The discussion underscored how traditional research evaluation systems and evolving Open Access models, while beneficial, have also provided opportunities for predatory publishers to thrive. With researchers under increasing pressure to publish, it has become more critical than ever to distinguish legitimate publishing avenues from exploitative ones. The high turnout for this webinar underscores the urgency of addressing predatory publishing and equipping researchers with the knowledge to navigate the scholarly landscape responsibly".
Predatory publishing

Ezeike, Ebuka **Building a Trustworthy Research Environment: Challenges and Solutions to Predatory Publishing.**
https://info-africarxiv.ubuntunet.net/building-a-trustworthy-research-environment-challenges-and-solutions-to-predatory-publishing/ (Posted 27 March 2025)
Reports about a slide presentation by Susan Veldsman, Director of the Scholarly Publication Unit at the Academy of Sciences (ASSAf) https://www.assaf.org.za/, responsible for driving the Open Science agenda: "to raise the visibility, discoverability and accessibility of South African scholarly journals, to improve the quality of SA research output, and support the development of policy frameworks in order to facilitate optimal use and access to publicly funded research." Questions that were addressed during the session include: What is predatory publishing, and why is it a major concern for African researchers? To what extent is predatory publishing a challenge for Open Science and Open Access publishing, particularly in Africa? How can researchers identify and avoid predatory journals? What impact does publishing in a predatory journal have on a researcher's career and credibility? What initiatives or resources are available to help African researchers publish in reputable journals?"
Predatory publishing

Moshi, Sevelina S., Frankwell Dulle, and Ronard Bernard Tarimo **Researchers' Knowledge and Awareness Regarding Predatory Publishers in Tanzanian Universities.**
https://doi.org/10.1177/0340035225136829 [*IFLA Journal*, Online first] ¶
"This study investigates knowledge levels, awareness regarding predatory publishers, and factors influencing researchers' choice of publishers among Tanzanian researchers. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, the study includes 201 respondents from the University of Dodoma and Sokoine University of Agriculture, combining a questionnaire for researchers

with interviews with university decision-makers. The results indicate that while many respondents recognized the key features of predatory publishing, such as identifying unsolicited email invitations, there remains a significant gap in comprehensive knowledge."
Predatory publishing

Waruru, Maina **African Researchers Warned to Watch Out for Predatory Journals.** https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20250409105607327&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=AFNL0491 (Posted 17 April 2025)
Researchers are likely to fall victim to the deceptive ways of some publishers who often operate as commercial and rarely as academic enterprises, much to the detriment of scholarly publishing and the advancement of knowledge. "If left unchallenged, the predatory market will have far-reaching effects, including undermining research enterprise, fuelling misinformation in public policy, and even worse, widening the research gap between high- and low-income countries, quoting Susan Veldsman, director of the Scholarly Publication Unit at the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf)" https://www.assaf.org.za/scholarly-publishing-programme/. While the Open-source model can be both a blessing and curse. "According to the UbuntuNet Alliance, publishing and evaluation with peer review at its core are essential components of the scientific endeavour. Despite these traditional academic publishing models, research evaluation and peer-review systems have never been entirely immune from exploitation and malpractice, with the risk of compromising the integrity of research and making the scholarly communication system vulnerable to overt commercial predation."
Predatory publishing

Publishing education and training

Afolabi, Abdulrasheed, and Fatai Jimoh **Publishing Education in the Emergent Digital Economy: A Focus on Formal Undergraduate Training in Book Publishing in Nigeria.** https://www.researchgate.net/publication/396029001_Publishing_Education_in_the_Emergent_Digital_Economy_A_Focus_on_Formal_Undergraduate_Training_in_Book_Publishing_in_Nigeria (Posted October 2025)
"The book publishing industry is a cornerstone of societal advancement. Nigeria is reputed to have one of the largest and well-established African publishing industries. However, there is a dearth of specialized formal training in book publishing, especially in the nation's higher education system. This brings forth serious concerns about professionalism in book publishing, especially given that the book industry is strategic to the economic development of countries. … This study examines the broad range of formal, undergraduate book publishing training available in Nigeria, with a specific focus on the Higher National Diploma (HND) book publishing programme at Yaba College of Technology, Lagos. This programme is one of the few attempts at promoting formal training and professionalism in book publishing in Nigeria."
Publishing education and training

Publishing in African languages

Chalamilla, Karen **Mkuki Bgoya: Swahili Writers Should be Mandatory Reading in Tanzania, But There's a Deep Trauma Around Books.**
https://africanarguments.org/2024/07/mkuki-bgoya-swahili-writers-should-be-mandatory-reading-in-tanzania-but-theres-a-deep-trauma-around-books/ (Posted 30 July 2024) ✝
"Abdulrazak Gurnah, the Zanzibari-born 2021 Nobel Literature laureate's grand homecoming was punctuated by the translation of his masterpiece, *Paradise,* into Kiswahili." His publisher, Mkuki Bgoya, of Mkuki na Nyota Publishers in Dar es Salaam https://mkukinanyota.com/about-us/ speaks about its significance in the Swahili canon.
Publishing in African languages

Ogunlade, Omolola **The Role of Publishing in Preserving African Languages and Stories.**
https://evanspublishers.com/the-role-of-publishing-in-preserving-african-languages-and-stories/ [no posting date]
The preservation of language and storytelling is fundamental to the identity and continuity of any developing society, says the author, who is English Editor at Evans Brothers Nigeria Publishers. "When languages and cultural narratives are passed from one generation to the next, they serve as a conduit for transmitting heritage, values, and collective memory. African languages and stories have evolved over time, influenced by factors such as technological advancement and the widespread use of social media. This evolution has been significantly shaped by publishers who continuously seek innovative ways to ensure that African languages and narratives thrive – despite the dominance of global languages that often marginalize indigenous voices."
Publishing in African languages

Reading culture and reading promotion

Akinwale [pseud] **Do Africans Really Read? 5 Problems in Literacy and Publishing.**
https://littafi.com/blog/do-africans-really-read-5-problems-in-literacy-and-publishing/
(Posted 09 April 2025)
This arguably somewhat contentious article "is about the bigger questions involving literacy, reading culture and book dissemination in African countries and how they affect how the African is viewed by his fellow global man. Do Black people really read? Can they comprehend the language of letters and text? What are the issues that have given rise to this worrying perspective? And how does the literary publishing industry tie into this puzzle?"

Chiraag **Africa's Untold Stories Could Be the Key to a Publishing Boom.**
https://www.joburgetc.com/culture-craze/african-book-industry-local-language-growth/
(Posted 07 July 2025)
A new UNESCO report (see also full record above, p.7) suggests that embracing African languages in publishing could transform the continent's book industry and its future. "The benefits would stretch far beyond economics. It is about preserving heritage, boosting literacy, and giving young Africans the chance to see their worlds reflected in print. …. If governments rise to the occasion and back their local writers and publishers, Africa could not only own a

larger slice of the global publishing pie but also ensure that its people see themselves in the pages they turn."
Reading culture and reading promotion

Esé, Emmanuel and Nadine Siegert, eds. **Reading Ecologies: Transforming Publishing in Africa. [**Not examined.]
https://limestonebooks.org/products/reading-ecologies-transforming-publishing-in-africa ¶
"Transforming Publishing in Africa calls for insurgent publishing, rooted in the political, aesthetic and epistemic struggles of independent publishers from the African continent and diaspora."
Publisher: Afrikadaamissread Mosaïques, 2025. 320 pp. ISBN: 9783962870072 [In English and French]
Maastricht: The Netherlands, Limestone Books, 2025. [Distr.?] 320 pp. [in English and French]
Reading culture and reading promotion

Hugo, Anna Jay, and Ivan Bachisi **"Using Mobile Reading Devices to Encourage Positive Leisure Reading Practices Amongst Adolescents – A Case Study from Zimbabwe." †**
Reading & Writing. Journal of the Literacy *Association of South Africa,* vol. 15, issue 1 (2024): 1-8. 10.4102/rw.v15i1.410
Also at
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/377861306_Using_mobile_reading_devices_to_encourage_positive_leisure_reading_practices_amongst_adolescents_-_a_case_study_from_Zimbabwe
"Being able to read and write are essential skills that have become synonymous with the current technological milieu, which defines the context in which this generation of adolescents interacts with the world around them. Well-developed literacy skills are thus necessary for the current crop of youths to access digital content via different electronic media, including mobile devices." The objective this study was "to identify the adolescents' leisure reading identities, as the authors sought to identify whether one model of leisure reading support suits everybody."
Reading culture and reading promotion

Williams, Mark **The Great Audiobook Conflation: Why Listening Isn't Reading.**
https://thenewpublishingstandard.com/2025/07/23/audiobooks-are-not-reading-why-listening-differs-from-reading/?fbclid=IwY2xjawLwHStleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHoCc5siqGj1NRAsFw4NXGpNuIysmeAF0rWsdBBzeelFj1z_u9b4J3EzTMZTA_aem_iZjJ_dJgOgZoDmg_OzP57g (Posted 23 July 2025)
"Rather than twisting ourselves into linguistic pretzels to validate audiobook consumption as reading, we might ask a more productive question: Are audiobooks valuable? The answer is an unqualified yes. … The audiobook industry can and should be proud of what it has accomplished, without needing to borrow the prestige of reading. Listening is its own art, with its own rewards. But it's not reading."
Reading culture and reading promotion

Scholarly and STM publishing

Elouaorti, Zakari, Imane Elouardighi, and Aomar Ibourk **Bridging the Gender Gap in African Scientific Publishing: Insights from Web of Science Indexed Journals.** *Learned Publishing* 38, no. 2 (2025): 1-29. [Open access] https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/leap.2007 (Posted 11 April 2025)
"African women researchers represent a minority within Africa's scientific community, accounting for 29.3%—a figure significantly lower than in other regions: 39% in Europe, 41% in Asia, 43% in South America, and 44% in North America. Moreover, this low participation rate masks intra-African disparities, with some Sub-Saharan African countries exhibiting particularly low percentages." This extensive study examines the participation of African women in scientific publications, focusing on differences between social sciences and exact sciences, as well as regional disparities between North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa. "It aims to identify key challenges and propose actions to enhance the presence of African women researchers in high-impact journals."
Scholarly and STM publishing

Mills, David **Academic Funding, Academic Publishing, and Academic Freedom: An African Conundrum.** https://africanarguments.org/2025/10/academic-funding-academic-publishing-and-academic-freedom-an-african-conundrum/ (Posted 21 October 2025)
Whether in the US or in Africa, defending academic freedom heavily relies on institutional resources, which in turn depends on states funding those institutions. "This has particular implications for publishing freedoms. Academic publishing cannot be done on the cheap. It relies on resources, infrastructures and expertise: support for editors, journal software, institutional repositories, university presses. These capabilities are hard to sustain in persistently underfunded institutions, especially when the priority is teaching ever larger numbers of students. … Even where universities provide funding and technical platforms for their own journals, the speed with which digital publishing technologies has evolved makes it hard for open-source software technologies to compete. The generation and dissemination of granular and high-quality journal metadata is key to journal discoverability. The largest publishers promote their own one-stop submission platforms and data-aggregation services, all with the aim of creating a detailed citation ecosystem."
Scholarly and STM publishing

Ndege, Nora, Haseeb Md. Irfanullah, Jon Harle, and Tom Drake **Africa's Research Publishing Landscape: Examining Journals, Publishers, and the Infrastructure Behind Them.** https://openresearchafrica.org/articles/8-20 (Posted 05 October 2025)
Africa's research publishing sector is growing but remains largely fragmented and under-resourced, posing major barriers to the visibility, accessibility, and global integration of African research. "This paper presents a continent-wide mapping of Africa's research publishing ecosystem, drawing on five integrated datasets covering 1,169 publishers and 1,790 journals to assess the scale, thematic content, linguistic diversity, and the degree of openness characterising the African publishing landscape. … The analysis reveals that the majority of journals are published by single-journal entities embedded within universities, learned

societies, and research institutes. While this decentralised model allows for locally driven publishing and alignment with national research priorities, it is often constrained by limited infrastructure, inconsistent metadata practices, and lack of professional publishing support."
Scholarly and STM publishing

Obanda, Johanssen, and Baraka Manjale Ngussa **Scholarly Publishing in Africa.Overcoming Barriers and Creating Opportunities.**
https://doi.org/10.60763/africarxiv/1628 (Posted 31 October 2024) ✝
A Crossref presentation: "We envision a rich and reusable open network of relationships connecting research organizations, people, things, and actions; a scholarly record that the global community can build on forever, for the benefit of society."
Scholarly and STM publishing

Thompson, Desmond **Revised Code Released to Boost Trust in Scholarly Publishing.**
https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20250804070118364 (Posted 05 August 2025)
First published in 2004 and revised in 2018, South Africa's scholarly publishing sector now has a new set of standards to navigate technological disruption, unethical practices and declining public trust. The 2025 revision of the *Code of Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing, Editing and Peer Review* https://research.assaf.org.za/items/d3bf1a41-8a64-4585-8443-ab1fe87b1778 recently released by the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAF) offers updated ethical and professional guidelines for editors, reviewers, publishers, and authors. "The code has become a cornerstone of the country's evolving research system."
Scholarly and STM publishing

Women in African publishing

Banjo, Fadeke **6 Nigerian Women Authors Who Helped Shape Society as We Know it Today.**
https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/6-nigerian-women-authors-shaping-society/ (Posted 14 February 2025)
"Pioneers like Flora Nwapa, Buchi Emecheta, and Balaraba Ramat Yakubu, challenged the status quo through their storytelling, fearlessly discussing social issues affecting women in their communities, such as child marriage, women's education, and financial independence. They laid the foundation for contemporary writers like Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Abi Daré, and Tomi Adeyemi — who explore and express the diverse experiences of Nigerian womanhood, while also addressing pressing social issues like women's rights, gender oppression, sexuality, identity, and women's bodily autonomy — to build a substantial literary landscape upon."
Women in African publishing/Publishing by and for women

Busby, Margaret, and Joel Cabrita, Fekola Olayinka et al, eds. **Imprint Africa. Conversations with African Women Publishers.**
https://www.mzansibooks.co.za/products/imprint-africa-conversations-with-african-women-publishers ¶

Cape Town: Modjaji Books, 2024. 234 pp (distributed outside Africa by African Books Collective https://www.africanbookscollective.com/publishers/modjaji-books) ¶
And see also https://www.readafricanbooks.com/catalogues/imprint-africa-conversations-with-african-women-publishers/
This rich anthology maps an early twenty-first century history of the remarkable women who have pioneered the publishing industry in Africa over last few decades. "These luminaries have modelled resistance to the forces excluding African writers from the publishing industry, both on the continent and beyond. Nine profiled publishers address themes of North-South economic disparity in the publishing industry, the demise of publishing on the continent amidst Structural Adjustment Programs and the political turmoil of the 1970s, the importance of African language publishing, the gendered dynamics of publishing in Africa, the fluid nature of African identity in an era of migration and diaspora, and the new importance of online platforms for African publishers." Over the last decade, the landscape of African literature has changed dramatically the authors say. "The flowering of women-led publishing houses and literary festivals has led to major literary-publishing shifts traced by the book." Includes a preface by celebrated publisher Margaret Busby.
Women in African publishing/Publishing by and for women

Dave, Jagravi **Ainehi Edoro-Glines Interviewed in Imprint Africa: Conversations with African Women Publishers.**
https://brittlepaper.com/2025/03/ainehi-edoro-glines-interviewed-in-imprints-africa-conversations-with-african-women-publishers/ (Posted 17 March 2025)
An extensive book review. "The world of African publishing has been shaped by the work of women, and a new book of the above, examines their transformative role over the past two decades. Recently published by Modjaji Books https://modjajibooks.co.za/titles/imprint-africa/ or https://africanbookscollective.com/books/imprint-africa/ Imprint Africa is a collection of interviews with influential women in the industry, including Brittle Paper's editor-in-chief Ainehi Edoro-Glines. … Imprint Africa highlights the groundbreaking contributions of women-led initiatives that are redefining literary publishing on the African continent and beyond. Ainehi Edoro-Glines' interview emphasises the work of these initiatives in allowing Africans to tell their own stories."
Women in African publishing

Powers, Jessica **On Focused Audiences for Marketing, Advice for Writers, and Independent Publishing.**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pSU16tOnllc (YouTube, 38.14 mins.)
An extensive and insightful interview with Colleen Higgs, publisher at Modjaji Books in South Africa https://modjajibooks.co.za/ by Jessica Powers of Catalyst Press https://www.catalystpress.org/thespark/categories/flare-books. Catalyst Press and Modjaji Books recently set up a new international publishing partnership set to commence in May 2025, with Catalyst Press to take on international marketing and distribution responsibilities for Modjaji's extensive list.
Women in African publishing/Publishing by and for women

Part III : Country-specific studies

Cameroon

Djamfa, Priscille Ngongang **Technological Innovation and Development of the Publishing Industry: The Challenging Digital Transformation of Publishing Houses in Cameroon.** *Open Journal of Applied Sciences* 14, 2024: 1863-1885.
https://www.scirp.org/journal/paperinformation?paperid=134806
https://doi.org/10.4236/ojapps.2024.147122
"In the digital age, performance-oriented publishing houses utilize digital tools to optimize their editorial activities. This optimization affects both editorial practices and products in terms of content and form. These products, now accessible through various media, bring significant changes, while the editorial function undergoes a metamorphosis due to digital exposure. In Cameroon, the book sector is predominantly focused on school textbooks, a legacy from the colonial period. This study investigates the impact of technological innovation on Cameroonian publishing by examining the processes of content selection, legitimization, and dissemination in the digital age. … Our findings indicate that a strategic shift towards embracing digital tools and improving infrastructure could significantly enhance the efficiency and reach of Cameroonian publishing houses. By addressing the specific challenges identified in our study, the industry can leverage digital technologies to foster a more inclusive, dynamic, and resilient publishing environment."
Cameroon

Urmilla, Mohan **Convivial Scholarship in an Incomplete World: Interview with Prof. Francis B. Nyamnjoh.**
https://www.langaa-rpcig.net/convivial-scholarship-in-an-incomplete-world-interview-with-prof-francis-b-nyamnjoh/ (Posted 17 September 2024) ✝
An extensive interview with Francis B. Nyamnjoh, head of the of the not-for-profit Langaa Research and Publishing Common Initiative Group (Langaa RPCIG) https://www.langaa-rpcig.net/ whose principal aim is to contribute to the cultural development and renaissance of Africa. "This is achieved by conducting research, providing training in research and writing, and publishing and promoting African scholarship and creative writing. Langaa, not set up for monetary profit-making, is supported by founding members and other contributors, financial grants and efforts of volunteers." While physically located in Bamenda and Buea (Cameroon), its members and volunteers operate from different parts of the world. Thus far, Langaa has published over 500 titles, primarily on Cameroon, but also studies on other African countries.
Cameroon

Ethiopia

Salim, Maryam, Fitsum Mulugeta, and Jennie Albone **Ethiopia: Building Bridges to Learning, One Book at a Time.**
https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/education/ethiopia--building-bridges-to-learning--one-book-at-a-time (Posted 08 September 2025)

To celebrate this year's International Literacy Day, the authors are highlighting how a programme in Ethiopia is expanding children's access to books through supporting caregivers to read with their children, as well as creating a supportive environment where learning can flourish even in the most difficult circumstances.
Ethiopia

Ghana

Arhin, Emmanuel Ekow **The Need for Paper Production in Ghana**. *Ghana Book World* 14 (2025): 14-19. https://gbdc.gov.gh/ghana-book-world-no-14-2025
In Ghana, paper stock for book production and other print materials is mostly imported. "There is no large-scale facility capable of producing the diverse types of paper needed for the local publishing industry and other sectors. Yet Print production plays a major role in the production of physical books, making paper stock a crucial raw material in the printing of books. This necessitates a heavy reliance on imported paper, leaving Ghana vulnerable to global market volatility; highlighting the urgent need for investment in a strong and diversified domestic paper production industry."
Ghana

Asante, Mavis **The 22nd Ghana International Book Fair: Advancing Inclusivity and Book Development.** *Ghana Book World* 14 (2025): 33-42. https://gbdc.gov.gh/ghana-book-world-no-14-2025
A report about the 22nd Ghana International Book Fair which highlighted inclusivity, cultural exchange, and professional capacity building.
Ghana

Asuinura, Ernesticia, and Kofi Asante Twumasi **Pages of Virtue: Building Ghana's Ethical Future Through Books and Storytelling**. *Ghana Book World* 14 (2025): 1-8. https://gbdc.gov.gh/ghana-book-world-no-14-2025
"Books, as cultural goods, have long been a means of preserving a nation's culture and heritage, in addition to use as a store and disseminator of knowledge, information and entertainment. Irrespective of the form of presentation, i.e. in printed or electronic form, books have continued to perform these important functions. … Ultimately, building Ghana's ethical future through books and storytelling is a shared responsibility, since it requires conscious and concerted eff orts from every stakeholder in the book industry."
Ghana

Glover, Agbelengor Reuben, Lucy Afeafa Ry-Kottoh, Adolph Hilary Agbo, and Michael Ato Essuman **Cultural Policy and Publishing in Ghana: Exploring the Symbiosis Between Policy and Practice.** *E-Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences* 6, issue 2 February (2025): 117-135 https://doi.org/10.38159/ehass.2025627
This significant evaluative study seeks to provides an in-depth analysis of Ghana's publishing industry within the context of cultural policy. "It explores the symbiosis between national cultural policy, ancillary policies, and its operational dynamics, focusing on how policy directives are implemented in the publishing sector, with emphasis on the mandate of the

National Commission on Culture (NCC) as a regulator and facilitator in promoting the growth of local authorship and literary arts through culture. … The findings indicate that while the publishing industry's practices, challenges, and innovations have the potential to influence national development, policymakers and administrators are apathetic towards these dynamics, indicating a disconnect between cultural policy objectives and the realities faced by industry stakeholders."
Ghana

Konadu, Yamoah Konadu **Ghana Publishers Association Statement on International Literacy Day on 8th September 2025.** *Ghana Book World* 14 (2025): 9-13.
https://gbdc.gov.gh/ghana-book-world-no-14-2025
"Literacy has always been the foundation of individual empowerment and national development. Traditionally, it referred to the ability to read and write, but in the 21st century, its meaning has expanded to include the capacity to access, understand, and use information effectively across digital platforms. The digital age has transformed how people learn, communicate, and participate in society. … Promoting literacy in this digital era is not simply about ensuring people can read words on a page; it is about equipping citizens with the skills to navigate vast amounts of online information, to identify credible sources, to create digital content responsibly, and to engage in lifelong learning."
Ghana

Oppong, Ernest **A Publisher is not a Printer.** *Ghana Book World* 14 (2025): 20-32.
https://gbdc.gov.gh/ghana-book-world-no-14-2025
Over the years there has been a serious misconception and misrepresentation by the public about who is a publisher on the one hand, and a printer on the other. "Through observations and interactions with Ghanaians, publishing industry professionals and political figures across Africa and other continents, it is clear that the basic understanding of the work of publishers and printers is not well grounded. Printing is one of the key aspects of the publishing process. This article focuses on drawing a clear comprehensive description and distinction between a publisher and a printer, as key professionals in the publishing industry. It also explains what book publishing and printing are. The article also provides a brief historical background to publishing and printing in Ghana to essentially highlight the transformative transition from handwritten publications to printed publications. Printing or the services of a printer are not needed for non-printed materials or serials and books in digital formats such as e-books and audiobooks." The author is the Executive Director of the African Publishers Network (APNET) https://apnetafrica.org/.
Ghana

Tetteh, Emanuel **Ghana Publishers Call for Renewed National Commitment to Publishing Sector.**
https://www.myjoyonline.com/ghana-publishers-call-for-renewed-national-commitment-to-publishing-sector/?ref=cedirates (Posted 06 November 2025)
The President of the Ghana Publishers Association (GPA) https://gpagh.org/, Asare Konadu Yamoah, has called for renewed national commitment to the publishing sector. He described it as a "force that can shift the soul of a nation", and as a "catalyst for Ghana's economic and

cultural transformation, and emphasised the urgent need for policy reforms that recognise publishing as a central pillar in national development."
Ghana

Twumasi, Kofi Asante **Workshop for Book Industry Practitioners on Venturing into Audiobook Publishing.** *Ghana Book World* 14 (2025): 43-48. https://gbdc.gov.gh/ghana-book-world-no-14-2025
The 2025 Fair emphasized "Ghana's commitment to broadening access to books, particularly for persons with visual and hearing impairments, in alignment with the global Marrakesh Treaty agenda."
Ghana

Twumasi, Kofi Asante **Integrating Innovative Pedagogies in Curriculum and Textbook Development for Quality Teaching and Learning**. *Ghana Book World*, no. 13 (2024): 26-34. https://gbdc.gov.gh/ghana-book-world-no-13-2024 ✝
There is a need to adopt student-centred learning as against the curriculum and textbooks for teaching and learning in Ghana, "which promote a teacher-centred approach, thus, stifling students' engagement, critical thinking and problem-solving skills." Reports about a 21-day training programme on 'Curriculum and Textbook Development for Professional Enhancement of Mathematics and Science Educators" held in Penang, Malaysia, from September 25 to October 15, 2024.
Ghana

The Gambia

Darboe, Mariama A. **Read Gambia Targets Literacy Gaps with First National Reading Marathon Initiative.**
https://thepoint.gm/africa/gambia/national-news/read-gambia-targets-literacy-gaps-with-first-national-reading-marathon-initiative#google_vignette (Posted 20 November 2025)
The Read Gambia Foundation recently convened a press conference to introduce the inaugural Gambia Read-A-Thon 2025, described as "a pioneering nationwide reading initiative designed to promote literacy and inspire young Gambians to aspire toward breaking the Guinness World Record for the longest reading marathon in the future. Organizers say the competition forms part of the country's ongoing push to address literacy challenges and track improvements in basic education."
The Gambia

Modou Lamin Age-Almusaf Sowe **The State of Gambian Literature and the Publishing Industry.**
https://standard.gm/the-state-of-gambian-literature-and-the-publishing-industry/ (Posted 26 August 2025)
An extensive investigation into the state of the book in The Gambia. "When will we designate Banjul or Brikama as a Unesco Book City? Shouldn't this be an open conversation within our arts and cultural landscape? Should we persist in ignoring The Gambia's literary scene as a failed group of ineffective writers who are unrealistic and unappealing? If given the

opportunity to meet His Excellency President Adama Barrow, the first question I would politely pose is how many Gambian books he has read between 2017 and now. In what ways did these books influence his life while serving as president? These two inquiries are enough to completely grasp his leadership as a head of state. … Throughout the meeting, the presenters offered compelling perspectives on the ways in which publishing influences education, identity, and cultural interactions across the continent. One aspect specifically caught my attention: The Gambia's creative economy was still untapped."
The Gambia

Kenya

Durrani, Shiraz **Ngugi's Untold Contribution to Politics & Publishing in Kenya.**
https://africanbookscollective.com/ngugis-untold-contribution-to-politics-publishing-in-kenya/ [No posting date, 2025]
The Kenyan writer Ngugi wa Thiong'o passed away on May 28, 2025. To honour his contribution to Kenya's liberation, and to literature and to resistance publishing, Vita Books https://www.vitabooks.co.ke/ has now reprinted his essay, *Writing Against Neocolonialism.* This book was the first title on the Vita Books list, published in in 1986. Ngugi's part in the establishment of Vita Books has also not yet been recognised in this tribute. "This Introduction aims to rectify this shortcoming on our part. Vita Books has grown from a very small beginning in 1986 to become one of the most important – perhaps the only – Left publisher in Kenya today. "In order to understand how and why Vita Book started, we need to travel back in time to the early1980s to London, UK. Ngugi came here in exile in 1982; Shiraz Durrani followed him into exile in1984 and Naila Durrani in 1986. Nothing remarkable about this except that all three were members of the underground December Twelve Movement and had taken an active part in DTM's underground and overground activities. What was unique about DTM membership is the ideological clarity, discipline and commitment to action and resistance that were created and honed in its strict cell structures. Being active in Kenya under the harsh Moi government hardened DTM members. It is this quality that the three brought to London."
Kenya

House, Emma **A Kenyan Publisher Hopes to Change the African Books Market.**
https://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/international/international-book-news/article/96325-a-kenyan-publisher-hopes-to-change-the-african-books-market.html
(Posted 27 November 2024) ✝
"Kenya's publishing industry, like much of Africa's, remains largely driven by educational texts. Trade publishing—covering fiction, poetry, and non-fiction—comprises only a small portion of the market. The major players in the educational sector maintain limited trade lists, while independent publishers and self-published authors have stepped in to fill the void. One of the most pressing challenges for Kenyan readers is the prohibitive cost of books. Imported titles dominate the shelves of Nairobi's bookstores … This situation leaves many African readers unable to access works by their own continent's authors, even when those authors are published and widely available outside of Africa. In addition, logistical hurdles across African countries mean that it is often easier to import books from overseas than to order books from

within Africa. This lack of a robust distribution network means that African literature struggles to reach its primary audience—African readers."
Kenya

Korir, Michelle Chepchumba **Publishing in Kenya: A Brief(ish) Overview.**
https://thekenyanbookmaker.substack.com/p/publishing-in-kenya-a-briefish-overview?utm_campaign=post&utm_medium=web (Posted 23 April 2025)
The author states that this overview "is for those that know nothing on the topic and would like a starting point", but it actually offers quite comprehensive and helpful advice about the entire book publishing process. From review of manuscripts, editing, book design, printing, marketing, post-sales activities, author contracts, the pros and cons of self-publishing, digital publishing, and more. The author says "publishing a book has never been more accessible. And in many ways, we are both better and worse for it."
Kenya

Ong-wen, Odour **A Bow to Shiraz Durrani: Publishing the Struggle.**
https://www.readafricanbooks.com/catalogues/a-bow-to-shiraz-durrani-publishing-the-struggle/ (Posted 05 January 2025)
Oduor Ong-wen shares his thoughts on the recent retirement of Shiraz Durrani of Nairobi based Vita Books https://vitabooks.co.ke/, "a publishing house that would become a beacon for progressive thought. Prior to that, literature from Kenya's underground and overt anti-imperialist struggles found it hard to get published, save for efforts of a few foreign publishing houses like Zed Books. Under his leadership, Vita Books published a wealth of literature not just on Kenya but across Africa, extending the horizons of freedom of expression and amplifying the voices of the marginalized. Through Vita Books, Shiraz ensured that the histories of struggle and the dreams of liberation would remain accessible for generations."
Kenya

Powers, J.L. "**Nuria. The Home of African Books".** *World Literature Today* 99, no. 1 January (2025): [Outposts]
https://www.worldliteraturetoday.org/2025/january/nuria-home-african-books-j-l-powers
(Posted January 2025)
Nuria https://nuriakenya.com/, the subject of this profile says, is a small bookstore in Nairobi "with an outsized collection of books you won't find anywhere else in the world". Established in 2015, Nuria is one of a handful of independent bookstores in Nairobi, Kenya, "but it uniquely focuses on curating books by Kenyan authors—classics and newly published books alike. What sets Nuria apart is its commitment to amplifying these authentic voices, particularly those of Kenyan authors who may not have access to global platform." Running an independent bookstore can be said to be a challenge anywhere in the world, but "Nuria has found its niche, giving visitors the opportunity to discover new and underrepresented authors and to explore Africa's evolving literary scene."
Kenya

Williams, Mark **Kenya's Publishers Face Parliamentary Deposit Mandate.**
https://thenewpublishingstandard.com/2025/12/10/kenya-legal-deposit-bill-2025-publishers/ (Posted 10 December 2025)
"Kenyan publishers must currently deposit copies with the Registrar of Books and Newspapers, Kenya National Library Service, and National Archives under the Books and Newspapers Act (Cap 111). The Books and Newspapers (Amendment) Bill, 2025 would add Parliament – via the Clerk of the Senate – as a fourth mandatory recipient. If passed, publishers must supply up to three copies of each publication, including digital formats." There are significant implications for publishers: "The Bill imposes additional administrative and financial burdens, particularly for small presses. Requiring both physical and digital deposits reflects modern preservation needs but doubles compliance complexity."

Kenya

Williams, Mark **eKitabu Launches Children's Imprint: Redefining African Publishing from Kenya to the World'**
https://thenewpublishingstandard.com/2025/11/23/ekitabu-launches-maua-books-childrens-press/ (Posted 23 November 2025)
eKitabu's launch of Maua Books, a children's imprint, is a gift from heaven, the author says. "It is a remarkable origin story: From Digital Pioneer to Inclusive Education Leader. Founded in 2012 in Nairobi, Kenya, eKitabu https://www.ekitabu.com/ emerged as East Africa's premier digital bookstore and content distribution platform, addressing a critical gap in the continent's education landscape. With 'Kitabu' meaning 'book' in Swahili, the company set out to democratise access to quality reading materials amid a surge in device adoption across African schools and households. Starting with a focus on educational content – which accounts for about 70% of African publishing – eKitabu built an open-architecture ecosystem that aggregates ebooks from over 60 African publishers, enabling seamless distribution via mobile money payments like M-Pesa."
Kenya

Nigeria

Black Tower Publishers **The State of Book Distribution in Nigeria: Challenges and Opportunities for Writers.**
https://blacktowerpublishers.com/the-state-of-book-distribution-in-nigeria-challenges-and-opportunities-for-writers/ [2025, no posting date]
For almost every writer in Nigeria, publishing a book is only half the journey. The real test comes with distribution. "Without strong networks to move books from printing presses to the hands of readers, even the best-written work risks being invisible. The Nigerian book market is vast, diverse, and full of potential, but it also presents serious challenges. From piracy to poor infrastructure, authors and publishers often struggle to figure out how to sell books in Nigeria. This article takes a critical look at the state of book distribution in Nigeria, highlighting the hurdles, emerging opportunities, and strategies writers can use to succeed."

Enidiok, Mary Sunday, et al **A Survey of the Publishing Strategies of the University of Calabar Printing and Publishing Press**. *The Journal of Arts, Humanities and Development Studies Research* 6, issue 1, (2025): 53-67. [Not examined]
Reports about a survey study undertaken to investigate the publishing activities and strategies of the University of Calabar Printing and Publishing Press https://unicalpress.unical.edu.ng/ in Nigeria.
Nigeria

International Publishers Organization (IPA)
Otunba Olayinka Lawal-Solarin on the Challenges Facing Publishing in Nigeria.
https://internationalpublishers.org/otunba-olayinka-lawal-solarin-on-challenges-facing-publishing-in-nigeria/ (Posted 20 August 2025)
Otunba Olayinka Lawal-Solarin is Chairman of Literamed Publications in https://www.publishersglobal.com/directory/publisher-profile/22229 (or www.lantern-books.com [page not accessible as at 17 October 2025] and one of Nigeria's best-known publishers. Here he tells the IPA about his experiences in publishing, and the enormous challenges facing the book industry. One major aspect being the current climate for piracy and copyright infringement in Nigeria. "Piracy is devastating the publishing industry in Nigeria. The whole intellectual property space here is dominated by pervasive piracy and has been for a very long time. As soon as I ventured into book publishing, especially school textbook publishing, our books were being pirated. Multinational publishers like MacMillan, Longman, Evans, Heinemann's books are heavily pirated. Today, piracy has taken a turn for the worse; pirates can go to China, India or Dubai to import near-perfect pirated copies of the original, which fool customers who cannot tell the difference between the original and pirated copies." However, it is not all doom and gloom, and "the Nigerian Government is beginning to show the political will to deal with the problems because of the growth of the entertainment industry where copyright infringement is most visible and where you have high-profile people protesting about it. There is a new levy on all imported printing equipment, including photocopying and digital equipment. This will fund the Copyright Commission and should make it more effective."
Nigeria

Mammah, Richard **Revitalizing Nigeria Through Reading Promotions.**
https://namibia.un.org/en/290127-revitalizing-nigeria-through-reading-promotions
(Posted 03 March 2025)
Richard Mammah is President of the Network of Book Clubs and Reading Promoters in Nigeria (NBRP) https://www.nbrp.org.ng/, founded in February 2020 as a non-profit organization to develop, promote and sustain a reading culture in Nigeria, and at the same time to serve as an umbrella organization for book clubs in the country. In this article he describes its wide-ranging activities and its achievements to date.
Nigeria

Moghalu, Chinedu **Nigeria: The Loud Silence Around the Reading Culture in Nigeria.**
https://allafrica.com/stories/202505060451.html (Posted 4 May 2025) [Originally published in the *Premium Times* newspaper]

"The future of education is not just in infrastructure or innovation, as vital as those are. It lies in how a society cultivates the inner life, how it teaches its people, from childhood, to sit with complexity, to ask questions, to listen for meaning beyond noise. In an age of algorithms and instant answers, reading remains one of the last forms of sustained attention we have left. … As Nigeria pursues long-overdue reforms in classrooms, connectivity, and human capital investment, we must also reckon with a quieter but more enduring challenge, namely our diminishing relationship with books, and the gradual erosion of reading as a cultural habit, a form of self-formation, and a gateway to deeper thinking. … Books are still seen by many as an academic requirement rather than a personal or societal asset. Reading, for too many children, and indeed adults, is something one must endure to pass an exam, not a practice to be nurtured, enjoyed, or claimed. In this, the crisis is not just educational. It is cultural."
Nigeria

Mushakavanhu, Tinashe **A University Bookshop in Ibadan Tells the Story of Nigeria's Rich Publishing Culture.**
https://theconversation.com/a-university-bookshop-in-ibadan-tells-the-story-of-nigerias-rich-publishing-culture-262050 **(**Posted 01 August 2025)
University bookshops have been overlooked but are essential nodes in the continent's intellectual history. This is an affectionate tribute and profile of the campus University Bookshop at Ibadan University. "Today, when the global publishing economy has been increasingly digitised and centralised, the bookshop feels almost radical just by existing. It's a reminder that intellectual life in Africa is not peripheral or derived from the west. It is present, prolific and profoundly local. To walk through the shelves of this bookshop was to encounter a history of African thought written and produced on its own terms."
Nigeria

Ogundare, Femi **Nigeria**: **How Our 60-Year Journey Reflects Quality, Innovation, Service to Education – Ladipo.**
https://allafrica.com/stories/202510150015.html (Posted 15 October 2025)
As Nigerian publisher Academy Press Plc https://academypress-plc.com/ celebrates its 60th anniversary, its Managing Director, Olugbenga Ladipo, reflects on the company's legacy in supporting Nigeria's education sector through quality printing and publishing. In this extensive interview he discusses the firm's journey, its role in producing educational materials, commitment to innovation, and plans to strengthen local capacity for the future.
Nigeria

Radarr Africa **Africa's Publishing Industry Rises as Nigerian Authors and Publishers Lead the Way.**
https://radarr.africa/africas-publishing-industry-rises-as-nigerian/ (Posted 05 June 2025)
"Africa's publishing industry is currently undergoing a major shift as local authors and publishers continue to break new ground and reshape the literary space across the continent. In Nigeria, a number of new publishing houses and bold storytellers are at the forefront of this change, offering readers fresh voices and relatable narratives that reflect African realities."
Nigeria

Strauss, Victoria **Return of the Nigerian Prince: A New Twist on Book Marketing Scams.** https://writerbeware.blog/2025/08/01/return-of-the-nigerian-prince-a-new-twist-on-book-marketing-scams/ (Posted 01 August 2025)
Marketing scams have always been plentiful in Nigeria, and over the past year or so they have significantly surged. The author here exposes one type of marketing scam – namely the 'Friendly author' social media scam, "in which someone impersonating a real (and often very well-known) author reaches out with a direct message, ostensibly because they're interested in your books or your writing, but actually in order to refer you to some sort of shady marketing service. Now there's a new type of marketing scam. It has the same starting point–direct solicitation–and the same end goal–tricking writers into handing over money. The new part is the steps that happen in between."
See also the author's earlier https://writerbeware.blog/2025/09/19/return-of-the-nigerian-prince-redux-beware-book-club-and-book-review-scams/.
Nigeria

Williams, Mark **Strategic Reforms Needed to Revitalise Nigeria's Publishing Industry.** https://thenewpublishingstandard.com/2025/11/08/policy-reforms-revive-nigeria-publishing-industry/ (Posted 08 November 2025)
"A clarion call has been made for comprehensive policy reforms to resuscitate Nigeria's printing and publishing sector, an industry valued at over USD 236 million annually. Stakeholders, convened by the Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI), have highlighted the urgent need for government intervention to address systemic challenges and unlock the sector's immense potential. … The industry faces significant headwinds, primarily stemming from a heavy reliance on imports. Over 80 per cent of printing inputs – including paper, ink, and plates – are imported, exposing operators to foreign exchange volatility and high production costs. … The industry also cautions against the uncritical implementation of digitalisation policies without assessing their impact. The Federal Government's plan to digitise all parastatals by December must be balanced with the reality that many rural communities still lack internet connectivity."
Nigeria

Williams, Mark **BLAPAN's Inauguration Marks a Turning Point in Nigeria's IP Protection Arena.**
https://thenewpublishingstandard.com/2025/06/01/blapans-inauguration-marks-a-turning-point-in-nigerias-ip-protection-arena/ (Posted 01 June 2025)
The BLAPAN – Better Life for Authors and Publishers Association of Nigeria – formally inaugurated its first National Executive Council in a ceremony at Moakland Plaza, Ikeja. "The event signified a bold step forward in the fight against piracy and the push for stronger protections for literary professionals."
Nigeria

Wiliams, Mark **The Reading Crisis in Nigeria: Challenges and the Role of Publishing Professionals.**
https://thenewpublishingstandard.com/2025/05/12/the-reading-crisis-in-nigeria-challenges-and-the-role-of-publishing-professionals/ (Posted 12 May 2025)

Mark Williams, Editor of the always lively *New Publishing Standard* https://thenewpublishingstandard.com/, says that Nigeria has produced some of the finest writers of the past century. "But where are the next generation of award-winning authors to come from if today's kids can barely read and write? As Nigeria embarks on long-overdue educational reforms, one critical issue remains largely overlooked: the erosion of reading as a cultural habit. While infrastructure, digital learning, and curriculum improvements are vital, they cannot replace the fundamental need for a society that values books beyond the classroom." In his conclusion Williams argues that "it's a tragic shame that the UK's leading publishers' and authors' reps, the Publishers Association and the Society of Authors, are so busy chasing soundbites about the evils of AI that they have totally lost sight of the real threat to the publishing industry – the next generation of non-readers."
Nigeria

Yusuf, Zia **How Self-Publishing is Disrupting Nigeria's Literary Landscape.**
https://the49thstreet.com/how-self-publishing-is-disrupting-nigeria/ (Posted 09 August 2025)
"For decades, the Nigerian literary scene has operated within a well-defined hierarchy. Traditional publishing houses were the gatekeepers, determining which stories deserved amplification and which manuscripts were worthy of public consumption. This system, while producing many of Nigeria's most celebrated authors, has also created barriers – lengthy submission processes, restrictive contracts, and a narrow definition of what constituted 'marketable' literature. Today, that system is being upended. Self-publishing, which was once dismissed as a vanity project for writers who couldn't secure 'real' book deals, has matured into something formidable and is reshaping how stories are told, shared, and sold across Nigeria."
Nigeria

Rwanda

Williams, Mark **De Marque Arrives in Rwanda – a Big Boost for One of Africa's Digital Hubs.**
https://thenewpublishingstandard.com/2025/11/17/de-marque-rwanda-digital-publishing-hub/ (Posted 17 November 2025)
"A press release from De Marque, a Canadian company specialising in global e-book and audiobook distribution, announces the establishment of their operations in Rwanda. It underlines Rwanda's growing reputation as a digital publishing hub in Africa, highlighting the country's readiness to embrace digital books as tools for education and cultural exchange. … With investments in digital literacy and smart classrooms, Rwanda aims to become a continental leader in digital knowledge sharing. De Marque's entry aligns with this vision, providing Rwandan authors and educators a platform to project the nation's voice globally. What impact it will have on the wider Rwandan publishing industry remains to be seen."
Rwanda

Sierra Leone

Keegan, Thomas, ed. by Stephanie Newell and Karin Barber **Literacy, Madness and African Selfhood in the Sierra Leone Weekly News.**
In *African Literature in Transition. Print Cultures and African Literature, 1860–1960* (2025): 166-183.
https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/abs/african-literature-in-transition/how-to-cultivate-a-love-for-reading/58034398086BEB36256CF33378780360 (Posted 23 October 2025) ¶
"African popular intellectuals in colonial Freetown, Sierra Leone, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries produced public writing in which they lamented the danger of reading 'like a European', or quick and mechanical reading practices, which they argued led to the degeneration of the 'African mind'." This chapter's case study of Orishatukeh Faduma's 1919 Sierra Leone Weekly News column, 'How to Cultivate a Love For Reading,' reveals how contributors in Freetown reimagined transatlantic public anxieties about race, nationhood, and madness to encourage local readers to 'read like an African', which meant slowly, selectively, and critically."
Sierra Leone

South Africa

Krut, Orenna **An Alternative Politics of Educational Publishing: Insights from the 1993 Conference on Publishing for Democratic Education.**
https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02560046.2025.2534034?src= (Posted 05 November 2025)
"The 1980s and early 1990s are viewed as a time of intense activism and street-level confrontation in South Africa, as well as a time of intellectual vibrancy and a search for alternatives. Intense debates explored new and creative ways of thinking about culture and education. Multiple organisations in the education space debated what democratic education looked like. A conference held just before South Africa's first democratic election of 1994 articulated a vision for educational publishing. … Now three decades into democracy in South Africa, the conference discussion and outcomes feel strikingly contemporaneous. This paper examines and interrogates the premises and promises of the 1993 conference on Publishing for Democratic Education in respect of the present position."
South Africa

Laubscher, Bradley **Manuscripts + Marketing: The Inside Scoop on Publishing in South Africa.**
https://brittlepaper.com/2025/09/manuscripts-marketing-the-inside-scoop-on-publishing-in-south-africa/ (Posted 05 September 2025)
Some sound advice here (and for writers not only in South Africa): "If you want to be published, you need more than a good manuscript; you need a plan", the author says. "The publishing landscape has undergone significant changes in recent years, particularly in South Africa. Before the pandemic, a first print run of 5,000 copies was considered standard, the minimum benchmark for a successful title. Today, that number has dropped to around 1,500. For many publishers, that's enough to cover production costs, reflecting a more cautious yet

pragmatic approach to risk and reward. … Getting from the first draft to the bookshelf is part art, part hustle. You'll need stamina, structure, and a strategic approach." Discusses rising trends, and says: "In short, the numbers may be smaller, but the opportunities are larger than ever, especially for writers who understand the market, know how to position their work, and aren't afraid to meet readers where they are."
South Africa

Le Roux, Elisabeth **Narratives of Transformation in South African Publishing in the 1990s**. *Critical Arts*, Vol. 39, issue 1-2: (2025)
https://doi.org/10.1080/02560046.2025.2497042 (Posted 22 May 2025)
https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02560046.2025.2497042?src=
[Open access/download]
Publishing is a particularly important sector to examine when considering issues of cultural change and reconstruction the author says, "because it speaks to and seeks to represent the varied identities of the society in which it operates. This paper examines the state of the South African publishing industry in the 1990s, a time of transition and change, as well as crisis due to declines in textbook and library budgets. At a time when prevalent discourses included terms like transition, transparency, inclusivity, diversity, nation building, redemption and reconciliation, framed as a collective vision for the country, the paper considers the discourse of transformation as it relates to publishing and reading. Using articles in newspapers and journals, government and trade reports, as well as internal planning and mission documents from the publishers themselves, in this paper I assess various kinds of transformation, including the aims of both redressing the inequalities of the past, and developing a shared and more inclusive culture."
South Africa

Le Roux, Elisabeth, Treffry-Goatley, L. Anyang, and I. Harvett, S. **South African Book Publishing Industry Survey, 2023–24.** Cape Town: Publishers' Association of South Africa, 2025. 40 pp.
https://publishsa.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/South-African-Book-Publishing-Industry-Survey-2023-2024.pdf
The annual Book Publishing Industry Survey provides information on the growth and development of the South African publishing industry. It is the most comprehensive survey available of the publishing industry in South Africa, providing information for planning and lobbying purposes since 2002. "The data collected annually are invaluable for understanding the publishing industry in South Africa, especially as transformational shifts take place across the key publishing sectors. The total number of active publishers in South Africa is estimated to be at least 200. The industry is dominated by a small group of very large publishers, who together represent more than 90% of all production and revenue. This representation is reflected in the participation in this survey."
South Africa

Mfaume, Nkhosi **The State of South Africa's Book Publishing Industry: Market Analysis and Opportunities for New Authors.**
https://zikhonaj.com/the-state-of-south-africas-book-publishing-industry-market-analysis-and-opportunities-for-new-authors/ (Posted 16 March 2025)

South African book publishing continues to evolve, the author says, and represents a significant but often overlooked economic sector, with a market capitalization of approximately R3.33 billion. "As writers and potential authors consider their publishing options, it's worth examining the actual state of the industry through concrete data and statistics." In terms of moving forward "one thing remains clear: there is room for new voices. With the right approach, determination, and market awareness, aspiring authors can find their place in this resilient industry."
South Africa

Nordling, Linda **Q&A: Why South Africa Updated its Scholarly Publishing Code.** https://www.researchprofessionalnews.com/rr-news-africa-south-2025-7-q-a-why-south-africa-updated-its-scholarly-publishing-code/ (Posted 24 July 2025)
Explains how challenges including AI and predatory journals have triggered revision of its Scholarly Publishing Code. The Academy of Science of South Africa has revised its best practice code for scholarly publishing, editing and peer review. "The new guidelines address contemporary challenges including artificial intelligence use, digital publishing growth and the persistent threat of predatory journals." Susan Veldsman Director of the ASSAf Scholarly Publishing Programme, https://www.assaf.org.za/scholarly-publishing-programme/ explains the rationale behind the update and its implications for South African research integrity.
South Africa

Nyamapfene, Lorraine. **Author Motivations for Self-Publishing Trade Books in South Africa.** *Critical Arts*, 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1080/02560046.2025.2524830 (Posted 07 July 2025) [Open access]
The traditional perception in South Africa has for long viewed self-published books as inferior to those produced through traditional publishing channels "This article interrogates such assumptions by exploring the motivations behind self-publishing among debut and established authors in South Africa's trade sector. It further evaluates the role of gatekeeping in traditional publishing, assessing whether it functions as a mechanism for quality assurance or as an exclusionary practice. Drawing on in-depth interviews with ten authors from diverse demographic backgrounds, genres, and publishing experiences, the study identifies key drivers of self-publishing, including rejection by traditional publishers, financial incentives, creative autonomy, the pursuit of prestige, and opportunities to experiment with innovative publishing formats. "
South Africa

Powers, J.L **A Few Out-of-the-Way Bookshops in South Africa.** https://worldliteraturetoday.org/2025/july/few-out-way-bookshops-south-africa-j-l-powers?mc_cid=2c3c30f3dd&mc_eid=eb9471349f (Posted July 2025)
From the always lively *World Literature Today.* Tiny bookstores are thriving across South Africa Jessice Powers says, and here offers a guided tour of some of her favourites. These minute bookstores—including the urban and rural tabletops full of used books manned by entrepreneurs and placed outdoors in locations where tourists or shoppers happen to wander by—are thriving across South Africa.
South Africa

Raga, Jarita **Language is Heritage: Why Inclusive Publishing Matters in South Africa.** https://www.injini.africa/post/language-is-heritage-why-inclusive-publishing-matters-in-south-africa (Posted 23 September 2025)
"In South Africa, language is more than a means of communication; it is a living vessel of culture, identity, and heritage. With 11 official written languages, our nation is a tapestry of diverse linguistic traditions, each carrying its own stories, wisdom, and worldview. As we strive towards a more inclusive and equitable society, it is imperative that we recognise the transformative power of language-inclusive education and the critical role publishers play in shaping this future."
South Africa

Tanzania

Williams, Mark **Tanzania's Publishing Industry Faces Swahili Literature Decline as English Titles Dominate Market.**
https://thenewpublishingstandard.com/2025/11/25/tanzania-publishing-swahili-literature-decline/ (Posted 25 November 2025)
Tanzania's publishing sector is grappling with a troubling paradox: English-language books continue to outsell Swahili titles despite the country's rich literary heritage. "Speaking at the 32nd National Book Festival in Dar es Salaam, Hermes Damian, CEO of a leading publishing house and chairman of the Publishers Association of Tanzania, highlighted how parental disengagement has eroded decades of progress in building a robust reading culture. … The first quarter-century after independence saw Tanzania produce extraordinary volumes of Swahili literature, including numerous plays and translations by Mwalimu Julius Nyerere. … Today, that momentum has dissipated. While millions of Tanzanians read, foreign titles from America and Europe consistently outsell locally-authored books."
Tanzania

van de Bruinhorst, Gerard **Book Acquisition Trip to Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.**
https://www.ascleiden.nl/content/book-acquisition-trip-dar-es-salaam-tanzania (Posted 3 March 2025)
During the summer of 2024 the author, an information specialist at the African Studies Centre Library in Leiden https://ascleiden.nl/organization/people/gerard-van-de-bruinhorst, spent three weeks in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, resulting in the acquisition of over 800 print publications and 250 periodicals and newspaper issues. "Although not the primary goal of this field trip, it provides a useful snapshot of the current state of (book) publishing in Tanzania. By way of illustration three examples from the literary, Islamic and Christian parts of this industry, which still remain quite segregated" are provided; and he reports that "the large-scale fragmentation in the publishing landscape of Swahili fiction, Islamic and Christian publications, although not unexpected, provide a serious challenge for academic collections in the near future."
Tanzania

Zimbabwe

Chirisa, Nomsa, and Mpho Ngoepe **The 'Golden Handcuffs' of Institutional Logics at Zimbabwean University Presses.** https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/0361526X.2025.2581582 (Posted 07 November 2025) *The Serials Librarian* 1-15. [Open access]
"University presses are deeply associated with and have close relations with their parent institutions, hence they operate under the imprint of the university. However, university presses are able to operate without direct obligations imposed by the university, yet in Africa, university presses are constrained by institutional logics that are holding them back from experimenting with new ways of doing things. While the relations with the parent institution offer some form and level of security, prestige, and benefits, institutional logics cannot accommodate university presses as they shut the gateway to reconfigure their production, distribution, and marketing processes. This is a dual position referred to as 'golden handcuffs.' Despite university presses in Zimbabwe being strategic business units, they are not autonomous from their parent, as the presses have largely been caught between the 'cathedral' – scholarly mission model, and the 'market' – business model in publishing scholarly books." [Not examined]
Zimbabwe

Viriri, Laurencia **Electronic Publishing of Shona Literature in Zimbabwe: An Overview Chapter.** https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-031-81716-8_7 In *Resuscitation of African Languages. Theorising the Battle Against Sociocultural Genocide*, edited by Isaac Mhute, Zilibele Mtumane and Vimbai Moreblessing Matiza: Springer Nature Link, 2025: 127-147. ¶
Argues the case for indigenous African languages, "which have been stripped of their importance and are now often overshadowed - both officially, through governmental language policies, and informally, through attitudes and ideologies - by former colonial languages. The authors present case studies from a range of countries in the region, arguing that languages tell us peoples' identities, and that by dropping their own languages in favour of foreign and imperialist languages they lose their culture, history and identity as well." [Publisher description of the book title.]
Zimbabwe