

Country Connectors

Research4Life



Location

Global (Bhutan; Democratic Republic of Congo; El Salvador; Moldova; Senegal; Sierra Leone; Tanzania; Ukraine and other eligible Research4Life countries)



Target group

Researchers, librarians, policymakers, lecturers, government staff, and tertiary-level students



Budget

\$70,000 a year (2022-2027)



SDGs

SDG4 (target 4.4) and SDG17 (17.6 and 17.16)



Additional partners

Springer Nature and Wiley Foundation

Synopsis

Boost research quality and output in low-and-middle-income countries by supporting local interventions to enhance information management, improve access, awareness and usage of Research4Life resources.

Program description

Research4Life was launched over two decades ago to provide access to critical peer reviewed resources and support research, teaching, practice and policymaking among researchers, faculty, scientists and healthcare practitioners in the global South. Since 2022, the Research4Life Country Connectors (CCs) program has worked to establish national country focal points to build local capacity and teach critical research skills within institutions. By fostering awareness and skills building, CCs seeks to grow committed networks of users and mentors, ensuring regional and global coordination and significantly impacting research, practice and policymaking, going far beyond the original Research4Life objective of providing access to published research.

The Country Connectors program is being implemented across 14 countries using 4 languages (English, French, Spanish, Portuguese) and developing national, regional and global networks for maximum impact.



ELSEVIER

Advancing human progress together

Goals

- Deep engagement and capacity building to increase usage and impact of Research4Life.
- Extensive training for users to develop research skills and evidence-based decision-making through local investments.
- Build strong communities of evidence users connecting researchers, librarians and policymakers.

Activities and milestones

- Delivered national workshops, webinars, and MOOCs to increase awareness and practical use of Research4Life among students, faculty, librarians and institutional ambassadors.
- Expanded outreach to newly registered and previously inactive institutions, contributing to a measurable increase in Research4Life registrations across eligible countries.
- Delivered the annual master training program with e-learning specialists TwentyOne Skills, equipping Country Connectors and ambassadors with certified modules to strengthen training delivery and user support.
- Achieved strong gender participation in training activities, with 52% women participants, supported by targeted recruitment of women ambassadors.
- Presented country case studies and user experiences at the Research4Life Global Partners Meeting and the Action for Equity Conference (Oxford, July 2025), highlighting the role of research access in evidence-based development.
- Strengthened research ecosystems through engagement with institutional leaders, collaboration with Technology and Innovation Support Centers, and support to local publishers, contributing to improved research visibility and increased citation impact.

Looking ahead

Building on progress in 2025, our partnership will continue strengthening the Country Connectors network across regions. Future efforts will focus on scaling ambassador programs, expanding mentoring and regional collaboration, and further embedding Research4Life within national research and innovation systems.

By deepening partnerships with institutions, publishers, and innovation networks, we aim to support stronger communities of evidence users and ensure that researchers and practitioners in lower-income countries can fully participate in the global research ecosystem.



Impact at a glance



1.8M

beneficiaries reached across participating countries.



52%

of training participants were women, supporting gender equity in research capacity building.



1,775+

institutions supported through country-level Research4Life networks.



Increase in Research4Life registrations across eligible countries, meeting program targets.



Higher citation impact for research outputs from participating countries compared with the pre-partnership baseline.



3

user stories per country annually documenting the impact of improved research access.

“In our darkest times, access to information becomes our light.”

Tetiana Yaroshenko

Ukrainian Country Connector, and Deputy Director, State Scientific and Technical Library of Ukraine