CAFOR   **AFRICAN UNION**

CONCEPT NOTE

CAFOR Project – African Digital Library

1. **Project Summary**

This project will support ongoing activities in integrated online full e-textbooks. The idea would be to contribute effectively to promoting digitized, full-text resources to learners in Africa via the Internet, thereby contributing to the revitalization of education and lifelong learning on the continent, the expansion of business, and poverty alleviation. This project will support e-books networking for schools and institutions of higher learning with knowledge exchange programmes.

The African Digital Library (ADL) was opened on 1 November 1999 with close to 3,000 e-books and has subsequently grown to over 8,000 e-books. The library is a project of the Centre for Lifelong Learning, Technikon SA, and has been created in the African Renaissance spirit. Digital e-books can either be downloaded from the Internet using an off-line reader or read directly on the Internet. Any African resident can access books in the library at no cost, provided they have access to the Internet. The ADL represents a collection of books available across the entire African continent of 54 countries and serves as a back-up to all physical libraries.

CAFOR is replicating this project in the African continent's remotest areas and is seeking sponsorship and association-building with organizations already involved in this project. CAFOR will ensure that through its members residing in countries in the five regions of Africa, they can take the task ahead in several steps in their respective countries.

2. **Problem Relevance**

The African Digital Library provides a core collection of digitized, full-text e-books supporting lifelong learning in Africa. The collection covers 52 subject areas and is available in 54 countries of Africa. The ADL strives to provide its services to scholars and learners throughout the region via existing institutions and individuals. Access is free of charge, providing the user has access to

the Internet. The ADL strives to offer a range of materials in support of existing facilities. Any existing library can increase its physical offerings to clients instantly by providing one or more Internet-enabled computers.

The ADL works in co-operation with netLibrary, a Colorado, USA-based company, to provide the required services. e-Books are hosted on the Internet on server farms at physical positions that are secure and not from particular countries. The location of the server farms is critical in ensuring the fastest possible access to all countries. Internet access in African countries is primarily received from the USA, with some European and other countries being used. Peering points to access information between African countries takes place off-continent. The hosting of server farms to support the African Digital Library needs to occur at sites close to standard peering points to maximize the delivery speed of e-book pages.

CAFOR will work closely with the following partners who initially contributed immensely in establishing the ADL. A joint venture project created the ADL between the Centre for Lifelong Learning of Technikon SA, The Association of African Universities and netLibrary, a Colorado-based US Company.

Online libraries typically provide:

- access to specific library or institution members,
- restricting access,
- preventing some people from gaining access to e-books.

ADL does not operate on this principle. CAFOR will apply for additional grants that would enable it to popularize, collect and expand different e-books. CAFOR would also contribute to the payment of storage fees and programming to support ongoing activities on the continent. Although digital books are gaining popularity in Africa, they tend to remain in the market's early-adaptor section. Many people still prefer the printed equivalent. CAFOR will provide more access to books that users would not otherwise be able to access in local libraries. This project is most relevant for Africa, and CAFOR would take it to further steps as ADL is a developmental project aimed at assisting a less-developed region of the world, where direct access to books is comparatively limited in contrast to what one finds, for example, in North America and Europe.

CAFOR will, through its media components, popularize and encourage e-books networking among schools and institutions of higher learning with knowledge exchange programmes. According to ADL principles, where a conventional, physical-campus institution needs to have multiple copies of the same book available for simultaneous access by more than one student, who would be compelled to purchase various copies of the book. The ADL buys just one copy of every title and does not purchase multiple copies of the same book. Customary intellectual property rights exist in all e-books, and it is every institution's responsibility to observe these.

The ADL now has a broad collection of e-books. The next phase of development should see the refinement and enrichment of the pack in such areas as:

- Science;
- Technology;
- Computer programming;
- General health care;
- Treatment and control of disease (e.g. Covid-19, Ebola, HIV/AIDS, TB, Hepatitis);
- Corporate governance;
- Corruption;
- Public sector management;
- Business development and management;
- Food production and security; and
- Animal husbandry and care.

3. **Call to Action**

CAFOR is associating with the ADL to provide the fixed Internet Protocol (IP) address. We will also want to have our logo displayed in the library for our patrons to see. We may do this in collaboration with ADL management to give further information and statistics on how CAFOR's users are using e-books, that would mainly constitute of youths across the continent CAFOR would want to build a private collection of books, at its cost, which can be restricted for use to its members. When users of an associated library login to the ADL, they will see the collection of books available from the central ADL collection, as well as the additional books purchased by the associated institution, while other users will not be able to see the books purchased for restricted use by that associated institution. The usual entry-level for a new library is at least 500 purchased e-books, which typically costs in the vicinity of US$60,000. Associated institutions may start their collection at very much smaller amounts than this, for example, $US1,500. Where an associated institution or donor wishes to place books in the central pool, these books become available to users across the continent.

CAFOR is seeking sponsorship for e-Book collections that are most relevant to African youths across the continent. Our supplies will be tailored to the size of support, with the average cost of an e-book, including storage and use in perpetuity, being US$75. Prices of individual books vary within the range of about US$12 to US$250.

e-Books cost approximately the same as their printed equivalent, and storage must be paid in addition to this purchase price. The cost of storage is equivalent to paying for the physical library building, cataloguing programmes, library staff, time. Storage fees may be paid in one instalment or paid off over several years. The ADL pays a once-off storage fee of 50% of the price of the book. This fee enables the ADL to have the book in its collection, n perpetuity, and without any ongoing expenses.

The main staffing posts of the ADL do not require full-time employees. The roles are partly voluntary by both the individuals and the organizations involved in the project. CAFOR can, therefore, contain costs to an absolute minimum.

CAFOR will also work with ADL to negotiate with African publishers to digitize African origin works and make these available for sale via digital book vendors (e.g. Amazon.com). This initiative is expected to make African results more visible and available internationally and generate a revenue stream through royalties back to the continent. Owners of the intellectual property, the digital publisher, and the ADL will share the benefits.

(a) Potential Sponsorships

The African Digital Library may be sponsored in the following ways:

- e-Book collections (US$75 to US$2m);
- Sponsorship of the central office (US$60,000 annually);
- Travel and subsistence to support an annual meeting of representatives from all sub-regions of Africa, to help co-ordinate e-book selection and promotion (US$25,000); and
- Travel and subsistence to sustain a yearly gathering of the ADL management members to govern the African Digital Library.

S. No.	SUMMARY BUDGET	Per Annum	Period (Yrs)	Personnel Deployed	Total (USD)
1	STAFF COSTS				
	Internal Staff Costs- Full Time Staff (2 % of total salary costs)	68636.63	5	4	343183.15
	Field Based Experts Costs - Project Period & Work	30000.00	5	5	750000
	Deploying 2 local field staff per country	500	5	10	25000
2	PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COSTS				
	Innovating education	12000	5		60000
	Workshops and Seminars to move to digital education & elearning	10000	5		50000
	Basic ICT Teacher training & Competencies	12500	5		62500
	Teacher professional development training	15000	5		75000
	Provision of learning materials	30000	5		150000
	ICT Integration of schools	30000	1		30000
	Website development & MIS reporting	25000	1		25000
3	Other Costs				
	Communication Costs- Monthly Mobile Top-Ups, Printouts, Stationery, Shipping, Postage, etc (per annum per person)	3000	5	9	135000
	Monitoring ,Evaluation Costs & IT Costs in 5 countries	4000	5	5	100000
	Associated Costs (Supplies, Equipment Costs, etc)	50000	5	5	1250000

	Operational Costs - Office Set-up Costs, Office Equipment, Etc	40000	1	5	200000
4	**TRAVEL& TRANSPORTATION COSTS**				
	Travel Insurance	1350	5	9	60750
	Per Diems per day for internal staff	260	5	9	11700
	Per Diems per day for international staff	200	5	5	5000
	Local Travel Costs per month	1000	5	9	45000
	International Travel Costs	600	5	9	27000
5	**TOTAL AMOUNT**				**3405133**
6	**MISCELLANEOUS EXPENDITURE**				
	Calculated at 15% of TOTAL Amount				510769.9725
7	**GRAND TOTAL**				**3,915,903**

Sponsors may expect recognition in a few ways:

- On the flash page that users see when they enter the library (**http://AfricaEducation.org/adl/** then take "Use the library";
- Sponsors may be included in a roll of honour, hosted on **www.AfricaEducation.org**, accessible from the ADL;
- Sponsors will be recognized in presentations at conferences and meetings as having supported education in Africa;
- A later development may include sponsor labels in individual e-books;
- Should a sponsor wish to remain anonymous, this will be respected by the ADL; and
- A section 501[c]3 registered company in the USA can issue tax certificates in that country, while Technikon SA can issue tax certificates in South Africa.

(b) The Future and Expected Outcomes

The objectives for 2021 are to grow the services of the African Digital Library:

- To 100,000 registered users (African scholars and lifelong learners);
- To 200,000 e-books;
- With 100 associated libraries; and
- In 55 African countries

Over the next five years, the African Digital Library will strive to reach at least 30,000 users in Africa's 55 countries, collecting at least 200,000 e-book titles. The improvement in the quality of computer screens and tablets' use over the past years and expected improvements during the next three to five years is likely to make books more user-friendly and more comfortable to read on-screen.

(c) **Capacity building in Africa**

CAFOR will also work with the ADL to build capacity in Africa by assisting institutions on the continent to convert the full text of theses, dissertations, and research papers into e-book format. These may become more visible to other researchers on the continent. Where thesis materials are available in e-book format, they are also available for sale to other libraries worldwide. This sale has two benefits: first, a revenue stream is created and, secondly, African research papers, not otherwise readily available, become accessible to the rest of the world.

Additional study material might be made available on a broader public basis by this exact mechanism. Such would include public domain material on agriculture, entrepreneurship, health, information technology, and food production.

(d) Funding

ADL's central collection supports institutions and individuals in more than 50 countries across a vast and impoverished continent. The central supply needs to be sponsored by grants and donations to ensure continued growth. When funds cease to exist, the library's expansion ceases, through the availability of existing books continues without any interruption.

The ADL can accommodate sponsorships from $75, being the average price of one e-book and the 50% storage fee, to $2m for a very substantial collection of e-books.

Sponsors of this collection will benefit from the following:

- The sponsor organization's name will be displayed every time a user enters the library (if the sponsor wants this);
- e-Books that are sponsored will be available for the benefit of lifelong learners in 54 countries;
- e-Books can never be lost, damaged or stolen - the collection remains safe at all times; and
- We may see the ADL sponsors to be playing a supportive role in the revitalization of education in Africa - a continent that is in desperate need of accelerated development.

4. Conclusion

The use of e-books is beginning to gain acceptance across the majority of countries in Africa. The ADL represents an example of how e-books can support the development of hundreds of organizations and tens of thousands of lifelong learners in a continent that has minimal resources. The future of projects such as this depends on the availability of project funding by forward-thinking global organizations that are serious about developing the continent. The project has thrived so far.