



CAFOR



AFRICAN UNION

AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION

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CONCEPT NOTE

CAFOR Project – Promoting CAFOR in the member states of the African Union

1. Project Summary

This project will create a strong awareness of the work of CAFOR and provide further outreach through enhancing partnerships and optimizing CAFOR in the 55 member states of the African Union.

CAFOR is a non-profit membership organization comprising institutions, organizations, experts, and individuals committed to ensuring that Africa's education systems are relevant to young Africans with newly acquired skills that correspond with what obtains in the African labour market. CAFOR already has a team of experts numbering more than 50 individuals and relies a great deal on external experts and its networks of more than 1,600 journalists, communicators, and advocates in the field to implement activities. CAFOR draws on the expertise of various areas related to its work: ministries of education, agriculture, employment, gender and women's affairs, youth, economy and finance through their communication or information units. Also, media specialized in learning and development reporting, communication researchers and trainers, education specialists, and development organizations engaged in areas of concern for youth and development.

CAFOR has stemmed from the idea that education for development systems works best in well-developed partnerships and trust between multiple actors. In addition to the significant classroom partnership between teacher and learners, CAFOR recognizes that education systems rely on connections and trust between school authorities. Also, teachers, community, and the education ministry, as well as between departments of education and their financing partners, mainly their ministries of finance, but also external financing partners, other ministries and agencies that are engaged in the development process; and between practitioners and more upstream professionals such as researchers. CAFOR needs to be known by these institutions and individuals for a good business relationship with the many issues that CAFOR will be thinking about as it evolves. These include better research, mapping out institutions and organizations that offer lifelong learning and training, sharing information, mobilizing supporters, informing the public, advocate on youth

issues for the economic and social development of the African continent, raise funds, coordinate with more vital forces, and gain leadership.

CAFOR will work in the 55 member states of the African Union with an energetic African professional corps that would know the organization well and support its programmes within the member states. One of the ideas underlying CAFOR is that information exchange and communication between partners are essential to achieving well-managed, efficient education systems and education of good quality for all.

2. Problem Relevance

Education is at the centre of the development agenda, especially in ensuring the SDGs' achievement and the African Union's Agenda 2063. Education has a positive contribution towards better health, better climate protection, improved economic growth, better governance and management systems, and other improvements in people's lives. CAFOR and its programmes need to be better known and well appreciated on the continent as they would bring together the interests and activities of a wide range of stakeholders, including leaders, communities, civil society advocacy groups, the media, donors, cooperating partners, learning institutions and learners.

So far, many organizations still struggle to communicate the link between education and other developmental goals adequately. More significantly, although making up the lion's share of national budgets, education is not sufficiently prioritized. Therefore, many education systems across Africa continue to suffer several challenges: a shortage of human resources (qualified and motivated teachers), teaching and learning materials, and inadequate infrastructures such as classrooms, harmful cultural practices, emergencies, and conflict situations. Most of these challenges require adequate political will and financing. CAFOR is well-placed to assume the role of communicating these links.

Business, as usual, can lead to failure if African countries do not yield the requisite maximum results as envisaged in the global and continental development and education agendas. For this reason, the African Union's CESA called for the establishment of a Coalition of Stakeholders as a strategy to amplify the case for prioritizing and investing in education and ensuring better coordination and networking on matters related to education in Africa.

In support of the African Union's calls to mobilize stakeholders to support CESA's implementation, CAFOR adds value by focusing on the communication dimension, which is its leverage point. CAFOR believes that communication must be at the core of the business of planning education on the continent, ensuring that it is comprehensive and inclusive and that its style and content enhances dialogue in promoting all facets of education. Information exchange and communication between partners are essential to achieving well-managed, efficient education systems and education of good quality for all. Through information sharing, building consensus and confidence, advocacy and social mobilization, and communication strategies help support education policies and their implementation among leaders, cooperating partners, donors, civil society groups, communities, the media, and other stakeholders. All of them are recognizing the need to work together.

CAFOR promotes the use of communication in support of education in Africa. CAFOR will focus on developing joint action for building confidence, trust, and ownership among development ministries, ministries of finance, the media, and all stakeholders in the development field,

particularly in education. Through the work of CAFOR and its networks, members will share new knowledge generated in educational reform for youths in Africa. This knowledge sharing enhances policy dialogue among the various stakeholders, as recommended by the African Union through CESA. They also promote a shared understanding of educational reforms for youth development and help build commitment and ownership of the changes. For these reasons, CAFOR needs to be better known and given due recognition.

3. Call to Action

CAFOR is new and unique in many ways but not yet very well known in African Union member states. It is the only membership organization of African citizens that has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the African Union. It is through this MOU that the African Union Commission hosts CAFOR to directly contribute towards achieving United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially: *Goal 4-* at the global level, the African Union's *Agenda 2063* and the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (*CESA*) 2016-25. CAFOR will enhance the integration of international and continental policy agendas, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Agenda 2063, the Science, Technology, and Innovations Strategy for Africa (STISA 2024), the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 16-25), and the Continental Strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) into country-level developmental and sectoral strategies for the development of the African continent.

A. Facilitating CAFOR Operational Activities

For its operational activities, CAFOR will need to be better known and recognized within member states of the African Union at the government, private sector, and non-government levels to:

- (a) Promote advocacy for education in favour of economic and social development on the continent,
- (b) Promote youth skills development,
- (c) Advocate for innovative education systems around the continent,
- (d) Urge governments and the private sector in Africa focus more on building human capital capacity through all available means,
- (e) Strengthen all coalitions for education in Africa while ensuring ownership by its members,
- (f) Support stakeholder mobilization and sensitization,
- (g) Provide the platform for multi-stakeholder partnerships for the achievement of educational goals,
- (h) promote communication in support of education for young Africans,
- (i) promote African Union Education and other policy instruments,
- (j) Give new impetus to media training on educational issues,
- (k) Promote networking,
- (l) Support youth in emergency and post-conflict situations
- (m) facilitate knowledge sharing, and
- (n) Stimulate and sustain public debate on education reform for youth across Africa and beyond.

As CAFOR is better known and recognized in member states of the African Union, acceptance and recognition would enable it to:

- (a) ***Provide a continent-wide platform*** for exchanging information, experience and practices about new technologies and innovations among experts in government ministries, CSOs, NGOs, the media, the youth and communities. CAFOR will promote a community practice involving young people in agriculture, entrepreneurship and other vocations to help curb internal and external migration.
- (b) ***Sensitize and mobilize stakeholders*** on acceptable communication practices among key stakeholders;
- (c) ***Build the capacity*** of media professionals and other interested stakeholders to stimulate robust public debate on education and development issues;
- (d) ***Promote policy change*** and measures for ensuring an enabling policy environment for youth to engage in n innovative enterprise in Africa.
- (e) ***Translate ideas*** into action on the ground by testing technological innovations and institutionalizing what works
- (f) ***Promote relationships*** of trust and meaningful multi-stakeholder partnerships for the achievement of education goals on the continent.
- (g) ***Undertake advocacy*** and lobbying to meet Africa's current economic and social challenges.
- (h) ***Collaborate*** with the African Union Commission, the Regional Economic Communities, the United Nations, donors, civil society networks and other cooperating partners in communication areas for education and development to achieve CESA and the SDGs, with a stronger emphasis on youths.

B. CAFOR Strategies following full recognition in member states

CAFOR will achieve its programmatic objectives through a six-pronged programme strategy related to education and skills development for youths in Africa as follows:

- (a) Facilitate research.
- (b) Strengthen stakeholder mobilization and sensitization.
- (c) Support capacity building initiatives.
- (d) Support skills development for young people in emergency and post-conflict situations.
- (e) Undertake and strengthen advocacy and lobbying.
- (f) Promote partnership and networking.

CAFOR Board members – all based in the member states- will participate in significant decision-making that affects the organization and agenda-setting to ensure a broader impact of CAFOR's activities by involving expertise in education, journalism, communication, innovations in science and technology, and the more comprehensive economic and social development of the African continent. Board members and ordinary members in the African Union member states will play the role of ambassadors for CAFOR and support the mobilization of resources and partnerships.

C. Sponsorship and Funding:

CAFOR is seeking sponsorship from partners and multilateral and bilateral agencies, and the private sector to support the management, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of this project in the following ways:

S. No.	SUMMARY BUDGET	Per Annum	Period (Yrs)	Personnel Deployed	Total (USD)
1	STAFF COSTS				
1.1	Internal Staff Costs- Full Time Staff (2 % of total salary costs)	68636.63	3	4	205910
1.2	Field Based Experts Costs - Project Period & Work	30000.00	3	5	90000
1.3	Deploying 2 local field staff per country	500	3	10	18000
2	PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COSTS				
	Generating advocacy plan for education in the member states to support CESA	25000	1	9	225000
	Promoting youth skills development	15000	3	9	405000
	Provision of continent wide platform for multi stakeholder partnerships	20000	1	9	180000
	Facilitating knowledge sharing among member states	30000	3	5	450000
	Developing communication strategy for AU policy agendas in member states	25000	1	9	225000
3	Other Costs				
	Communication Costs- Monthly Mobile Top-Ups, Printouts, Stationery, Shipping, Postage, etc (per annum per person)	3000	3	9	81000
	Monitoring ,Evaluation Costs & IT Costs in 5 countries	4000	3	5	60000
	Associated Costs (Supplies, Equipment Costs, etc)	50000	3	5	750000
	Operational Costs - Office Set-up Costs, Office Equipment, Etc	40000	1	5	200000
4	TRAVEL& TRANSPORTATION COSTS				
	Travel Insurance	1350	3	9	36450
	Per Diems per day for internal staff	260	3	9	7020
	Per Diems per day for international staff	200	3	5	3000
	Local Travel Costs per month	1000	3	9	27000
	International Travel Costs	600	3	9	16200
5	TOTAL AMOUNT				2979580
6	MISCELLANEOUS EXPENDITURE				
	Calculated at 15% of TOTAL Amount				446937
7	GRAND TOTAL				3,426,517

Sponsors may expect recognition in a few ways:

- Sponsors may be included in a roll of honour, hosted on the CAFOR website www.cafor.org, with the African Union's recognition.

- Sponsors will be recognized in presentations at conferences and meetings as having supported education in Africa.
- Should a sponsor wish to remain anonymous, this will be respected by CAFOR.

4. Conclusion

As CAFOR is better known and recognized in the member states of the African Union, it will be in an excellent position to liaise closely with relevant institutions through its members to provide technical, strategic and advocacy support to establish a system to address the regulatory environment on issues on educational reforms for youth to ensure more employability. CAFOR will also be in good shape to facilitate dialogue among its members about innovative practices in education and TVET implementation for young people across Africa. CAFOR will also ensure connections among the various stakeholders, including educators, researchers, policymakers, decision-makers, university heads, employers, industries, students or job seekers, and a partnership between universities and industry. CAFOR will assist by promoting such alliances to work on:

- (a) *Multidisciplinary model*: Partnership between academicians and researchers, between different universities, between various training institutions to develop better curriculum and pedagogy methods.
- (b) *PPP model*: Partnership between public and private institutions to provide better access to facilities.
- (c) *A partnership between industries* and firms with educational institutions and universities to map the demands and supply.

As it is better known in the continent, CAFOR and its networks will work better with the African Union Commission's various departments to popularize Agenda 2063 at the regional and country levels. They will encourage the African Union to work closely with other African institutions such as the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) to strengthen scientific research and innovation through African networks of excellence. CAFOR, through its extended networks, will embark on new approaches that will focus on better education and better matching of supply and demand for skilled workers to address youth unemployment. CAFOR will ensure that these institutions will collectively help create dynamic, innovative systems with global links and develop mentorship programs (with the diaspora) to equip the next generation of entrepreneurs. CAFOR, in its role as a knowledge broker, will use its technical arms to collaborate with like-minded institutions on the continent and beyond to assist African governments and key stakeholders in promoting skills in traditional fields as well as in such areas as engineering, research, and science and technology to support the continent's fast-changing political, social, and economic development. Universities and regional vocational training institutions will be at the centre of this effort.