



CAFOR



AFRICAN UNION

AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION

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CONCEPT NOTE

CAFOR Project – Training of Journalists and Communication Officers in Ministries of Education in Africa.

1. Project Summary

This Project will enhance communication for development by training over 30,000 journalists, communication, and public relations officers in the ministries of education and civil society organizations in all five African continent regions. The Project will also revise and update an existing Education Toolkit for journalists and communication specialists. Many members of CAFOR worked previously on the development and finalization of this Toolkit in 2010.

Education is at the center of the development agenda, especially in ensuring the SDGs and the African Union's Agenda 2063. The African Union's Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 16-25) called for establishing 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 the implementation of CESA 16-25, 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.

In this Project, CAFOR would provide specialized training to communication and public relations officers in the ministries of education, civil society organizations and journalists in Africa who cover education. CAFOR would furthermore promote information exchange and communication between partners. These are essential to the achievement of 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, communities, civil society groups, the media, donors and cooperating partners, and other stakeholders. All of them are recognizing the

need to work together. CAFOR will ensure that this Project focuses on developing joint action to build 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 share new knowledge generated in educational reform for youths in Africa. This knowledge sharing enhances policy dialogue among the various stakeholders recommended by the African Union through CESA 16-25. They also promote a shared understanding of educational reforms for youth development and help build commitment and ownership of the changes.

2. Problem Relevance

Education in Africa brings 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. However, many have not adequately communicated to and understood the link between education and other developmental goals. 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. It is clear from these issues that 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.

The education sector plays an incredibly complex, double role in country-led social and economic development and presents a challenge and sustainable development opportunity. It is both a producer (supplier) and consumer (demander) of capacity – at individual, organizational and institutional levels. Achieving the global Sustainable Goal No. 4 and the African Union's Continental Education Strategy for Africa increases both external and domestic financing for education. It also requires using these funds efficiently and effectively. Resources need to reach classrooms and communities and promote quality teaching and learning, school performance, and improved learning outcomes. Increased financing for education must be embedded in a broader context of public sector reform. The challenge is to put equitable policies and the best-formulated plans into practice.

However, one of the significant obstacles to the success of the various reforms in education in Africa since independence in the 1960s is the inability of governments to engage in meaningful dialogue with their partners (students, parents, teachers, communities, donor agencies, politicians, taxpayers, the business community, the media, and NGOs) and build a consensus around policies. A meeting point and a flow of information are essential for the advancement of education in Africa.

3. Call to Action:

It is necessary to be able to communicate on education, mainly through pedagogy and the subject of education itself. To this end, ministries of education must communicate effectively with their partners, who are the various actors and beneficiaries of education. In this way, drawing up appropriate and efficient communication strategies for teaching and learning is indispensable. The reality is that ministries of education in Africa often show inadequate institutional capacity and lack resources for organizing any acceptable level of communication for teaching and learning. In

most cases, communication policies and strategies do not exist. Consequently, communication is often managed during periods of crisis. Similarly, the media give inadequate attention to education and demonstrate limited professionalism in its treatment of educational issues, whether in terms of quality or quantity.

CAFOR would partner with the African Union Commission and universities and other training institutions in Africa and abroad to provide specialized training to communication/ public relations officers in the ministries of education, civil society organizations and journalists who cover education with the hope of:

- i. Developing technical skills for communicating in the ministries of education to promote dialogue and national consensus on education issues.
- ii. Enhancing knowledge and understanding of education issues and improving their treatment by the media.
- iii. Ensuring knowledge of the need for partnership and cooperation between communication officers, journalists, and other stakeholders.

(a) The training of Journalists and other media practitioners

Through its various training programmes in the five regions across the continent, journalists and communication officers will be well equipped to promote dialogue between African governments and their external partners on various subjects pertaining related to improving education on the African continent as related to what Africa has achieved so far in education and economic development over the past decade. African journalists will have a pivotal role to play in information analysis and dissemination to ensure dialogue promotion among all stakeholders. Therefore, CAFOR will prepare and train a cross-section of journalists and communication specialists across the continent to better understand the salient issues and acquire top journalistic skills that would allow them to cover the African stories in an objective and coherent manner. This training would build media practitioners' capacity and strengthen their abilities and enhance their professional performance and promote effective communication that would result in collaboration among ministries, local authorities, communities, and cooperating partners. The training and coverage of special education events would also enable journalists to report on issues that would promote dialogue and debate and encourage partnerships to strengthen education finance, bringing different governmental partners and civil society together – including education and finance ministries, local government institutions and development partners, end even ensuring that the contributions of the latter are predictable.

(b) The revision and updating of the CAFOR Education Toolkit for the training of journalists.

As strategic communication is not generally institutionalized in the structures and practices of ministries of education and NGOs working on education issues in Africa, many countries in Africa have yet to create an enabling policy environment and instruments through which national or sectoral communication strategies, including those for education, can emerge. One of the purposes for revising and updating this tool kit for widespread use in the training of media practitioners and other relevant professionals in advocacy and communication in African countries is to fill that gap. This kit should serve as a training tool for communication officers of ministries of education in African countries, journalists reporting on education, and members of civil society organizations

who will engage in policy debates and dialogue on educational issues at national, sub-regional and regional levels.

This kit would support the use of some fundamental elements of a multi-dimensional communication strategy for education. It would also demonstrate to the learner that communication is an essential tool for education policymakers in their quest to go to scale. It will provide examples of how different communication forms have been used successfully in enabling dialogue among stakeholders. It will also emphasize the need for a policy and strategic approach to communication in support of education in Africa. Journalists and communication experts who would receive training with the use of this kit would be well-resourced with the technical knowledge and expertise in ensuring that a policy and strategic approach to communication for education would provide an essential point of departure for the massive mobilization of resources and energies required for implementing the African Union's policies and strategies. These include 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), and the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as other crucial programmes of educational reform on the African continent.

The revised and updated Toolkit and its components will ensure that journalists have access to information which they can diffuse as widely as possible at national and international levels. Also, training will enable journalists to continue to promote dialogue using their various and respective media of communication among governments, local and national representatives of marginalized groups to determine needs, priorities and solutions for inclusive learning environments and curricula, and inclusive approaches to educational planning and teacher training.

(c) This training will enable journalists to:

- i. Know and understand the critical issues on education and economic progress in Africa.
- ii. Appreciate the need for comprehensive and systematic coverage of education issues in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals, Agenda 2063, and the Continental Education Strategy for Africa.
- iii. Understand the role of partners in education development and their contribution to it.
- iv. Identify the sources of information on education issues and how to gather information with ease.
- v. Write articles or produce radio, television and internet programmes on education that are informative and interesting.
- vi. Justify the need for the creation of an education desk in media organizations throughout the continent.
- vii. Use the ICTs to access educational information.

The training strategy would center on the combined acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that cut across participatory, experimental, and practical teaching methods. The organization of this training will be carried out with the assistance of a combination of suitable techniques for adults' education and training, emphasizing learning by doing.

(d) **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				
	Internal Staff Costs- Full Time Staff (2 % of total salary costs)	68636.63	5	4	343183
	Field Based Experts Costs - Project Period & Work	30000.00	5	5	750000
	Deploying 2 local field staff per country	500	5	10	300000
2	PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COSTS				
2.1	Regional Training Workshops				
	Professional Training Curriculum Designing	25000	1		25000
	Developing Advocacy & Communication Strategy	25000	1		25000
	Roll out Advocacy Campaigns	20000	5		100000
	Organising Workshops, Conferences, Direct support to journalists & Online sessions	20000	5		100000
2.2	Media Monitoring				
	Training in Media Literacy	10000	5		50000
	Training in Media Coverage	15000	5		75000
	Training in Media Monitoring	17500	5		87500
	Journalists Training in using appropriate media	12500	5		62500
	Creating Media Usage Standards	15000	5		75000
2.3	Media Communication				
	News reports generation	20000	5		100000
	Engaging media outlets	20000	5		100000
	Investigative Reporting & Publishing	25000	5		125000
2.4	Tool Kit Revisiosn				
	Creation of user manual for journalists	25000	1		25000
2.5	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	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
3	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	260	5	5	6500
	Local Travel Costs per month	1000	5	9	45000
	International Travel Costs	600	5	9	27000
4	TOTAL AMOUNT				4,179,133
5	MISCELLANEOUS EXPENDITURE				
5.1	Calculated at 15% of TOTAL Amount				626,870
6	GRAND TOTAL				4,806,003

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 recognition by the African Union.
- 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

This training will equip journalists and other media practitioners with invaluable skills for reporting on and analyzing issues about education and development across the continent. Active training using the revised and updated Toolkit would enable an active coalition of at least 20,000 communicators, education professionals and advocates promoting SDGs, CESA, STISA and TVET in the five regions of the continent for better reporting and analysis of the issues. The Project would empower two hundred million youths with basic knowledge of science, technology and innovations, and other relevant skills for jobs and entrepreneurship across the continent. Excellence and fairness in media reporting for African education and development could lead to an enabling policy, curriculum, and legal framework for advancing education and development targeting young people. This merit could enable up to one million African youths to be active in employment on small to medium scale businesses. Finally, a change in mindsets could lead to quality and equity in education and skills (especially in science, technology, and innovation) programmes for youths.