The need for quality journalism education in Africa

Building Sustainable Centres of Excellence in Journalism Education

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

UNESCO will build Centres of Excellence in Journalism Education

"While press freedom is the cornerstone of democracy and development, a well-trained and professional cadre of journalists is in turn the foundation of that press freedom. Without the skills and expertise of the professional journalist the press cannot effectively campaign for economic development, democracy, accountability, transparency and for an end to the abuse of citizen's rights".

Geoffrey Nyarota, Laureate of the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press 2002
and former editor of Daily News, Zimbabwe.

The most promising journalism education institutions in Africa will be supported by UNESCO to become Centres of Excellence in journalism education. UNESCO will work to strengthen their capacity to offer high quality journalism education programs for aspiring and working journalists. Moreover, UNESCO will support them to facilitate the engagement of civil society in the development of free, independent and pluralistic media. The future Centres of Excellence will become role models for other universities in the region.

Objective 1: Build sustainable Centres of Excellence in journalism education
Achieve sustainable quality journalism education in selected universities by improving staff training, curricula, learning materials, media resources centres, networks and management skills. This will allow the universities to drive their own success.

Objective 2: Create knowledge spillover to other universities
Create knowledge spillover to other universities in Africa through partnerships and exchange of ideas and experiences.

Objective 3: Become credible facilitators for media development
Capacitate universities to engage civil society, state actors and media community in promoting free, independent and pluralistic media.

UNESCO will support seven key areas:

- **Curricula**: Implementing UNESCO's model curricula and improving assessment systems
- **Staff training**: Building capacities of teaching staff through training and exchange programs with other universities
- **Learning material**: Making textbooks available in national languages and improving access to learning material
- **Media Resource Centres**: Providing adequate equipment and technical facilities for training in new and traditional media
- **Management**: Enhancing institutional governance, sustainability and the involvement with the media sector
- **Media monitoring**: Improving capacities to monitor media sector development
- **Networking**: Creating networks between regional, national and international journalism education institutions and media

Through the Centres of Excellence, UNESCO will support media development in Africa

" Journalists should be aware of our basic dilemma as citizens: that we have a need for timely and deep knowledge of important issues and trends--but we lack the time and means to access most of this crucial information. Thus journalists should use their special access to put the material they gather in a context that will engage our attention and also allow us to see trends and events in proportion to their true significance in our lives."

Elements of Journalism – Bill Kovac and Rosantha

Journalists as guardians of the public interest

Professional news media acts as a guardian of public interest. It is an important component of the checks and balances that form part of a democracy. By disseminating information to citizens, the news media enables citizen participation in development and strengthens accountability feedback mechanisms. Therefore, society has a responsibility to ensure its journalists have the competencies to seek out and interpret information, and the judgment and integrity to communicate it in as objective and unbiased terms as possible.

Building the capacity of journalists

The practice of professional journalism is challenging. Journalists must be able to critically analyze the full spectrum of activities the public and private sectors engage in, from peace processes to elections, from climate change to consumer and financial regulation. Many African journalism institutions today do not have the resources to develop a learning environment that is able to address these needs. UNESCO has heeded the call from teachers and students alike to build the capacity of journalism schools to hone the competencies of the next generation of African journalists.

Background: Laying a foundation for quality journalism education

In 2005 UNESCO was asked by its member states to hold a worldwide consultation to develop Model Curricula for Journalism Education, published in 2007 in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. Since 2007 the UNESCO Model Curricula have been adapted to suit local conditions in over 40 developing countries.

In 2007 l´École Supérieure de Journalism de Lille (France) and the Rhodes University (South Africa) developed a framework for assessing the quality of journalism training institutions in Africa in collaboration with UNESCO. They mapped 90 journalism institutions in Africa against key success criteria of some of the world's leading journalism institutions, listed in the table below:

A : Curriculum and Institutional capacity	• Curriculum • Teaching resources • Assessment systems
B : Professional and public service, external links and recognition	• Interaction and relations within the profession • International networking and recognition • Social participation and standing • Other external orientations
C : Development plan, strategy and potential	• Strategy • Budget and sustainability • Management abilities • Challenges

The resulting publication "*Criteria and Indicators for Quality Journalism Training Institutions: Identifying Potential Centres of Excellence in Journalism Training in Africa*" identified 12 potential Centres of Excellence and 9 portential Centres of Referenbce in Journalism Education. All these institutions have since been working on developing their strategy and identifying their needs to receive support from UNESCO.

In 2008 UNESCO convened a consultation meeting at Rhodes University (South Africa) and in 2009 a workshop at Polytechnic of Namibia. These meetings brought together representatives from the potential Centres of Excellence, development agencies, NGOs, professional organisations and internationally renowned universities, to explore ways to enhance journalism training in Africa. In 2009 UNESCO signed a memorandum with the African Union to strengthen the mutual commitment to high quality journalism education.

In parallel, UNESCO has developed a framework *"Media Development Indicators: A framework for assessing media development"* that can be used to analyze the media development of a country. The indicators help stakeholders assess the state of the media and measure the impact of media development programs. It is important to build credible national institutions which can facilitate the monitoring process in the media sector. The potential Centres of Execellence are well suited to perform this function.

Goal: To support institutions with the potential to be excellent

UNESCO recognises the critical need to enhance journalism training in Africa through building the capacity of existing institutions. The UNESCO publication *"Criteria and Indicators for Quality Journalism Training Institutions: Identifying Potential Centres of Excellence in Journalism Training in Africa"* revealed that *"Africa does not need new or more journalism schools. Instead, the continent needs a core of excellent facilities that make a real impact, and which are also at the heart of a wider network with other schools"*.

Therefore, the initiative "The need for quality journalism in Africa" will provide support for four years to the existing Potential Centres of Excellence located in Cameroon, Kenya, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa and Uganda. These are universities that are strong relative to peers but constrained in the ability to excel by themselves. Institutional capacity building efforts over a four year period will help them become self-sustained Centres of Excellence. As such, they will gradually assume an important role within the region, helping other universities reach similar levels. In addition, the UNESCO initiative seeks to support the Potential Centres of Reference located in Ghana, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. These are institutions that can be considered as those who would use support well, to improve their growth and sustainability to achieve a wider impact, even if this outcome is achieved indirectly.

At the same time, UNESCO will start to work with the 9 Potential Centres of Reference to become Potential Centres of Excellence in four years. This initiative is part of a wider effort to improve media development by monitoring a set of established indicators. During the project the Centres of Excellence will be trained to engage civil society, state actors and media community in fostering free, independent and pluralistic media based on these indicators.

External support for the Potential Centres of Excellence was requested by African journalists, many of whom have low regard for training supplied in journalism schools. Aspiring journalists the world over want accredited qualifications from recognized institutions.

ÉCOLE SUPÉRIEURE DES SCIENCES ET TECHNIQUES DE L´INFORMATION ET DE LA COMMUNICATION (ESSTIC), Cameroon, Laurent Charles Boyomo Assala
"We have many generations of journalists in Cameroon. Some of them are not trained, and there is a lack of respect for the professional norms of journalism. We are therefore trying to improve the manner in which journalism is treated. We want African journalists to be journalists first and Africans second. Our challenge therefore is to build capacity by through professional training in communication and ethics."[1]

UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS, Nigeria
"Boasting Africa's first Pulitzer Prize winner (Dele Olojede) among its graduates, the University of Lagos offers a journalism course that covers everything from print and broadcasting, to advertising and public relations. The institution's director Ralph Akinfeleye says they have made it their philosophy to produce high caliber students who are comfortable in all media environments. Akinfeleye is proud that the school has established itself as an intellectual institution that is active in public debate – particularly those around media freedom.[1]"

Potential Centres of Excellence

Cameroon	**École supérieure des sciences et techniques de l'information et de la communication** www.universite-yde2.org
Kenya	**The School of Journalism and Mass Communications (SOJMC), University of Nairobi** www.uon.ac.ke
Morocco	**Institut supérieur de l'information et de la communication (ISIC)** www.isic.ma
Mozambique	**Mozambican School of Journalism**
Namibia	**School of Communication, Legal and Secretarial Studies, Namibia Polytechnic** www.polytechnic.edu.na
Nigeria	**Department of Mass Communication, University of Lagos** www.unilag.edu.ng
Senegal	**Centre d'études des sciences et techniques de l'information (CESTI)** http://cesti.ucad.sn
Uganda	**Mass Communication Department, Makerere University** http://masscom.mak.ac.ug
South Africa	**University of Stellenbosch.** www.sun.ac.za **Rhodes University.** www.ru.ac.za **Walter Sisulu University. School of Communication Studies.** www.wsu.ac.za **University of Technology. Department of Journalism.** www.tut.ac.za

Potential Centres of Reference

Ghana	**Africa University College of Communications** www.aijcghana.com
Burkina Faso	**Université d'Ouagadougou, Département Communication & Journalisme** www.univ-ouaga.bf
Kenya	**Daystar University, Department of Communication** www.daystar.ac.ke
Madagascar	**Antananarivo University, Unité de Formation et de Recherche en Journalisme** www.univ-antananarivo.mg
Mozambique	**Southern African Media Training Trust (NSJ). School of Communication** www.nsjtraining.org
Namibia	**University of Namibia, Namibia** www.unam.na
Nigeria	**Lagos Polytechnic. Department of Mass Communication** www.mylaspotech.com **University of Ibadan. Department of Communication** www.ui.edu.ng
Zimbabwe	**National University of Science and Technology. Faculty of Communication and Information Science** www.nust.ac.zw

Implementation strategy: Building capacity to ensure sustainability

UNESCO will support the selected institutions to become Centres of Excellence in journalism education over the next four years.

The figure below shows the main activities.

	UNESCO's Strategic Plan		Implementation	Catalyze change
Timeline	2005-2009	2009-2010	2010-2014	Self-sustainable model beyond 2014

Activities	• Development of the Model Curriculum
	
	• Development of the Criteria of Excellence in journalism education
	
	• Identification of potential Centers of Excellence in journalism training in Africa
	
	• Identification of needs of journalism institutions
		• Consolidate strategic plans of potential Centers of Excellence into a 4-5 year strategy
		a) Finalize workplans for each center
		b) Finalize monitoring and evaluation plans for each center
		c) Create a sustainable funding plan for 4-5 years for each center
		d) (Define risk mitigation strategies)
		
		• Secure funds
			• Implement
			  • Staff training
			  • Model curriculum
			  • Management training
			  • Networks
			
			• Create media centers and quality libraries
			
			• Continuous monitoring
			
			• 2 year evaluation based on media development indicators
				• Centers of Excellence will become high quality teaching institutions in journalism
				
				• Centers of Excellence will become self-sustainable institutions
				
				• Centers of Excellence will play role of regional hubs to support other universities in achieving excellence

Past activities
Activities not part of funding proposal

CENTRE D'ETUDES DES SCIENCES ET TECHNIQUES DE L'INFORMATION (CESTI)
Senegal, Eugénie Aw-Ndiaya

"We link practical training to theoretical learning. For example, we will be looking at conflict in Africa. We have also a module on gender and the media, in which we will be talking to three generations of women journalists. Through partnerships we are able to give our students new perspectives. To date we have mostly South-South relationships, but now we want South-North relationships too. We have a lot to offer, and we want to give, instead of always taking." [1]

---

[1] Pictures and quotes: Highway Africa News Agency (HANA), 2008, "*j-schools afrique – Africa may host World Journalism Educators Congress*", Consultation Meeting on Capacity Building for Potential Centres of Excellence in Journalism in Africa in Grahamstown, South Africa (17-18 March 2008)

Monitoring and Evaluation: Tracking progress for each Centre of Excellence

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of the project is an integral part of the implementation strategy that will improve performance towards reaching the objectives of the project. Lessons learned captured along the way through the M&E process will ensure an increasingly efficient and effective roll out of the project. UNESCO will monitor progress towards achieving the overall project objective based on the following established indicators:

Performance measurement

Project objective	Indicators
Improve quality of journalism education in Africa through capacity building in selected universities	- Academic courses are accessible to a wide range of students including working journalists - Academic courses equip students with skills and knowledge related to democratic development - Journalism education equips media professionals with a cross disciplinary approach
Project Outputs	**Indicators**
Staff training	- Teachers provide high quality education to journalism students and working journalists - Teachers provide high quality training in specialized matters such as: new media, investigative journalism, HIV-AIDS, gender, conflict sensitive reporting, community media, science journalism, sustainable development and climate change
Model Curricula	- UNESCO Model Curricula are implemented at undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate level
Learning material	- Textbooks and materials are improved and are accessible in national languages
Media centres	- Adequate audiovisual training equipment and online access to information resources are available
Management skills	- The development strategy of the journalism education institutions includes management and governance structure, student selection and evaluation criteria as well as a funding plan
Media monitoring	- Periodic multi-stakeholder assessments of the media sector are conducted
Networking	- Teachers and students have opportunities for regional and international exchange programs - Centres of Excellence develop common journalism research program - Students have access to media internships and workshops - Centres of Excellence have a common website to exchange information, knowledge and best practices - Regional consultations are held to enhance university cooperation

Governance and management structure

The project will be coordinated centrally through UNESCO's **International Program for the Development of Communication (IPDC)**. The IPDC is UNESCO's main instrument for media development assistance. On the ground, UNESCO's Field Offices will liaise directly with the Potential Centres of Excellence and the national stakeholders of the project.

Who	Roles and responsibilities
UNESCO / IPDC	- Strategic planning support - Provision of expertise - Fund allocation through Fund-in-trust account - Overall project monitoring
UNESCO Field Offices	- Multi-stakeholder validation of the project interventions - Supervision and facilitation of project implementation - Progress monitoring of individual Centres and reporting to UNESCO/IPDC
Potential Centres of Excellence	- Strategy development for UNESCO's review - Project implementation - Regular progress updates to UNESCO

Why UNESCO?

UNESCO is uniquely positioned to support Potential Centres of Excellence:

- **UNESCO mandate**. UNESCO is the only UN organization mandated to foster freedom of expression and to develop free, independent and pluralistic media. It has a high credibility among media professionals and works directly with beneficiaries in the field of media development. The IPDC program has 30 years of experience in mobilizing the international community to discuss and promote media development in developing countries.

- **Deep understanding of local needs**. UNESCO's programs are demand-driven and directly facilitated through UNESCO's field presence in the countries.

- **Credibility in providing journalism education in Africa.** UNESCO is highly credible in setting standards for education. The international assistance provided through the multilateral cooperation of UNESCO does not interfere with the integrity and independence of media institutions.

- **Approach focused on sustainable results**. Sustainability is ensured through capacity building. The Potential Centres of Excellence have already been supported for some years and will be guided to build internal capacities to improve and expand excellence in teaching.

- **Africa is a priority for UNESCO member states.** The African Union acknowledges UNESCO's crucial role in the development of high quality journalism education in Africa.

Why the selected Potential Centres of Excellence?

- **Academic strength.** The Potential Centres of Excellence are some of the most promising journalism education institutions in Africa and capable of achieving the criteria of excellence, if adequate resources can be mobilized.

- **Academic independence.** The Potential Centres of Excellence are recognized for their academic independence. Being independent public institutions, they are well placed to foster an enabling environment for media development and to promote freedom of expression.

- **Multi-disciplinary learning environment**. Tertiary education institutions have the possibilities to tap resources from other education institutions. Thus they are well placed to offer multidisciplinary education for journalists

- **The urge to acquire a recognized professional qualification from tertiary education institutions** remains high among journalists

- **Sustainability.** The recurrent costs of the Potential Centres of Excellence are met through public funds. Thus, the project outcomes can be sustainable.

Resource Mobilization

To support the eight Potential Centres of Excellence over the first four years a total of USD 10 million in funds is required. Over USD 8 million will go to staff training, the establishment of media centres, enhancement of management skills and networking. Support with model curricula and learning materials can be provided at a reduced cost due to synergies from existing UNESCO material and networks.

On average each Potential Centre of Excellence will receive USD 500,000 assistance. Ongoing funding will be conditional on meeting progress targets. Concrete funding allocations will be determined as soon as each Potential Centre of Excellence details its exact requirements.

A special fund-in-trust account managed at UNESCO will be set up for the purpose of the project.

SUMMARY

Improve the quality, diversity and relevance of news media in Africa, by strengthening journalism universities		
…TO…		
Objective 1 Become sustainable Centres of Excellence in journalism education	**Objective 2** Create knowledge spill over to other universities	**Objective 3** Become credible facilitators for media development
... THROUGH CAPACITY BUILDING IN…		

Staff Training	Model curricula	Learning materials	Media centres	Management skills	Media monitoring	Regional and international networks

Background documents:

- *"Criteria and Indicators for Quality Journalism Training Institutions: Identifying Potential Centres of Excellence in Journalism Training in Africa"* (http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=24847&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)
- *African Journalism Institutions Database* (www.unesco.org/webworld/en/african-journalism-schools-database)
- *"Model Curricula for Journalism Education"* (http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=24824&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html).
- *"Media Development Indicators: A framework for assessing media development"* (http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=26032&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

For further information, please contact:

Ms. Silvia Chocarro Marcesse
UNESCO Communication Development Division
s.chocarro-marcesse@unesco.org

Mr. Hara Padhy
UNESCO Communication Development Division
h.padhy@unesco.org