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**I**NTERNATIONAL  
**P**ROGRAMME FOR THE  
**D**EVELOPMENT OF  
**C**OMMUNICATION

**SETTING UP CRITERIA AND INDICATORS FOR  
QUALITY MEDIA/JOURNALISM TRAINING  
INSTITUTIONS  
&  
IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL CENTRES OF  
EXCELLENCE  
IN JOURNALISM TRAINING IN AFRICA**

**IPDC BUREAU  
Fifty-first meeting**



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**Setting up criteria and indicators for quality  
media/journalism training institutions  
&  
identifying potential centres of excellence  
in journalism training in Africa**

**By Prof Guy Berger, Rhodes University's School of Journalism and Corinne  
Matras, Ecole Supérieure de Journalisme de Lille ( ESJ)**

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**Executive summary:**

Within the framework of UNESCO's Programme and particularly the action "Building professional and institutional capacity for media training" this document reports on the process and results of a project to

- set up criteria and indicators for quality ("excellence") media/journalism training institutions;
- map African journalism schools and to assess the quality of the top 15.

It is the outcome of a collaboration between Rhodes University's School of Journalism (Grahamstown, South Africa) and the Ecole Supérieure de Journalisme de Lille (ESJ) - International School of Journalism (Lille, France). In formulating criteria and indicators, contributions came from seven experts, including some in the international networks Theophraste, Orbicom and Journet. Comments also came from almost twenty African teaching institutions and 12 media development agencies. In total, 29 institutions of 96 on the Map of African Journalism schools submitted in-depth information in regard to the agreed Criteria and Indicators, and 30 were visited.

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## **1. Background and terms of reference:**

UNESCO contracted Rhodes University's School of Journalism and Media Studies (Grahamstown, South Africa) and the Ecole Supérieure de Journalisme de Lille (ESJ) – School of Journalism (Lille, France) to undertake this project. The key rationale for the work was to identify sustainable centres of potential excellence in African journalism training with whom UNESCO might in future choose to work in a productive manner.

This exercise required:

- (a) setting up criteria and indicators for quality (“excellence”) media/journalism training;
- (b) a mapping of the entire field, so that the identification process would be based on a comprehensive picture; and
- (c) a methodology to conduct the identification in an appropriate manner.

The “centres of excellence” issue was part of the agenda of an experts meeting convened by UNESCO in December 2005. There, UNESCO explained that it saw the concept as getting “a more efficient and systematic means of providing support to capability building activities”. A centre of excellence could become a resource base for training other institutions within a particular country and region. Such a centre could also be tapped to develop courses (both conventional and online).

It is against this background that UNESCO initiated the project described in this report. As will be evident, many aspects of the project correspond to best practice as set out in the February 2007 “A Review of UNESCO’s Capacity-Building Function” (Stiles Associates, 2007).

## **2. Report on process:**

Working closely, Rhodes, ESJ and UNESCO agreed that Rhodes would research Lusophone and most Anglophone countries; ESJ would do Francophone countries and also South Africa (to avoid any conflict of interests arising from Rhodes researching itself and its national peers).

The research process was conceptualised as follows:

1. First phase: a basic mapping of the players in the field.
2. Second phase: a joint online brainstorming amongst whoever would be interested about what criteria would constitute a “potential centre of excellence” in African journalism education.
3. Third phase: any institution that wished to be considered as a “potential centre of excellence” was to be invited to step forward with data related to the criteria agreed in the second phase.
4. Fourth phase: a visit to selected institutions from either ESJ or RU for further discussions and on-site inspection.
5. Fifth phase: submission of final report to UNESCO, and of results (excluding the Appendices with detailed information) to participating schools who are invited to send any additional comments to UNESCO should they so wish.

In more detail, the first phase (i.e. the basic mapping) required the researchers to develop criteria for basic information about each school. The resulting grid is in Appendix One, and it details the 12 fields of information that were sought.

Data were gathered on 60 Anglophone institutions (a 1986 UNESCO project by Kaarle Nordenstreng and Boafo listed 36). Data was found on 30 Francophone, and six Lusophone centres – making a grand total of 96 schools. These were located in 36 of the 54 countries in Africa. (See Appendix Two for the list of countries covered).

The information map compiled by these returns is currently being input to a database with a query-able interface, which would then be placed on the UNESCO website (and the Rhodes and ESJ websites).

Proceeding to the next phase, Rhodes and ESJ examined criteria systems for measuring journalism-school excellence in the UK, USA and Francophone countries. This revealed that the three international experiences had value, although this particular project would also need to reflect specifically African contexts and challenges. Further, inasmuch as UNESCO wished to look at “potential”, this project needed to give attention to the momentum and credible plans of a given institution.

Taking cognisance of all this, a draft discussion document was drawn up which proposed appropriate criteria and indicators for discussion (and a French translation was done). This document was then sent out to all 96 journalism schools on the map, as well as to identified experts with knowledge of African conditions (including from Journet, Orbicom and Theophraste) in early December 2006.

ESJ and Rhodes discussed the comments with UNESCO, and in January 2007 proposed three general criteria, with related specific indicators. These criteria covered: (i) curriculum and specified learning outcomes; (ii) professional and public service, external linkages and responsiveness; and (iii) the existence of a mid- or long-term strategy of development.

The contributions by respondents are all freely available online to any interested party at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/UNESCOAJ/>.

Much constructive debate occurred in the discussion, such as whether the extent to which journalism schools should define quality, rather than the media industry which in some countries failed to live up to its standards. Another debate was on the importance of good selection processes for learners as a criterion for rating a journalism school. Issues were raised about the differences between universities, technical colleges and NGOs. The list of contributing parties is in Appendix Three.

After taking cognisance of all the arguments, a final version of Criteria and Indicators was adopted by Rhodes and ESJ. This document was sent out to all institutions on the map, this time requesting them to submit their evidence in relation to each indicator. Twenty-one Anglophone institutions sent full responses to the checklist, and eight Francophone, making a total of 29 of the 96 on the map. The list of respondents is in Appendix 4.

### **3. The checklist of criteria and indicators:**

#### **CRITERIA AREAS:**

The schema below is clustered into three broad criteria deemed to be critical for assessing an institution's eligibility to be regarded as a potential centre of excellence for UNESCO purposes. It is in the form of a survey questionnaire which African journalism schools were invited to complete:

Criterion 1: The journalism curriculum and your capacity.

Criterion 2: Professional and public service, and external linkages and responsiveness.

Criterion 3: Looking ahead: development plans, strategy and potential.

#### **CRITERIA AND INDICATORS:**

##### **CRITERION 1. ASSESSING YOUR JOURNALISM CURRICULUM AND CAPACITY**

###### **INDICATORS:**

###### **● CURRICULUM**

Describe your curriculum's balance between theory, practical application and reflection – i.e. praxis as regards the teaching of journalism as such.

1. How and where do you teach linkages between media and democracy (values and laws of free speech, ethics, economics, historical role of media, investigative journalism, critique of bad journalistic practices)? Special courses? Mainstreamed/integrated?
2. How and where do you teach how to report on key issues (eg. Health, HIV, gender, Pan Africanism, development concerns, rural-urban issues and community media)?
3. How do you ensure development of linguistic, and multi-linguistic, skills of learners?

###### **● TEACHING RESOURCES AND EQUIPMENT**

4. Give an overview of your staff's education and skill-set.
5. Numbers of specifically journalism graduates p.a.
6. Throughput record (Completion rates vs enrolment rates).
7. What range of media platforms is covered in your courses?

8. Adequacy of technology for students to learn the practical dimension (for example dedicated computer labs, radio studio, etc)?
9. Instructor-learner ratios for practical courses?
10. Opportunities for practical media production by learners (eg. real newspaper, internships).
11. What kind of Internet access is there for staff and students?

- ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS

12. What systems do you use to assess learning – (eg. Continuous assessment, portfolios, external examiners for quality control, industry-related regarding credit-bearing internships, etc.)?
13. What systems to assess teachers and courses – (eg. Students do course evaluations; Head discusses these with staffer; peer evaluations; other...)?

CRITERION 2. PROFESSIONAL AND PUBLIC SERVICE, AND EXTERNAL LINKAGES AND RESPONSIVENESS.

INDICATORS:

- INTERACTION AND RELATIONS WITH THE PROFESSION

14. Formal mechanisms for interaction with the profession (eg. Advisory board; external examiners, consultation on curriculum, assessment of internships).
15. Offer of continuing/in-service training to practising professionals.
16. Knowledge-disseminating activities aimed at professional circles (symposia, lectures, events...).
17. Involvement by teachers in productions for the media industry.
18. Rate of take-up by mass media employers of graduates leaving the institution (proportion of whole output).
19. Involvement of people from industry to teach specialist subjects in curricula?
20. Level of participation by journalist alumni (eg. a dedicated association for the school itself, their participation in meetings, response to requests from institution etc).

- INTERNATIONAL NETWORKING AND RECOGNITION

21. Involvement in journalism and/or training networks and associations.
22. Any external networking such as securing bursaries; judging journalism competitions.

23. Invitations to serve on editorial boards, or be external evaluators of other journalism programmes?

● SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AND STANDING

24. Any links with private sector or community organisations.

25. Role of your institution as a critical public intellectual: eg. critical engagement with media on its role; being approached for commentary on media issues, protesting violations of media freedom, commemorating world media freedom day (3 May).

● OTHER EXTERNAL ORIENTATIONS

26. Any publications and/or webpresence of your institution.

27. Number and type of any other external projects/outreach in the past two years.

3. CRITERION 3. LOOKING AHEAD : YOUR DEVELOPMENT PLANS, STRATEGY AND POTENTIAL.

INDICATORS:

● PLANNING:

28. Describe momentum of expansion/improvement of programmes over past three years, (eg. updating activities through new courses).

29. Other evidence of innovation and ability to adapt to challenges or opportunities (eg. new structures, new creative teaching methods).

30. Do you have a written annual or medium-term plan (please submit).

31. Important investments coming up in regard to additional or new technology, facilities, staffing, curriculum, continuing training services, etc?

32. Capacity/obstacles to enrolling learners from other African countries?

● BUDGET AND SUSTAINABILITY:

33. The proportions of financing from state, donors, sponsors, consultancy and students. Who pays for salaries and equipment?

34. Commitment and capacity of your institution's overall management towards your activities (eg. Budget allocation, facilities, equipment renewal, etc.)? Examples ?

35. What latitude do you have to manage budget?

36. Diversified national and international partners. (i.e. how dependent are you on a single relationship for a particular activity?).

● MANAGEMENT:

37. Participative governance and transparency of decisions (collegiality, student representatives, etc).

38. Systems for development of staff through education & retraining, exchanges, etc.

39. Formal external review mechanisms of your institution, and use thereof to improve.

● CHALLENGES:

40. What challenges or weaknesses does your institution face right now and how do you think you can overcome them?

#### **4. Results of research: list of the potential centres of excellence**

Rhodes and ESJ conducted site visits at 30 institutions as part of the process of developing the checklist above, and especially on the basis of the 28 responses received. The list of sites visited is in Appendix 5.

In taking stock of the submitted data, and where applicable, also the site visits, it was agreed to pay special attention to seven -“mission-critical” - of the 40 indicator areas that had been identified. They were also identified as being significant factors of differentiation between institutions. Thus, special attention was paid to:

1. the breadth of media platforms covered by a school (eg. radio, TV, newspapers, online);
2. formal mechanisms for interaction with the profession;
3. offer of continuing/in-service training to practising professionals;
4. involvement in journalism and/or training networks and associations;
5. momentum of expansion/improvement over past three years;
6. sustainability: commitment of overall management to school’s activities and diversified national and international partners;
7. systems for development of staff.

It can be seen from all this that a consultative, open and transparent process was devised in order to establish maximally-consensual criteria, and where subsequent application of these was then primarily a non-controversial technical process. Further, the notion that participants retain the right to submit independent responses to the findings in the final report further represents an approach that provides optimum fairness and legitimacy. In these respects, therefore, the exercise has taken close cognisance of the social and political dynamics of organisational change, as advised by Stiles Associates. It has also, as recommended by Stiles Associates, contributed to capacity-building by ensuring local ownership and facilitating networking. In short, this was not a technical research project – it entailed additional valuable outputs beyond the findings.

The schools not on this proposed list to UNESCO do not necessarily lack in excellence or potential excellence. Rather, their qualities in this regard are not central to the concerns of UNESCO. In no particular order of priority, below are the researchers' provisional recommendations on the potential centres of excellence.

East Africa:

1. University of Nairobi (Kenya)
2. Makerere University (Uganda).

Lusophone Africa:

3. Mozambican School of Journalism (Mozambique).
4. NSJ media training centre (Mozambique).

West Africa (Anglophone):

5. African Institute of Journalism (Ghana).
6. University of Lagos (Nigeria).

Southern Africa:

7. Namibia Polytechnic (Namibia)
8. Rhodes University (South Africa)
9. Stellenbosch University (South Africa)
10. Tshwane University of Technology (South Africa)
11. Walter Sisulu University (South Africa)

West and Central Africa (Francophone)

12. Senegal: CESTI (Centre d'Etudes des Sciences et Techniques de l'Information)
13. Cameroon: ESSTIC (Ecole Supérieure des Sciences et Techniques de l'Information et de la Communication)
14. Burkina Faso: University of Ouagadougou

Arab Africa:

15. Morocco: ISIC (Institut Supérieur de l'Information et de la Communication)

## **5. Conclusion and recommendations**

This historic project has generated a number of outputs:

- (a) a unique map of African journalism teaching institutions;
- (b) a consensus-originated set of criteria and indicators for defining potential excellence in these institutions;
- (c) a list of selected institutions with whom UNESCO may wish to work.

The map is a pioneering resource. Once online on the UNESCO website, it will – in one place – put African journalism institutions on the global cyberspace map, a highly strategic arena in which many were previously absent. A wide-range of networking and other benefits could arise, such as collaborative programmes, curriculum development, textbook development, exchanges, etc. It is advised that the map be updated every 2nd-year, so that it remains a relevant UNESCO knowledge resource.

The criteria and indicators for defining potential excellence offer each institution with an interest in self-improvement a tool for honest self-assessment on a regular basis. The checklist, which can be certainly used in other regions of the world, also provides a framework against which institutions can vision and plan. In time, the criteria and indicators may also be at the heart of a pan-African system of quality assurance for a network of African journalism schools. Thus the project exhibits the Stiles Associates' criterion of working on UNESCO's strength in international standard setting and in bringing national and international groups together to plan, implement and reflect.

Finally, those institutions on the list of potential centres of excellence can utilise this for development even irrespective of possible UNESCO partnerships. It is a status that can elicit respect from potential students and learners, from their own parent institutions where applicable (eg. University administrations), from the media they serve, and from donors and foundations in general.

Institutions rise and fall, and what may be at the top of a list one year may be displaced some time thereafter. However, the point of this UNESCO project has been to see which institutions are well-positioned in 2007 for a period of sustained growth,

development and impact, particularly from the point of view of UNESCO interests and capacities. Whether collaboration with them does occur, and whether any such investment yields results, is of course not guaranteed. However, invaluable groundwork has been done. The final report on this project will contain detailed recommendations on the areas of possible partnership whereby UNESCO can make informed decisions about its role in helping to realise the potential of these important African facilities.

**Appendix One: Grid of Information Fields for the Map of African Journalism Schools.**

1. Contact details;
2. Status of school (eg. public university);
3. Primary language of programmes;
4. Core business focus (entry-level, or working professional);
5. Courses offered and graduate level;
6. Conditions for acceptance of people into programmes;
7. Specialisations in practical journalistic production areas;
8. Time spent on practical media production (including attachments), as a percentage of time spent on the whole qualification (eg. 30%);
9. The approximate numbers of students/professionals that are successfully “output” each year per completed programme;
10. Self-perceptions on standing and reputation of institution;
11. Links with national media;
12. Approximate percentage of learners who are employed in journalism at the end of their studies/courses.

## Appendix Two: Countries with ournalism schools

	Anglophone	Lusophone	Francophone	Total	Additional but uncontactable
Algeria			1		
Angola	1	1			3
Benin			2		
Botswana	1				
Burkina Faso			4		
Burundi			3		
Cape Verde		1			
Cameroon	1		3		
CAR			0		
Chad			0		
Comoros			0		
Congo			1		
Cote d'Ivoire			1		
DRC			4		
Egypt	2				1
Equatorial G.			0		
Eritrea	1				
Ethiopia	1				
Gabon			0		
Gambia	0				
Ghana	3				
Guinea Conakry			0		
Guinea Bissau		0			
Kenya	6				17
Lesotho	0				
Liberia	1				
Libya			0		
Madagascar			1		
Malawi	1				4
Mali			1		
Mauritania			0		
Mauritius			0		
Morocco			1		
Mozambique	4	4			
Namibia	2				
Niger			1		
Nigeria	12				36
Rwanda			2		
Sao Tome & P.		0			
Senegal			2		
Seychelles			0		
Sierra Leone	0				1
Somalia	0				2 (Somaliland)
South Africa	12				
Sudan	0				
Swaziland	1				
Tanzania	2				8
Togo			1		
Tunisia			2		
Uganda	2				

	Anglophone	Lusophone	Francophone	<i>Total</i>	Additional but Uncontactable
Sahwari ADR			0		
Zambia	3				
Zimbabwe	4				
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>36</b>

The 18 countries not recorded on this map seem to have few or no well-established journalism teaching institutions. They are: Libya, Chad, Central African Republic, Comoros, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea Conakry, Guinea Bissau, Gambia, Lesotho, Mauritania, Mauritius, Sao Tome and Principe, Sudan and the Saharwi Democratic Republic. In other countries, various research such as web searches, Akimfeleye (1998), and BBC-WST (2007) suggested additional institutions in certain countries (the list is in the right hand column), but attempts to make contact with them proved fruitless – indicating in turn that they were unlikely to be potential centres of excellence for UNESCO.

### **Appendix Three. Participants in the discussions to develop final criteria and indicators:**

Responses to the discussion on criteria and indicators in a 1<sup>st</sup> round came from

#### Institutions:

1. Midlands State University (Zimbabwe)
2. Lagos State University (Nigeria)
3. Stellenbosch University (South Africa)
4. Tshwane University of Technology (South Africa)
5. Harare Polytechnic (Zimbabwe)
6. University of Botswana
7. American University in Cairo (Egypt)
8. Amadu Bello University (Nigeria)
9. Ajayi Crowther University (Nigeria)
10. Mohammed Amin Foundation (Kenya)
11. Escola de Jornalismo (Mozambique)
12. ESSTC (Cameroon)
13. CESTI (Senegal)
14. UFR (University of Antananrivo)

#### Experts commenting were:

Haman Mana (Cameroon)  
Prof Hans Henrik Holm (Denmark)  
Prof Alfred Opubor (Benin)  
Prof Jamal Eddine Naji (Morocco)  
Dr Levi Obiojor (Australia)

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> round, comments on the near-final criteria and indicators came from:

#### Institutions:

1. Midlands State University;
2. University of Ibadan;
3. University of Stellenbosch;
4. Rhodes University;
5. Mohammed Amin Foundation;
6. Tangaza College (Kenya);
7. Makerere University;
8. Namibia Polytechnic.

#### Experts in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round were:

Prof Hans Henrik Holm,  
Prof Helge Ronning,  
Dr Anthony Olorunnisola.

A selection of media donors and development agencies around the world was also canvassed for opinion.

Anglophone responses were received from persons working for:

1. Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa (NIZA),
2. Knight Foundation,
3. Global Foundation for Media Development,
4. Open Society Institute of Southern Africa,
5. DFID,
6. International Centre for Journalists (ICFJ),
7. IREX.

Francophone responses came from:

1. French Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
2. Groupe de Recherche et d'Echanges Technologiques (GRET),
3. Direction of Cooperation and Development of Swiss Cooperation in Burkina Faso,
4. Panos Paris.

#### **Appendix Four: Responses to the checklist.**

Completed returns were received from:

1. University of Nairobi (Kenya)
2. Tangaza College (Kenya)
3. Daystar University (Kenya)
4. Mohammed Amin Foundation (Kenya)
5. Makerere University (Uganda)
6. University of Addis Ababa (Ethiopia)
7. University of Ghana (Ghana)
8. University of Ibadan (Nigeria)
9. Nnamdi Azikiwe University (Nigeria)
10. Lagos State Polytechnic (Nigeria)
11. NSJ (Mozambique)
12. Harare Polytechnic (Zimbabwe)
13. Midlands State University (Zimbabwe)
14. National University of Science and Technology (Zimbabwe)
15. Polytechnic of Namibia
16. University of Namibia
17. University of Botswana
18. North West University (South Africa)
19. Walter Sisulu University (South Africa)
20. Tshwane University of Technology (South Africa)
21. University of Stellenbosch (South Africa)
22. Institut Supérieur de l'Information et de la Communication (ISIC - Morocco)
23. University of Antananarivo (Madagascar)
24. Centre Panafricain de Formation et de Perfectionnement des Journalistes-  
CAFPJ (Benin)
25. Centre d'Etudes des Sciences et Techniques de l'Information – (CESTI-  
Senegal)
26. University of Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso)
27. University of Kinshasa (Democratif Republic of Congo)
28. Ecole Supérieure des Sciences et Techniques de l'Information et de la  
Communication – ESSTIC (Cameroon)
29. University of Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of Congo)

## **Appendix Five: List of sites visited.**

Rhodes and ESJ conducted site visits at 30 institutions.

1. Kenya: University of Nairobi; United States International University; Daystar University.
2. Uganda: University of Makerere
3. Namibia: University of Namibia; Namibia Polytechnic
4. Mozambique: Eduardo Mondlane University; Mozambican School of Journalism; NSJ media training centre.
5. Ghana: University of Ghana at Legon; Ghana Institute of Journalism; African Institute of Journalism and Communications.
6. Nigeria: University of Ibadan; University of Ilorin; University of Lagos; State University of Lagos; Polytechnic of Ibadan; Lagos State Polytechnic.
7. South Africa: Rhodes University; Stellenbosch University, Tshwane University, Walter Sisulu University.
8. Burkina Faso : University of Ouagadougou
9. Cameroon: Ecole Supérieure des Sciences et Techniques de l'Information et de la Communication – ESSTIC
10. Democratic Republic of Congo: FCK, IFASIC, UNIKIN, ICA
11. Rwanda: University of Butare (EJC)
12. Burundi: University of Tanganyika Lake

ESJ had also a meeting – but in France - with the Director of ISIC (Morocco) in March 2007. ESJ visited also ISIC in April 2006 for an educational evaluation of the school. CAFPJ in Benin was visited in July 2005 and the informations received by different experts confirmed that no notable changes had happened since.

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