



2nd RUFORUM TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE

Call for Expression of Interest from Development Communications Expert

to deliver a training on

“Strengthening Capacity of University Communication Officers to Serve as Development Communication Professionals”

Submission Deadline: 15th June 2024 at 17:00hours East African Time

Background

Africa over the last three decades has seen a forward growth trajectory with positive development outcomes. Nonetheless, there remains considerable development needs for the continent. Communication is an important element of the development process because it is a two-way bridge between generators of knowledge, technologies, innovations that drive economic growth and the ultimate users. Social change can only be achieved when there is effective utilisation of new knowledge, technologies and innovations that result into physical and material progress. Communication as an important pillar in development process takes on different directions with varied focus, for example, corporate communication, internal communication, advocacy communication, and development communication. In the global north for example, development communication is geared toward addressing the dysfunctions of physical and material progress. Meanwhile in the global south, it is often concerned with the provision of physical and material infrastructure. However, it is also concerned with social change in the form of inspiring hard work, eliciting self-help, and providing education, health facilities, and other critical conditions¹.

Despite reported development progress in Africa over the last three decades, the continent’s progress does not match the human population growth and the priority services and products, especially for the increasing number of young people. Thus, the growing concern is how to stimulate development and social change with young people at the leadership position. There are several development programs being implemented in the continent by governments, development partners, philanthropists, and other individuals but these require to be amplified if they are to deliver the aspired impact. Accordingly, development communication is generally accepted as an important tool for accelerating development delivery in developing countries in the global south.

¹ Mefalopulos, P. (2008). Development communication sourcebook: Broadening the boundaries of communication. World Bank Publications.

Co-organized by:





However, amplifying the role of development communication requires that the internal and institutional capacity of Communication Officers is strengthened. This is because most of the Communication Officers are often oriented towards internal communication, advocacy communication, and corporate communication but very limited capacity exists in development communication. This is even more important within the universities, where often, Communication Officers are brought to relay the results of projects already implemented rather than being part of the design and delivery. This leaves their approach and effectiveness of the communications at periphery and ineffective in influencing social change among different stakeholder groups.

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) in partnership with the Mastercard Foundation recognise the capacity gaps among universities' Communication Officers in shaping the development communication in programme delivery. Accordingly, a training in "development communication" has been organised for Communication Officers from RUFORUM member universities to be held as part of the 2nd Triennial Conference in Windhoek, Namibia.

Purpose and tasks of the assignment

The overarching objective of this training is to strengthen the capacity of universities Communication Officers in development communication to enhance the effectiveness in communications for catalysing social change in development interventions led by universities. Specifically, the training objectives are:

- a) Strengthen Communication Officers understanding of phases and steps for development communication and development communication planning.
- b) Enhance Communication Officers capacity for development communication across stakeholder groups including donor reporting.
- c) Position Communication Officers as facilitators of development process and stakeholders as part of advancing university missions.

Need for an experienced Consultant to deliver the training.

Recognizing that this training requires an expert with significant amount of experience, the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) is seeking for a development communications expert to deliver a hands-on training to University Communications Officers. The expert must design and deliver a training that achieves the following outcomes among others.

- a) Enhanced capacity to articulate development context, map out the role that development communication plays, and deploy it as part of delivering the university missions of training, research, innovation, and enterprise development.
- b) Enhanced capacity to develop and deploy development communication strategies and plans for the universities that adapted to the mandated roles of universities.



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- c) Participants are familiarized with the different innovative and interactive communication tools digital and analogue tools for documenting and communicating impact from university activities.
- d) Enhanced capacity to design and implement short-, medium-, and long-term communication tools.
- e) Enhanced capacity to monitor, evaluate and report impact of development communication activities capacity.

Consultancy approach

The Consultant is expected to deploy a co-creative learning approach that is adapted to adult learners. The consultant will be required to extensively elaborate how he/she will deliver the assignment.

Expected deliverables

The consultant will be expected to produce the following deliverables as part of the assignment.

- a) An inception report clearly describing the applicant's knowledge of the capacity gaps in development communication, the training approach for delivering the training, draft programme, and how to assess the effectiveness of the training.
- b) Learning aids required with a budget estimate for acquiring them.
- c) Training report detailing the expectations of the participants, training methodology, skills and competencies gained, areas of continuous improvement after the training.
- d) A plan for continuous engagement of Communications Officers as a Community of Practice after the training has been completed.

Required expertise and qualification

The consultant must have training, expertise, and experience in the following areas.

- a) Have at least a master's degree in mass communication, development communication or science communication from an accredited university (30).
- b) Have at least five years' experience in developing and implementing development communications programmes, evaluating their impact, or have worked as a communications expert in a reputable research and innovation organization (30).
- c) At least five years' experience as a development/science communications trainer or facilitator in African universities or research institutions setting (30).
- d) Experience in offering training to multi-national audiences with diverse language and cultural settings (10).



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Contents of the Submission of Expression of Interest

The expression of interest should be packaged in form of a proposal containing the following sections in one word document:

- a) Background to the assignment.
- b) Interpretation of the assignment.
- c) Development communications gaps at universities
- d) The methodology for delivering the training that is consistent with adult learning, tools and learning aids to be used in the training, skills.
- e) Competencies to be gained by participants, criteria for assessing whether the participants have gained the competencies or not.
- f) Draft foreseen strategy, plan, and tools for continuous engagement of Communications Officers in a Community of Practice.
- g) The estimated budget is required to deliver the assignment. The budget should include two items – the professional fees in person days at a specified amount per person day, and the estimated budget for the tools and learning aids. Please note that the travel, accommodation, meals, and other incidentals budget should not be included since RUFORUM will pay directly to the service providers.

Applicants should also attach a detailed curriculum vitae indicating educational background, previous work experience, projects/programmes implemented with contact persons for verification, short courses attended, workshops facilitated with their locations and nationalities of participants, among other items providing proof of experience.

Interested experts should submit the following documents to secretariat@ruforum.org with copies to e.acan@ruforum.org and a.egeru@ruforum.org by 15th June 2024 at 17:00hours East African Time.

Duration of the assignment

This assignment has been planned for 15 person days spread between 1st July and 30th August 2024.

Management of the assignment

The selected consultants will report to the RUFORUM Secretariat designate(s) who will provide technical guidance for the review and ensure that the review process is independently conducted, and the agreed processes are followed.