**Terms of Reference for the provision of individual**

**Consultancy for writing and journalistic services to the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF)**

1. **Background.**

For more than thirty years, the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) has been building human capital and institutional capacity for Africa’s sustainable development. With membership from 40 African Countries, the African Development Bank (AfDB), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the African Union (AU), and the World Bank, ACBF is the leading institution for capacity development in Africa.

While serving all actors, ACBF recognizes the importance of and pays attention to improving the effectiveness of Africa’s public sector institutions at local, national, regional, and continental levels so that they can become effective systems integrators and catalyzers of sustainable and transformative change.

To support capacity development interventions, ACBF has adopted its Strategy 2023–2027, which focuses on the following key impact areas:

* Climate Change and Energy for productive use
* Agribusiness and Food Security
* Trade as an engine of economic development and;
* Economic and Social Governance

Building partnerships and ensuring the full support of African countries are critical to the strategy's success and impact. To encourage support for implementing the ACBF Strategy 2023-2027 and widely share ACBF's achievements and impact, ACBF must continuously engage its stakeholders by sharing well-designed, up-to-date articles, fit-for-purpose reports, strategic studies, and graphic visuals on ACBF’s role in addressing capacity development.

Against this background, ACBF would like to engage journalists to produce high-quality articles on topical capacity development issues **and/or** act as fixers to organize media coverage of ACBF events and issues.

**2. Objectives of the assignment**

The main objective of this consultancy is to increase the visibility of ACBF’s past and future achievements in the region and internationally.

**2.1 Specific Objectives**

* Engage and inform ACBF stakeholders and the public on ACBF’s successes, programmatic activities, and corporate events.
* Revive the confidence of traditional donors and member States to garner more support for ACBF's work.
* Engineer more buy-in into and implementation of the ACBF’s policy advice.

**3. Scope of work**

The individual consultants will run interviews and write well-researched and high-quality articles. They will specifically be engaged to perform the following duties:

1. Write articles on capacity development issues with themes as directed by the Head of Communications and Influencing.
2. Write human interest feature articles on ACBF-supported projects.
3. Write analytical articles from ACBF publications, including the Annual Report, Africa Capacity Report, Development memoirs, and policy briefs as assigned.
4. Write success stories, including testimonials from beneficiaries of ACBF-supported learning institutions.
5. Draft Opinion-Editorials (Op-Eds)
6. Follow-up for media placements of ACBF stories/Op-Eds and public service announcements (construed as adverts by some media entities).
7. Mobilize media to cover ACBF events and visits of the ACBF Executive Secretary in their countries/constituencies through drafting and forwarding coverage requests and follow-up phone calls.
8. Package a round-up of media coverage (press book) of such activities in accessible formats, such as links and PDF files, on audio-visual and print media outputs resulting from each assignment.
9. Negotiate for interview opportunities with the Executive Secretary of ACBF or any delegated spokesperson given such a mandate by the Executive Secretary and work with the ACBF’s Head of Communications and Influencing or other designated officials to propose interview protocols.
10. In collaboration with the designated ACBF officials, pitch story ideas to journalists covering the events to which the consultant has been assigned and to those within the Consultant’s network.
11. Respond promptly to media inquiries on the events/issues assigned to cover.
12. Collaborate with ACBF’s Communication Unit to organize/handle accreditation matters for journalists covering ACBF events within the consultants’ jurisdiction.

**4. Specific tasks**

The individual consultant is expected to provide and satisfactorily perform the tasks below. ACBF might as well request a combination of two or more tasks.

4.1 Writing Tasks

News articles must be submitted within a maximum period of 5 days from the date of assignment, and opinion editorials within 8 days from the date of assignment. Any other writing materials must be submitted within the specified period assigned by the Head of Communications and Influencing. The articles and writing materials must be submitted by email as soft copies in MS Word, editable format. Pictures should be at least 5 megapixels, high resolution, in Jpeg or PNG format.

4.2 Mobilization of Press for Media Coverage and Content Placement

For events organized within the Individual Consultant’s constituency or elsewhere as agreed upon with ACBF, the said consultant would be required to mobilize at least the following types of media outlets to cover the event and conduct interviews with the Executive Secretary or other ACBF spokespersons:

* The country’s National Television Broadcaster
* The Country’s National Radio Broadcaster
* The Country’s most influential state-owned newspaper
* At least two international radio broadcasting correspondents (BBC is mandatory for Anglophone Africa, while either BBC Afrique or Radio France International is mandatory for Francophone African countries)
* At least 2 international TV correspondents from any of the following: BBC, CNN, CNBC Africa, Africa 24, Africa 24, Vox Africa, Channel Africa, SABC, TV5 Monde, CGTN, VOA, Deutsche Welle, Sky News, France 24, Euronews, Africanews, Afrique Media, News 24.
* If in East Africa, at least one of the following regional papers: East African, Daily Nation, The Standard
* If in Southern Africa, all should be done to ensure coverage by at least one of the following regionally circulated papers: Mail & Guardian, the Sunday Times
* At least one private nationwide newspaper
* At least one private Television channel
* At least one influential local FM Radio

**4.3 Interview Opportunities**

For missions of the Executive Secretary which do not require the mobilization of media from a protocol standpoint or as a matter of time exigencies, the Individual Consultant will be required to negotiate for interviews with specific international news outlets that would be specified by ACBF.

**5. Reporting Line**

The individual consultants report to the Head of Communications and Influencing and any other staff as may be designated.

**6. Qualifications and Experience Requirements**

1. Professional qualifications in Journalism, Communication, or Literature. A master’s degree in social sciences or arts is desirable. In the absence of these qualifications, 10 years of distinct journalistic/writing experience would be considered.
2. At least five (5) years experience as a writer/reporter. Two years of writing on developmental issues is desirable.
3. At least three (3) years’ work experience at a national or regional mainstream newspaper/publication or five years of editorial experience with a recognized broadcasting company.
4. Excellent storytelling skills, with the ability to craft compelling narratives that engage audiences.
5. Strong research and analytical skills, with the ability to interpret complex data and information.
6. Excellent writing and editing skills, with the ability to produce high-quality content under tight deadlines.
7. Strong communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to work with diverse stakeholders.
8. The candidate should provide links to or access to at least five (5) published articles or broadcast stories under their byline.

**7. Consultancy Duration**

The journalist/writer will be contracted under a Framework Agreement for an initial period of one calendar year. Subject to satisfactory performance and the ACBF option, the contract is renewable for up to three calendar years.

**8. Working arrangements**

In terms of news article writing, ACBF will assign themes and provide guidance on the scope of the articles to be written. It will also provide publications for review and other documents to inform the articles. The individual consultants will write and submit the articles to their respective lines of reporting. ACBF will subsequently determine what articles will be used for communication.

Similarly, in terms of mobilizing the press for media coverage of events and negotiating interview and Op-Ed placements, ACBF will offer guidance on the type of media it seeks for such coverage and placements. It will also collaboratively define quick interview protocols with the consultant.

When such a need arises, ACBF will contact the individual consultant in advance with a summary description of the assignment.

During the assignment, ACBF will provide the consultant with the necessary guidance and directions, including, but not limited to, which organization/ entity to visit for interviews, the contact person, and pertinent information needed to perform any particular assignment.

Upon completion of the task, the individual consultant will send his/her final invoice of the required output to his/her direct line of reporting. ACBF should confirm its acceptance and proceed to payment accordingly.

All assignments are home-based. The consultant is expected to use their own equipment (i.e., laptop, internet connection, printer) to produce the required output.

**9. Intellectual Property**

ACBF shall, solely and exclusively, own all rights in and to any work created in connection with this assignment. The consultant shall not be allowed to post or publish (electronically or in print) any proposal-related information without the explicit consent of ACBF.

**10. Evaluation Criteria**

 **Table 1:**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| No.  | Criteria    | Max Points (100)  |
| 1  | Professional qualification in Journalism, Communication or Literature. A master’s degree in social sciences or arts is desirable. In the absence of these qualifications, 10 years of distinct journalistic/writing experience would be considered. |  30 |
| 2  | Storytelling skills and ability to craft compelling narratives |  30 |
| 3  | At least three (3) years’ work experience at a national or regional mainstream newspaper/publication or five years of editorial experience with a recognized broadcasting company. |  20 |
| 4  | Quality of writing samples and portfolio including research and analytical skills |  20 |
| 5  | TOTAL |  100 |

**How to Apply**

Interested candidates should submit their proposals, including:

1. A cover letter outlining their experience, qualifications, and interest in the assignment.
2. A detailed CV, including contact information for at least three professional references.
3. Writing samples and portfolio, showcasing their storytelling skills and ability to craft compelling narratives.

Kindly provide your submission, expressing your interest in undertaking the consultancy.

Submission should be with subject clearly marked, “REOI Process No.: ACBF/REOI/001/25/COMM. Framework contract,” to email address: submission@acbf-pact.org  on or before 17.00 hours (local Harare time), on 21 February 2025.