

**Media Capacity**

# Informing the Public



**Africa Adaptation Programme**

The difference that an informed, analytical press corps can make to the climate adaptation agenda in Africa is enormous. Every citizen needs to know about threats to their country's progress that could constrain prospects for a better future. And the effectiveness of efforts by governments across Africa to strengthen the resilience of their countries to such threats – both climate and non-climate in origin – depends on how well the population is informed and engaged.

From its base in Nairobi, the AAP's Media Capacity Building Project (MCBP) is supporting the professional development of journalists in all 20 AAP countries. The project seeks to introduce a thorough knowledge of the climate change debate to African print, broadcast and web-based journalists and other media professionals. This involves not only helping them build their capacities to track this issue as it evolves, but to play their unique and indispensable role in providing a forum for discussion, informing debate with context and analysis, and contributing to public accountability by reporting on progress or the lack of it.

The overarching purpose in fostering the professional development of journalists is to equip them to overcome obstacles in their coverage of the climate story.

In the first phase of the project, the focus is on reaching the regional and national agenda-setting media in each AAP country. Trainings will be provided simultaneously in four clusters of five countries each, assembled on the basis of proximity and/or common languages. Within each cluster, a seasoned professional journalist serves as the lead implementer, working with the support of an established host institution in their home country, which will function as the hub within the cluster. Each lead implementer is convening workshops in their hub country for journalists from all the countries within their cluster, and will conduct training activities in those countries as well.

## Country Clusters

### FRANCOPHONE CLUSTER 1

- Rwanda
- Congo-Brazzaville
- Gabon
- Cameroon\*
- Mauritius

### FRANCOPHONE CLUSTER 2

- Burkina Faso
- Senegal\*
- Morocco
- Tunisia
- Niger

### ANGLOPHONE CLUSTER 1

- Ethiopia
- Kenya\*
- Tanzania
- Malawi
- Mozambique

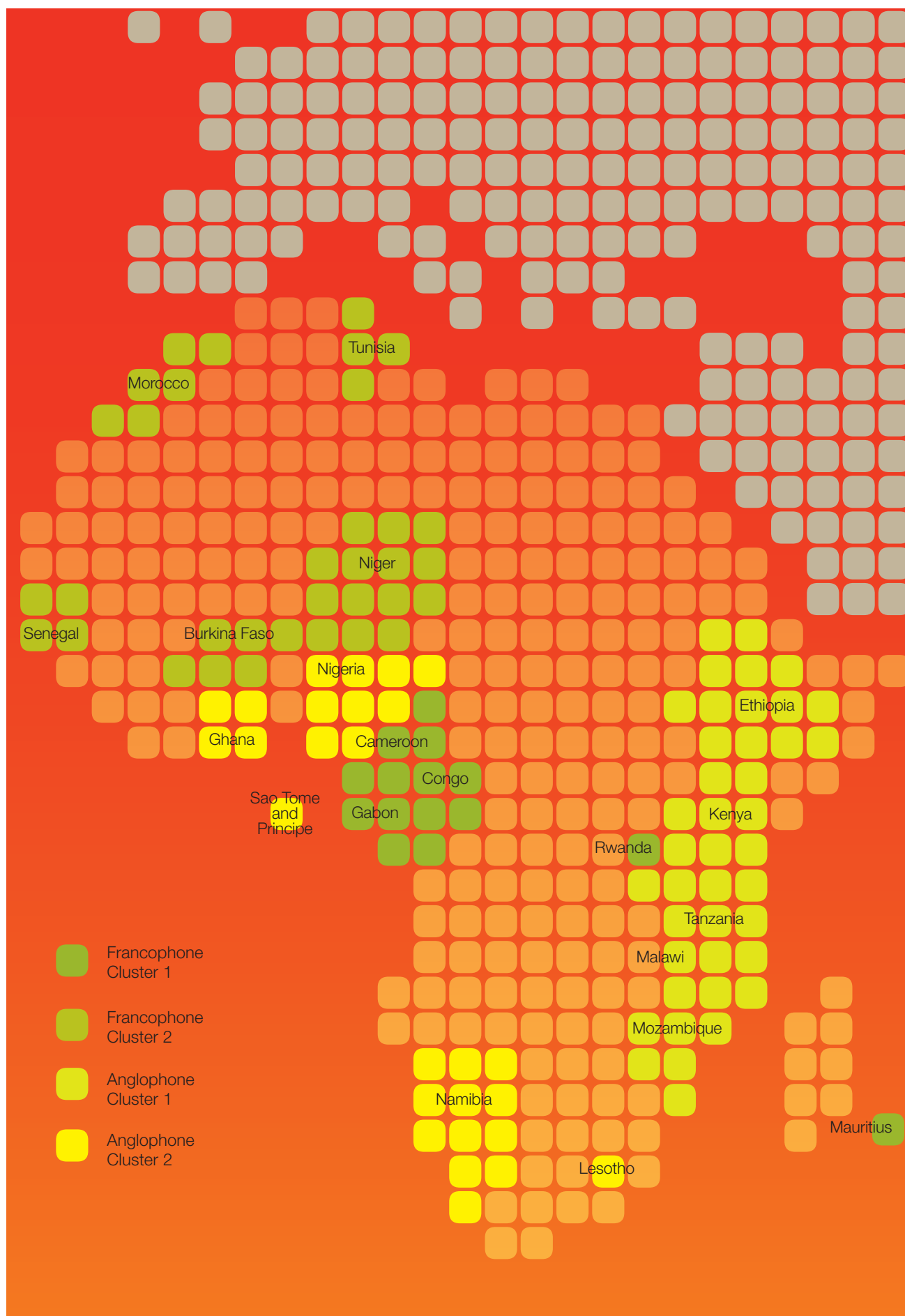
### ANGLOPHONE CLUSTER 2

- Lesotho
- Namibia
- Nigeria
- Ghana\*
- Sao Tome and Principe

*\*Cluster hub country*

In the second phase of the project, journalists that participated in the first phase will be well-positioned to conduct training sessions in their home countries, expanding the project's reach into the sub-national, community and vernacular media within each country. It is hoped that this stage in the process, envisioned for the project's second year, will be supported by the AAP national projects as part of their own awareness-building strategies.

The overarching purpose in fostering the professional development of journalists is to equip them to overcome obstacles in their coverage of the climate story, whether by improving their own knowledge of climate science, building their skills to provide their audiences with context and analysis, informing their understanding of climate change as not just an environmental issue but as a threat that will touch every person and sector in society, or in exploring ways of telling climate change stories – such as the



use of human interest angles or news hooks – that will make them irresistible to their editors.

To support the professional development of participants, the MCBP maintains a virtual library of media resources for journalists and is developing a guide to climate journalism in Africa.

## Every citizen needs to know about threats to their country's progress that could constrain prospects for a better future.

Lead implementers will also discuss with editors the roles they can play in fostering the professional development of their reporters and the importance of allocating time and space to publishing stories on the effort to build Africa's resilience to the threat posed by climate change.

The possibility of offering an award for excellence in climate journalism, as well as the potential for engagement with journalism programmes in African universities, are under consideration by the MCBP, as are emerging opportunities to engage journalists in raising awareness of the climate resilience agenda.

For example, MCBP is recruiting several young journalists to file stories on the theme 'On the Road to Durban' as they travel with an African youth caravan of buses from Nairobi to Durban mobilising youth in the run-up to COP 17 in November.

### Benefits

- An increased and growing cadre of journalists with a deeper understanding of climate change and greater professional capability as journalists.

- Growth in coverage of climate change in the mass media, with connections to a broader range of issues such as water, agriculture, food, health, energy, tourism, business, employment, poverty, development, economy, energy, politics, security and international relations, etc.
- An increased number of experienced African climate change journalism trainers, who can continue to expand understanding and coverage of the issues.

### Partners

#### The International Centre for Journalists (ICFJ)

is a non-profit, professional organisation that promotes quality journalism worldwide in the belief that independent, vigorous media are crucial in improving the human condition. ICFJ is assisting the AAP in the implementation of the AAP's Media Capacity Building Project. [www.icfj.org](http://www.icfj.org)

#### The Special Unit for South-South Cooperation (SU/SSC)

was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1978 and is hosted by UNDP. Its primary mandate is to promote, coordinate and support south-south and triangular cooperation on a global and United Nations system-wide basis. The SU/SSC collaborated with the AAP in the development and launch of the Media Capacity Building Project in Nairobi in November 2010. [ssc.undp.org](http://ssc.undp.org)

**For more information on the AAP's Media Awareness Capacity Building Project, please contact us by email at [aap.nairobi@unops.org](mailto:aap.nairobi@unops.org), visit [www.undp-aap.org/media-capacity](http://www.undp-aap.org/media-capacity), or find our Baobab Coalition Journalists site on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/pages/Baobab-Coalition-Journalists-AAP/129005357180515?ref=ts](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Baobab-Coalition-Journalists-AAP/129005357180515?ref=ts)**

