

## Improving the capacity of African journalists to report on climate change

March 2021

### Project:

Coordination, Capacity  
Development and Knowledge  
Exchange Unit

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## IMPACT

The Africa reporting mentorship programme provided journalists with mentorship from highly-skilled international climate change editors and valuable experience in how to pitch to international outlets in the future. The high quality of the stories resulted in all being published on Climate Home News, increasing the journalists exposure on an international climate change website, an opportunity only made possible due to the reporting programme.

The in-person journalist training workshop provided journalists with the appropriate tools for the communication of climate change such as formats, story packaging, and how to increase audience engagement. The workshop has helped to create strategic links between the journalists and climate scientists working within Tanzania and the broader East African Community to enable a lasting legacy post-workshop.



## THE CHANGE STORY

There is a need for better understanding of climate change, in particular over Africa as it is one of the most vulnerable continents. The media and journalists play an integral knowledge broker role in reporting on climate impacts and solutions and helping decision-makers and communities to better understand these. Impactful and locally relevant climate change stories can empower positive change and shift behaviour. However, climate change is a complex issue to communicate, with many journalists struggling to accurately report on it.

Recognising this, the Coordination, Capacity Development and Knowledge Exchange unit (CCKE) of FCFA have initiated a number of activities and opportunities:

- 2019: In-person training workshop in Tanzania on communicating climate change in the media with BBC Media Action and the Network of Climate Journalists of the Greater Horn of Africa (NECJOGHA)
- 2019: Sponsorship of a journalist to report at COP25
- 2019 and 2020: Africa reporting mentorship programme with Climate Home News
- 2020 and 2021: 3 online training workshops on reporting on climate change

In total through all these activities, the CCKE has helped to support approximately 70 African journalists. Through these activities, journalists were able to better understand climate change and its impacts and solutions but also better able to pitch and report on climate-related stories.

# IMPACT

45 journalists from 18 African countries attended the 3 online trainings providing extensive collaboration and networking opportunities. Not only did journalists learn more about climate change, they also learnt about pitching climate change stories. Some of the pitches that were developed in the workshop and with follow up mentoring have since been published.

One of the key individual successes of FCFA's journalist capacity development activities has been building the capacity of a Kenyan environmental journalist. Having proven their ability, they were sponsored to report on COP25 and this has empowered them to transfer their skills and learnings on to other local journalists.

## FURTHER RESOURCES

[Insight for better communicating climate change exchanged between journalists and scientists at training workshop in Tanzania](#)

[FCFA sponsors African journalists as part of an environmental reporting programme with Climate Home News](#)

[Online journalism training to boost climate reporting in Africa](#)

[Online journalist training session videos](#)

## FCFA area of change 3:

Increasing the capacities of users/decision making bodies/institutions to appropriately integrate climate information within medium-term decision-making.

## FCFA area of change 4:

Approaches that support co-production of decision-relevant climate information and enable channels for on-going dialogue between the providers and users of climate information.

# LEARNING

There is a massive demand for climate change journalist training across the continent as illustrated by the large number of applications to the activities, the keen participation and requests for more support.

Considering feedback and to allow for greater impact in the future, additional costs and items to include would be to increase the number of days of the trainings, include data packages for online trainings and to provide travel funds to a select number of journalists to travel to the field to report and develop their climate stories.

The trainings were also an opportunity to promote FCFA's vast amount of climate research to journalists and subsequently journalists have connected with FCFA researchers as leads on further information for stories.

The impact from FCFA's journalist capacity development activities is illustrated through the feedback from journalists, the journalist community connections created and the climate-related stories published. But follow-up initiatives and future funding support to report on local climate-related stories will be important to continue to build the next generation of African climate reporters.

## Future Climate for Africa's Areas of Change are:

1. Enhancing scientific knowledge and prediction of African climate and new understanding of the resulting impact on the robustness of future climate change scenarios.
2. Strengthening scientists' capacities to develop decision-relevant climate information.
3. Increasing the capacities of users/decision making bodies/institutions to appropriately integrate climate information within medium-term decision-making.
4. Approaches that support co-production of decision-relevant climate information and enable channels for on-going dialogue between the providers and users of climate information.
5. Identifying social, political, behavioural and economic barriers to the use of climate information in long-term decision-making, working to elicit solutions which support effective integration of climate risks within decision making across scales, sectors and social groups.
6. Approaches to climate science research and climate-sensitive risks within medium-term decision making which enable active participation and address the specific concerns of women and marginalised groups.

Funded by:



Natural Environment Research Council

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