

Program Brief



Climate Reporting in Africa

Berlin, Germany
2 - 7 May, 2024

Discover how climate
change impacts Africa and
how African journalists are
covering it!



PROGRAM

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The Study Trip of Climate Journalists from Africa to Berlin, organized by MiCT and APRI in conjunction with UNESCO for World Press Freedom Day in May 2024, aimed to enhance climate change reporting in Africa. Despite contributing less than 5% of global greenhouse gas emissions, Africa faces severe climate vulnerability and local journalists face significant barriers to reporting its effects. This platform was designed for African journalists to engage with German climate experts and media workers to exchange experiences on challenges, barriers, and opportunities for enhanced climate reporting in Africa.

The program included visits to Berlin's governmental institutions, foundations, media outlets, and NGOs, fostering dialogue on the critical role of journalism in climate change. The event, 'Climate Change Reporting in Africa: Challenges, Perspectives and Solutions' featured discussions on local and global climate narratives and the responsibilities of the Global North. It spotlighted challenges for climate reporting in Africa, as well as solutions for context-informed media to enhance societal awareness, ownership, and leadership at local and global levels.

The conference emphasized the need to humanize climate change data to motivate broader societal awareness and action. Discussions also spotlighted the scarcity of climate reporting by local journalists, underscoring the need for capacity development and access to data to support effective, accurate, free, and independent information on the impacts and solutions to climate change. Participants shared examples of innovative projects and investigative journalism efforts tracking environmental degradation and pollution in some of Africa's most vulnerable communities and ecosystems.

Panel discussions addressed challenges such as lack of resources, political interference, and the need for collaboration and strategic alliances. Attendees explored opportunities for cross-border partnerships, capacity-building initiatives, and long-term funding solutions to support sustainable climate change reporting in Africa.

DEDICATION

This Program Brief is dedicated to our colleague and friend, Mouhamadou Toure, who left us far too early. His humanity and dedication to climate journalism and reporting, and his immense contributions during his time in Berlin, proved invaluable to the success of the program and this publication.

PROGRAM

AGENDA

DAY	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION
Thursday 2.5.2024	Arrival Day,	Visit to the German Foreign Office
Friday 3.5.2024	Conference Day	Full Day Climate Reporting Event + Discussion
Saturday 4.5.2024	APRI DAY	Workshop at MiCT
Sunday 5.5.2024	Tourism Day	Neighborhood Walk around Kreuzberg with a Local Urban Climate activist Cléo Mieulet
Monday 6.5.2024	PIC Potsdam Day and MiCT Day	A Visit to the Potsdam Institute of Climate Studies in Brandenburg
Tuesday 7.5. 2024	Media Visit	TAZ Visit
Wednesday 8.5. 2024	All Departures	Final Farewell

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Justice Baidoo	Journalist / Communications Consultant	Ghana
Mouhamadou Touré	Journalist / Fondation Hirondelle's	Mali
Afy Bobyondo Malungu	Journalist / Founder and Editor of <u>Africa Reveal</u>	DRC
Mary Kasoka	Journalist / Communications Executive	Zambia
Happy Mulolani	Journalist – Principal Agricultural Information Officer	Zambia
Bernard Mwinzi	Journalist / Nation Media Group (TV)	Kenya
KRA Akissi Marthe Bénédicte,	Journalist- (Radio)	Côte d'Ivoire
Andiswa Matikinca	Investigative Journalist - Oxpeckers (Print)	South Africa
Banna Sabally	Journalist (Radio / Print)	The Gambia
Vanessa Nakate	Climate Activist	Uganda
John Douglas Mutumba Mubiri.	Journalist (Radio) East Africa Radio Service - Kampala	Uganda
Balgis Osman Elasha	Climate Scientist - African Development Bank	Sudan

CONFERENCE DAY

CONFERENCE AGENDA

TIME	ACTIVITY	FACILITATOR, PRESENTER
10:00 - 10:20am	Welcome Reception	Klass Glenewinkel Angelina Davydova Dr. Grace Mbungu Nyima Jadama
10:20 - 10:50am	Keynote Address	Vanessa Nakata
10:50 - 11:20am	Presentation #1: "Climate Investigation Stories" (Challenges and Impact) Focus on East	Andiswa Matikinci Bernard Mwinzi
11:20 - 11:50am	Presentation #2 "Challenges of Climate Journalism in Africa Access to Information"	Banna Sabally Afy Bobyondo Malungu
11:50 - 12:50pm	Panel #1 "Dangerous Storytelling " Showcase of Investigate Stories, Impact and Threads	Justice Baidoo Banna Sabally Afy Bobyondo Malungu Moderator: Dr Grace Mbungu
12:50 - 13:00pm	UN University for Africa: Phase-out Research, Hands-on Workshops, and Doctoral Scholarships	Dr. Alexey Alekseenko

CONFERENCE DAY

CONFERENCE AGENDA

TIME	ACTIVITY	FACILITATOR, PRESENTER
15:00 - 16:00pm	Panel #2 "Outlooks and Partnerships for Better Climate Reporting in Africa"	Milou Dirkx, Kra Akessi Marta Benedicta Moderator: Angelina Davydova
14:00 - 14:30pm	Presentation #3 "Climate Change in Darfur and the War in Sudan" + Q+A	Balgis Osman Elasha
14:30 - 15:00pm	Presentation #4 "Climate Justice: Solution Journalism in Climate Reporting" + Q&A	Mary Kasoka, Mamadou Touré
13:00 - 14:00	Panel #3 "Climate Justice and Migration Research / Reporting (Challenges and Impact)"	Rose Wanjiru Njeri Jennifer Kamau Lamin Jahata Moderator: Nyima Jadama
16:00 - 17:00pm	Closing Reception	All

KEYNOTE ADDRESS



Vanessa Nakate

Ugandan activist and founder of Youth for Future Africa Vanessa Nakate delivered a poignant keynote address emphasizing the critical role of empathy in addressing the impacts of the climate crisis.

She highlighted the disproportionate suffering endured by regions like Turkana, Kenya, illustrated through the tragic case of Desmond, a young boy who died from malnutrition. She criticized the lack of meaningful outcomes from international climate negotiations, urging leaders to take drastic measures.

Nakate condemned the profit-driven systems perpetuating inequalities and advocated for a paradigm shift towards prioritizing people and the planet. Drawing attention to the alarming projections by the IPCC, she stressed the need for collective action to prevent the 1.5°C threshold from being surpassed and called upon Western governments to fulfill their moral obligation by divesting from fossil fuels and investing in the most vulnerable communities, underscoring the pressing need for empathy-driven action to confront the existential threat of the climate crisis.

PRESENTATIONS

Climate Investigation Stories' (Challenges and Impact) Focus on East

Andiswa Matikinca from The Oxpeckers Center discussed the #powertracker initiative, which scrutinizes fund allocation for renewable energy and coal projects.

Bernard Mwinzi from the Nation Media Group discussed Africa's ecological challenges at The Climate Story Lab Africa, emphasizing the impact of individual actions on the environment.

Challenges of Climate Journalism in Africa: Access to Information

Justice Baidoo highlighted Ghana's e-waste reporting, along with the significant environmental and health risks associated with informal recycling practices. He advocated for improved regulation and sustainable management strategies.

Afy Bobyondo Malungu highlighted the challenges faced by African journalists in covering climate change, noting the need for independent journalism and better access to information to foster transparency and accountability.

Happy Mulolani highlighted the need to share Indigenous knowledge through media, where concepts around climate change are translated into local languages. He also emphasizes the need to amplify women's and youth's voices within farming narratives, which are often male-dominated. His role as the Principal Agricultural Information Officer in Zambia underscored the importance of integrating climate reporting into government ministries.

PRESENTATIONS

“Climate Justice”:

Solution Journalism in Climate Journalism / Reporting

Mary Kasoka emphasized the need for a balance between solution- and challenge-oriented journalism to motivate society-wide climate action. She noted that: “It is easier to project problems over solutions when it comes to climate change reporting”.

Mamadou Touré highlighted the challenges of reporting on climate change, underscoring the need for sustainable finance to ensure free, independent, and professional climate reporting in Africa.

Climate Change in Darfur and the War in Sudan

Dr. Balgis Osman Elasha discussed the relationship between Sudan's ongoing conflict and climate change, where heightened drought, extreme rainfall variability, depletion of water sources, and desertification have been fueling social and political instability.

UN University for Africa: Phase-Out Research, Hands-on Workshops, and Doctoral Scholarships

Dr. Alexey Alekseenko highlighted the UN University for Africa's multifaceted approach to enhancing climate reporting capabilities in the region, which includes conducting phase-out research, organizing hands-on workshops, and offering doctoral scholarships.

PANELS

PANEL 1: "Dangerous Storytelling " Showcase of Investigate Stories, Impact and Threads

Moderator: Dr Grace Mbugu
Justice Baidoo, Banna Sabally, Afy Bobyondo Malungu

PANEL 2: Outlooks and Partnerships for Better Climate Reporting in Africa

Moderator: Angelina Davydova
Milou Dirx and Kra Akessi Marta Benedicta

PANEL 3: Climate Justice and Migration Research / Reporting (Challenges and Impact)

Moderator: Nyima Jadama
Rose Wanjiku, Njeri Jennifer Kamau, Lamin Jahate

THE DISCUSSIONS

The discussions delved into the dangers and barriers faced by journalists in their pursuit of investigative stories, highlighting the critical need for greater protection and support for reporters operating in challenging environments.

Panelists emphasized the importance of fostering transparency and accountability to counter threats to press freedom and ensure the dissemination of impactful stories that address societal injustices. Panelists underscored the urgency of empowering journalists and amplifying voices to promote an equitable society.

Discussions focused on the challenges of reporting from an African perspective and touched on the potential of collaborative relationships between local and external journalists to advocate for freedom of expression. The panels also highlighted the need for resources to amplify African voices around climate change in global discourse.

EVENTS

VISIT TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE



Participants engaged in discussions with senior representatives on the challenges and opportunities for Germany and the international community to support effective climate reporting in African countries.



EVENTS

Saturday May 4th 2024: APRI Day

Workshop to facilitate the co- development of a handbook on climate reporting in Africa

Sunday May 5th, 2024: Tourism Day

Neighborhood walk around Kreuzberg with local urban climate activist Cléo Mieulet about sustainable, community-led urban practices, including urban gardening, planting of indigenous plants, collecting rainwater, and installing solar panels.



Monday May 6th, 2024: PIK Potsdam Day and MiCT Day

A visit to the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK)

Discussion: Climate Research and Data in Africa + Globally.



Tuesday May 7th, 2024: tazVisit

Meeting with the head of the climate section of taz, Susanne Schwarz, the representatives of the taz Panter Stiftung, and colleagues from taz' Klima-Hub.

MAIN MESSAGES

1

Empathy and Local Impact: Addressing climate change requires empathy to understand its effects on local communities in Africa.

2

Fair Access to Data and Knowledge: Providing African nations with fair access to climate data is crucial to enable informed decision-making and equitable participation in global climate discussions.

3

Challenges in Climate Reporting: There are significant barriers to effective climate reporting in Africa, including lack of training, resources, freedom of expression, and safety concerns.

4

Local and Indigenous Knowledge: There is a strong need to incorporate local and indigenous knowledge into climate strategies and communicate concepts in local languages to ensure broader understanding and engagement.

5

Collaboration and Support for Journalists: Collaboration between local and international journalists is crucial for effective climate reporting. Providing resources, training, and platforms for local journalists can enhance the quality and impact of climate stories.

ACTION POINTS & OPPORTUNITIES

Empowerment and Resources for Journalists

Providing financial resources, training programs, and necessary equipment to journalists can enhance their ability to report on climate issues effectively.

Collaboration and Support

Journalists can share platforms, expertise, and equipment to access a broader network and share compelling stories about climate change.

Freedom of Expression

Providing platforms and support for indigenous people and local communities to voice their concerns about climate change can lead to more diverse and inclusive reporting on environmental issues.

Localized Reporting and Communication

Journalists should focus on translating complex scientific concepts into understandable language and incorporating indigenous knowledge into their reporting to ensure that information reaches a wider audience.

Long-term Funding and Sustainability

Instead of relying solely on grants and competitions, establishing partnerships and securing consistent funding can ensure the viability of media outlets and enable journalists to continue reporting on climate issues effectively.

Critical Perspective and Solutions-Oriented Reporting

Promoting dialogue and discussions about climate change in various spaces can drive awareness and action towards addressing environmental challenges.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The program was hosted by Media in Cooperation and Transition (MiCT) together with the Berlin-based think tank, APRI - Africa Policy Research Institute, and Angelina Davydova, a renowned climate journalist who is also a member of the World Future Council and has been an observer in the UN Climate Change negotiation process since 2008.

Our sincere gratitude goes to all the participants, who joined us in Berlin and online for their participation and contributions.

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This Briefing was prepared by the Africa Policy Research Institute (APRI) — a Berlin-based independent, non-partisan African Think Tank researching key policy issues affecting the continent.



ABOUT THE ORGANIZERS



About APRI - Africa Policy Research Institute

The Africa Policy Research Institute (APRI) is an independent and nonpartisan African think tank. It researches key policy issues affecting African countries and the African continent. APRI provides insights to the German and European Union policy-making processes on Africa. In addition, APRI provides policy options to African policymakers and civil society actors.

Contact:

Dr. Grace Mbungu
Senior Fellow and Head of Climate Change Program
gmbungu@afripoli.org



About Media in Cooperation and Transition (MiCT)

Media in Cooperation and Transition (MiCT) is a German NGO that supports journalism and media in conflict areas and developing countries. MiCT engages in a dynamic range of activities centered around climate and environmental reporting, with a particular focus on the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Contact:

Klaas Glenewinkel
Managing Director
klaas@mict-international.org

