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FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT: Rhodes JMS UNESCO contract 4500134261

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Project: Colloquium on journalism and climate change in the Global
South at Highway Africa 2011

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Report Content

- a) Project Summary
- b) Deliverables
- c) Activities and results
- d) Conclusion
- e) Going Forward

A. Project Summary

This narrative report below aims to communicate project activity in fulfilling a contract agreement between Rhodes University's Highway Africa and UNESCO and to provide an outline of the organisational and conceptual activities, successes and challenges in fulfilling project objectives.

Rhodes School of Journalism and Media Studies (JMS), under its Highway Africa project coordinated the colloquium of educators across the African continent to share information and perspectives on climate change as it affects countries and regions in the Global South and on the African continent more specifically. A key output of the colloquium was to produce research articles for publication in a peer-reviewed journal, *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies*, for wider dissemination beyond the conference. During a two day interaction at the annual Highway Africa Conference, the colloquium brought together educators from Africa and their counterparts representing two key countries in the Global South – India and China - to exchange ideas and suggest best practices. Presence at the annual highway Africa Conference allowed for increased networking with journalists, media industry stakeholders and policy makers as well as interaction with climate change expert groupings, new media skills workshop interactions and several plenary discussions addressing themes relating to media reporting and developing countries' responses to the climate change debate.

Rhodes JMS was able to use its networks to ensure inclusion of participants from several UNESCO potential Centres of Excellence, namely Daystar University in Kenya, the Department of Mass Communication Makerere University in Uganda, the Namibian Polytechnic, Stellenbosch University and Rhodes University from South Africa, as well as representatives from the Universities of Cape Town, KwaZulu-Natal and the Witwatersrand.

B. Project deliverables

1. Rhodes JMS to organise a colloquium for media and journalism educators to share information and perspective on media response to the climate change debate, with a particular focus on developing nations and the effect of climate change in these regions.

2. Rhodes JMS to ensure there is academic research output from sponsored media educators present at the colloquium which will culminate in the form of research article publications in a special copy of journal *Ecquid Novi, African Journalism Studies* that will focus on media and climate change.
3. Rhodes JMS to facilitate logistics for the presence of delegates, networking opportunities for said delegates at the Highway Africa Conference with other industry role-players including journalists, editors, media owners and policy makers.
4. Rhodes JMS to ensure UNESCO is adequately acknowledged for its contribution and support in marketing material published
5. Rhodes JMS to prepare narrative and financial reports and submit to UNESCO to account for project activities including challenges and evaluation on contract dates agreed to.

C. Project Activities and Results

1. Highway Africa Colloquium Logistics: travel and accommodation

Participants for the workshop were selected through a targeted process in which potential authors were asked to submit abstracts. Once abstracts were submitted 10 educators were contacted and the arrangements for travel and accommodation made. A small group of educators was selected to ensure an in-depth qualitative engagement with the topic.

A final selection of 11 educators and media researchers were contacted to begin preparation of individual working research papers for presentation and discussion during colloquium event with Emily Brown from Namibia's Polytechnic invited as a non-presenting participant to ensure representation from another Southern Africam Unesco potential Centre of Excellence. All colloquium delegates were accommodated at the same hotel, a short walk away from Conference venue and within the budgeted amount from funds available.

2. Colloquium Outputs

At the colloquium presentations of research papers took place over two afternoons (see attached programme) during Highway Africa Conference with journal editors as facilitators and fellow educators as peers offering shared perspective and advice. The mornings were shared with the general Highway Africa programme so as to ensure integration of the colloquium in the overall programme and maximum networking opportunities. The workshop and colloquium was led and facilitated by professor Herman Wasserman, deputy Head of School at the Rhodes School of Journalism and Media Studies (JMS) and editor of the journal *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies*. The colloquium was followed up by a writing workshop for participants, co-hosted by Wasserman and colleague prof Anthea Garman, also based at Rhodes, funded in collaboration with the Open Society Foundation. This writing workshop sought to deliberately focus on skills for the group to help capacitate and exchange information on how best to write for academic journal publications as well as popular media channels like print media.

The colloquium was distinct from the range of prior meetings which had largely taken the format of (valuable) panel-discussions and broad public meetings of journalism educators and media professionals. This particular colloquium event instead materialized more considered and researched inputs that will in turn served as interventions into the wider debate of climate change and the reporting by media in developing countries on the topic. In this way, the Rhodes colloquium capitalised on the specific research and intellectual strengths at South Africa's higher education schools of journalism, media and communication studies and through UNESCO's assistance broadened input to the rest of the continent as well as beyond.

3. Writing workshop partnering with OSF

The partnering with Open Society Funding was strategic in reaching project objectives as it allowed for a focus on academic publication writing skills, a necessary tool in journal article publishing. The writing skills and information sharing workshop would benefit UNESCO delegate educators and researchers attending colloquium to improve their writing skills and hence be more capacitated and able to produce required research publications for special edition journal.

Furthermore the association provided and allowed for an intimate space to interact with journalists and editors through a panel discussion during Highway Africa. With OSF funding, Anthea Garman Editor of *Rhodes Journalism Review* was funded to travel to the conference and workshop and acted as both convenor and panellist of the journal editors alongside *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies* editor and Rhodes' Deputy Head of School of Journalism and Media Studies, Herman Wasserman. Senior lecturer Milton Viola from the Department of Communication at University of South Africa (Unisa) represented the Journal *Communicatio*. Stellenbosch University-based Gabriel Botma, editor of *The Global Media Journal: Africa Edition* and a senior lecturer in the media and journalism department at Stellenbosch University was also able to attend and join this panel.

Prof Francis Nyamnjoh, a sociologist, novelist, playwright and respected academic and specialist in African media, now head of Social Anthropology at the University of Cape Town, was invited to deliver a keynote address to workshop participants and share his experience specifically on writing for publication in multiple genres. He has written several books and published extensively on research around media and journalism as well as related social disciplines.

4. Editors' and journalists' panel

The panel discussion formed part of the writing workshop at the end of colloquium, involving all UNESCO funded participants. The aim of this panel discussion was to find ways of communicating academic research into climate change through popular media outlets such as print media so as to widen the possibilities for knowledge dissemination. To this end, invitations to were sent out to selected print and online editors, mostly Cape Town-based or attending Highway Africa, and this effort resulted in a panel of experts comprising Natasha Joseph, News Editor at the *The Argus*, Mondli Makhanya, Editor in Chief at Avusa (one of four main media groups in SA) and SANEF Chairperson, as well as William Bird, Director of the media monitoring

group Media Monitoring Africa. Outside of above mentioned guests and panellists, representatives from UNESCO, Windhoek and Paris Offices as well as members of the Gender Network Institute attended.

5. List of UNESCO sponsored attendees

Delegates that attended and were funded through the UNESCO grant are

1	Miklos Sukosd	University of Hong Kong, China
2	Shakuntala Rao	State University of New York, Plattsburgh, USA (expert on Indian media)
3	Nassanga Goretti	Makerere University, Uganda
4	Levi Obonyo	Daystar University, Kenya
5	Harold Gess	Rhodes University, SA
6	Nicola Jones	University of KwaZulu Natal, SA
7	Alan Finlay	University of the Witwatersrand
8	Kwame Karikari	Media Foundation for West Africa, Ghana
9	Emily Brown	Polytechnic, Namibia
10	Herman Wasserman	Rhodes University, SA
11	Ibrahim Saleh	University of Cape Town, SA

6. Special Issue Journal

A special issue of the academic journal *Ecquid Novi – African Journalism Studies*, made up of a selection of papers from the colloquium that have passed a rigorous and independent peer-review process, is set to go into production and will appear online in January 2012 and in print soon thereafter. This publication will ensure that the key research findings presented at the colloquium will be disseminated to the international scholarly community. UNESCO's support is duly acknowledged in the journal issue. Ultimately this research is hoped to contribute to the debate about how media can contribute, report and actively engage with the public and policy makers on the issue of climate change.

D. Conclusion

Rhodes JMS remains grateful for the support from UNESCO which enables us to strengthen of media education and training with the goal of ensuring a free, transparent and an open society with media playing its role as information provider. UNESCO's support in arranging this colloquium which will have contributed to the capacity of media educators and journalism trainers to respond affirmatively to the challenges of climate change, has been crucial. Climate change in particular and science journalism in general remain fairly recent areas of focus in African media studies, and therefore require special efforts to be integrated into research and teaching programmes. Rhodes JMS is grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with UNESCO to build capacity in the potential centres of excellence in journalism education on the continent, so as to improve the ability of African educators to meet the challenges of climate change.

Going forward

Rhodes JMS is engaging with partner groups of like minded institutions to facilitate skills transfer workshops and shared platforms to engage and interrogate common objectives on climate change research by media professionals. As this falls outside the traditional role of teaching, the process also involves identifying and approaching funding partners in order to organise such follow on engagement processes including coordination of colloquia and research conferences. This project and initiative forms part of a broader ongoing research focus on journalism, media and democracy, cognisant of the continuously changing content and technology landscape and wanting to ensure media plays a meaningful role in the debate on climate change . Rhodes JMS has adopted a research intensive approach guided by its need to contribute towards increasing educators who publish in academic journals both in South Africa and the continent.

By so doing Rhodes JMS hopes educators involved with research will greatly benefit the teaching of media education in Africa particularly in new avenues such as climate change, science journalism, technology reporting, economic journalism and many of the new forms of specialised areas of journalism which require media workers to adapt and re-skill in order to be effective and relevant. Looking forward to 2012, Rhodes JMS is hopeful that it will once again be able to draw on the support of UNESCO to develop initiatives that could strengthen the ability of journalism educators on the continent, as well as their counterparts in countries of the South, to contribute to meaningful social change and sustainable development.