



## CONCEPT NOTE AND TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE MEDIA DEBT TOOLKIT

### A. Introduction

The African Forum and Network on Debt and Development (AFRODAD) was created 28 years ago as a Pan-African organisation advocating for sustainable debt and development through its contributions to finding sustainable solutions to Africa's debt and resource management challenges, including financial development. Part of AFRODAD's concept of sustainability is pegged on the premise that well-capacitated individuals, groups, or organisations are key instruments in scaling up and sustaining continuous transformation towards sustainable debt management.

One of the key stakeholders whose capacity AFRODAD intentionally seeks to enhance is the media, through the AFRODAD Media Initiative (AFROMedI). To enable continuous collaboration and learning, AFROMedI alumni become members of the AFRODAD's Media Debt Network Africa (M-DNA).

Journalists play a pivotal role towards sound debt management, including calling for responsible borrowing/lending, transparency, accountability, good governance and humanising the debt discourse.

### B. Problem

From interactions that AFRODAD has had with journalists, they have repeatedly voiced challenges they encounter including (i) understanding and interpreting complex debt concepts, thus (ii) difficulty to report with depth and humanising the debt discourse, (iii) challenges to access information and (iv) limited reporting freedom as confirmed by the Reporters without Borders' Barometer 2024. This is the reason they asked for a Media Debt Toolkit which would help them overcome these challenges to a good extent. It would also be useful to other journalists across the continent.

### C. Rationale of the Media Debt Toolkit

The way the media reports issues in the public domain has a bearing on how those issues are framed, in line with the agenda-setting theory. The documented power of the media, as the 4th estate, to set a nation or region's agenda and to focus public attention on key public issues is an immense influence. Additionally, journalists are a vehicle for getting the attention of specific decision-makers and opinion leaders, such as politicians, government regulators, community leaders, and corporate executives. Moreover, they play a role in promoting accountability, transparency, sustainable management of public debt, and inclusive development.

Even though AFRODAD has been training journalists selected from various African countries since 2021, each edition has only 1 journalist per country. So far 34 African countries have been reached, which means there are other countries to reach and there are many journalists that AFRODAD has not reached and will not be able to meet in a physical and/or virtual setting. Therefore, the toolkit will help AFROMedI alumni

gain information from the toolkit which will complement what they learn during the AFROmedl sessions. Moreover, the toolkit will be widely distributed to journalists from the continent through M-DNA, AFRODAD partners, media associations, media databases, etc. to widely share the content of the Media Debt Toolkit.

#### **D. The Media Debt Toolkit Proposed Content**

##### Expounding Complex Debt Concepts

- The link between debt and development.
- The impact of debt and debt service on development expenditure and service delivery.
- Overview of relevant laws and regulations affecting debt and debt reporting.
- Humanising debt: Analysis of how debt affects different sectors, such as health, education, and social services.
- Understanding loan agreements including red flags that journalists should challenge
- Definition of key words/ Glossary.

##### Access to Information

- Reliable sources for debt-related data, including governmental, civil societies, and academia.
- How journalists can use the Access to Information act (ATI) to access information.

##### Limited Reporting

- How to report sensitive debt issues in countries that lack reporting freedom.
- Platforms that offer to post stories on behalf of journalists with limited freedom to report.

##### Other Useful Information

- In-depth analysis of successful debt reporting stories from Africa and around the world.
- Tools and templates for creating graphs, charts, and other visual aids to enhance debt stories.
- Checklist for good debt contracts and what a journalist should look out for before challenging a contract.
- List of Civil Society Organisations and academic institutions that can offer more information and/or interviews on issues on public debt.

#### **E. Scope of Work**

- Prepare a plan and outline of the toolkit.
- Prepare a draft of the toolkit and share it with the AFRODAD team for the required feedback.
- Conduct the toolkit validation workshop with members of M-DNA and other journalists.
- Incorporate the received feedback/inputs and finalise the toolkit.

#### **F. Final Product**

- The toolkit should be organised in a logical and easy-to-follow manner, with each section building upon the previous one.

- It should include a table of contents and be designed for easy navigation, both in digital and print formats.
- It should be illustrated for easy consumption.

### **G. Timeline**

The Media Debt Toolkit development should be completed within 90 days after signing the contract. The work will include the designed/ illustrated toolkit for easy use.

### **H. Reporting**

Regular progress updates will be provided to the Campaigns & communication manager.

### **I. Required Experience & Knowledge**

- Minimum of 5 years' experience in developing toolkits.
- Experience developing educational or training materials.
- Knowledge of African socio-economic and political contexts regarding debt and development.
- Should understand the concept of Pan- Africanism to Africa's development.

### **J. Education & Knowledge**

- Minimum of master's degree in development communication, communication studies, development economics with another degree in communication or media studies.

### **K. The Application**

- Share samples of toolkit done previously.
- Include the illustrator/ designer's work portfolio.
- Share the proposed workplan and financial proposal for the toolkit development and illustration in US Dollars.

Expressions of interest should be sent to [recruitment@afrodad.org](mailto:recruitment@afrodad.org) with the subject line "Media Debt Toolkit " COB by 16 August 2024.

\*\*\*