

TERMS OF REFERENCES

Outreach and Communication Manager



Location: ACORD Headquarter, Nairobi, Kenya
Some travelling within Africa and internationally

Background

ACORD (Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development) is a Pan African organisation working for social justice and development in Africa, through a combination of practical interventions on the ground, people-centred research and policy advocacy. ACORD has decentralised country offices in 17 African countries that work with communities on livelihoods and food sovereignty, HIV/AIDS and the right to health, peace building and women's rights. ACORD also campaigns and engages in advocacy on these issues at Pan African and international level.

ACORD believes that people have a right to a just and equal society and is committed to making that right a reality for people on the margins of African societies. We work in common cause with people who are poor and those who have been denied their rights to obtain social justice and development and be part of locally rooted citizen movements.

Communication for ACORD is key to sharing our best practices internally across the organization and externally with partners within and beyond the continent. To this effect ACORD strives to build the communication capacities of staff and partners to strengthen the impact of its work.

ACORD incorporates a variety of approaches to its communication work. A key focus is targeted advocacy; in essence we are of the view that advocacy means communicating in order to convince people to change. This means that advocacy must persuade people of the fact that there is a problem, it can be solved and they, themselves, should take action to contribute to the solution.

Job Summary

ACORD employs four main approaches to advocacy: empowerment; policy influencing; campaigning; and convening for change. Advocacy is in essence about communicating to convince people to change, and communications tools are an essential aspect of this. Just as important as our policy positions are the ways in which we communicate them. Concise and coherent messaging of our positions will lead to more effective communications and a more receptive audience. This can often mean communicating complex issues and policy details in a simple, engaging and comprehensible manner. Messaging around advocacy is an essential aspect of successful advocacy.

Communication therefore lies at the heart of ACORD's work. Improving External Communication is one of the four pillars of the 2011-2015 ACORD strategic plan: "ACORD will foster a robust communication strategy for ACORD's impact and added value underpinning its advocacy work and supporting fundraising". More specific communication objectives in the existing strategy is to: i) Enhance the efficiency of ACORD's people-centred advocacy campaigns; ii) Increase traffic on ACORD's website, one of our most important and cost effective communication tools; iii) Get our messages across on mass media such as newspapers, magazines, radio or television and new social media; iv) Enhance the visibility and image of ACORD, and help increase public awareness on the issues we are working on; and v) Build consistent and powerful branding at local, national, regional, Pan African and international levels and increase ACORD brand awareness. This is with a view to disseminate ACORD's work, sharing best practices and promoting learning.

ACORD publishes a wide range of materials every year. ACORD also relies on its website – www.acordinternational.org - and social media pages to help the organisation achieve its mission with 3 main objectives for our online communication: e-campaigning, e-fundraising and e-resource for civil society and development practitioners. ACORD works with the media to disseminate information and contribute to learning and linking and changing attitudes and policies towards achieving social justice. Increased visibility of ACORD's work is also expected to support fundraising. The Outreach and Communications Manager is in charge of fostering a robust communication strategy for ACORD's impact and added valued underpinning its advocacy work and supporting fundraising.

The Outreach and Communications Manager is supervising the positions of Communications and Media officer, Online Communications Officer and also oversees Graphic design. He/she will collaborate extensively with colleagues across the organisation. The Communications Coordinator is based in ACORD's pan African programme (PAP) department in the Secretariat and is reporting directly to the Head of Policy and Advocacy.

Responsibilities

Within the broad parameters set in ACORD's current Strategic plan and ACORD's Advocacy strategy:

1. Strategy: Foster a robust communication strategy for ACORD's impact and added value underpinning its advocacy work and supporting fundraising.

- Lead the development of ACORD's communication strategy and coordinate its implementation
- Ensure necessary monitoring and evaluation of activities to inform future communication directions
- Contribute expertise in the areas of media and online engagement and public outreach to ACORD's overall strategic planning.
- Stay abreast of developments of communications tools and methodologies and make recommendations to the organisation on how best we can improve our internal and external communications

2. Advocacy: Enhance the efficiency of ACORD's people-centred advocacy campaigns and help increase public awareness on the issues we are working on

- In collaboration with ACORD thematic leads and country programmes, contribute to raise public awareness and positively influence public opinion around thematic issues ACORD is working on
- Ensure that the ACORD website is updated and steadily improved by posting articles, blogs, videos and other educational content, and by overseeing all website copy to ensure quality
- Develop new and creative communication streams, including podcasts and videos
- Coordinate public and targeted outreach as well as profiling of ACORD at events, including workshops, conferences.
- Coordinate the effective and successful implementation of ACORD's digital strategy
- Respond, or ensure that the communication team responds to public enquiries about ACORD issues received by phone, email or letter.

3. Profiling and Branding: Build consistent and powerful branding at local, national, regional, Pan African and international levels and increase ACORD brand awareness

- Review and update ACORD branding guidelines, and ensure its dissemination and application across the organisation
- Provide technical backstopping and support to improve country programmes' branding and profiling
- Ensure that all ACORD output, including articles, briefing papers and key communication material, is in ACORD's house style
- Identify opportunities for profiling ACORD in Africa, the UK and beyond as required.

4. Media: Get our messages across on media such as newspapers, magazines, radio or television and new social media

- Build relationships and contacts with relevant print, broadcast and online journalists in Africa and beyond when relevant for ACORD's work
- Review ACORD's work and research regularly in order to identify possible stories, then undertake proactive media engagement, and coordinates writing press releases and pitching feature articles
- Ensure that ACORD responds to all media enquiries in a timely and accurate fashion
- Ensure that journalists are briefed as required and draft reactive statements and letters to editors
- Organise press conferences as required
- Produce media briefings for press conferences and events as required
- Coordinate the arrangement of media interviews for ACORD staff and draft briefings for them when appropriate
- Ensure that all ACORD media coverage is recorded for dissemination and archive
- Offer periodic training to staff at ACORD in media skills and dealing with the press more generally.

5. Supporting Fundraising

- Ensure that ACORD's best practices are communicated in a way that they foster visibility and ultimately contribute to fundraising for the organisation
- Develop ACORD promotional material, leaflets and portfolio documents
- Promote ACORD online donation facility and shop
- Give technical advice and input for incorporating visibility and communications in funding proposals and reports where appropriate
- Ensure that ACORD's CiviCRM database is up to date and effectively used for communication and fundraising purposes.

6. Team management, coordination and capacity building of ACORD staff across the organisation in communication skills and practices

- Train, motivate and manage the Communication and Media Officer and the Online Communications Officer to assist in carrying out the above responsibilities
- Manage and supervise the work of communication interns as required
- Coordinate the support offered by the Communications Team to ACORD's country and thematic programmes
- Contribute to a culture of information sharing and organisational learning in communication;
- Develop and administer the necessary administrative systems for tracking all ACORD's interactions with the press and members of the public
- Coordinate quality translation (English to French) in the organisation
- Because of the dynamic environment there might be a need to take on any emerging tasks in agreement with the supervisor and as ACORD's work in relation to communication keeps on evolving.

Required Qualifications

- Masters degree in Communications, Journalism, International Relations, Management, or similar field.
- At least 5 years' relevant experience in communications (preferably in the non-profit sector)
- Bilingual in English and French. Knowledge of Portuguese would be an advantage.
- Fully conversant with ICT and office applications; and experience of web content management systems, ideally Treeline (or Drupal/Joomla)

Relevant Knowledge and Skills

- Excellent written and oral communications skills (French and English), with ability to adapt style to suit different audiences and communicate complex and nuanced issues to the media
- Creative and innovative approach to communications and branding.
- Up-to-date on new opportunities for the not-for-profit sector presented by blogging and social media
- Excellent collaboration, team work and interpersonal skills

- Creativity, innovation and ability to take initiative
- Ability to work well in a multicultural environment across different geographical locations
- Ability to handle change and unpredictability
- Ability to deliver under pressure and to multi-task
- Attention to detail
- Ability to conceptualize and present ideas in a clear and convincing manner
- Good analytical and strategic skills
- Good understanding of and willingness to learn more about development and social justice challenges in Africa and trends in the non-profit sector, particularly as it relates to outreach, communication, advocacy and knowledge management

REMUNERATION: A competitive international package

To apply, please complete an application form available at www.acordinternational.org and e-mail it with a detailed Curriculum Vitae and cover letter to recruit@acordinternational.org with the Job title in the Subject Box.

Closing Date: 14th December 2014

Interviews will be conducted during the 1st half of January 2015.