

CABINET SECRETARIAT POLICY ANALYSIS TRAINING WORKSHOP

25-29 AUGUST 2014, KIGALI

Organisation/Host:

The training workshop will be delivered by the **Africa Cabinet Government Network**, supported by the UK Government's **Building Capacity to Use Research Evidence (BCURE)** programme and hosted by the **Rwanda Ministry of Cabinet Affairs**.

Dates:

25-29 August 2014.

Participants will be expected to arrive by Sunday evening 24 August and depart on Saturday 30 August.

Deadline for Nominations:

Nominations of Cabinet Secretariat staff to participate must be received by 10 July 2014.

Nomination forms (being sent to ACGN members) should be signed by Cabinet Secretaries and submitted to the Africa Cabinet Decision-Making (ACD) team (see contact details below). This will allow time for other nominations to be accepted if not all member Secretariats wish to participate.

Venue:

Kigali, Rwanda.

Objectives

1. To improve participants' understanding of the role of the Cabinet secretariat in supporting evidence-informed policy-making;
2. To improve their ability to analyse/critique Cabinet proposals (usually called memoranda), this improvement to be measured through testing at the beginning and end of the training workshop;
3. To improve skills in giving and receiving feedback, to support ongoing team and individual development; and
4. To develop relationships among individuals and among secretariats to facilitate ongoing peer support and learning.

Eligible Participants:

The workshop is **not** targeted at Cabinet Secretaries or their deputies, but policy 'analysts' This includes middle level staff who work in the Cabinet secretariat doing (or with the potential to do) day-to-day processing and reviewing of Cabinet proposals.

We recognise that the participants will have a range of relevant qualifications and experience. The workshop will therefore include some concurrent sessions and some work with groups of trainees with similar backgrounds. Other plenary and group sessions will combine trainees from different backgrounds to enable all participants to benefit from peer input.

Language:

The training will be conducted in English, and it will be assumed that participants have at least an 'upper intermediate' standard of English, especially listening and reading skills. Pre-training and post-training tests will be conducted in English and will be individual tests (without opportunity for help from other participants).

Cabinet Secretaries are therefore asked to nominate trainees with sufficient English language ability (eg IELTS score of at least 6.0, TOEFL iBT score of at least 70, or completion of university degree in English). If Cabinet Secretaries are in any doubt about a nominee's language ability, the ACD team can arrange for an English test conducted on-line, including a Skype interview.

Numbers

There will be approximately 25 participants, depending on demand, with maximum of 30. They will be supported by 4 skilled trainers/advisers plus administrative support. This will enable some individual attention, enable trainers to set and mark tests in good time, allow active plenary discussion and group work.

It is proposed that each of the 11 secretariats participating in the Addis Roundtable Workshop be invited to nominate 2 analysts, and may nominate a third person in the event of unexpected withdrawals. Additional participants will be allowed from Sierra Leone and South Sudan, given their particular needs, as well as from the host organisation, the Rwanda Ministry of Cabinet Affairs.

Proposed training format

- 1. PRE-WORKSHOP** – advisers will visit several Secretariats during June-July to discuss their work, the challenges they face, quality of Cabinet memos and the current Cabinet memo vetting process. This will enable the content and level of training to be pitched appropriately. Secretariats will also be invited to provide example Cabinet proposals (if necessary with identifying or sensitive material deleted), as well as memo vetting checklists and/or memo standard formats to use as a basis for practical exercises.
- 2. TESTING AT THE BEGINNING AND END OF THE WORKSHOP** – to enable the training programme to be fine-tuned to participants' current skill levels and to measure the increase in critical skills in reviewing proposals to Cabinet. The tests will be designed to enable rapid assessment, with multiple choice questions and short answer questions based on extracts of real memos or short hypothetical case studies. To demonstrate progress, the pre and post tests will be of comparable difficulty – for example by using the same questions with different memos/case studies.
- 3. THEORETICAL INPUTS** – role of Cabinet; role of Cabinet Secretariat; evidence-informed policy - to set the context and show trainees wider goals of their work. But the focus of the week will be on practical work, not theory. There will also be some concurrent sessions on practical policy analysis skills, with trainees streamed according to their current level of performance/ability. Also, a session on principles of giving and receiving feedback, followed by practice.
- 4. PRACTICAL EXERCISES** – these will be based around some actual Cabinet memos (sanitised if necessary to protect Cabinet confidentiality) and some short hypothetical case studies¹. These will be used for discussions in pairs, groups and plenary sessions to test and enhance skills such as: **grasping key points** quickly; **summarising** clearly; writing clear concise **briefing** for the President/Prime Minister, Ministers or Cabinet Secretary on gaps and issues; making reasoned **recommendations**; and learning from one another.
- 5. FOLLOW UP** –All trainees will be followed up approximately 6 months after the training, to assess progress and support their application of learning. Those unable to be visited will be contacted through email and Skype/phone discussions. Peer follow up will also be facilitated.

Indicative timetable:

The attached timetable will be revised in the light of feedback from Cabinet Secretaries and pre-training visits by ACD advisers to selected secretariats.

Travel and accommodation:

Participants from selected Secretariats outside Rwanda will be provided with economy class travel to Kigali, hotel accommodation in Kigali, breakfast and lunch and a daily per diem to cover other costs. Air fares may be reimbursed with prior approval or travel will be booked and paid for by Adam Smith International.

Contact:

Content of training: Dr Mark Johnston, Executive Director, ACGN: MarkJ@CabinetGovernment.net.
Nominations and logistics: Mark Gilkes, Manager, ASI: Mark.Gilkes@adamsmithinternational.com.

¹The hypothetical case studies will outline proposals to test/train on *identifying what a good memo on this subject should include* –eg understanding underlying problems, options, implementation, risks, consultation, communication.

Draft training programme

| Day | Activity | Description/purpose | Inputs | Outputs |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| BEFORE ARRIVAL | Selection of participants | To decide on participation and collection of data on needs | Selection criteria and nomination form | Training team selects participants based on Cabinet Secretaries' nomination and form completed by nominees |
| | Documents | Collection of actual memos from different jurisdictions Memo standard formats and vetting checklists where these exist | Memos | Sanitised if necessary (ie edited to remove country identification and/or remove of sensitive information) |
| | | Hypothetical case studies | Prepared by ACD team members | Hypothetical policy proposals for discussion and testing on key issues |
| | Preliminary reading | To introduce key ideas | Readings | |
| DAY 1 Monday 25th August | <u>Pre-training test</u> Multiple choice as far as possible to facilitate rapid, objective marking | Testing some or all of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>understanding</u> or role of Cabinet/secretariat • <u>understanding</u> of evidence-informed policy • <u>ability</u> to identify key issues; summarise; critique memos; provide concise reasoned advice | Tests | Scores for each trainee; average score for the cohort [Baseline] |
| | Introduction | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of the week • Trainee learning objectives • Principles of giving and receiving feedback | Agenda Feedback principles | Flipcharts of objectives, hopes and fears; feedback practice –will be a mechanism to facilitate learning |
| | Team building | To warm up and start building relationships to enable trainees to learn from one another, have peer support after the workshop | Exercises that engage physical, emotional, creative energies | Group differences & similarities; represent self on flipchart; groups present Cabinet memo process |
| | Evidence-informed policy | To ensure all trainees have basic understanding, to start discussing challenges and limits | Presentation | Questions; Discussion |
| DAY 2 Tuesday 26th August | Results/feedback from pre-test | | | |
| | Cabinet and secretariat overview | To understand similarities and differences in systems | Presentation and trainee contributions | Questions; Discussion |
| | <u>Memo exercise 1</u> | <i>Identifying key issues</i> | Example memos/case studies | Work in small groups, then plenary discussion |
| <u>Memo exercise 2</u> | <i>Finding the gaps in a memo – where is evidence missing? Where is analysis inadequate?</i> | Example memos and checklists | Divide into small groups, exchange answers, discuss | |

| Day | Activity | Description/purpose | Inputs | Outputs |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| DAY 3 Wednesday 27th August | Policy analysis skills with <u>exercises</u> (concurrent sessions) | Based on trainee priorities | Data on trainee needs from nomination forms, pre-test results and expectations | Understanding of some core analysis tools (eg interpreting statistics, identifying policy options) |
| | <u>Memo exercise 3</u> | <i>Writing a summary</i> | Example memos/case studies | |
| | <u>Memo exercise 4</u> | To be decided based on pre-test results | Example memos/case studies | |
| DAY 4 Thursday 28th August | Presenting evidence and recommendations | Practical tips for presenting information to Ministers, etc | | |
| | <u>Memo exercise 5</u> | <i>Preparing a briefing note</i> | Example memos/case studies | Draft briefing notes |
| | Post-test | Equivalent test to pre-test to measure progress | Marked overnight [to enable Grade to be given in certificate?] | Scores for each trainee; average score for the cohort [progress]. Comparison with pre-test results (individual and aggregate) |
| DAY 5 Friday 29th August | Cabinet secretariat visit | To be briefed on Rwanda Cabinet process and especially review of Cabinet memos | To be arranged by Ministry of Cabinet Affairs | |
| | Feedback session | Post-test results; learning points; action plans | Test against trainee objectives | Peer feedback for each trainee |
| | Graduation ceremony Group photograph | Prizes for best results (including most improved) | Prizes | Certificate for successful trainees Photos |
| FOLLOW UP | | Follow up with each trainee through email, Skype or visit to discuss application of skills, completion of personal action plans and further capacity building needs. | Standard questions | Report for ACGN Executive Committee and DFID on aggregate (not individual) responses. |