



CONCEPT NOTE / TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR) FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A DIGITAL STORYTELLING & KNOWLEDGE-SHARING PLATFORM FOR AfrEA YEEs.

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1. CONTEXT & JUSTIFICATION.

1.1 Youth, Evaluation, and Digital Innovation.

Role of YEEs in Evaluation.

Young and Emerging Evaluators (YEEs) are increasingly recognized as critical actors in shaping evaluation systems that are relevant, equitable, and contextually grounded. Yet, many evaluation spaces remain dominated by established voices, methodologies, and power structures. Meaningful youth engagement requires more than assigning tasks; it involves elevating their voices, narratives, and lived experiences. Engaging youth in evaluation is therefore more than sharing power. It's about creating space for new ideas, new energy, and a more equitable process.

Digital Storytelling in M&E.

Digital storytelling in M&E is a structured approach that applies multimedia tools; video, audio, images, and text, to capture and communicate evaluation findings. It shifts evaluation practice from being purely data-driven to people-centered, ensuring that evidence reflects both numbers and lived realities. Through storytelling, evidence is communicated in ways that resonate with diverse stakeholders and influence decision-making and policy.

African Youth Experiences.

Across Africa, youth-led storytelling initiatives have shown how lived experiences can make evaluation results more relatable, culturally sensitive, and actionable. For instance, projects in Kenya and South Africa demonstrate that when youth are trained in digital storytelling, they contribute directly to evidence generation and use. Their stories not only enrich evaluation data but also influence public perception and policy debates, highlighting the value of culturally rooted narratives in evaluation.

Contribution to Inclusive Evaluation.

Embedding storytelling in M&E strengthens inclusivity, enhances knowledge dissemination, and builds advocacy for evidence use across varied audiences. By integrating human stories into evaluation systems, accountability and learning are deepened, while ensuring practices remain culturally relevant and responsive to context.

Rationale for a Digital Platform.

Given these opportunities, developing a tailored digital platform for YEEs will:

- i. **Shift narrative control to youth** by giving them ownership of how evaluation stories are told and shared.
- ii. **Lower barriers to knowledge sharing** across countries, languages, and contexts, fostering equal participation.
- iii. **Facilitate peer-to-peer engagement** by providing discussion spaces, forums, and collaborative features.
- iv. **Enhance advocacy for inclusive evaluation** by showcasing youth voices on AfrEA's website and at the 12th AfrEA Conference.
- v. **Increase visibility of YEEs** within AfrEA and the wider evaluation community, strengthening their professional recognition.
- vi. **Support culturally sensitive evaluation practices** by enabling storytelling that reflects local values, languages, and realities.
- vii. **Build a sustainable digital knowledge hub** that continuously generates content and fosters innovation in evaluation communication.

1.2 Challenges and Design Considerations.

However, building such a platform must respond to known challenges:

- **Digital divide / connectivity limitations:** Many YEEs work in environments with limited bandwidth or intermittent connectivity; the platform must be lightweight, mobile-responsive, and tolerant of offline uploads or syncing.
- **User experience / accessibility:** The tool must be intuitive and designed with youth in mind; simple navigation, multilingual options, and adaptive to diverse literacy levels.
- **Data privacy, consent & ethics:** Storytelling may expose sensitive personal or community information. Appropriate safeguards (consent, anonymization, moderation) must be built in.
- **Sustainability & ownership:** The platform should not remain a one-off but must be maintainable by AfrEA and YEEs, with capacity building, governance mechanisms, and clear handover plans.
- **Scalability and integration:** It should be integrable into AfrEA's existing systems and scalable to future features or expansion.

Given this context, AfrEA intends to commission a consultant to co-design and operationalize a digital storytelling and knowledge-sharing platform that is youth-led, sustainable, and impactful, to be showcased on AfrEA's website and at the 12th AfrEA Conference in Morocco.

2. PURPOSE OF THE INITIATIVE.

To create a digital storytelling and knowledge-sharing platform, co-designed with YEEs and linked to the AfrEA website, which:

- i. Enables youth to publish their evaluation experiences (narratives, multimedia, reflections) in a culturally sensitive way.
- ii. Fosters peer engagement through discussion, feedback, and networking.
- iii. Serves as an advocacy and visibility venue for inclusive, youth-led evaluation practices.
- iv. Strengthens AfrEA's youth ecosystem and supports the "Made in Africa Evaluation" agenda.

3. OBJECTIVES.

Overall Objective.

To operationalize a youth-driven digital platform to amplify the voices of YEEs and facilitate knowledge dissemination, engagement, and advocacy in evaluation.

Specific Objectives.

- i. Conduct a participatory needs assessment (across regions, contexts) with YEEs and AfrEA Secretariat to map user needs, challenges, and aspirations.
- ii. Design a responsive and secure platform architecture (web + mobile) tailored to low-bandwidth African contexts.
- iii. Integrate core features: storytelling modules (text, audio, video, images), interactive discussion spaces, tagging/categorization, peer comments, and advocacy call-to-action modules.
- iv. Ensure seamless linkage to AfrEA's existing website.

- v. Develop training materials, user guides, and capacitate YEEs in content creation, moderation, and maintenance.
- vi. Create a sustainability plan covering governance, maintenance, content moderation, analytics, funding, and scaling.

4. SCOPE OF WORK.

The consultant will:

- i. Review AfrEA's strategic plan, Mastercard Foundation digital innovation priorities, and relevant AfrEA systems.
- ii. Conduct participatory co-design workshops with YEEs to identify user needs and platform features.
- iii. Develop a prototype platform and refine it through pilot testing.
- iv. Ensure integration with AfrEA's website and multilingual accessibility.
- v. Train YEEs and AfrEA Secretariat staff in using, moderating, and managing the platform.
- vi. Deliver a sustainability and handover package (maintenance guide, governance model, analytics tools, scaling plan).

5. EXPECTED OUTPUTS / DELIVERABLES.

- i. Inception report (with methodology, design approach, stakeholder mapping, work plan).
- ii. Needs assessment report (findings, feature requirements).
- iii. Platform prototype (functional demo) within defined weeks.
- iv. Pilot of the platform with selected YEEs across regions; user feedback report.
- v. Final version of the platform, fully integrated into AfrEA's website.
- vi. Develop an application to complement the platform and enhance accessibility, engagement, and user experience.
- vii. Training sessions conducted (virtual/physical) and training toolkit/manual.
- viii. Sustainability & handover document – A practical guide covering:
 - a) **How to keep the platforms running** (maintenance guidelines).
 - b) **How to review and approve stories or posts** (moderation steps).
 - c) **How to track usage and impact** (simple reporting tools and data).
 - d) **Who is responsible for managing the platforms** (roles and decision-making).
 - e) **How the platform can grow in future** (adding more users, features, or languages).
- ix. Launch plan and integration into the 12th AfrEA Conference (e.g. featured stories, demonstration, user onboarding).

6. DURATION AND TIMELINE

The assignment should be completed within 14 weeks from the date of signing of the contract. The platform and mobile application will be officially launched at the **12th AfrEA Conference in November 2026**

Phase	Key Activities	Duration	Dates
Phase 1: Inception & Assessment	Stakeholder consultations; mapping AfrEA systems; co-design workshops with YEEs; defining user profiles & feature list.	2 weeks	03 Aug – 17 Aug 2026
Phase 2: Prototype Development and Mobile App Development	Draft page layouts (wireframes); design user interface/experience (UI/UX); backend development; early integration; initial feedback from YEEs.	6 weeks	18 Aug – 22 Sept 2026
Phase 3: Pilot Testing & Refinement	Onboard selected YEEs; collect feedback; fix issues; test usability across devices; refine features.	3 weeks	19 Sept – 03 Oct 2026
Phase 4: Final Deployment & Training	Deploy on AfrEA website; migrate content; train YEEs & AfrEA Secretariat (manuals, toolkits, live sessions); set up moderation.	2 weeks	04 Oct – 19 Oct 2026
Phase 5: Handover & Closure	Deliver sustainability package (maintenance guide, moderation process, analytics, governance, scaling plan); final review & sign-off.	1 week	20 Oct – 30 Oct 2026

7. TARGET BENEFICIARIES / USERS.

- i. **Primary users:** AfrEA YEEs (across African regions) who will share stories, engage peers, and advocate.
- ii. **Secondary users:** AfrEA members, evaluation practitioners, policymakers, donors, and the general public who will access, comment, and leverage shared content.
- iii. **Administrators/moderators:** Selected YEEs and AfrEA Secretariat who will curate, moderate, and manage the platform.

8. RISKS & MITIGATIONS.

Key Risk	Mitigation Strategy
Low internet connectivity / digital divide	Design lightweight, mobile-first UI, offline upload/sync capability
Content misuse or privacy breaches	Embed consent protocols, anonymization options, moderation controls
Low uptake or usage	Engage YEEs early in design; pilot with incentives; marketing via AfrEA networks
Technical failures / maintenance burdens	Use robust frameworks, document code, ensure handover training
Overdependence on one individual	Distribute moderation / admin roles, build institutional capacity

9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION.

AfrEA will assess the consultant's performance using clear, measurable criteria to ensure accountability and quality. Assessment will be based on:

- Timeliness: Delivery of all outputs within the agreed timeframe.
- Quality: Technical robustness, user-friendliness, and security of the platform.
- Relevance: Alignment of platform features with the needs of YEEs and AfrEA.
- User Satisfaction: Feedback from YEEs during pilot testing and training.
- Sustainability: Strength of handover documentation, governance model, and maintenance plan.

10. REQUIRED SKILLS.

To successfully design, develop, and implement the digital platform for YEEs, the consultant must demonstrate the following qualifications and competencies:

a) Academic Training

- Master's degree (or equivalent) in Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Computer Science, Software Engineering, Digital Communication, or a related field.
- Additional training in project management, UX/UI design, or digital communication is an advantage.

b) Professional Experience

- Minimum of **5 years' proven experience** in designing and developing digital platforms or interactive websites.
- Experience in creating participatory digital solutions that engage youth, communities, or networks.
- Demonstrated expertise in developing multimedia tools (e.g., videos, podcasts, interactive stories, digital storytelling).
- Previous work with international organizations, NGOs, or pan-African networks.
- Specific experience in evaluation, communication for development, or promoting youth participation is a strong asset.

c) Technical Skills

- Proficiency in programming languages and content management systems (CMS) such as WordPress, Drupal, or equivalent.
- Strong skills in UI/UX design, accessibility, and user-friendly navigation.
- Solid knowledge of IT security and personal data protection standards.
- Ability to design multilingual platforms compatible with various devices (computers, tablets, mobile phones).
- Proficiency in web analytics tools (e.g., Google Analytics, Matomo).
- Familiarity with collaborative and interactive tools (forums, discussion spaces, social media integration).

d) Cross-Functional Skills

- Excellent project management skills, including planning, coordination, and time management.
- Ability to collaborate effectively with multidisciplinary teams (YEEs, AfrEA Secretariat, partners).
- Strong written and oral communication skills in English; proficiency in French or other African languages is an added advantage.
- Demonstrated ability to simplify digital tools to make them inclusive and accessible for diverse youth groups.

e) Attitudes and Values

- Strong commitment to inclusion, youth participation, and cultural diversity.
- Dedication to promoting innovative and inclusive evaluation practices.
- High levels of integrity, independence, creativity, and initiative.

11. BUDGET AND CONTRACTUAL TERMS.

The consultant will be contracted by AfrEA under the following terms:

- **Submission:** Applicants are required to submit both a Technical Proposal (including the proposed methodology, work plan, and relevant experience) and a Financial Proposal (detailing the professional fees, communication, software development costs, and any other associated costs).
- **Payment Schedule:** Payments will be milestone-based and made upon the satisfactory completion and approval of deliverables, as follows:
 - 20% upon approval of the Inception Report.
 - 30% upon delivery and validation of the prototype platforms.
 - 30% upon delivery and validation of the final platforms, including the mobile application and all agreed digital solutions.
 - 20% upon approval of the sustainability plan, handover package, source code, technical documentation, and user training.

12. GOVERNANCE AND SUPERVISION.

The consultant will be overseen by the AfrEA Secretariat, led by the Executive Director, in close coordination with the YEE Leadership Team and the AfrEA Board.

- **Reporting Frequency:** The consultant will provide bi-weekly updates, including short written progress briefs and virtual meetings with the coordination team.
- **Validation Workshops:** Draft deliverables will be presented in validation workshops with YEEs and AfrEA Secretariat before finalization.
- **Accountability:** The Secretariat will serve as the primary contact, ensuring deliverables align with AfrEA's strategy, donor commitments, and YEE priorities.