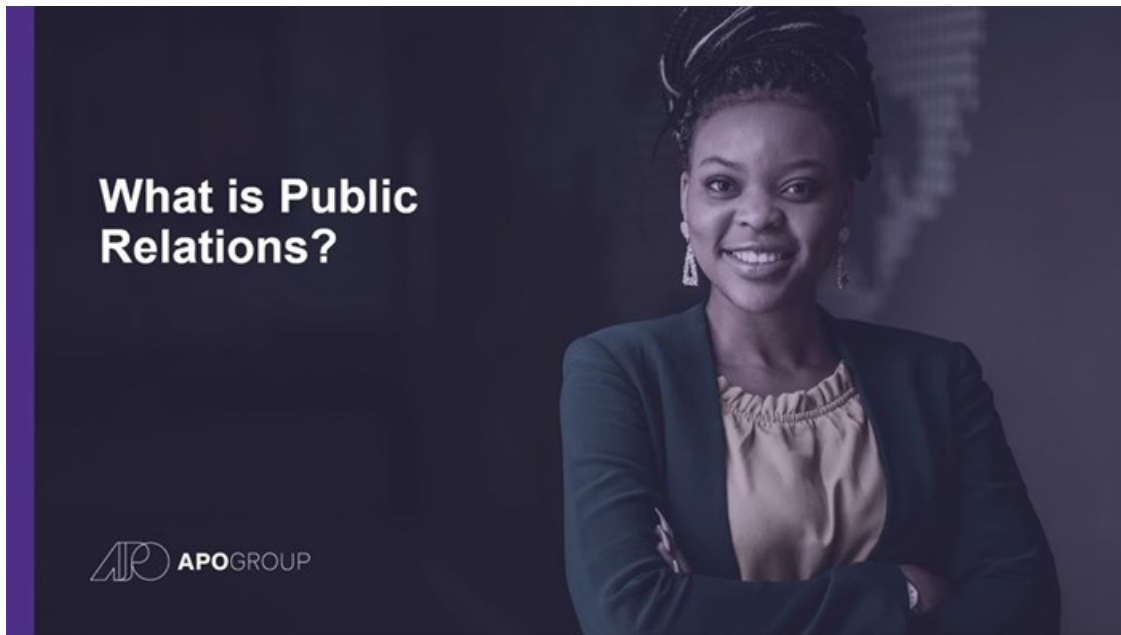


APO Group launches a unique curriculum to empower communications professionals working in Africa

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The inaugural APO Group Communications Curriculum involves more than 130 communications professionals working for national rugby federations and the Roman Catholic Church across 30 African countries



APO Group (<https://APO-opa.com/>), the leading Pan-African communications consultancy and press release distribution service, is delighted to announce the launch of its unique Communications Curriculum designed to help hundreds of comms professionals across Africa develop their skills in all aspects of public relations, media relations, and content strategy.

The pro-bono initiative has been running since May 2023 as part of APO Group's long-standing partnerships with Rugby Africa (<https://apo-opa.info/3qUoP6t>), the governing body of African rugby, and the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM) (<https://apo-opa.info/3sM6R7l>) - the institution that coordinates the Roman Catholic Church's pastoral work in Africa.

The curriculum will run for a period of 18 months and involves more than 130 trainees from 30 countries. They will receive more than 60 hours of online training, delivered by some of APO Group's most esteemed and valued personnel, all of whom have experience working with some of the company's biggest clients, including FIFA, Jack Ma Foundation, Nestle, Liquid Intelligent Technologies, and many more.

The curriculum has been meticulously crafted. From core topics such as *The Fundamentals of Media Types and Content Distribution*, to more specialised subjects like *Business Writing in a Digital Age* and *Gen Z Engagement and Communication*, participants are set to gain a holistic view of the media landscape.

The APO Group Communications Curriculum also features appearances from seasoned guest speakers working at globally recognised media establishments like CNN, the BBC, Al Jazeera, and Euronews, who will provide firsthand insights on what the media are looking for from communications professionals working in Africa.

João Gaspar Marques, director of strategy at APO Group and a mentor for the programme, believes media literacy is a

fundamental requirement in today's corporate reality. "Our training is tailored to equip these institutions with the essential tools they need to thrive amidst the constant influx of information dominating the media landscape," he commented. "At APO Group we want to enrich the public relations and communications sector by sharing our extensive knowledge, fostering a culture of professionalism, and nurturing talent across the continent."

APO Group has built deep working relationships with both Rugby Africa and the Roman Catholic Church over several years. It provides support across a broad range of communications services, including the distribution of press releases, and the facilitation of interviews, press conferences, and networking opportunities. The new curriculum will help drive the production of more high-quality content – all of which will be subsequently distributed by APO Group free of charge to ensure stories from the organisations are heard far and wide.

Both Rugby Africa and the Roman Catholic Church have huge potential audiences in Africa. Rugby is one of the most popular sports in the continent, with Africa home to three of the six fastest-developing rugby nations in the world. Similarly, Africa's 236 million Catholics make up roughly 20% of the global Catholic population, and the continent is also the fastest-growing Catholic region in the world. By 2050, the World Christian Database estimates that African Catholics will make up 32% of the global Catholic population.

APO Group's media relations experts are working closely with communications teams from Rugby Africa and SECAM, taking them on a transformative journey towards excellence in communication management. By the end of the 18-month programme, it is hoped the teams will have all the skills they need to thrive in the complex African media landscape.

The APO Group Communication Curriculum offers:

- **Extensive Expertise:** Training sessions are conducted by APO Group staff with in-depth knowledge and on-the-ground experience working with journalists across Africa
- **Exclusive Insights:** APO Group has a vast network of media professionals to draw on, and the programme includes guest speakers from esteemed establishments such as CNN, the BBC, Al Jazeera, Euronews and many more
- **Online Delivery:** The curriculum has been designed specifically for busy professionals, with training sessions delivered online to allow trainees across Africa to participate and benefit from the programme
- **Multilingual Support:** All sessions are delivered in English, with simultaneous translation into French
- **Comprehensive Curriculum:** The curriculum covers a wide range of topics essential for excelling in the field of communications and media relations
- **Wide Reach:** The initial programme has over 130 registered participants from Rugby Africa and SECAM, creating a diverse and enriching learning environment. This wide reach also fosters networking opportunities, enabling participants to connect and learn from each other
- **Certification of Completion:** Participants who successfully complete all lessons will be awarded a certificate of completion at the end of the programme. This certification serves as a testament to their dedication and newfound expertise, adding value to their professional portfolio and elevating their ability to handle the demands of the media industry

Reaction to the programme since its launch in May has been overwhelmingly positive, with trainees commenting that the sessions have been: *"very useful"*, *"most engaging"*, *"exceptional"*, and *"crucial to our professional journey."*

The APO Group team, too, are gaining a lot from being involved in the programme.

"One of my core values is giving back to society in any way I can, and I am lucky to work in an organisation that not only understands, but actually practices this principle," said Rosemary Otor, an account director at APO Group based in Nigeria. "I am grateful to have been given the opportunity to impart some of the knowledge I have gained over time. It's a win-win for me!"

"I want to express my sincere gratitude to each and every one of the APO Group team who are actively participating in this pro-bono initiative," said APO group founder and chairman, Nicolas Pompigne-Mognard (www.Pompigne-Mognard.com).

“Sharing professional knowledge and expertise is an incredibly rewarding experience, offering us a unique opportunity to truly make a difference in the lives of 130 communications professionals. The curriculum that our colleagues have collectively crafted, along with the wealth of expertise within the team, is truly unparalleled. Our colleagues are not only positively impacting the lives of those taking part, but they are also contributing to a collective achievement that our entire company can be proud of.”

Among the APO Group personnel who have developed and are delivering the curriculum are [in alphabetical order]: Hussain Ali, head of design (Pakistan), Yasmina Ndella Bileoma, account director (Senegal), Lerato Chiyangwa, account director (South Africa), Emeka Enyadike, account director (South Africa), Lindsay Farley, former vice president: editorial and content strategy (South Africa), Sylvia Gaita, account manager (Kenya), Christian Gwandure, project lead (South Africa), Lynne Krawchuk, vice president of digital, PR and media relations (South Africa), João Gaspar Marques, director of strategy (Portugal), Abhishek Mukherjee, digital marketing manager (India), Ekene Nwakonobi, account manager (Nigeria), Rosemary Ngozi Otor, account director (Nigeria), Bonnie Robinson, director: content strategy and copy editing (South Africa), and Beatrice Tonhodzayi, senior account manager (Zimbabwe).

The entire project is spearheaded by Michelle Scott, senior executive assistant to Nicolas Pompigne-Mognard, founder and chairman of APO Group (South Africa).

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