

# Call for Applications and Nominations

## INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM IN THE NATURAL RESOURCE SECTOR

Duration  
5 weeks



Online Training

Beginning of the training : 17<sup>th</sup> October 2022

Application Deadline : 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022

**Coming soon**

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**INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM  
IN THE NATURAL RESOURCE SECTOR**

**Call for Applications and Nominations**

***Announcement in brief***

**Course Type :** Online Course

**Area :** Natural Resource Management

**Dates :** 17<sup>th</sup> October – 18<sup>th</sup> December 2022

**Duration:** 5 Weeks

**Language :** Bilingual ( French / English )

**Application Deadline :** 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022



## Background

According to the United Nations, Africa is home to about 30 per cent of the world's natural resources, a good proportion of which resides in the West Africa sub-region. For many years, countries in the West Africa sub-region have harnessed natural resources such as oil, gold, cotton, bauxite and many others. However, the abundance of these resources and their continued exploitation have not yielded expected development in the sub-region. Several factors, including bad leadership, corruption, lack of technical know-how, colonial ties among others, have been identified for this underdevelopment amidst wealth.

Viewing this problem from another - but equally important - spectrum, it is evident that the myriads of environmental challenges the region currently faces are as a result of unsustainable, largely illegal, practices deployed in harnessing natural resources. For instance, countries like Mauritania, Senegal, The Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Guinea and Sierra Leone lose about US\$2.3 billion annually to illegal fishing; over 540,000 tons of rosewood have been illegally harvested and exported in Ghana since the past 10 years, among just a few examples.

Despite the fact that West Africa holds a large reserve of natural resources, the wealth in natural resources has not transformed to development in many countries. In the past, critical interventions have been deployed by Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and journalists.

For instance, the pressure that led to the passage of the Petroleum Industry Bill in Nigeria, the Panama Papers and Pandora Papers investigations that traced illegal havens some African leaders stashed their illicit wealth, mostly gotten from natural resources exports produce, among others. Despite these interventions, the problem of underdevelopment, environmental disaster and other resulting challenges still persist in the sub-region.

In order to play their role in building the capacities of non-state actors, IDEP and OSIWA as funding partner, have decided to jointly organize a training course on the "Investigative Journalism in the Natural Resource sector" mainly targeting Journalists, Media people, Social Media Managers, Reporters, Activists, CSOs, and other Experts and Analysts of the sector in West Africa.

As a pragmatic intervention, this training is designed to help journalists covering the extractive sector understand the issues at stake and the best approaches for reporting, writing and advocacy. It will cover areas of investigative journalism, data journalism, fact-checking and writing.

## Objective

The overall objective of the module is to enhance the capacity and investigation techniques of journalists and other actors particularly interested and/or specialized in governance issues especially in the extractive sector in West Africa.

Other specific objectives include:

- **Provide participants with a detailed understanding of the West Africa natural resources ecosystem.**
- **Organize and support the creation of a synergy of action between actors so that they work in consortium and be able to carry out national and transnational investigations.**
- **Enhance capacities to assess, monitor and evaluate actions and policies implemented by governments in the governance of natural resources, particularly extractive industries.**

- Increase qualitatively and quantitatively productions on the natural resources sector;
- Help participants in sourcing investigative story ideas and motivate them in delivery.

## Content

The content of the training will be designed to cover the basics and innovative ways of doing investigative journalism. Specifically, the following modules will be taught:

- **Overview of Africa's Natural Resource Sector:** This module will help participants to understand the matrix of scientific, social, environmental and economic innovation for the growth and development of the natural resource sector, especially with increasing population growth, widening inequality gap and increasing demands on these resources. The session will also beam some light on previous reports on the subject matter and how to improve same for expanded impact.
- **Investigating the natural resources sector:** This module will introduce journalists to the significance of investigative journalism, the processes, ethics and approaches. Further, the course will interrogate the controversial issue of undercover reporting and how to deploy it (if at all) in covering the natural resources sector. Specific examples from West Africa will be drawn to aid understanding.
- **Writing great stories in the natural resources sector:** Given the somewhat opaque nature of information from the sector, many journalists throw vague information at their audience without clarity. This session will take participants on the step-by-step process of telling great stories in the sector. This will include tips on how to humanize stories, how to present statistics in stories, how to craft interesting leads to attract readers and the needed visuals to better communicate stories to the audience.
- **Data journalism:** Whether in budgetary allocations, annual reports or research, information about the extractive sector mostly comes in raw data. How do journalists make sense of these data and turn them into great stories? Also, a number of issues like licensing, revenue management data are opaque and only available for a select few. This session will attempt to expose participants to skills needed to explore restricted data access in the natural resource sector and how to deploy freedom of information laws to advance transparency and accountability using case studies from the sub-region.

## Skills To Be Imparted

At the end of the training, participants will be expected to acquire the following:

- Investigative skills (Argument for and against undercover reporting)
- Research and Analytical Skills in investigation journalism
- Treatment of sources
- Handling of documents

- Converting data to stories
- How to drive impact for natural resources stories
- Fact-checking skills
- Digital tools for fact-checking

## Pedagogical Approach and Mode of Delivery

The course will be delivered for one month including one week for the final evaluation and retakes if any. The course will be moderated asynchronously on a daily basis and participants are required to participate in the on-line discussions. The lessons are designed in a way that learners are also able to self-assess their understanding through practical exercises which will be in the form of case studies that will support active learning. Additional resources such as bibliographies, web links and optional readings are provided for participants who wish to deepen their knowledge of the course topic.

The course will be delivered in English and French. The course is structured to run over a period of four weeks. The following fifth week will be dedicated to the final evaluation and retakes if any. Extension maybe granted upon request. The pedagogical team will include a Course Director, a team of moderators and Resource persons with first-hand knowledge of the historical and contemporary issues in Investigation on the extractive sector in Africa particularly the Western region.

They also come with strong comparative insights from other regions of the world. In line with the IDEP pedagogical philosophy, the presentation of the course modules will combine a knowledge-building component with experience-sharing among participants.

## Certificate of Completion

A Certificate of Completion will be issued by IDEP to all participants who successfully complete the course-related self-assessments presented for each module.

## Target Audience

The course aims at gathering Journalists, Media people, Social Media Managers, Reporters, Activists, CSOs, and other Experts and Analysts of the sector in West Africa as well as youth interested in extractive industries issues, accountability and policy advocacy. The course is also suitable for people from academia and public administration who want to learn more about the above issues.

## Acceptance To the Course

Until the registration deadline, participants are accepted to the course on a rolling basis and subject to availability of slots. Please refer to the paragraph below to see priority target group. Applications must be completed exclusively on IDEP online application platform at

<https://idep-applications.uneca.org/>

## Technical Requirements

Access to internet is an essential condition for participation. The following specifications, as a minimum in terms of hardware and software, are required to take this e-Learning course, please consult your Network Administrator or Systems person to ensure that you have the following:

- Platform: Windows 95, 98, 2000, NT, ME, XP or superior; Mac OS 9 or Mac OS X; Linux
- Hardware: 64 MB of RAM, 1 GB of free disk space
- Software :
  - Adobe Acrobat Reader
  - Adobe Flash Player
  - Microsoft Office (Windows or Mac) or Open Office
  - Browser: Internet Explorer 7 or higher or Firefox 36 or higher
- Modem : 56 K
- Note that JavaScript, Cookies and Pop-ups must be enabled

## Importants Dates

- Deadline for Applications and Nominations: **1<sup>st</sup> October 2022**
- Course Period : **17<sup>th</sup> October – 18<sup>th</sup> November 2022**

## Contact Information

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***N.B : L'IDEP encourage vivement et soutient la participation de femmes fonctionnaires dûment qualifiées à son programme de développement des capacités et de formation.***