



TOOL KIT

*A Guide for the
Formulation and
Implementation
of National Book
and Reading
Policies in Africa*



Ushirika wa Maendeleo ya Elimu Barani Afrika
الرابطة لأجل تطوير التربية في إفريقيا
Association for the Development of Education in Africa
Association pour le Développement de l'Éducation en Afrique
Associação para o Desenvolvimento da Educação em África



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BACKGROUND

The book publishing industry is strategic in developing quality education in Africa. Therefore, every African country needs a well-developed, organized and functioning book trade for supporting educational, cultural, scientific and technological progress. Sustaining literacy and lifelong learning is critical for democratic participation and personal fulfillment for all citizens.

Recognising that access to a wide range of books and other informational materials is central to providing the knowledge and skills necessary for the increase of productivity and wealth creation in any nation, African book practitioners have deployed many efforts to lobby governments for inclusion of the book sector in national development plans. Consequently, enactment of policies to facilitate, among others, writer's protection and promotion, publishing and printing facilities, bookselling, expansion of library networks, promotion of reading, archiving, removal of taxes and duties from books, support to books in local language, among others, would enable African publishers diversify their lists and produce books that are relevant to Africa's development agenda.

The African Union Commission Common Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 16-25)¹ is dedicated to the promotion of literacy skills through launching comprehensive and effective literacy campaigns across the continent. This entails, among others, expanding existing literacy campaigns; developing curricula and pedagogy to meet specific learner needs; and promoting the teaching of languages and the use of ICT in literacy programs as well as promoting reading and writing by revitalizing and expanding African book fairs, school and community libraries; giving awards to the best writers in national languages; and supporting existing public and national libraries while at the same time building additional ones. Also considering the absence of national book and reading policies in the majority of African countries, the African Union had drafted in 2009² a continental book and reading policy framework, whose vision is "to establish Africa's book industry as a key sector in contributing to development of culture, information and education" (ADEA, AUC, GBA, 2009).

¹ <http://www.adeanet.org/en/knowledge-and-resources/the-african-union-continental-education-strategy-for-africa-cesa-16-25>

² AU - Draft Framework for Continental Book Policy 27-March 2009, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

THE CONTINENTAL FRAMEWORK ON BOOK AND READING POLICIES

With the mission of providing developmental and legal guidelines on the production and distribution of books and promoting reading and the book trade, the framework's overall goal is "to serve as a model for development, enactment and application of national book and reading policies in Africa; to guarantee production, availability and accessibility of relevant, quality, affordable books for all citizens" (ADEA, AUC, GBA, 2019).

The Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) and the African Union Commission (AUC), in cooperation with the Global Book Alliance (GBA), supported by USAID, have taken a leading role to help Governments and all stakeholders at the national level to formulate and adopt robust NBRPs across the continent. The partners validated the *Continental Framework on Book and Reading Policy Formulation in Africa* (ADEA, AUC, GBA, 2019) through several technical seminars in 2019 to inform and sensitize policy makers and major actors on the benefits of book and reading policy formulation and implementation.

The overall goal of the Continental Framework on Book and Reading Policies is to facilitate the formulation, enactment and implementation of National Book and Reading Policies in Africa.

The continental framework (Appendix 1) aims at harmonising book sector development under the coordination of a uniting institution. Consequently, financing of a proposed **National Book Development Council** (NBDC) should be a strategic objective to strengthen Africa's book industries coordination and regulation. As governments commit to supporting implementation of national book and reading policies, NBDCs will operate within the ambit of the state and their financing included in national budgets.

A comprehensive national book and reading policy should identify some of the key factors at play in the book industry, including copyright, adherence to the Florence Agreement and its Nairobi Protocol, local languages development, indigenous knowledge, technology and trade practices, which necessitate formulation of comprehensive legislation to guide its development and govern the practices of stakeholders in the book supply value chain.

CONTEXT/RATIONALE FOR NATIONAL BOOK AND READING POLICIES

Books and Learning Materials Section: Inter Country Quality Node on Teaching and Learning

The core agenda of the Books and Learning Materials section of the ADEA Inter Quality Node on Teaching and Learning is to work with member countries to improve teaching and learning through quality Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs). In doing so, one of the major concerns is developing and nurturing a reading habit along with providing relevant reading materials, because the ability to read and write is regarded as a foundational skill upon which all other lifelong learning skills are anchored, including the acquisition of education in preparation for the world of work. In January 2018, the BLM section held a successful 3-day Regional Workshop for African Book Industry Stakeholders in Abidjan, Ivory Coast. A major outcome was an Action Plan that sought to jumpstart a somewhat stagnant industry beset with a myriad of challenges and without much recognition and support by the governments. Furthermore, the workshop expressed deep concern about the disruption of the book supply chain by cutting off booksellers who play a critical role in ensuring the widest possible reach and steady supply of books. This unprecedented trend continues to pose a major threat to educational development, whose success heavily depends on a steady supply of books especially in rural areas.

It is known that *reading* is not only an important gateway to personal development, but also to cultural, social, economic and civic life. Furthermore, books are intrinsic to learning in terms of developing creativity, attitudes and skills, and providing knowledge through a reading habit early in life. Yet, according to the UN, more than 50% of children in Africa have few or no books and are thus disadvantaged in regard to acquiring an early quality education (Musau, 2017 – 2018).

Unfortunately, government leaders in many countries do not fully grasp the critical role books and reading play in the cultural, social and economic development of nations, and that the book and access to relevant information is the transformative tool that controls a nation's development. As such, many African governments lack a coherent agenda on books and reading, and do not have a national book and reading policy. In order to harmonize and regulate the book industry and promote books and a reading culture it is essential that countries deploy all necessary efforts to formulate and approve well-articulated and strong national book and reading policies for sustainable lifelong learning through quality education. Books in local languages would enable greater access to sustainable development, knowledge and skills in all sectors such as education, health, environment, water, energy, industry, gender equality, peace and security, and income generation by the majority of citizens.

A National Book and Reading Policy is an essential framework for guiding access to quality education and unlimited access to knowledge, thought, culture and information. A National Book and Reading Policy would also regularise and streamline the book industry, which by nature tends to be complex and therefore not so easy to understand and manage.

Education and National Book and Reading Policies

Education is one of the fundamental factors of development. It raises people's creativity and productivity and plays a critical role in securing social and economic progress. Yet, according to the 2018 World Development Report on "Learning to Realize Education's Promise," millions of children globally are unable to read, write and solve basic math problems after several years of schooling. Unfortunately, the crisis is more severe in Africa.

The African Union's Agenda 2063³: *The Africa We Want* is a 50-year vision that echoes the aspirations of the continent's founding leaders. Among others, the founders aspire for an Africa that is prosperous based on inclusive growth and sustainable development; where development is people-driven, unleashing the potential of its women and youth; an Africa that is strong, united and influential in the global arena as both player and partner, among other aspirations.

The Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016-2025 (CESA 16-25) is the vehicle that the African Union is using to deliver the necessary human capital for the realization of the African Union's vision of a "peaceful and prosperous Africa, integrated, led by its own citizens and occupying the place it deserves in the global community and in the knowledge economy.

The Books and Learning Materials (BLM) section has therefore been focusing, for a number of years, on National Book and Reading Policies formulation and implementation in its annual work plan. At the heart of this effort is the need to create awareness among governments and all key stakeholders on the essential role of National Book and Reading Policies and National Book Development Councils whose primary mandate is to regulate the book industry and promote literacy and a reading culture, in order to meet the ambitious overall goals of education. Studies have shown that except for South Africa and Ghana, other African countries south of Sahara do not have functional National Book Development Councils. Unfortunately, even for these two, the Councils do not operate optimally as they do not receive the necessary support from their governments.

The book industry and overall quality in education

Book industries across the world are similar and face challenges of a unique nature because they consist of various professions that tend to have conflicting interests. The various professions form what is commonly referred to as the book supply value chain which comprises of authors, publishers, printers, booksellers, librarians, archivists and readers, and of course, the special interest group – government – represented by Ministries of Education, Culture, Finance and Trade. The relationships between these interest groups are often characterized by friction and lack of harmony, primarily due to weak coordination. Given the strategic role of the book sector, it is incumbent therefore for every nation to

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<https://au.int/en/agenda2063/overview#:~:text=It%20is%20the%20continent's%20strategic,African%20Renaissance%20The%20genesis%20of>

ensure that all stakeholders' roles within the industry are recognised, developed and nurtured by relevant government ministries. This way, each of them would perform optimally in support and realisation of quality education for all.

The African Union drafted a continental book policy framework in 2009⁴ whose vision is "to establish Africa's book industry as a key sector in contributing to development of culture, information and education." With the mission of "providing developmental and legal guidelines on the production and distribution of books, and promoting reading and the book trade", the framework's overall goal is "to serve as a model for development, enactment and application of national book and reading policies in Africa: to guarantee production, availability and accessibility of relevant, quality, affordable books by all citizens." The development of the draft framework was in response to the recognised need, at the launch of the AU Second Decade of Education for Africa's Plan of Action in 2006, for a home grown education system for Africa, placing greater value on local knowledge, and the realisation that focussing on human resource development necessitates the development of comprehensive national book and reading policies relevant to the needs of expanding education and training programs.

Apart from having curriculum, teaching and learning materials development as one of the seven areas of focus of the Plan of Action, the draft continental book and reading policy framework was a key outcome of the AU's First Pan African Conference, following the recommendation of COMEDAF II, on Rebuilding Education in March 2009. It focussed on four key themes: African languages, curriculum, reading, writing and book sector development.

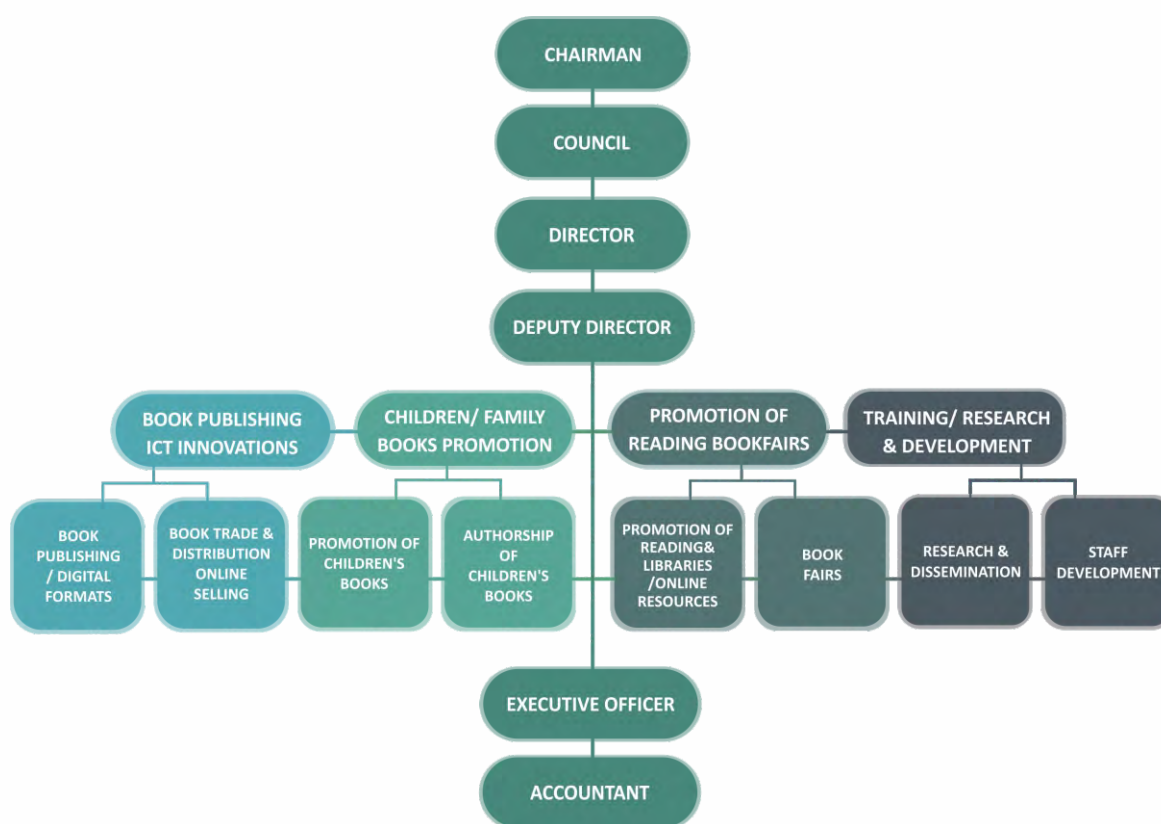
The role of the Ministries of Education in book and reading policy formulation and implementation: Need for a Book Law

National Book and Reading Policies are at the core of educational quality, literacy development, lifelong learning and sustainable development. There is an inextricable link between books, literacy, lifelong learning and sustainable development. Without access to a wide range of relevant books and reading materials, especially those in national languages, literacy skills – which are the basis for lifelong learning – cannot be developed and sustained. The role of Ministries of Education (MoEs) / Ministries of Culture (MoC) is critical in the quest for creating a reading culture in schools – essential for encouraging students' engagement and motivation as lifelong readers. Developing a reading culture takes time and requires sustained commitment and investment, hence the need for a national book and reading framework. MoE and MoC are key actors in achieving the ambitious outcomes of UN SDG 4 and CESA 16-25 and given their strategic role as custodians of countries' goals of education, the role of MoEs and MoC in the development of national book and reading policies is particularly essential.

⁴ AU - Draft Framework for Continental Book Policy 27-March 2009, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

According to UNESCO⁵, “a National Book (and Reading) Policy is a coherent set of regulations and indicators set by the national authority to govern the development, production, printing, distribution and dissemination of books and other reading materials, with the aim of promoting a reading culture. The backing of the highest national authority is essential since it is not only a question of the allocation of sufficient resources, but also of giving *official* status to the book and reading policy to ensure that it will be implemented.”

Organisational structure of a National Book Development Council



The multiple actors in the education sector have distinct and specialized roles, but there are often conflicting interests among them. With such dynamic and specialized stakeholders, the ensuing mistrust, misunderstanding and rivalry demands for a mediator. The general guidelines of a Book Law can guide this mediation through an independent regulatory body commonly known as a National Book Development Council (NBDC). The Book Law would also mandate a NBDC to have representation of all stakeholders and to deal with each stakeholder firmly and fairly. In the case of mediation, the council would discuss and resolve any ensuing matter and a binding decision would be made for purposes of harmonious relationships for the good of the industry and by extension of the

⁵ Askerud, Pernille. A guide to sustainable book provision. UNESCO. Paris. 1997

education sector. Another major objective of a NBDC would be to harmonize and regulate the book industry in order to promote all kinds of books and the culture of reading for lifelong learning.

A book and reading policy should ensure a conducive environment for books availability and affordability in each country, making it possible for books to be easily found all over the country at affordable prices. Additionally, as the most critical skill, *reading* should receive special attention in African countries through a clear sectoral library and reading policies.

Digital Publishing

The modern world has presented opportunities through increased Internet availability and access to smart phones, even in the rural areas, which has triggered interest and involvement in digital publishing, open licensing and copyright. However, while the digital era promises to open up more avenues for the distribution of books and other reading materials to wider markets, it presents a number of challenges in such areas as online copyright permissions and protection, pricing of e-content, ICT training, accessibility of user-platforms, and reliability and affordability of internet connectivity. A book and reading policy should guide on the best practices and provide direction as the future of education, teaching and learning is increasingly being dictated by information technology. This opens up opportunities to access a wealth of information and even to create relevant books and reading materials, in local languages and appropriate reading levels.

WHY THE TOOL KIT?

In order to effectively and efficiently help ADEA member countries to adopt the continental framework for book and reading policies formulation and implementation, and to assist them to engage necessary steps to formulate their book and reading policies, the ADEA ICQN TL: Books and Learning Materials (BLM) section has developed this *Tool Kit* along with supporting appendices (see attachments 1-8), that will serve as a quick reference guide to stakeholders to easily understand the need for the policy and the process for systematic and coherent formulation and implementation of a National Book and Reading Policy (NBRP).

It is to be noted that *National Book Policy* (NBP) as a concept was propagated by UNESCO since the 1970's, ostensibly to urge Member States to formulate and adopt book and reading policies with a view to ensuring that books and other reading materials are developed and made commonplace for the purpose of supporting education, literacy and lifelong learning. We believe that due to the complex nature of the book industry and other priorities that most governments were handling, this matter was not given the proper attention then. The initiative by ADEA and the AUC in preparing the continental framework has added the necessity to the need of National Book and Reading Policies that requires

legal action through the Ministries of Education or Culture. We think that a tool kit is necessary to speed up the uptake of the framework that requires a law to be enacted for setting up a National Book Development Council (NBDC) for the implementation of the resultant Book Law.

This tool kit includes the Continental Framework (**appendix 1**); a series of questionnaires for book specialists (writers, publishers, printers, booksellers, reading specialists, Government officials (MoE and MoC specifically), and other selected stakeholders to assess the national book industry status and challenges (**appendix 2**); a complementing brochure (the 5W's + H of NBRP) (**appendix 3**); a model book law (**appendix 4**); a suggested list of media channels for a wide and continued publicity through radio, television, newspapers and newsletters, book professionals' websites, social media tools (WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, etc.) (**appendix 5**); a list of book related events to use as avenues for advocacy (**appendix 6**); a model cover letter to ministries of education (**appendix 7**); as well as a checklist to validate the tool kit, for all actors in the book chain (**appendix 8**)

To help stakeholders in the book supply value chain to be meaningfully involved in the NBRP formulation and implementation, the tool kit draws from the methodological approaches recommended by the Continental framework. It also derives its mandate from developmental goals and objectives of various international and continental charters, statutes, plans and programs relevant to book development. Additionally, owing to the multi-sectoral nature of the book sector, the policy framework links the book policy with policies of other sectors that enhance authorship, publishing, selling, distribution and to reading promotion.

The objective of the questionnaires for all stakeholders (Appendix 3) would enable data collection on the current status of national book industries, under the coordination of a multi-sectoral committee put in place by the government in order to formulate the country's NBRP document. The document thus produced will serve as a conceptual basis for the subsequent steps for the formulation and validation of a national book and reading policy, whose results will be shared with all stakeholders in the book supply value chain and validated into a *Book Law*.

AUDIENCE AND SCOPE

The tool kit will be especially useful to government officials within Ministries of Education, Culture, Trade and Finance, Attorney General Chambers, the civil society and stakeholders in the book supply value chain, as it will provide them with a quick guide on the what, where, who, when, why and how of the book industry and how to formulate and implement their book and reading policies with ease.

The tool kit will comprise knowledge and information about the book industry in general and will provide tools and steps deemed necessary for policy formulation and implementation. It takes into

consideration all common relevant issues to most of African countries as they formulate and implement their national book and reading policies.

PROCESS OF THE NBRP FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

As a general guideline, the process of national book and reading policy formulation is articulated around defined steps to follow based on national and local realities:

STEP 1: National diagnostic study / Situational analysis of the whole book sector

The national diagnostic study's objective is to draw up an exhaustive inventory and carry out an in-depth analysis of the book industry in the country in order to enable political decision-makers, various book professionals of the book chain, and economic actors (funders, public and private managers, cultural promoters, local stakeholders, etc.) to know the general context in which book and reading activities are developed, the potential of the industry and its main strengths and constraints.

Thus, this study aims to help filling the lack of information on the national book industry, potential and specificities of the different sub-sectors of the book chain (writing, publishing, printing, distribution, promotion, selling, reading) in the country including issues related to production and distribution of books in national languages and in digital format

Ultimately, the diagnostic study also aims to carry out a qualitative and quantitative analysis leading to the proposal of strategies of action for governments, private and institutional actors, civil society, development partners and other stakeholders concerned, with a view to promoting the structuring, consolidation and development of this important cultural sector to the national development.

A set of questionnaires addressed to the various stakeholders in the book supply value chain are to guide the national research teams to efficiently and effectively collect relevant information in the book industry that will inform the book and reading policy – (see appendix XXX).

This step is of essence because a policy must be based on reliable and detailed information and knowledge of the social and economic conditions prevailing in the country and not be inspired by precedent ones. To fully achieve the targeted goals, the study should be based on the major recommendations of the Continental framework for national book and reading policy formulation document proposed by ADEA and Africa Union Commission (AUC) – (see appendix 1).

STEP 2: Reporting on the national diagnostic study

Once completed the findings of the national diagnostic study on the book industry are compiled and a report is prepared by the inter-sectorial research team. The report must reinvest all major recommendations made for the national book and reading policy formulation by the various stakeholders interviewed. Thus, it would be necessary to derive a set of legal and administrative instruments from the major findings of the study capable of translating the final objectives into concrete action for the development of the local book industry at all levels.

It is important that these instruments be consistent with the cultural and social policies in the country, and in harmony with the international conventions to which the country has subscribed (including the Florence Agreement and the Nairobi Protocol), as well as the various conventions relating to the free circulation of cultural goods and the copyright law.

STEP 3: Review and national validation of the draft National Book and Reading Policy

The research committee will organise a national workshop to share and discuss the report with all actors of the book supply value chain, representatives of decision makers, Government partners and specialized NGOs in order to make a final review, amendments and approval of the document.

STEP 4: Adoption of the National Book and Reading Policy document by the Government

Once the draft document of the National Book and Reading Policy is widely discussed among book professionals and policy makers for validation, it is submitted to the Government for official approval and transmission to the Parliament.

For all intent and purposes, the NBRP document should consider the essential following aspects:

- Support for the sustainable development of a national book industry, by putting in place appropriate institutional, legal and regulatory measures;
- Effective involvement of the national private sector in the production and distribution of educational materials;
- Support for the development of national professional organizations in the book chain (associations of writers, publishers, printers, booksellers, librarians, etc.);
- Support for human resource training and developmental actions at the various points of the book chain;
- Elimination of taxes on books production and trade both at national and intra-African levels;
- Copyright protection and fight against piracy, in accordance with international legislation in force;
- Support for the creation of sustainable mechanisms for public reading, fight against illiteracy and national languages promotion;
- Establishment of a viable and inclusive National Book Council;
- Enactment of a book law.

STEP 5: Preparation, adoption and enactment of a Book Law by Parliament

Once the draft document of the National Book and Reading Policy is approved, an accompanying draft book law drawn by the Attorney General's office, should be sent to the national parliament for enactment.

STEP 6: Set up and validation of an inter sectorial implementation body

At the final stage, under the institutional supervision of the Ministry of Education and/ or Culture, a *Book Council* (BC) or *National Book Development Council* (NBDC) should be set up including representatives of all prominent book professionals and Government departments to coordinate the implementation of the National Book and Reading Policy. This council is the right place for a permanent and trusted dialogue between public and private sectors. Most importantly, the dialogue between public and private sectors is one of the characteristics of the national policy for book and reading development; as well as in a certain view one of the conditions of its success (Garzon, 1997).

But, as a matter of policy and relevance, the listed policy elements are focused on shared areas requiring policy attention across the continent. They are, however, not uniform and every country's national stakeholders should interrogate and confirm the validity of each policy element, and possible implementation of the strategies before adoption. Expected outcomes of each strategy and organs/institutions/offices/responsible for implementation, and the time frame for completion should be stated. Ultimately, a **National Book Development Act** (the book law), requiring the formulation and implementation of a National Book and Reading Policy is the desired outcome.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

It will be important for each country to have a monitoring and evaluation plan at the start of the formulation period running through the implementation, and beyond. Monitoring will assist in collecting information about the processes, while ensuring that things are going on according to plan, as well as to identify and solve ensuing problems quickly. On the other hand, evaluation will help examine the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact of activities in the light of already specified objectives.

Therefore, it is particularly important to develop an M&E plan before beginning any monitoring activities so that there is a clear plan for what questions about the program need to be answered. It will help program staff decide how they are going to collect data to track indicators, how monitoring data will be analyzed, and how the results of data collection will be disseminated both to internal and

external publics. An M&E plan will help make sure data is being used efficiently to make the program as effective as possible and to be able to report on results at the end of the program cycle.

RISKS

It is anticipated that there will be risks involved in the process of formulating and implementing National Book and Reading Policies. Therefore, a risk mitigation plan should be designed, based on any country local realities, to eliminate or minimize the impact of the risks that are likely to have a negative impact on the program. The risks may be related to such aspects as technical, costs management, funding or even political interference. Risk management should include risk assessment and a mitigation strategy for those risks.

There will be need for risk management strategy, involving identifying, analyzing, and minimizing potential problems that could negatively affect the progress of a program. The main objective of risk management is to take care of anything that might stop the process from reaching its ultimate goal. There may be need to set up regular meetings and regular communication such as webinars and in person meetings to monitor risk during the course of the program.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

The Continental Framework on Book and Reading Policy Formulation in Africa

APPENDIX 2

Questionnaires to Stakeholders

APPENDIX 3:

Brochure:

A Brief Guide on National Book & Reading Policies
(NBRP's) Formulation & Implementation in Africa

APPENDIX 4

Model Book Law

APPENDIX 5

List of major African Professional Book Fairs

APPENDIX 6

Recommended Media and other Channels

APPENDIX 7

Model Cover Letter to Ministries of Education

APPENDIX 8

Validation Tool

USEFUL LINKS

1. <http://www.adeanet.org/en/>
2. <https://www.sabookcouncil.co.za/>
3. <http://www.gbdc.gov.gh/>



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