



**CAPACITY-BUILDING WORKSHOP FOR AJEF MEMBERS
AND LAND PROFESSIONALS**
**From Competence to Influence: Tools for planning, writing and
communication**



Yaoundé, Cameroon / 23 August 2025
Workshop report



Table of contents

I. Introduction	3
II. Workshop schedule	4
1. Presentation of the Audrey Barker Fund.....	4
2. Le montage et présentation de PowerPoint.....	4
3. The Rapid Planning Toolkit	6
4. Writing an effective resume and cover letter: keys to successful job applications.....	8
5. How to apply for a scholarship/research grant in the field of land tenure: where to find them and how to apply	10
III. Conclusion.....	13



I. Introduction

The Association des Jeunes Experts sur les Questions Foncières (AJEF) is a civil society organisation (CSO) based in Cameroon. Present in several countries on the African continent, it stands out for its expertise in land and property issues, its strategic support for decentralised local authorities, and its commitment to education and land governance.

For the past three years, AJEF has been working actively in Africa, in partnership with various institutions, and has established itself as a major player in the promotion of inclusive and responsible land governance. Its most notable achievements include the successful organisation of the International Seminar on Land Governance in Africa, and the launch of the NELGA alumni network in Central Africa. It also contributed significantly to the co-organisation of the 4th and 5th Land and Real Estate Fairs in Cameroon, the national awareness-raising project on the problems of land sales and land grabbing, the virtual conference on the issues and challenges of responsible agro-pastoral governance in Africa, and the setting up of the Multi-Actor Youth and Land Platform in Africa, supported by YILAA.

Combining competitiveness and excellence, AJEF has more than twenty successful projects to its credit, all focusing on land issues in Africa. In line with the guidelines for the development of study programmes on land governance in Africa, AJEF regularly offers capacity-building sessions to its members, the research community and professionals in the sector to meet the needs of an increasingly demanding professional world. With the support of the Aubrey Barker Fund, which works to improve survey skills and sustainable land management in developing countries through professional training and capacity building for the benefit of local communities, AJEF organised a capacity building workshop on 23 August 2025 in Yaoundé to equip its members and the research community with the following topics:

- Editing and presenting PowerPoint presentations
- Writing professional CVs and covering letters
- The Rapid Planning Toolkit



- Writing policy briefs
- Opportunities for research grants in the land sector

39 participants attended this training course, 17 of whom attended face-to-face and 22 online. The workshop was marked by question-and-answer sessions, constructive discussions and coffee breaks.

II. Workshop schedule

The workshop began at 8:30 a.m. with a welcome speech by Dr. Diane TAPIMALI, Director of Indigenous Peoples, who also presented the AJEF, its missions, and its objectives.

1. Presentation of the Audrey Barker Fund

In his speech, Iain GREENWAY, the ABF Chair, explained that ABF is Dedicated to enhancing sustainable survey and land management skills in developing countries through professional education and capacity building for the lasting benefit of local communities. Once more, Aubrey Barker, a distinguished surveyor from Guyana and the initial President (designate) of the Commonwealth Association of Surveying and Land Economy (CASLE) who died before the formal creation of CASLE. More also, this fund offer the grants and scholarships to support projects which positively impact the ability to measure and manage matters directly related to land. Asked about scholarships in his field, Iain replied that there are scholarships available on the ABF website.

2. Le montage et présentation de PowerPoint

The session focused on best practices for creating and presenting slideshows using PowerPoint. In his introductory remarks, Mr. Clovis TADOH explained that PowerPoint is a tool for summarizing information, particularly useful for presenting academic work (dissertations, theses) or professional projects. He emphasized several key points for effective presentations, including:

- Slide content: It is crucial not to overload slides with text. The goal is to present a summary, not the entire document.



- Use of visuals: The use of images is strongly recommended to illustrate your points and make the presentation more dynamic and understandable.
- Moderation of effects: Avoid excessive transitions and animations that may distract the audience.
- Mastery of the subject: the presenter should only address topics that they have a thorough understanding of in order to remain confident and credible.

The presentation prompted several pertinent questions and comments from the audience.

Regarding alternatives to PowerPoint, Tatiana OMENGUE raised the question of using other tools such as Canvas, Gamma, or Google Slides. Mr. Clovis responded by emphasizing the importance of manual learning in design, arguing that it allows for better appropriation and understanding of the work, unlike a fully AI-automated generation that can make it "weak."

With regard to time management, Christian MVOGO drew a parallel between the concise nature of a PowerPoint presentation and the management of allocated time. Mr. Clovis confirmed that it is essential to respect the time allocated, which requires thorough preparation and rehearsal beforehand.

As for Stress Management and Comfort, Christian BENE and Diane added comments on the human aspects of the presentation. They emphasized the importance of knowing how to manage one's emotions and focusing on the aspects of the subject with which one is most comfortable in order to give a better performance.

Based on the presentation and discussions, the following recommendations can be made for preparing and delivering PowerPoint presentations:

- Focus on summarizing by designing slides as a concise visual aid rather than as an exhaustive text document.
- Enrich slides with visuals, images, graphics, and other relevant elements to illustrate ideas and capture attention;
- Limit the use of animations and transitions to what is strictly necessary so as not to distract attention from the main message;



- Practice presenting your slideshow to master the content and flow perfectly and stay within the allotted time.
- Structure your presentation around the aspects of the subject that you know best so that you can speak with confidence.
- Learn emotion management techniques to remain calm and professional in front of an audience.

Mastering your tools: Although AI tools exist, it is recommended that you master the manual creation of presentations for a better understanding and customization of your work.

3. The Rapid Planning Toolkit

Moderated by Ms. Agnès Tatiana OMENGUE EDOA, she began by explaining that this tool was designed to guide and assist mayors and other municipal managers in planning the development and management of cities. The context for its creation is the strong population growth observed in African cities, often accompanied by poorly organized urbanization and sanitation problems. The main objective of the toolkit is to enable the creation of clean and well-planned cities, while ensuring environmental protection. The implementation of the tool is based on several key steps, including:

- The drafting of a growth charter, a fundamental document that defines the vision for the development of the neighborhood or city, taking into account local realities and resident communities.
- A public consultation that allows the charter to be submitted to communities and their opinions to be sought before it is validated and officially presented.
- The development of a rapid growth plan, a detailed action plan to implement the vision of the charter.
- Preliminary mapping aimed at creating models to visualize and organize future development.
- Identifying landowners will enable the identification of landowners and provide insight into land use plans to avoid building in unauthorized or high-risk areas.



A major challenge raised during the presentation was the low proportion of people holding land titles in Cameroon, which may complicate the implementation of these measures. The presentation was followed by a question-and-answer session that clarified several points.

In response to a question from Mr. Christian MVOGO regarding the scope of application of the tool, the presenter clarified that the toolkit is versatile. It can be used both for the creation of new cities and for the restructuring of existing neighborhoods or cities.

As for the involvement of legal experts, one participant asked whether the tool provided for the involvement of a lawyer. The speaker explained that although the tool does not formally require it, the contribution of a lawyer is considered very important and necessary in the implementation of any project of this nature.

Furthermore, Mr. Christian MVOGO raised the issue of the tool's applicability to local land issues (land grabbing, evictions, lack of land titles). The presenter acknowledged the complexity of the situation in Cameroon but affirmed that with political will and practical work, the tool could be deployed.

Finally, it was emphasized that the tool is not exclusively intended for government use. Civil society organizations can use it to set up projects and seek funding. The opportunity to apply for the Urban Kickstart 2025 call for projects was mentioned. Ms. Diane TAPIMALI also suggested approaching FEICOM, which has funding available for urbanization projects.

In light of the presentation and discussions, the following recommendations were made:

- Incorporate legal expertise: Given the complexity of land issues in Cameroon, it is recommended that a lawyer or land expert be systematically involved from the outset of any project using this toolkit.
- Adapting the tool to the local context: before large-scale deployment, it would be appropriate to conduct a pilot project to adapt the "toolkit" to the specific legal, social, and administrative realities of Cameroon.



- Conduct a preliminary land analysis: for any planning project, it is crucial to carry out an in-depth preliminary study of the land situation in the area concerned in order to anticipate and manage potential conflicts.
- Actively explore funding opportunities: Interested organizations and municipalities are encouraged to document projects based on this methodology and submit them to potential funders such as FEICOM and international programs such as "Urban Kickstart."

4. Writing an effective resume and cover letter: keys to successful job applications

The training module on writing resumes (CVs) and cover letters was led by Ms. AMAFELA Doria.

With regard to the CV as a strategic application tool, the speaker emphasized that the CV must be impactful and capable of capturing the attention of a recruiter in less than ten seconds. To achieve this, it is essential to systematically adapt it to the position being sought in order to highlight the most relevant skills. The content should be organized in reverse chronological order, starting with the most recent experience. It was reiterated that a resume, like a cover letter, must be free of spelling and grammar mistakes. Ms. AMAFELA also mentioned the need to keep your resume up to date, both on online platforms and in your personal files. Regarding recommendations, she emphasized the importance of asking people with whom you have a good professional relationship. To facilitate CV creation, several online applications and tools were presented, including: Canva, Zety, VisualCV, Kickresume, Novoresume, indeed, and ResumeUp.

The presentation was followed by a rich and constructive discussion session, during which several participants shared their views and advice.

Participants asked for advice on how to make their resumes more competitive. In response, tools such as Claude AI were mentioned as alternatives to ChatGPT to help structure and format professional documents. However, Christian BENE expressed clear reservations about the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for resume writing, stating that he would



immediately discard any resume suspected of being generated by AI. He emphasized that AI should be a tool to aid in wording or structuring, not a content generator. Recruiters value authenticity, personality, and the candidate's real experiences. A resume generated entirely by AI lacks substance and is often identifiable by its generic style and meaningless wording. Nuancing these comments, Giovanni ENGAMBA stated that it is possible to use certain forms of AI in a subtle way, without it being detectable by recruiters.

Christian MVOGO concluded the workshop by emphasizing the importance of carefully crafting the body of the application email and always including a clear and precise subject line before sending the application.

At the end of the session, a series of key recommendations were made to optimize applications:

- Include hyperlinks (URLs) in your resume to specific work (publications, reports, blog posts, portfolios) to provide tangible evidence of your expertise and achievements.
- Focus on following dedicated accounts and pages on professional social networks (particularly LinkedIn and X/Twitter) to stay informed in real time about new calls for applications.
- Ban AI-generated resumes by crafting your resume yourself so that it accurately reflects your career path and personality. In reality, authenticity and specificity are major selection criteria for evaluators.
- Name the file professionally: use a clear naming convention such as "CV_LastName_FirstName_Position.pdf" to make it easier for recruiters to identify.
- Customize for Each Position: systematically tailor your resume to the specific requirements of each job offer.
- Highlight achievements: focus on describing concrete and tangible results obtained in past experiences.
- Be clear and structured: use a spacious layout with clearly defined sections (experience, education, etc.).
- Optimize the Skills section: highlight the skills (hard skills and soft skills) that are most relevant to the position you are applying for.



- Maintain an active presence on LinkedIn: ensure that your LinkedIn profile is up to date and consistent with the information on your resume, and maintain regular activity on the site.

5. How to apply for a scholarship/research grant in the field of land tenure: where to find them and how to apply

The presentation was led by Yannick MENDOUGA, who began by emphasizing the central role of land issues in current development challenges. He then detailed the different categories of scholarships available. These include scholarships for master's and doctoral degrees, postdoctoral fellowships for research after the doctorate, and project funding grants to support specific initiatives.

Mr. MENDOUGA then shared a list of specialized platforms and websites where these opportunities can be found, noting that the choice often depends on the subject area. He cited, among others, Land Portal (which focuses on land governance, data, policies, and international events), CORAF, CBSI (Science Initiative for the Congo Basin: examples of targeted networks and initiatives)

A crucial point was made about the importance of choosing a scholarship that matches one's language skills. The presentation concluded with a practical six-step guide to applying effectively for a scholarship:

- Identification: finding a scholarship that matches your profile and your project.
- Reading: Carefully read the eligibility criteria.
- Preparation: gather all the required documents.
- Respect: strictly adhere to deadlines and requested formats.
- Proofreading: proofread and have someone else proofread the file before sending it.
- Submission: finalize your application by clicking on "apply" or "postuler."
- Recommendations for future applicants

Following this informative presentation, several recommendations were made to optimize applications:



- Precise targeting: Prospective applicants should focus only on scholarships that perfectly match their profile, research project, and language skills. Applying indiscriminately is a waste of time.
- Rigorous method: It is essential to follow the six application steps outlined. Methodical preparation and adherence to instructions are essential to avoid rejection of the application.
- Proactive monitoring: It is advisable to adopt a strategy of constant monitoring, particularly on professional social networks, to stay informed of new opportunities and calls for applications.

6. How to write powerful policy briefs: your research deserves to be heard

Dr. TAPIMALI presented the policy brief as an essential decision-making tool designed to be addressed directly to policymakers. The main objective is to provide a clear and structured solution to a problematic situation.

During the presentation, the key elements of an effective policy brief were highlighted:

- Title: It should be short, direct, and evocative (3 to 10 words maximum), with a specific geographical reference (e.g., a location in Cameroon).
- Content: The context must be precise and the problem clearly stated. The methodology used, the results obtained, the recommendations proposed, and the action plan must be presented very clearly.
- Legitimacy: Ideally, the document should be drafted by those directly affected by the issue, as their experience lends greater legitimacy to the document.
- Argumentation: It is crucial to support proposals with specific facts and reliable, verifiable information. The consequences of inaction must also be emphasized in order to encourage decision-makers to take action.
- Format: A policy brief should be concise and direct, not exceeding five pages.

The discussion phase provided an opportunity to explore the concepts presented in greater depth. Participants discussed the importance of conveying their message in a powerful way.



The discussion highlighted the importance of tailoring the content and tone of the policy brief to the target audience. It was emphasized that it is not enough to have reliable information; it is also necessary to know how to present it in a way that influences the decision-making process.

The discussion also focused on the need to carefully target the recipients of recommendations to ensure that they reach those with the power to implement them. Participants therefore considered strategies to ensure that proposals do not remain unheeded.

At the end of this session, several recommendations were made to improve the quality of policy brief writing:

- Aim for clarity and efficiency: the document must be able to be read quickly by decision-makers who are often overloaded.
- Anchor yourself in reality: use facts, figures, and verifiable data to justify your proposals. Concrete examples and powerful illustrations reinforce the impact.
- Involve the people concerned: ensure that the policy brief reflects the experience and concerns of those directly affected by the issue. Their voices are a major asset to the credibility of the document.
- Target decision-makers: make recommendations that are both relevant and achievable for the intended audience. Ensure that your proposals are in line with political priorities and constraints.
- Highlight the consequences of inaction: don't just offer solutions. Emphasize what could happen if nothing is done to solve the problem; this adds a sense of urgency that can spur action.



III. Conclusion

The capacity building session enabled learners to acquire skills in writing CVs, cover letters, and policy briefs, as well as in searching for research grants and applying the rapid planning toolkit. All of the recommendations made will enable each people to update their skills in order to seize opportunities. A special announcement was made regarding the submission of four policy briefs to the Audrey Barker Fund for publication. The organizers closed the training session with words of thanks and a dinner.