

**THE AFRICA COLLOQUIUM OF LEGAL
COUNSEL TO PARLIAMENTS**

**COLLOQUIUM TRAINING AND ATTACHMENT
POLICY**

FEBRUARY, 2025

1.0 BACKGROUND

The Africa Colloquium of Legal Counsel to Parliaments is an event held once in every two years. The Colloquium was established as a forum through which Legal Counsel serving in Parliaments would meet, share their experiences and learn from each other with the aim of enhancing their role in the delivery of sound, professional and independent legal advice to their respective Parliaments.

The overall purpose of the Colloquium is networking and sharing of information amongst Legal Counsel serving in Parliaments across Africa and its objectives are the—

1. interaction, networking and inter-linkage between Legal Counsel serving in the Parliaments of different jurisdictions in Africa.
2. examination and enhancement of the functions and roles of Legal Counsel serving in the Parliaments of Africa;
3. examination of the functional inter-linkages of Legal Counsel and other officers serving in Parliaments, the other arms of Government, the legal fraternity and the public;
4. sharing of modern trends and best-practices in the provision of legal services to Parliaments;
5. examination of contemporary legal and parliamentary issues and questions;
6. promotion of the work of Legal Counsel;
7. promotion of capacity building of Legal Counsel serving in Parliament; and
8. the networking and co-operation with Associations with similar objectives.

2.0 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Parliaments are the supreme law-making organs in various jurisdictions and they play an important role in the life of a nation. They make new laws, change existing laws and repeal laws which are no longer needed, they represent and articulate the views and wishes of the citizens in decision making process and oversee the activities of the executive so that the government is accountable to the people. Achieving good

governance requires the existence of a strong, effective and efficient Parliament. The capacity of the legislature to perform its functions efficiently and effectively is a major concern in many African countries. Indeed, the Parliaments in Africa are quite young and the most underdeveloped amongst the three arms of government. They are faced with challenges which can be tackled through training and retraining by those engaged in offering services to Parliaments.

The objectives of the Colloquium under the Constitution emphasize interaction, networking and inter-linkage between Legal Counsel serving the Parliaments of different jurisdictions in Africa. Similarly, the principle of cooperation under the Nairobi Principles requires Parliaments to facilitate cooperation, collaboration and benchmarking among their Offices of Legal Counsel and those of other jurisdictions. Offices of Legal Counsel should organize and participate in conferences, colloquia, attachments and exchange programmes with their counterparts from other jurisdictions in order to share their knowledge, experiences and best practices.

It is against this background that the Africa Colloquium of Legal Counsel to Parliaments conceived the need to develop a training and attachment policy for Legal Counsel to Parliaments. This is informed by the recognition that experienced professional and knowledgeable staff is an important condition for Members of Parliament to be able to effectively exercise their oversight and decision-making function. There is a wealth of experience to be shared from the different African jurisdictions on the provision of legal services to Parliaments.

This policy aims to establish training and attachment programmes that provide experience and expertise to parliamentary counsel particularly those working in the legal services. Parliamentary training and attachment programmes focused particularly on counsel from partner parliaments to the Colloquium, will therefore be a priority for the Colloquium partners. This will provide Legal Counsel with practical experience in the work of the Parliaments of different jurisdictions and its Committees as well as an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the legal offices of the partner Parliaments to the Colloquium.

Therefore, the strategy for this policy is aimed at establishing a mechanism to oversee effective and efficient implementation of the training and attachment programmes in the different parliamentary jurisdictions. It proposes to establish a committee to oversee the implementation of the training and attachment programmes. The Committee shall be based at the headquarters of the Colloquium which shall be Nairobi, Kenya.

By bringing together Legal Counsel from various African countries, this policy sets the scene for future co-operation and lasting links among participants, as well as helping the Parliaments fulfill their roles. Finally, the programmes provide an intangible benefit for the building of contacts between Legal Counsel to Parliaments. Through the training and attachment programme, Counsels will meet their counterparts from neighboring states and beyond which is a welcome development.

3.0 TRAINING AND ATTACHMENT POLICY

3.1 CITATION

This policy shall be referred to as “Colloquium Training and Attachment Policy”.

3.2 OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

The purpose of the Colloquium Training and Attachment Policy is to —

1. develop high level of competence among Legal Counsel with a view to enhance effectiveness, efficiency and overall productivity;
2. provide Legal Counsel an opportunity to exchange ideas in the context of their own experiences in their legislatures and to make them aware of the environment, tradition, culture and working of the parliamentary institutions of other jurisdictions;
3. equip Legal Counsel with the basic concepts, skills and techniques required for drafting legislation in order to enable them to appreciate better the nature of their role and place in the overall context of the parliamentary system thus leading to a more informed response to their work in relation to Parliament.
4. provide study tour opportunities for parliamentary Legal Counsel to foreign Parliaments and training institutions.
5. provide a framework for training of members of the Colloquium by parliamentary associations and other training agencies.

3.3 APPLICATION

The policy shall apply to members of the Colloquium undertaking training and attachment by the Colloquium. It also provides a framework for training of Colloquium members in various jurisdictions by parliamentary associations and other training agencies.

3.4 POLICY STRATEGY

The strategy for this policy is aimed at establishing a mechanism to oversee effective and efficient implementation of the training and attachment programmes in the different parliamentary jurisdictions. The policy strategy adopted therefore is to—

1. establish an effective coordination framework for training and attachment of Legal Counsel in Colloquium member states;
2. establish a committee to oversee the implementation of the training and attachment programmes;
3. develop procedures for the administration of the training and attachment programmes;
4. formulate a plan of action with specific timelines on the training and attachment programmes;
5. create a mechanism for sharing information on training and attachment programmes by the members of the Colloquium through electronic, social platform and print media;
6. facilitate adherence to the requirements of the training and attachment programmes by member states;
7. facilitate virtual training for Legal Counsel in programmes designed by parliamentary associations and other training agencies in collaboration with the Training Committee.
8. identify the specific obligations and corresponding implementers; and
9. develop and implement a monitoring and evaluation framework for the training and attachment programmes.

3.5 IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

1. The implementation framework for this policy shall consist of the establishment of a Training Committee of the Council to monitor and oversee the training and attachment programmes.

2. The Training Committee shall be based at the headquarters of the Colloquium which shall be Nairobi, Kenya;
3. The membership of the Committee shall consist of—
 - a chairperson who shall be a member of the Council
 - the Secretary-General;
 - six members of the Colloquium, who shall be regional representatives; and
 - two members of the Colloquium appointed by the President and who have knowledge and experience in training and attachments.
4. The Committee may co-opt any other person, as and when required.

3.6 MANDATE OF THE COMMITTEE

The mandate of the Training Committee shall be to—

1. develop and review the training and attachment procedures as needed;
2. consider and approve the training and attachment plan for each parliamentary jurisdiction;
3. consider and approve the training and attachment requests from different parliamentary jurisdictions;
4. ensure efficient coordination of training and attachment in different parliamentary jurisdictions;
5. make all Colloquium parliamentary jurisdictions aware of open training and development opportunities;
6. assist in prioritizing the identified training needs of different parliamentary jurisdictions;
7. assess and evaluate the effectiveness of the training and attachments programmes;
8. liaise with different parliamentary jurisdictions and facilitate attendance of Legal Counsel to the training and attachment programmes;
9. liaise with individual members of the Colloquium in identification of training needs and courses;

10. regularly review the Colloquium Training and Attachment Policy;
11. keep and maintain database of all training providers, training and attachment programmes and beneficiaries of the various trainings and attachments undertaken by the different Colloquium parliamentary jurisdictions;
12. regularly monitor and evaluate training and attachment programmes undertaken by the various Colloquium parliamentary jurisdictions;
13. establish a mechanism for sharing experiences on the training and attachments of members of the Colloquium in order to strengthen training and attachment programmes;
14. develop guidelines for application for training for all members of the Colloquium;
15. liaise with other institutions for training and attachment programmes for members of the Colloquium including trainings by the following parliamentary associations and training agencies—
 - (1) The Commonwealth Association of Legislative Counsel;
 - (2) Commonwealth Parliamentary Association; and
 - (3) The Centre for Parliamentary Studies and Training.
16. collaborate with the parliamentary associations and other training agencies to—
 - (a) provide virtual training opportunities to Legal Counsel in legislative drafting, post-legislative scrutiny, litigation, parliamentary procedures and oversight functions;
 - (b) facilitate access to training programs for members in various Colloquium parliamentary jurisdictions; and
 - (c) develop training modules and programs for members of the Colloquium.
17. collaborate with the training committees established in various Parliaments.

3.7 GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

The implementation of this policy will be guided by the following principles and values—

1. fairness, transparency and equity;

2. fostering of patriotism and peace;
3. fostering of understanding and cooperation among the member countries to the Colloquium;
4. provision of a fair, flexible, safe and rewarding working environment for attachments;
5. promotion of the spirit of cooperation in the workplace based on consultation and communication;
6. development of a working environment that is free from discrimination, recognition of the diverse backgrounds of the different parliamentary jurisdictions and promotion of inter-regional integration;
7. high regard for principles of political neutrality, professionalism, efficiency, equality and fairness, courtesy and discipline in parliamentary jurisdictions; and
8. maintenance of high ethical standards of honesty, accountability and integrity in the delivery of legal services.

3.8 MANAGEMENT OF TRAINING AND ATTACHMENTS

The Council to the Colloquium in general and the Training Committee specifically are responsible for the administration, revision, interpretation and application of this policy.

3.9 REVIEW OF POLICY

This policy will be reviewed at least biennially and from time to time as and when circumstances demand.

4.0 ELIGIBILITY FOR TRAINING AND ATTACHMENT

A member of the Colloquium shall be eligible for training and attachment.

4.1 FREQUENCY OF TRAINING AND ATTACHMENT

Training and attachment for a member may be on bi-annual basis and subject to the directions of the respective Colloquium parliamentary jurisdiction.

4.2 DURATION OF TRAINING AND ATTACHMENT

The duration of the training and attachment programmes will be for a maximum of two weeks and subject to the guidelines developed and adopted by the Training Committee.

4.3 TRAINING AND ATTACHMENT OPTIONS

The options for training and attachment of Legal Counsel may include—

1. mentoring and skills sharing;
2. placement to different parliamentary jurisdictions;
3. study visits to other parliamentary jurisdictions;
4. setting up opportunities such as public speaking and making presentations at different parliamentary jurisdictions;
5. attending internal and external trainings and workshops;
6. attending virtual trainings; and
7. any other training advised by the Training Committee.

4.4 APPLICATION FOR TRAINING AND ATTACHMENT

1. The training and attachment opportunities shall be advertised on the Colloquium's website.
2. The applications for training or attachment of Legal Counsel shall be made to the Training Committee through the respective Colloquium parliamentary jurisdictions.

4.5 FUNDING OF TRAINING AND ATTACHMENT

Each Colloquium parliamentary jurisdiction will provide funds for its members which include air ticket, accommodation and tuition in case of training or attachment.

4.5A: ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FUND

There is established a Fund known as the Colloquium Training and Attachment Fund which shall be administered by the Council.

The object and purpose of the Fund shall be to provide funds to assist Legal Counsel to pursue training and attachment at parliamentary jurisdictions, recognized by the Council to the Colloquium.

4.5B: SOURCES OF THE FUND

The sources of the Fund shall be—

- (a) such monies as may be received by the Council in the form of donations, endowments, grants and gifts
- (b) sums of money as may be raised by the Council for the execution of the training and attachment programmes of the Colloquium; and
- (c) any sums of money borrowed by the Council.

There shall be paid out of the Fund any expenditure approved by the Council and incurred in connection with the administration of the training and attachment programmes.

4.6 GUIDELINES ON ATTENDANCE OF ATTACHMENT PROGRAMMES

A Legal Counsel on an attachment programme will be working in the standing committees, caucuses and other forums in the Parliaments to facilitate their day to day work. Specifically, the Legal Counsel are expected to—

1. adhere to policies, procedures and rules governing professional behavior in the assigned Colloquium parliamentary jurisdiction;
2. be punctual and work the required number of hours at times agreed with the appointed supervisor;
3. notify their supervisor if they are unable to attend as planned;
4. respect the confidentiality of the workplace, its clients and its employees;

5. if things are slow, take the initiative and volunteer for different tasks or other work;
6. discuss any problems with their supervisor and, if necessary, with the attachment coordinator at the Colloquium parliamentary jurisdiction;
7. at the end of the attachment programme, the supervisor will provide Legal Counsel with a certificate of attachment designed by the Colloquium; and
8. the Legal Counsel will evaluate the overall attachment experience and the evaluation form must be returned to the supervisor.

4.7: SUPERVISION OF LEGAL COUNSEL ON ATTACHMENT

1. Legal Counsel will have a designated site supervisor who will be responsible for providing orientation and supervision.
2. The supervisor will be required to possess expertise in the area in which the Counsel will work and be available to the Legal Counsel on a regular basis.
3. The supervisor will be required to possess qualities such as leadership, strong communication skills and patience and will serve as a teacher, mentor, critic and boss to the Legal Counsel.
4. Where Legal Counsel shall be rotated to various departments in order to gain broad-based experience, there shall be a single overall supervisor who shall oversee the attachment of the Legal Counsel as a whole.
5. The supervisor will ensure regular and ongoing supervision of Legal Counsel during the attachment programme and review the progress on projects and provide feedback to the Legal Counsel.
6. The supervisor will oversee and assign Legal Counsel work.
7. The supervisor will provide Legal Counsel with an evaluation form and a letter of recommendation at the end of the attachment programme.

4.8: VIRTUAL TRAININGS

The Colloquium aims to enhance capacity and effectiveness through targeted training and development. Specifically, the Colloquium focuses on strengthening capacity building, facilitating networking, knowledge sharing and best practices in parliamentary training.

1. Objectives of virtual trainings

This section of the Training Policy provides the procedures governing development, delivery and evaluation of the virtual training programs offered by parliamentary associations and other training agencies.

It aims to ensure the quality, accessibility, efficiency and security of the virtual training process while promoting best practices in online learning.

Given that parliamentary counsel come from different countries, virtual trainings facilitate experience sharing and the exchange of best practices in parliamentary procedures and training.

2. Scope of the training

- (1) The training agencies will provide virtual trainings and specialized programs to Legal Counsel serving Parliaments across Africa in the following areas—
 - (a) legislative drafting;
 - (b) post-legislative scrutiny;
 - (c) litigation;
 - (d) parliamentary practice and procedures and oversight; and
 - (e) other related areas.
- (2) The training agencies will be responsible for providing facilitators and resource persons for virtual trainings, allocating resources and developing the modules and programs in collaboration with the Training Committee.

3. Methodology

- (1) The training agencies will advertise courses locally and internationally on the Colloquium's website for application by members of the Colloquium.
- (2) The virtual training requests will be submitted electronically through the designated portal after approval by the respective Colloquium parliamentary jurisdiction.

- (3) The training agencies will establish a clear process for registering participants and communication channel for virtual training programs.
- (4) The training agencies will prepare modules and provide training materials to participants electronically.
- (5) The training agencies will ensure accessibility of the modules and training materials to participants.
- (6) The training agencies will design flexible modules and programs to allow participants balance their training with other responsibilities.
- (7) Access to training materials shall be restricted to authorized persons.
- (8) Approved video conferencing and messaging applications shall be utilized for the virtual trainings while ensuring the platforms meet the specific needs of the training agencies and participants in terms of features, accessibility, security and cost.
- (9) The training agencies will employ diverse methods including courses, seminars, research forums, online modules, blended learning and collaborative programs.
- (10) Virtual training will incorporate interactive elements and engaging content to maximize learner participation and knowledge retention.
- (11) Participant's progress and knowledge gain will be assessed through a variety of methods such as class discussion, experience sharing sessions, group work and individual assignments.
- (12) A Certificate will be issued for every course and authenticated using digital signature protocols.
- (13) Training materials and records shall be archived in a secure repository for future reference.

4. Data security and confidentiality

- (1) All training materials and communication will be encrypted and stored in secure databases to ensure security and confidentiality.
- (2) The training agencies will implement appropriate security measures to protect participant's data from unauthorized access, use or disclosure.
- (3) The training agencies will conduct regular security audits to ensure compliance with data protection standards.

5. Training and capacity building

- (1) The provisions of this Training Policy shall apply with regard to the qualifications for training, duration and regularity of the training and funding of Colloquium members for the training.

- (2) A refresher session shall be conducted for participants and trainers to update them on the digital training platform to be utilized for the virtual trainings.

6. Monitoring and evaluation

- (1) The training agencies will evaluate the effectiveness of the virtual training programs through online evaluation feedback forms by participants and trainers and the evaluation data will be used to improve future training programs.
- (2) Regular evaluation will be conducted to identify challenges and implement improvements.

7. Implementation and review

The virtual training sessions will take effect immediately upon approval by the Council and shall be subject to review periodically to ensure alignment with technological developments and best practices in parliamentary training.