

Media immersion and training for journalists on Africa's circular economy (13 – 16 October 2025)

Background

Africa's push towards a circular economy is no longer an abstract ambition. Governments across the continent are incorporating circularity into national policies, entrepreneurs are scaling innovative solutions, and the African Union has adopted a Continental Circular Economy Action Plan (2024 – 2034). Despite this progress, public awareness and media coverage remain limited. Reporting on circular opportunities often appears fragmented or highly technical, leaving citizens, investors and decision-makers unaware of the benefits. To sustain momentum, Africa needs compelling stories that translate policy and technical advances into language people can relate to.

This media immersion initiative aims to build a network of journalists who can accurately and persuasively report on the continent's circular economy transition. Rather than focusing solely on a single institution's programmes, the emphasis is on improving the visibility of circular initiatives across Africa and showcasing how circularity creates jobs, strengthens competitiveness and bolsters climate resilience. By investing in training, exposure and mentorship, the programme will:

- **Strengthen public understanding** by equipping journalists with framing tools and exposure to technical debates so that they can craft human-centred stories that resonate with policymakers, investors and citizens.
- **Build a lasting community of practice** by cultivating a network of 10 journalists for this first cohort from diverse linguistic and geographic backgrounds who will continue to cover circular economy issues long after the event.
- **Amplify Africa's voice** by ensuring that African perspectives and experiences shape global discussions on circularity, with journalists linking country-level successes to continental priorities.

The training will take place alongside the ACEA Annual Meeting. Hosting the workshop in tandem with high-level meetings gives journalists direct access to different actors in Circular Economy in Africa, enabling them to capture newsworthy insights while also benefitting from a structured learning environment.

UNECA will provide technical support and host the workshop, ensuring that discussions are grounded in sound economic analysis and aligned with broader development objectives.

Expected results and added value

- **Sustained media capacity** – A pool of 11 vetted journalists trained to report on circular topics will continue to highlight national and continental initiatives beyond the event. Their reporting will help to strengthen political leadership and attract investment in the circular economy.
- **High-quality coverage** – Participants will publish at least ten articles or broadcast pieces based on the Annual Meetings, expanding the reach of discussions beyond Ethiopia and showcasing Africa's leadership in circularity.
- **Continental narrative building** – By weaving together stories from different countries, the initiative will amplify Africa's voice on circular solutions and connect local experiences to global trends.

Programme overview

Day 1 – Orientation workshop (13 October) A full-day training introduces the circular economy landscape in Africa and situates it within broader industrialisation and trade agendas. Participants learn about key opportunities. Annex 1 for the detailed agenda

Day 2 – Exposure to high-level discussions (14 October). Journalists attend opening sessions, observe thematic showcases and engage with representative from different countries and other stakeholders to understand policy and investment opportunities. An end-of-day briefing aligns messaging and allows for reflection.

Day 3 – Sectoral deep dives and content lab (15 October). Journalists join sessions on priority sectors such as food systems, packaging, electronics, textiles and construction to capture thematic priorities and interview experts.

Day 4 – Field visit (16 October). Participants visit a local circular enterprise or city initiative in Addis Ababa and conduct on-site interviews with entrepreneurs, officials and beneficiaries. The visit reinforces the human impact of circular policies and provides material for follow-up stories. A final debrief consolidates narratives and plans publication timelines.

Deliverables

- **Participant selection and preparation** – 11 journalists selected for regional and language diversity, prepared through briefing materials and pre-event orientation. Travel and per-diem logistics will be handled by Africa21.
- **Media toolkit** – A curated package of factsheets, data points, interview guides and framing notes to ensure consistent and accurate reporting during and after the event.

- **Coverage outputs** – At least ten published articles, interviews or broadcast features across participating outlets, including human-centred multimedia pieces drawn from the field visit.
- **Post-event package** – A consolidated media digest summarising published outputs and lessons learned to guide future engagements.

Implementation and partnership

The initiative will be delivered in collaboration with Africa21, a pan-African association that convenes and trains journalists on sustainable development. Africa21's network of more than 1 000 journalists across 44 countries brings unmatched convening power and credibility. A dedicated coordinator will oversee selection, workshop facilitation, editorial guidance and logistics. UNECA will provide technical expertise and host the workshop, ensuring that the discussions reflect continental priorities and that training aligns with broader economic frameworks.

This collaboration combines Africa21's media expertise, UNECA's technical support and the momentum of the continental circular economy gathering to maximize impact.

By investing in journalists' capacity and creating space for informed storytelling, this media immersion programme will help Africa lead the global conversation on circularity and make the continent's innovations visible to policymakers, investors and the wider public.

ANNEX 1- AGENDA OF THE FIRST DAY – 13 october 2025

TIMEFRAME	ACTIVITIES	LEAD	CONTENT	KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR JOURNALISTS
8:00 – 8:30	Arrival and registration	ACEA – UNECA – Africa21		
8:30 – 8:45	Opening statements	ACEA UNECA Moderator : ACEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcoming remarks 	
8:45 – 9:00	Overview of the ACEA Annual Meeting agenda	ACEA Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agenda of the day Agenda of the Annual Meeting 	
8:45 – 9:30	Global trends & Lessons	Ellen MacArthur Foundation Moderator : UNECA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CE definition and principles Global trends and lessons on Circular Economy 	Africa's CE is part of a worldwide shift; Africa can leapfrog and attract capital if the narrative is clear.
9:30 – 10:15	Interactive session	Moderator : Africa21		
10:15 – 10:45	COFFEE BREAK			
10:45 – 11:30	The Circular Economy opportunities for Africa	UNECA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CE as part of Africa's structural transformation and development strategy 	CE goes beyond environment. It's also about trade, industrialization and Africa's leadership.
11:30 – 12:15	Interactive session	Moderator : Africa21		
12:15 – 13:45	LUNCH			
13:45 – 14:15	Africa's Agenda & Five Big Bets	ACEA Secretariat Moderator : UNECA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role of ACEA/ACEF in CE transition in Africa Grounds CE in AU CEAP and ACEA priorities; highlights investable sectors with political legitimacy. 	Africa owns its CE pathway; journalists can link national stories to continental priorities.
14:15 – 15:30	Interactive session	Moderator : Africa21		
15:30 – 17:00	Framing Circular Stories & interactive session with journalists	Africa21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Translates technical content into compelling narratives; equips journalists with a practical toolkit. 	Journalists leave with story angles, data points, and ready-to-use materials for coverage.