PASGR/PedaL e-Case Development Process

1. Background

In 2014, MRPP network universities and PASGR worked closely with the University of Minnesota, to author 38 digitally enabled case studies (e-cases) on a range of public policy issues on the continent. An e-case is an interactive multimedia case that presents real life scenarios that encourage learners to be inquisitive and actively explore concepts and issues rather than passively absorbing the subject matter. E-cases combine a range of resources such as video clips, audio clips, charts, graphs, reports, text, data and journal articles into an object that tells a compelling story.

MRPP e-cases were developed in a participatory process that incorporated knowledge and understanding of the African context as well as expertise and experience of MRPP teaching staff. The teachers identified components of the MRPP curriculum where e-cases would add the most value and maximize learning outcomes, and subsequently authored the e-cases. To date PASGR boasts the largest repository of e-cases on African public policy issues. The cases have been used to deliver MRPP courses to more than 500 students in 13 universities over the past 5 years. MRPP students have embraced the use of the cases and affirmed a range of competencies associated with the case method such as critical thinking, problem solving, and social consciousness and adaptation.

With the launch of the Pedagogical leadership in Africa (PedaL) project in 2018, case study teaching assumed even greater importance. PedaL aims to catalyze systemic change in teaching and learning across African universities starting with 25 target social science programmes that include the MRPP. Case study teaching is one of the key PedaL teaching and learning tools. However, paucity of case materials could constrain the adoption of the case method across social science programmes and beyond. It is therefore imperative to increase and diversify e-cases to support delivery of a variety of courses. It is expected that this process will cascade relevant skills to a new cohort of teaching staff and also lead to the development of about 25 new e-cases.

2. Key activities

The case development process will be organized around remote work, training and a write shop to be conducted on January 14 -16, 2019. It will involve the following key activities:

- 'Hands-on' training of additional teaching staff on the Hubert e-case development process;

- Research on key issues;

- Determination of case objectives and specification of relevant content;

- Elaboration of storylines/architecture for the e-cases;

- Identification and collection of a variety of assets that relate to individual cases;

- Loading and organizing a variety of assets that relate to individual cases into the e-case authoring software by the IT team;

- Finalization and deployment of the 25 e-cases into accessible media.

The case development process will draw on the expertise of experienced case authors as well as a cadre of teaching staff who will be trained in e-case authorship. The case development team comprises:

- Facilitators and trainers - to provide training as well as technical consultation and product review throughout the case development process;

- Experienced case authors who participated in the writing of the MRPP cases - to author the e-cases. They will develop the learning objectives and scenarios based on the requirements of the courses they teach and also determine the setting, protagonists and write the story;

- New case authors – to be trained in e-case authorship and to subsequently write e-cases;

- Media production team - IT experts who will work with e-case authors to collect and load the various assets (video clips, audio clips, charts, graphs, reports, text, etc.) into the e-case authoring software.

3. Expected outcomes

By the end of this process, 25 e-cases will have been developed to support delivery of a range of courses in the PedaL project including the MRPP programme. In addition, the pool of e-case authors would have expanded. The ultimate goal will be to improve the quality of teaching and learning so as to maximize learning outcomes among students.