



**MINISTRY OF ICT &
NATIONAL GUIDANCE**

NATIONAL COMMUNICATION POLICY



March 2026



FOREWORD

It is with great honor and a deep sense of responsibility that I present the Government Communication Policy, a strategic framework designed to strengthen Government communication in Uganda. The Government of Uganda recognizes that effective communication is the foundation of transparency, accountability, and citizen participation. It is through clear, consistent, and systematic information dissemination that we can build public trust, counter misinformation, and foster national unity.

The development of this policy was deeply consultative, involving engagements with Government Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs), Local Governments, Civil Society Organizations, media professionals, and private sector players. Their recommendations have shaped the principles and guidelines contained in this Policy, making it a robust and practical tool for improving Government communication.

The Department of Communication and Information Dissemination (C&ID) led this development, with extensive consultations across various sectors to ensure its relevance and effectiveness. This Policy builds upon existing communication structures, which it refines and strengthens to be more responsive, efficient, and align with Uganda's National Development Plan IV (NDP IV) and Vision 2040. Through these enhancements, the Government aims to foster greater public engagement, transparency and contribute to the achievement of national development goals.

As the Ministry entrusted with overseeing Uganda's Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector and Government communication, we are committed to ensuring that technology is fully leveraged to enhance public service delivery and citizen engagement.

A key priority is to digitize Government communication systems that will streamline public sector engagement and ensure that Government information is accessible, timely, and inclusive. The Policy institutionalizes strategic communications, enhances its role as an administrative function and as a driver of production and productivity with value addition to boost socio-economic development.

To ensure successful implementation, the Ministry of ICT and National Guidance will lead efforts in capacity building for Government communicators, foster collaboration across all levels of Government, and integrate technology-driven communication solutions. Public institutions must adopt a citizen-centric approach, ensuring that communication is transparent, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of all Ugandans, including marginalized groups such as persons with disabilities (PWDs) and hard-to-reach rural communities.

I call upon all stakeholders in Government, non-state actors, the media, civil society organizations, and the private sector to embrace and actively support its implementation. Together, we can create a knowledgeable, informed, engaged, and empowered citizenry. Through effective communication, we can drive national development, strengthen democracy, and transform Uganda.

For God and My Country.



Dr. Chris Baryomunsi (MP)

Minister of ICT and National Guidance

PREAMBLE

On behalf of the Ministry of Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance (MoICT&NG), it is a great honor to introduce to all our stakeholders, the National Communications Policy, 2026. As you, our cherished stakeholders may be aware, ours is the Ministry charged, among others, with coordinating the Government communication function, across Ministries, Departments, Agencies, and Local Governments.

Alongside our affiliated agencies, we seek to ensure that Government policies, programs, and special initiatives are communicated effectively and efficiently. This is to drive rapid growth and socio-economic transformation and to empower and positively impact our people by continuously engaging with them about opportunities available for livelihood enhancement. As such, this Policy is part of our dynamic approach towards communication at various levels, more so, robust engagement with the people of Uganda, taking and acting on feedback from them, for purposes of participatory service delivery.

The Policy is a derivative of an extensive literature review, in-depth research, and consultations with actors from the Government, private sector, academia, and media, among others. As such, it is anchored with Uganda's National Development Plan (NDP IV, 2025-2030). Since Uganda is an active state party externally, the Policy is also designed to illuminate our related engagements with the EAC, COMESA, African Union, the UN Frameworks, and other global multi-lateral and bilateral frameworks.

This Policy is also alive to emerging trends, with technology at the center stage of all facets of economic, social, and political dynamics, globally. Dynamic in nature, it is also attuned to the centrality of technology in the communication function for now, and for the future.

We can, and should leverage robust communication, among others to take Uganda to the next level, as envisaged in Uganda's National Vision, 2040. This Policy presents us with the most comprehensive framework, ever, to deliver our aspirations - as a Government, and as a nation.

I thank all those entities and individuals who generously supported us, including valuable insights, which have brought this Policy to life. I invite all our co-implementing partners to internalize this document and work closely with our Ministry to implement it, wholesomely.

For God and My Country.



Dr. Aminah Zawedde
Permanent Secretary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Communication Policy is intended to harmonize processes, systems, and feedback of communication, and to elevate its recognition and appreciation. In addition, the Policy is to promote digitization and inherent value addition of communication. The communication sector is vital for economic growth and effective Government service delivery. This sector greatly enhances the visibility of both public and private goods and services at national and international levels. It enhances public participation, transparency, accountability, visibility, and usage of digital skills and solutions while improving Uganda's image among others.

Communication is identified as a key driver of the globalization phenomenon that is integrating economies and the Policy explores opportunities and strategies to mitigate the threats therein. It targets to address adverse effects of the global environmental phenomena by improving planning for crisis communication, forecasting, and access to timely information and feedback among others.

The Policy addresses the problems of unstandardized processes of exchanging information, using inappropriate forms, inadequate media for intended purposes of communication and ineffective means of obtaining feedback. It recognizes the effects of these problems which include limited synchronization of processes and systems across the process of communication; slow processes of approval in clearing information for dissemination; high levels of distortion; inadequate tools of communication and lack of transparency among others.

It registers the impact of these effects such as low up-take of e-government services as indicated by the proportion of the population dissatisfied at 22.2% in FY2023/24 and inadequate citizen appreciation of public policies and programs indicated by the Government Effectiveness Index at 0.57% as of FY 2023/24 among others

The National Communication Policy seeks to aggregate institutional establishment of the function of communication in all Government Ministries, Departments, Agencies, Local Governments and Uganda's Missions abroad with institutionalized communication strategies to support increasing productivity across all sectors and value addition with increased exchange of data and information availing opportunities of synergies and complementarity.

The goal is "To establish clear and uniform communication processes that ensure timely, accurate information sharing and effective feedback across all Government entities and relevant stakeholders by 2030".

The Policy outlines strategic objectives to:

- i. Strengthen Government capacity for effective communication.
- ii. Enhance the synchronization of processes and systems of communication.
- iii. Increase digitization in communication.
- iv. Improve value addition from communication.

It provides a number of actions such as to formulate national standards for communication, provide adequate staff establishment structures in the public sector under the communication function, enhance prioritization of the role of communication in supporting the traditional administrative function, reduce restrictive Government procedures on communication (that limit the role of Responsible Officers), fasten processes of approval in clearing information for dissemination, provide adequate tools of communication, provide and promote national values, increase levels of digitalization/automation of Government content among others.

The Policy sets its major outcomes such as increased usage of digital solutions to 45%, high uptake of e-government services to 30%, enhanced citizen appreciation of public policies and programs, improved visibility of goods and services, improved public image about goods and services characterized by increased transparency and accountability in the provision of public services, reduced poverty rates with a decrease in the population below the poverty line, increased job creation with improved working conditions, improved service delivery with increased levels of public satisfaction with service delivery, adequate digital domestic solutions as indicated by increased products commercialized (both government and private sector), reduced crime rates and conflicts among stakeholders.

The Policy sets out its communication values, communication principles, implementation framework and strategies for coordination, and leadership. In addition, it identifies stakeholders and their roles in communication.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CNN:	Cable News Network
COMESA:	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CSOs:	Civil Society Organizations
EAC:	East African Community
FY:	Financial Year
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
ICT:	Information Communication Technology
MDAs:	Ministries Departments and Agencies
LGs:	Local Governments
NITA-U:	National Information Technology Authority - Uganda
NDPIV:	National Development Plan IV 2025/26-2029/30
RIA:	Regulatory Impact Assessment
SABC:	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SDGs:	Sustainable Development Goals
STI:	Science, Technology, and Innovation
UBC:	Uganda Broadcasting Corporation
UCC:	Uganda Communications Commission
USDs:	United States Dollars

1. INTRODUCTION

Globally, communication is a central aspect for the effective and efficient execution of operations, both in the public and private sectors. Effective communication is a critical enabler of governance, service delivery, and socio-economic transformation. In recognition of its central role in national development, Government developed the National Communication Policy to provide a clear and coordinated framework for public communication across all sectors. The National Communication Policy aims to support effective communication of Government policies and programmes for socio-economic transformation and to drive Uganda's development agenda across Government and non-state actors.

Government communication, which is the gist of this Policy, is the process of exchanging information in various forms between a sender and receiver through different media for an intended purpose and obtaining feedback. This encompasses, planned, systematic, and coordinated process through which Government institutions generate, disseminate, and manage information in order to inform, engage, and build trust with citizens and various stakeholders to support effective policy implementation, accountability, and public participation.

The Policy is intended to harmonize processes, systems, and feedback of communication, and to elevate its recognition and appreciation. In addition, the Policy seeks to promote digitization and inherent value addition of communication. The communication sector is vital for economic growth and effective Government service delivery. This sector greatly enhances the visibility of both public and private goods and services at national and international levels. It enhances public participation, transparency, accountability, visibility, and usage of digital skills and solutions while improving Uganda's image among others.

2. BACKGROUND

The Policy aims to support the achievements of the of the Vision 2040 by supporting the objectives of NDPIV, the Government's Tenfold Growth Strategy and the NRM Government Manifesto 2026/2031. The Policy is further aligned to global and regional frameworks to which Uganda is a state party. The Ministry of ICT and National Guidance is mandated to coordinate the communication function across Government, which will effectively be implemented through the National Communication Policy.

2.1 Policy Context

2.1.1 Global Policy Context

Economic Context: Globalization has brought about the integration of economies with the exponential growth of international trading termed as one global market. It is characterized by increased capital growth, outsourcing, technological changes, a shift from aid to trade, inequalities, monopolies, poverty, and exploitation among others. Incidents of growing communication multinational companies such as Twitter (X), a social-media platform sold controlling shares for \$44 billion in April 2022¹. This was equivalent to the annual GDP of Uganda at the time. This platform with over 200 million daily users, compared to Facebook and Instagram with billions of daily users, generates over \$100 million annually. This expanded global market has more market reach, more access to suppliers, more talent to hire, and more ideas to harness. Communication is a key driver of this global phenomenon and Uganda has developed a National Communication Policy to explore the opportunities and mitigate the threats therein.

Socio-Political Context: Globalization is further characterized by the integration of cultures, interconnected geopolitics, a shrinking world, growing disparities of the haves and have-nots, terrorism, and alien practices among others. This has increased occurrences of growing cable networks, online media streaming, incidences of different forms of monopolies, and access inequalities with diverse geopolitical inclinations and social impact. The National Communication Policy is to enable Uganda to re-position to better influence, set agendas, foster national interests at this global level and contribute to abating socio-economic upheavals.

Environmental Context: The growth of globalization has had an impact on the global environment. It is characterized by an increase in the demand for natural resources, and diverse effects on the ecological cycle often related to consumption of products and growing industrialization. Global reports on climate change indicate a wide array of global adverse effects, including rising temperatures, more frequent and intense extreme weather events, sea-level rise, disruptions to ecosystems, and threats to food security and human health, including e-waste. This National Communication Policy seeks to mitigate the adverse effects of the global environmental phenomena by improving planning for crisis communication, forecasting, and access to timely information and feedback among others.

¹ Communication News Reports on Purchase of Social Media Company Twitter:
<https://www.reuters.com/technology/exclusive-twitter-set-accept-musks-best-final-offer-sources-2022-04-25/>

Regional Policy Context

Economic context: Sub-Saharan economies increasingly leverage global communication with less focus on a regional approach to information and data exchange and joint ICT investments to compete globally. To remain competitive, African countries have to invest in regional information and data initiatives, including shared communication platforms, regional broadcasting and content distribution networks. This can be optimized by taking advantage of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and East African Community (EAC) with estimated GDP of over \$800 billion and \$200 billion in combined GDP of member states² respectively. The National Communication Policy aims to provide a framework for Uganda to reposition itself to influence and harness regional communication opportunities.

Socio-Political Context: Regional communication continues to play a big role in the socio-political interactions regionally. This in turn promotes expansion of regional markets, immigration, emigration and tourism for various purposes. This further supports harmonious living of various cultures across regions.

Environmental Context: Regional communication is equally impacted by the global communication relationship with the environment. Regional reports on climate change indicate incidences of rising temperatures, more frequent and intense extreme weather events, sea-level rise, disruptions to ecosystems, and threats to food security and human health. This National Communication Policy seeks to forecast and communicate interventions through early warning systems that promptly allow stakeholders to prepare and respond to these diverse effects.

2.1.2 National Policy Context

Economic context: Uganda's economy targets a double-digit growth of 10.13% by 2029/30 as per the NDPIV³. The economic growth focuses on: increasing productivity of all sectors; pursuing value addition in the agro-processing, tourism, mineral products, oil & gas and mainstreaming Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) including ICT, redirecting industrialization to light manufacturing; and ensuring delivery of services.

The National Communication Policy seeks to aggregate institutional establishment of the function of communication in all Government Ministries, Departments, Agencies, Local Governments, and Uganda's Missions abroad with institutionalized communication strategies to support increasing productivity across all sectors and value addition with increased exchange of data and information availing opportunities of synergies and complementarity.

Socio-Political Context: Since Uganda's independence in 1962, communication has predominantly been considered an administrative function and not a deliberate developmental function. In 1992, the Government liberalized the media and communication sector. This resulted in the rapid growth of the sector with many media platforms both print and electronic

² East African Common Market with inclusion DRC, South Sudan and Somalia: <https://www.eac.int/overview-of-eac>

³ Macroeconomic Strategy under Fourth National Development Plan (NDPIV) 2025/25-2029/30.

freely operating in the country. This trend and increased uptake of communication services (both digital and conventional) have been part of the globalized market economy over the recent years. The communication sector is very dynamic and has both direct and indirect bearing on socio-economic and political development.

The Government has since brought together the previous Ministry of ICT, Directorate of Information and National Guidance, Uganda Media Centre, Uganda Broadcasting Corporation, Vision Group, and Media Council of Uganda to work under the Ministry of ICT and National Guidance, to enhance effectiveness of Government communication.

Environmental Context: The National Communication Policy seeks to enhance the role in forecasting weather, climate catastrophes, socio-economic behavior, and cultural trends for the national economy to better position itself in preparedness and competitiveness for resources. For example, in the Mountain Elgon region of Uganda, landslides have tragically claimed hundreds of lives, destroyed livestock, and displaced thousands of people between 2008 and 2025. This Policy encompasses communication strategies for such emergencies to deliver timely communication of targeted interventions regarding environmental and climatic aspects.

2.2 Problem Statement

Communication is the process of exchanging information in various forms between a sender and receiver, through different media for an intended purpose and obtaining feedback.

The issues of concern therein are: the unstandardized processes of exchanging information; using inappropriate forms between a sender and receiver; through inadequate media for intended purposes; and ineffective means of obtaining feedback.

These issues are caused by limited synchronization of processes and systems across the communication function, resulting from the absence of national standards and frameworks for communication; limited recognition of communication as both a core administrative function and an enabler of productivity; weak research, analysis, and evidence-based approaches in communication; insufficient promotion of local content and innovation; and inadequate collaboration and information sharing across communication processes.

The issues are also a result of limited Government capacity for effective communication arising from: lengthy and complex approval processes that delay the dissemination of information; restrictive procedures and siloed practices that hinder coordination and timely communication; weak systems to prevent distortion, misinformation, and disinformation; insufficient cybersecurity, media safeguards, and information protection for Government communication systems; lack of clearly defined crisis and risk communication strategies at national and institutional levels; limited capacity and underutilization of the National Broadcaster, Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (UBC); inadequate communication units within MDAs, Local Governments, and Uganda's Missions abroad; gaps in staffing, skills, and professional training for Government communication actors; poor coordination, inconsistent messaging, delays in

sharing Government information; weak public engagement, limited feedback mechanisms, and low transparency in Government communication.

Additionally, these issues are brought about by low levels of digitization caused by: insufficient digital communication tools, devices, and infrastructure; unreliable complementary infrastructure; inadequate maintenance of infrastructure due to gaps in skills for digital literacy, content creation, professional photography, videography, and public speaking; low adoption and limited understanding of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and emerging technologies; slow adaptation to changes in digital communication methods; and barriers that limit access to communication devices and the use of digital technologies.

Furthermore, these issues are a result of limited value addition from communication due to: limited use of communication as a tool for socio-economic transformation; lack of institutionalized communication strategies across Government institutions; weak feedback mechanisms, including inadequate analysis, monitoring, and use of feedback in decision-making; low promotion of social cohesion and civic awareness, leading to limited public participation in communication processes; insufficient translation services and inadequate inclusion of people with special information access needs or those in hard-to-reach areas; and limited forecasting and tailoring of communication to meet socio-economic needs and emerging trends.

If these issues are not addressed, Uganda will suffer consequences such as: low usage of digital solutions by the population as indicated by internet usage at 20% in FY2023/24; low uptake of e-Government services as indicated by the proportion of the population dissatisfied at 22.2% in FY2023/24; inadequate citizen appreciation of public policies and programs indicated by the Government Effectiveness Index at 0.57% as of FY2023/24; low visibility of digital skills solutions of the population as indicated by limited digitally skilled persons at 26% in FY2023/24; low visibility of cyber security measures as indicated by the inadequate cyber security posture at 50.65% in FY2023/24; absence of unified messaging with misaligned narratives, incoherence, and disjointed communication efforts among different stakeholders and at the national level; and a negative public image of Government resulting from misinformation, inconsistent messaging, and poor communication with citizens.

2.3 Justification

A Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) on communication was carried out and from all the possible options using the strategic objectives and actions, only four (4) options were found to be the most appropriate to address the underlying issues. These include; introduction of a new policy, enhancing enforcement of existing laws, enhancing awareness creation and sensitization, and enhancing coordination.

In addition to the do-nothing option, these four options were considered for option analysis using triangulation, involving cost-benefit analysis, impacts and distribution of impacts, and ease of enforcement and implementation as well as ease of monitoring and evaluation.

The overall ranking turned out developing a new policy as the best option in addressing issues in communication after subjecting the options to analysis of benefits, negative impacts and their distribution, and positive impacts and their distribution.

The second-best option is enhancing enforcement of existing laws which ranked number two in analysis of costs, positive impacts and their distribution, and ease of enforcement and implementation.

The last option is Do Nothing which is also ranked last in the analysis of benefits, cost, positive impacts, and their distribution, negative impacts and their distribution, ease of enforcement and implementation, and ease of monitoring and evaluation.

In line with the analysis and its conclusion, the RIA recommended the most feasible option to address the issues under communication to be a National Communication Policy. However, considering that several strategic options required enhancement of enforcement of existing laws such as the Uganda Communications Act, 2013; The Access to Information Act, 2005, and review and amendment of the Press and Journalists Act, CAP 105, there is a need to develop customized regulations for specific and targeted interventions that have legal implications, such as the creation of new obligations, expansion of regulatory powers, introduction of offenses and penalties and amendments.

3. STRATEGIC DIRECTION

This section outlines what the Policy seeks to achieve through effective and consistent implementation. It covers the vision, mission, goal, values, principles, strategic objectives and outcomes.

3.1 Vision

The vision of the National Communication Policy is: *A knowledgeable and productive society driven by Information, Communications Technology, and National Ideology by 2040.*

3.2 Mission

The mission of the National Communication Policy is: *To ensure effective communication of Government policies and programmes for socio-economic transformation.*

3.3 Goal

The goal of the National Communication Policy is: *To establish clear and uniform communication processes that ensure timely, accurate information sharing and effective feedback across all government entities and relevant stakeholders by 2030.*

3.4 Values

The core values that will be upheld in the implementation of the National Communication Policy include:

- i. **Ethical and Responsible Communication:** Emphasize ethical conduct and responsible communication as a practice for media professionals, content creators, social media users, and ICT users. Adhere to principles of accuracy, fairness, integrity, and privacy for the well-being of individuals and society.
- ii. **Press Freedom and Responsibility:** Respect media pluralism and press freedoms as pillars of a democratic society. Foster responsible journalism in an independent and diverse media landscape, with safeguards against misinformation, promotion of professional ethics, and privacy of individuals.
- iii. **Privacy and Data Protection:** Safeguard individuals' privacy rights and personal data. Promote enforcement of robust data protection laws and regulations for citizens' personal information and Government security concerns.
- iv. **Inclusivity:** Foster an inclusive communication environment that embraces diversity and promotes equal participation for all individuals and communities. Encourage the representation and amplification of marginalized voices, including women, youth, ethnic minorities, and persons with disabilities.
- v. **Transparency:** Foster transparency and accountability in communication for both public and private institutions.
- vi. **Consistency:** Ensure that all government messages are aligned, uniform, and delivered in a steady manner across all platforms and institutions.

3.5 Guiding Principles

The principles that will guide the National Communication Policy include:

- i. **Public Service Broadcasting:** Support and strengthen public service broadcasting to provide informative, educational, and culturally diverse programming that serves the public interest at all levels. Ensure its independence, accountability, and quality content production and dissemination.
- ii. **E-Government and Citizen Engagement:** Promote e-governance initiatives to improve public administration transparency, efficiency, and citizen engagement. Enhance digital platforms for online services, participatory decision-making and public consultations, enabling citizens to have a voice in governance processes.
- iii. **Local Content Promotion:** Encourage creating, producing, and disseminating locally relevant and culturally diverse content across various communication platforms. Support local artistes, content creators, and storytellers to showcase Uganda's rich cultural heritage and stimulate the growth of the creative industry.
- iv. **Public-Private Collaboration:** Foster effective collaboration between the public and private sectors in the communication industry. Encourage partnerships that promote innovation, investment, and infrastructure development to expand communication services and improve their quality and reach.
- v. **Disaster Preparedness and Resilience:** Incorporate communication strategies that prioritize disaster preparedness, early warning systems, and crisis response mechanisms. Ensure effective communication channels are in place to disseminate timely and accurate information during emergencies, natural disasters, and public health crises.
- vi. **Cultural Preservation:** Protect and preserve Uganda's cultural identity in the face of globalization and digital advancements. Promote the use of communication technologies to document, archive, and promote indigenous languages, traditional knowledge, and cultural practices.
- vii. **Balanced Innovation, Competition and Protection:** Establish a clear and robust setup of proactive considerations for the communication sector that balances innovation, competition, and consumer protection. Foster an enabling environment that encourages fair business practices, prevents monopolies, and addresses emerging challenges like fake news and online misinformation.
- viii. **Regional Integration and Connectivity:** Promote regional integration and cross-border connectivity by collaborating with neighboring countries to improve communication infrastructure, harmonize regulations, and enhance information sharing. Facilitate seamless communication services and cooperation for trade, tourism, and cultural exchange.
- ix. **Environmental Sustainability:** Integrate environmental sustainability considerations into communication policies, encouraging responsible consumption, waste reduction, and eco-friendly practices. Support initiatives that leverage communication technologies for environmental education, conservation awareness, and climate action.
- x. **Safety and Privacy:** Empower and inform all stakeholders in the digital value chain about both the opportunities and risks arising from the digital economy and society. Thus, the secure deployment and utilization of ICTs to maintain social cohesion, personal security, and environmental integrity.

3.6 Policy Objectives

The objectives of the Policy are to:

- i. Strengthen Government capacity for effective communication.
- ii. Enhance the synchronization of processes and systems of communication.
- iii. Increase digitization in communication.
- iv. Improve value addition from communication.

3.7 Policy Outcomes

The Policy sets outcomes with targets aligned to NDPIV as outlined below:

- i. Improved visibility of Government communication initiatives and public information, including clear, timely, and coherent messaging that reaches citizens effectively.
- ii. Enhanced citizen understanding and appreciation of public policies and programs.
- iii. Increased usage of digital solutions by the population as indicated by internet usage rising from 20% in FY2023/24 to 45% in FY2029/30.
- iv. Increased uptake of e-Government services as indicated by the proportion of the population satisfied from 22.2% in FY2023/24 to 30% in FY 2029/30.
- v. Strengthened public image of government, characterized by consistent, transparent, and accountable communication, reducing misinformation and misperceptions among citizens.
- vi. Unified messaging with common narratives, coherence, and coordinated communication efforts among different stakeholders at various levels.
- vii. Increased digital literacy and communication skills among citizens and public officials, enabling better access to and use of digital information and services.

4.0 STRATEGIES OF THE NATIONAL COMMUNICATION POLICY

The strategies that will be implemented are aligned to the respective objectives as below:

4.1 Strategic Objective 1: To strengthen Government capacity for effective communication

Strategies:

- i. Fast-track approval processes for clearing information to be disseminated.
- ii. Reduce restrictive procedures and silo practices that limit effective Government communication.
- iii. Strengthen systems to prevent distortion, misinformation, and disinformation in Government communication.
- iv. Provide adequate cyber security, media, and information safeguards for Government communication systems.
- v. Develop and implement crisis and risk communication strategies at national and institutional levels.
- vi. Strengthen the role and services of the National Broadcaster, Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (UBC).
- vii. Establish and strengthen communication units within MDAs, Local Governments, and Uganda's Missions abroad.
- viii. Strengthen staffing, skills development, and professional training for Government communication actors.
- ix. Enhance coordination, unified messaging, and timely dissemination of Government information.
- x. Strengthen public engagement, feedback mechanisms, and transparency in Government communication.

4.2 Strategic Objective 2: To enhance the synchronization of processes and systems of communication

Strategies:

- i. Formulate national standards and frameworks for communication, including media programming formats.
- ii. Establish accreditation for communication strategies in the public sector.
- iii. Enhance research, analysis, and market-focused processes in communication.
- iv. Promote local content and innovation in communication.
- v. Strengthen professional collaboration, think tanks, and information sharing across communication processes.
- vi. Enhance quality assurance, data organization, and open data provision in communication processes.
- vii. Establish and enforce regulatory frameworks, including licensing conditions for Internet Service Providers, to control the dissemination of harmful content online while safeguarding freedom of expression.

4.3 Strategic Objective 3: To increase digitization in communication

Strategies:

- i. Promote usage of adequate digital communication tools and devices.
- ii. Promote establishment of adequate communication infrastructure and ensure their maintenance.
- iii. Build skills in digital literacy, content creation, professional photography/videography, and public speaking.
- iv. Enhance adoption and appreciation of AI and emerging technologies; demonstrate benefits of digital media.
- v. Fast-track adaptation to changes in digital communication methods.
- vi. Promote the uptake of e-Government services.
- vii. Promote access to communication devices and reduce barriers to digital technology use.

4.4 Strategic Objective 4: To improve value addition from communication

Strategies:

- i. Use communication as a key tool to support socio-economic development.
- ii. Institutionalize communication plans in Government institutions.
- iii. Enhance feedback mechanisms, including analysis, monitoring, and use of feedback in decision-making.
- iv. Promote social cohesion and civic awareness for active participation in Government development processes.
- v. Provide translation services and ensure inclusion of people with special information access needs and those in hard-to-reach areas.
- vi. Forecast and tailor communication to meet socio-economic needs and emerging trends.

5.0 LINKAGES TO EXISTING LEGISLATIONS, POLICIES, PROTOCOLS, REGULATIONS, STRATEGIES, AND CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

Uganda is a signatory to several international and regional protocols. As a country, it has several policies, strategies, and regulations that have crossing-cutting issues. All these have a bearing on communication and they are outlined with their relevant components in the next subsection.

5.1 International, Continental and Regional Legislations, Policies, Protocols, Regulations, Strategies

Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 19: This international declaration emphasizes the right to freedom of expression and access to information.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 19(2): This instrument stresses freedom of expression, freedom to seek, receive, and impart information of all kinds, regardless of frontiers.

The African Charter on Human and People's Rights: This Charter is the primary human rights instrument of the AU that guarantees freedom of expression in Article 9.

COMESA Treaty (1994) – Articles on Governance and Human Rights: The treaty calls for the recognition, promotion, and protection of human and peoples' rights in accordance with the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.

The Eastern African Community's Common Market Protocol: This protocol emphasizes the promotion of common understanding and cooperation, and enhances research and technological achievement to accelerate social and economic development.

5.2 National Legislations, Policies, Regulations, Strategies

Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995: The highlights therein are: Article 29 guarantees access to information as a right; Article 29(1)(a) provides for every person's right to freedom of speech and expression which includes freedom of the press and other media; Article 41(1) which states that every citizen has a right to access to information in the possession of the State or any other organ or agency of the State except where the release of the information is likely to prejudice the security or sovereignty of the State or interfere with the right to the privacy of any other person.

Uganda Vision 2040: Focuses on national transformation economically, socially, and politically highlighting issues related to inspiring and empowering people.

The Uganda Communications Act, 2013: This legislation established the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) as the regulatory body for the communications sector. It provides regulations for telecommunications, broadcasting, postal services, and other communication services.

Access to Information Act, 2005: This legislation guarantees the right of access to information held by public bodies. It promotes transparency, accountability, and citizen participation by ensuring that citizens have the right to access information that is in the possession of any public entity. The Act establishes procedures for making requests, exceptions, and mechanisms for appeals.

Press and Journalists Act, 1995: This legislation established the Media Council of Uganda as a statutory body responsible for regulating the conduct and professionalism of journalists and media organizations in Uganda. In addition, it established an independent National Institute of Journalists of Uganda (NIJU) that has since been dormant. The Act sets out standards of ethics and professional conduct, establishes a complaint-handling mechanism, and provides for the accreditation and licensing of journalists and media practitioners. This is undermined by a non-functional journalists' institute i.e NIJU.

Uganda Broadcasting Corporation Act, 2005: This legislation highlights the merger of Radio Uganda and Uganda Television to form Uganda Broadcasting Corporation as a Public Broadcaster, supported through public funding and wholly owned by Government.

Computer Misuse Act, 2011: This legislation provides for the safety and security of electronic transaction and information systems including computers and electronic devices and securing the conduct of electronic transactions.

Data Protection and Privacy Act, 2019: This legislation protects individuals and their data by regulating the processing of personal information by state and non-state actors.

The Official Secrets Act, 1964: This legislation protects State security by criminalizing the wrongful communication of information, spying and acts prejudicial to the safety of the country. The Act aims to protect Uganda's interests against foreign powers and subversive activities.

Penal Code Act, Cap 120: This legislation was passed to establish a code of criminal law in Uganda that stipulates crimes, offenses, and punishment

National Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Policy, 2003: This Policy aims to promote the sustainable development and utilization of ICTs in Uganda. It focuses on expanding access to ICT infrastructure, improving connectivity, developing human capacity, promoting local content development, enabling e-governance, and fostering entrepreneurship in the ICT sector. The Policy also emphasizes the role of ICT in poverty reduction, promoting social inclusion, and improving service delivery.

National Broadband Policy, 2018: This Policy aims to promote broadband access and adoption across Uganda. It focuses on infrastructure development, affordability, capacity building, and fostering digital innovation and entrepreneurship. The Policy sets ambitious targets for broadband connectivity, aiming to expand access to unserved and underserved areas, promote affordable internet services, and develop digital skills.

Government Communication Strategy, 2011: This framework was designed to transform Uganda's public communication from reactive "firefighting" to a proactive, coordinated dissemination of Government information. It aimed to harmonize how Ministries, Departments, Agencies and Local Governments engage with the public, ensuring citizens are well-informed and involved in national development programs.

The National ICT Policy, 2014: This Policy outlines the ICT plans and implementation framework to boost economic transformation along with infrastructure expansion

Government of Uganda Social Media Guide, 2013: These guidelines provide a framework for Government MDAs and LGs to manage and use social media effectively and securely. They aim to promote transparency, public engagement, and efficient service delivery. The guidelines apply to all Government employees using social media for official purposes.

5.3 Cross-Cutting Issues

5.3.1 Online safety and cyber security: With the rapid growth of digital technologies, the Government of Uganda has developed strategies, regulations, and awareness campaigns to address online safety, privacy, and cyber security concerns. These initiatives aim to protect individuals and organizations from cyber threats and ensure the safe use of digital platforms.

5.3.2 Language diversity: Uganda is linguistically diverse, with over 40 different languages spoken across the country. Efforts have been made by the Government and various stakeholders to promote multilingualism in communication, such as providing language support for broadcasting and publishing in local languages to ensure inclusivity and access to information for all citizens.

5.3.3 Waste Recycling and Mitigating Environmental Issues: Consideration was given to legislation that highlights intervention areas specific to the impact of digital technologies and infrastructure on the environment and communities affected by the setting up, and disposal thereafter of tools and equipment.

5.3.4 Gender Equity and Equality: Through consultations and review of existing policies, regulations, guides and strategies, consideration was made to ensure gender equity and equality are at the heart of the implementation of this Policy.

6.0 IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK AND STRATEGIES

This section highlights aspects of coordination, information and communication, implementation stages, funding mechanisms, monitoring and evaluation and Policy review and audit.

6.1 Stakeholder Matrix for the National Communication Policy

S/N	Stakeholder	Key Roles	Relationship with other stakeholders
1	Cabinet	Provide political and policy guidance; enforce compliance; advocate for resources; set implementation priorities; identify key government policy communication issues; resolve coordination bottlenecks; manage crisis communication	Provides overall policy direction; works directly with Lead Ministry and MDAs
2	Ministry of ICT & National Guidance	Coordinate policy implementation; regulate communication sector; develop standards; follow up on Cabinet decisions; ensure establishment and monitoring of communication strategies in MDAs & LGs; regulatory oversight; administer the Scheme of Service for the Communication Cadre in MDAs & LGs.	Leads and coordinates all CWGs; liaises with Cabinet, MDAs, LGs, private sector, and academia
3	MDAs & LGs	Implement sector communication; provide content; align strategies with National Communication Policy; gather and develop content; develop and translate messages.	Coordinate with Lead Ministry, other MDA, LGs and Communities.
4	Private Sector	Drive transformation; produce and consume communication; support market economy	Collaborates with Government, Media, Academia and Local Communities
5	Academia, Think-Tanks, Professional Bodies	Innovate; research; train; enhance ethics; develop content; adapt to digital change	Support Government, Media, Private Sector with research and training
6	Media	Disseminate information; shape public opinion; provide feedback	Interface between Government and the Public
7	Public	Audience; receive information; producers and consumers of communication; provide feedback;	Final beneficiaries; Interact with Media and Government

S/N	Stakeholder	Key Roles	Relationship with other stakeholders
		participate in governance and development	
8	Community-Based & Non-Governmental Organizations	Mobilize communities; provide feedback; support development communication	Work with Local Communities, Government
9	Faith-Based & Cultural Organizations	Opinion leadership; mobilization; cultural mediation	Engage communities; collaborate with Government
10	Development Partners	Provide financial and technical support	Support Government programs through MDAs and LGs.

6.2 Information, Education, Communication and Dissemination Strategy

The implementation of the National Communication Policy guides the selection of tools and methods for carrying out actions that achieve its strategic objectives in information, education, communication and dissemination of the Policy.

The Policy has identified tools to use in carrying out actions to achieve the strategic objectives which include: letters and memos, brochures, fliers, banners, print media, projectors, speakers, communication plans and strategies, films, videos, documentaries, radios, computers, TVs, cell phones, radio calls, smartphones, billboards and noticeboards, posters, postcards and online platforms (websites, social media, blogs, and live streaming).

In addition, the identified methods include: music, dance, and drama, plays and songs, barazas, meetings, workshops, symposia, video conferencing and webinars, websites and social media networks.

These will take into consideration the Policy objectives. In addition, the tools and methods will take into consideration the cross-cutting areas related to communication.

Official Government communication shall be conducted through designated and authorized channels in line with Section P (Information and Records Management in the Public Service) of the Public Service Standing Orders. All Ministries, Departments, Agencies, and Local Governments shall use official Government email addresses based on the .go.ug domain, official websites, and other approved electronic platforms to manage and disseminate official information. Forms of communication in the Public Service shall include telegrams, letters, fax, email, telex, telephone, teleconferencing, and video conferencing, and shall employ the quickest and most effective form appropriate to the purpose. Postal services may be used when transmitting Government documents, and all correspondence shall be marked according to the degree of priority.

A Responsible Officer shall designate, in writing, all official communication channels, including electronic media channels, and shall regularly update and publish the list on the

official website of the Ministry, Department, or Local Government. The Responsible Officer shall also appoint, in writing, specific officers authorized to open, receive, and manage official mail, including electronic mail, and shall ensure clear procedures for handling such mail from receipt to final action by the responsible public officer. Official correspondence shall include all letters, memoranda, documents, communications, or any other recorded information, in whatever form, that comes into the possession of an officer in the course of official duties.

Communication of official business shall be clear, accurate, and timely, and shall be issued only through approved channels to ensure consistency, accountability, and public trust. Records of communication shall be properly captured, stored, and backed up in accordance with existing laws and regulations, with access limited to authorized officers only. Official information published online shall comply with the Access to Information Act and relevant security requirements to ensure that public information is accessible, reliable, and protected.

The implementation of the National Communication Policy is to establish effective communication channels and feedback mechanisms to ensure its successful implementation and continuous improvement. The Policy considers key feedback mechanisms encompassing continuous evaluation and adaptation to create a culture of open communication, gather valuable insights, and foster an environment where stakeholders feel heard and valued. Details of execution are detailed in the awareness creation strategy.

6.3 Feedback Mechanisms

The Policy considers key feedback mechanisms encompassing continuous evaluation and adaptation to create a culture of open communication, gather valuable insights and foster an environment where stakeholders feel heard and valued. These are outlined as follows: written communication channels, meetings and town halls, surveys and feedback forms, focus groups, suggestion boxes, online collaboration platforms, performance reviews and appraisals, continuous improvement initiatives.

6.4 Implementation Stages and Drivers

The Policy implementation stages and drivers include:

a) Planning Stage:

- i. Identify priority areas for Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and Local Governments (LGs) that are aligned to the Policy.
- ii. Conduct targeted thematic pilot studies and projects to generate evidence and inform the full-scale implementation of the Policy in achieving the strategic objectives.
- iii. Engage key stakeholders to ensure their buy-in and commitment to the strategic interventions within the National Communication Policy in their Communication Strategies.
- iv. Mainstream the Policy implementation plan within the Strategic Plan, Budget Framework Paper, and the Ministerial Policy Statement of the Ministry of ICT and National Guidance.

- v. Establish clear communication channels and mechanisms to facilitate effective coordination and collaboration.

b) Resource Mobilization Stage:

- i. Assess funding requirements for the implementation of strategic objectives and actions.
- ii. Explore various funding sources, such as Government budgets, grants, partnerships, and donor funding.
- iii. Develop a comprehensive funding strategy to secure the necessary financial resources.
- iv. Seek support from development partners and other relevant organizations to leverage additional funding opportunities.

c) Capacity Building Stage:

- i. Identify capacity gaps among stakeholders involved in the implementation process.
- ii. Design and implement training programs to enhance the skills and knowledge of key personnel.
- iii. Provide technical assistance and mentorship to ensure stakeholders have the necessary expertise to carry out their roles effectively.
- iv. Foster a culture of continuous learning and improvement through workshops, seminars, and knowledge-sharing platforms.

d) Implementation Stage:

- i. Execute the planned activities according to the implementation plan.
- ii. Monitor progress regularly to ensure activities are on track and milestones are being achieved.
- iii. Address any challenges or bottlenecks that arise during implementation promptly.
- iv. Foster collaboration and coordination among stakeholders to facilitate the smooth execution of activities.

e) Monitoring and Evaluation Stage:

- i. Develop a monitoring and evaluation framework to assess the effectiveness and impact of the implemented actions.
- ii. Regularly collect and analyze data to measure progress toward strategic objectives.
- iii. Use the findings from monitoring and evaluation to make informed decisions and adjust implementation strategies as needed.
- iv. Communicate the results of monitoring and evaluation to stakeholders to ensure transparency and accountability.

6.5 Funding Mechanisms

The Policy funding mechanisms are outlined as follows:

a) Government Budget Allocation:

- i. Advocate for the allocation of 30% of entity program funds from the Government budget to support the implementation of strategic objectives for the communication function.

- ii. Work closely with relevant Government agencies to ensure budgetary considerations are included in the planning process for communication.
- iii. Monitor the disbursement and utilization of funds to ensure they are allocated appropriately and effectively.

b) Grants and Donor Funding:

- i. Identify and apply for relevant grants and funding opportunities from international organizations, foundations, and development agencies.
- ii. Develop strong project proposals highlighting the alignment between the proposed activities and the donor's priorities.
- iii. Build partnerships with donors and maintain regular communication to explore potential funding collaborations.

c) Public-Private Partnerships:

- i. Engage with the private sector to explore opportunities for financial support and collaboration.
- ii. Develop mutually beneficial partnerships where the private sector can contribute resources, expertise, or funding to the implementation process.
- iii. Establish clear agreements and mechanisms for accountability and monitoring in public-private partnerships.

d) Cost-Sharing and Community Contributions:

- i. Explore options for cost-sharing arrangements, where stakeholders contribute financially to the implementation process.
- ii. Engage with local communities to identify ways they can contribute resources or funds to support the initiatives.
- iii. Foster a sense of ownership and responsibility among stakeholders by involving them in the financial aspects of the implementation.

e) Crowd-Funding and Fundraising:

- i. Utilize crowd-funding platforms or organize fundraising events to generate additional funds for specific projects or activities in line with public finance management guidelines.
- ii. Tap into community networks and social media to raise awareness about the initiatives and encourage individuals to contribute financially.
- iii. Establish transparent mechanisms for managing and allocating funds raised through crowd-funding for fundraising efforts.

6.6 Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

The National Communication Policy monitoring and evaluation framework has determined outputs, indicators, baseline data, targets, data collection tools and methods, frequencies, responsibility centres, reporting, and feedback mechanisms that will be used in assessing the progress of the Policy in achieving its intended objectives. Details of these have been reflected in *Annex 2*.

6.7 Policy Review

The Policy has an in-built approach to track the progress of the implementation of planned actions and to identify any potential risks that may hinder the realization of its intended objectives. This approach is both qualitative and quantitative and considers short timelines such as quarterly reviews and long timelines on annual basis with relevant tools and methods. Details are contained in *Annex 2*.

7.0 CONCLUSION

The development and implementation of the National Communication Policy confirms Uganda's commitment to increasing productivity across all sectors and value addition with increased exchange of data and information availing opportunities of synergies and complementarity.

The Policy further provides a structured framework for coordinated communication across Government, ensuring that information flows are timely, accurate and accessible to all stakeholders. By strengthening institutional communication capacities and promoting the effective use of digital platforms, the Policy supports informed decision-making, public participation and accountability, which are essential for inclusive socio-economic transformation.



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