

The Republic of Uganda



THE GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

GOVERNMENT OF UGANDA

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1:0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 1.1.1 In September, 2006 a Joint Leadership Forum of Ministers and Permanent Secretaries was organized by the Government of Uganda in partnership with the Government of the Province of Ontario, Canada and the Institute of Public Administration of Canada (IPAC). One of the key outcomes of the Forum was the need to establish an effective Policy Communication Strategy for improved Government Communication.
- 1.1.2 The Forum noted that the Government Communication function was not well coordinated or effectively managed thus affecting the responsiveness of Government Communication to the diverse information needs of the public. In order to address this need, the Office of the President (Cabinet Secretariat) was tasked to facilitate the development of an integrated Communication Strategy for Government to guide Government communication function.
- 1.1.3 The strategy is intended to provide an important framework for the Government of Uganda to build its capacity to advance socio-economic transformation through effective Communication.
- 1.1.4 Despite the many Government policies and initiatives to address the problems of national economic development and social transformation such as the National Development Plan (NDP), Poverty Action Plan (PAP), National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) and others, the understanding of such policies and uptake of the new initiatives remains a major challenge and a hindrance to the achievement of national development objectives. This weakness on the part of government to effectively deliver on policies and initiatives; their aims and objectives has partly been attributed to the weaknesses within the government Communication process and the lack of a well defined strategy for communicating government policies and initiatives.
- 1.1.5 The Uganda Communication sector was liberalized in 1990, opening space for more players. As a consequence, there has been a proliferation of private television and FM radio stations, newspapers and magazines, and internet service providers. Currently, there are over 200 licensed FM radio and 25 television stations, 21 internet service providers and 20 newspaper/magazines operating in the Country. This process of liberalization of the airwaves marked a departure from Government dominance of the Communication environment. Most messages by then came from Government as a single source. Since the liberalization of the media, Government has, in the past decade, had to compete as an equal player for the attention of the varied audiences in the public domain.

1.2.0 The Communication context, Legal and Institutional Framework

1.2.1 To manage and develop the now liberalised media sector, Government put in place a legal and institutional framework to guide the operations of the media, both print and electronic, to protect the interests of the public. Some of the key policy and institutional frameworks include:

- i. the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 2005
- ii. the Electronic Media Act, Cap 104,
- iii. the Press and Journalist Act, Cap 105,
- iv. the Penal Code Act, Cap 120,
- v. the Official Secrets Act, Cap 302,
- vi. the Uganda Broadcasting Corporation Act, No 5/2005;
- vii. the Access to Information Act, No 6/2005;

1.2.2 The Presidency

The Presidency provides overall leadership in public policy management, facilitation of the policy making process and promotion of good governance in public institutions and advocacy for Government policies and programmes.

a. Cabinet Secretariat

Cabinet decisions and Returns on implementation form a regular means of Communication between Cabinet and the Ministries. The Cabinet Secretariat subsequently compiles a report of all Cabinet Decisions and Returns from Permanent Secretaries which are placed on the agenda of Cabinet as Matters Arising and is used as a mechanism to assess the extent of implementation of Cabinet directives/decisions.

b. The Uganda Media Centre

The Centre was created as a Research and Analysis Unit to provide a platform to avail information from Government Ministries, Departments, Agencies, Local Governments and to feed into the Government Spokesperson's regular activities of informing the public about Government action on various issues of concern.

Following the exponential growth of the media and telecommunication sector in Uganda, the country experienced large expansion in the information industry. This in turn meant that the public had greater and more varied access to sources of information. This growth was, and has been, driven largely by private sector investment following the liberalization of the information and Communication sectors.

Unfortunately, Government made very little investment in these sectors and virtually withdrew. This created a situation where government information was not attaining meaningful media penetration. The vacuum created by the lack of timely dissemination of government information was therefore filled by various critics of government. Any proactive measures by government to set the media agenda and dominate it were either uncoordinated, too little too late, inadequate or mismanaged.

To address this imbalance, the Uganda Media Centre was created as a platform/ mechanism to enable Government to better engage the media. Its role is to facilitate the management and coordination of ongoing media situations so as to ensure consistent and accurate reflection of Uganda in the media.

1.2.3 The Office of the Prime Minister

The Office of the Prime Minister is responsible for coordinating the implementation of Government policy, with specific role in the management of flow of information and providing national guidance in line with government policy; hence the Minister of Information and National Guidance being the Government Spokesperson.

a. The Directorate of Information and National Guidance

The Directorate is responsible for policy formulation, coordination, media regulation and implementation of the Act on the Right of Access to information and the policy on Flow of Government Information. Its mandate is to act as the Lead Agency on Government information dissemination, public relations and advocacy. It is responsible for:

- i. formulating the policy on information management
- ii. Setting national information standards and regulating multi-media services
- iii. Establishing a sound information system across Government.
- iv. Communicating government's position on policy and programmes.
- v. Communicating as the official Government Spokesperson (The Minister of Information and National Guidance).
- vi. Act as the source of official Government position on public issues.
- vii. Supervise and coordinate the activities of the Uganda Media Centre

1.2.4 The Ministries

Communication in Ministries is at two levels; internal and external Communication. Ministers as political heads of their Ministries are responsible for communicating the Ministry/sector policies, programmes and projects.

Permanent Secretaries are also mandated by law, as the Chief Executive Officers of their Ministries, to communicate Government Policy and programmes. Ministries or Government agencies have a Public Relations Officer or Information Officer designated to speak on behalf of that Ministry, Department or Agency. The officers handle information as only one of their duties and are not necessarily trained to deal with the media. There is, however, no structure by way of a Unit/Department that is resourced and staffed to provide the Communication function, with the exception of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education and Sports.

1.2.5 Local Governments

The Chief Administrative Officers and the District Information Officers are mandated by law under The Local Government's Act 1997 to communicate Government Policy and programmes in the district. Since Local Governments are at the forefront of service delivery, they are strategically placed to engage with the public in identifying issues and information needs of the citizens at the grassroots level.

1.3 Key Challenges

- 1.3.1 Although the above legal and institutional framework exists, there are obvious challenges in the way Government handles the Communication function. During the Communication Needs Assessment, it was clearly demonstrated that there was need for the development and establishment of Communication structures, and a function and accountability mechanism. The absence of a clear structure and accountability mechanism, for the Communication function in Government has resulted in the poor coordination of information flow within and without Government. This has resulted in a multiplicity of responsibility centres and slow response by Government to issues that arise and therefore constraining its ability to take advantage of the media landscape thus undermining Government's image and successful implementation of Government policies, programs and projects.

There is also a need to consider information dissemination through the use of non conventional media such as drama, rural video/film shows, popular traditional media, poetry, songs etc especially that these are more often used in rural, illiterate and poor communities.

2:0 THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

2.1 Purpose

- 2.1.1 The Strategy places emphasis on the need for Government to adopt a proactive and coordinated approach to handling the Communication function. To achieve this, the strategy introduces structures within Government to be used to communicate its policies and programmes in a strategic and effective way that engages and galvanizes citizens for national development. The strategy also proposes a one stop centre for Government media placements.
- 2.1.2 Government's Communication objectives will define critical target audiences, mechanisms for sharing and exchanging knowledge, synchronise Government media placement, skills and technology in improving the livelihoods of the target communities and define and establish the Communication infrastructure in the Public Service
- 2.1.3 The strategy, therefore, sets a road map that will guide the Government in building the Communication function as well as promoting the understanding and uptake of new policies and programs for national development among the citizens.

2.2 Problem Statement

- 2.2.1 Government desires to effectively engage the public, media and all key stakeholders to participate in the national development process that will result into social cohesion and transformation. Despite the many Government policies and initiatives to eradicate poverty through strategies such as PEAP, PMA, UPE and USE, National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) and others, the understanding of such policies and uptake of the new initiatives among the population remains a major challenge and a hindrance to the achievement of national development objectives. Even the limited communication that is undertaken is uncoordinated.
- 2.2.2 This inadequacy on the part of Government to effectively deliver on policies and initiatives; is partly attributed to the weaknesses within the Government Communication process and the lack of a well defined strategy and coordinated approach for Government to communicate its intentions.
- 2.2.3 Currently, the Government Communication landscape is characterized by the following:

- i. Lack of clear mandates as to who is responsible for communicating Government's position on policy and programs which leaves a great deal of uncertainty
- ii. A perceived lukewarm Government responsiveness to public demand for information, even the little information that is given is uncoordinated, and;
- iii. Duplication, inconsistency, incoherence in Government Communication with the resultant Communication vacuum that is filled by other institutions or Communication sources. Government is simply invisible.

2.2.4 This has led to public apathy, scepticism and suspicion of Government initiatives, policies and programs. And it is this challenge that the Government Communication Strategy seeks to address.

2.3 Key Communication Issues

2.3.1 The key issues that the strategy will address are;

- i. Make Government visible.
- ii. Providing media 'leadership' by the Government to fast moving issues and taking best advantage of platforms as they develop.
- iii. Creating more opportunities for the President and the Ministers to become more accessible to the media and the public. .
- iv. Being an active and lead player in the fast growing and competing sources of information available to the media, the private sector, the general public and the international community.
- v. Building capacity in terms of human, material, financial and technical resources to effectively handle the increasing demand for information.
- vi. Strengthening its internal Communication infrastructure by defining formal reporting lines for Spokespersons, monitoring, rebuttal systems, forward planning and message development in MDAs.
- vii. Harmonizing the mandates and relationships of multiple and parallel institutions in Government, which have limited coordination mechanism and resourcing.
- viii. Strengthening internal and external coordination and resourcing of the Communication function and to align existing policies and laws to the Communication strategy to enable strategic planning and proactive approach to the Communication function across Government.
- ix. Taking advantage of a relatively mature media landscape to communicate consistently and effectively for the successful implementation of Government policies, programs and projects.
- x. Developing and implementing structures and accountability mechanisms for effective delivery of the Communication function across Government.
- xi. Create a one stop centre for Government media placement.
- xii. Use of non conventional media to communicate the people especially in rural communities.

2.4 Goal of the Communication Strategy

2.4.1 Overall Goal

The goal of the Government Communication Strategy is to establish an effective, well coordinated and proactive Communication system across Government and with the public that will meet the nation's information needs.

2.4.2 Strategic Objectives

The strategy is intended:

- i. To bring order, discipline and harmony in the Government Communication function
- ii. To meet the information needs of the nation
- iii. To promote a positive image of the Government and country within and outside the country.

2.4.3 Specific Objectives

As a means of addressing the Communication issues and challenges identified, the strategy will focus on the implementation of the specific objectives and the key result areas/action points outlined here below.

a. Specific Objective No. 1

To ensure that Communication across Government is well coordinated, effectively managed and is responsive to the diverse information needs of the nation.

Key Results Areas

- i. Establish Communication function and units across government
- ii. Define capacity development plan for MDAs
- iii. Align legislations to streamline the Communication function
- iv. Harmonize parallel agencies, mandates and centers
- v. Define roles, responsibility structures of all the key players in the Communication function
- vi. Identify clear channels of Communication in a multi channel approach to reach all audiences and ensure effective message delivery
- vii. Develop a media relations plan to take advantage of the media landscape

- viii. Articulate a hierarchy of Communication to eliminate conflicting Communication

b. Specific Objective No. 2

To develop mechanisms for the provision of timely, accurate, clear, objective and complete information on Government policies, programs, services and initiatives to citizens.

Key Result Areas

- i. Develop a stable and skilled cadre of professionals to deliver the Communication function in Government.
- ii. Develop an environmental scan framework for enhanced Government awareness of public perceptions, information needs and opinions on its policies and programs.
- iii. Develop an effective feedback management mechanism with platforms to capture public views on Government performance as a means of ensuring enhanced public participation in the development process
- iv. Establish a monitoring and evaluation framework as well as conduct periodic media monitoring and evaluation to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of message delivery of Government policies programs and activities
- v. Develop a Communication template to incorporate in the policy and program development process by Line Ministries.
- vi. Establish a mechanism through which all Ministries, Departments and Agencies provide timely information the office of the Government Spokesperson (Minister of Information and National Guidance), about the progress and status of Government policies, programs and activities.

c. Specific Objective No. 3

To provide a framework to enable Public Servants communicate easily with the public on policies, programs, services and initiatives they are familiar with and which responsible for.

Key Results Areas

- i. Develop mechanisms for regular press briefings by each MDA
- ii. Operationalise the Access to Information Act and flow of Government Information Policy .

- iii. Develop a Government and country promotion strategy targeting the regional and international audiences.
- iv. Amend provisions of the Government Standing Orders to place responsibly for Communication on policies and programs on Permanent Secretary or senior Public Servants .

d. Specific objective No. 4

To promote creation of relevant and sharable local content, and provide for its development and management by Directorate of Information and National Guidance in liaison with different Government Ministries, Departments and agencies

Key Result areas

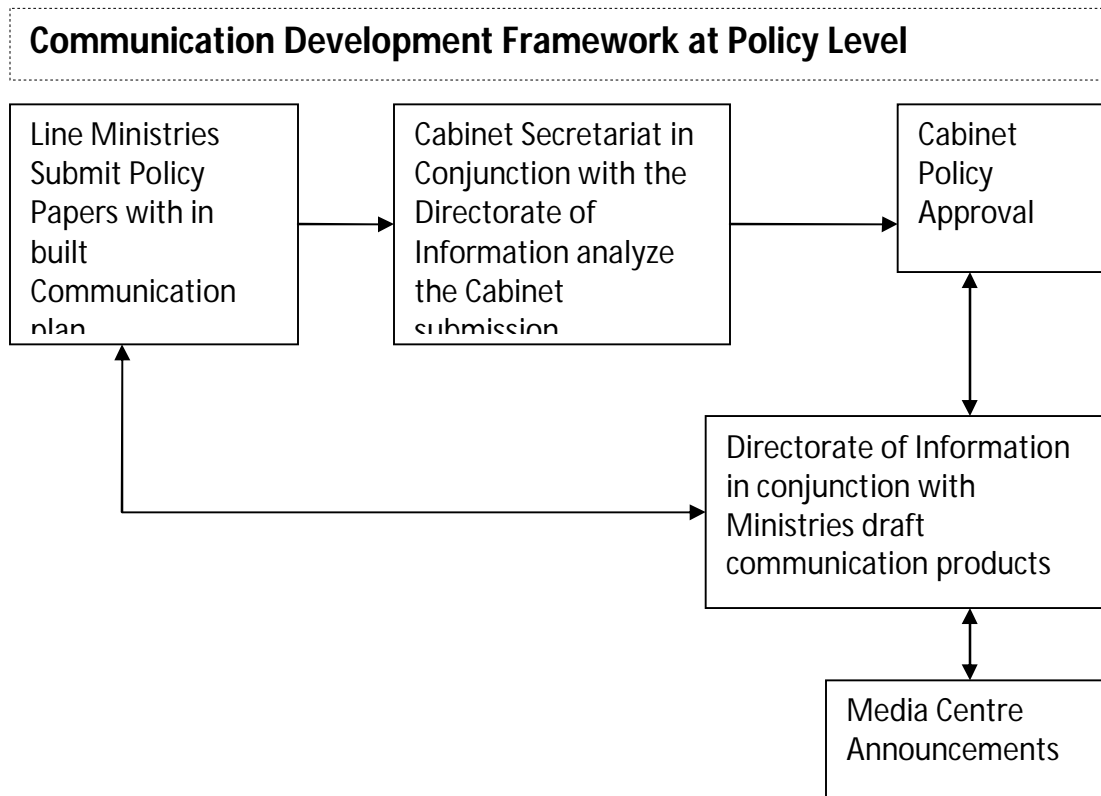
- i. To define local content in the context of the wider mandate of educating, informing, and entertaining the public.
- ii. Reorient and train staff on local content, electronic or otherwise, identification, creation, storage and management to enhance their ability to promote local content development and management
- iii. Provide for translation in English and local languages in the creation of relevant content to meet the information needs of the nation.
- iv. Define local content development and management plan for MDAs and harmonize content management tools and systems with built organisational capacities across Government.
- v. Align public-private sector local content development and management partnerships to meet relevant public information needs with clear channels of consultations (public, private sector, Academia as key players)
- vi. Establish local content resource centres, data banks and archives with clear platforms and sharable channels across government IT infrastructure.
- vii. Develop a monitoring and evaluation framework to ensure efficiency and effective local content development and management.

3:0 STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION PLANNING AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Communication Planning

- 3.1.1 Up till now, there is no known experience of Government wide Communication planning. Previously Government was the single source of information on public issues but more recently, Government has been engaged in fire fighting bouts and last minute crisis management events due to public misinformation by the media houses or inappropriate timing of delivery of sensitive information to the public. The strategy is intended to build across Government a systematic and coordinated approach to providing the public with information that will positively guide and promote development in the country as well as provide media leadership. The Communication Plan is flexible and designed to adapt to changes in Government's priorities and Communication environment hence, the strategy will be reviewed periodically to keep it relevant to the Communication needs of Government and the public.
- 3.1.2 To ensure that Communication is integrated with the policy formulation process, the strategy establishes a Cabinet submission process requiring all Government policies, programmes and projects to in build a Communication strategy that will guide the dissemination of information to the public and the wider, regional and international audience in a systematic, targeted and coherent approach. The flow chart below illustrates the process for integrating Communication through the Cabinet approval process.

Fig.1: Communication Development Framework at Policy Level



(Ministries are required to submit Cabinet papers from time to time, during preparation of the paper, the Ministry will design and in build a detailed communication plan for the policy and related program, the flow chart illustrates the steps, process and stakeholders involved in the preparation of the Cabinet Paper with emphasis on the design of the communications plan leading to strategic communication products)

3.2 Key Priorities and Core Messages

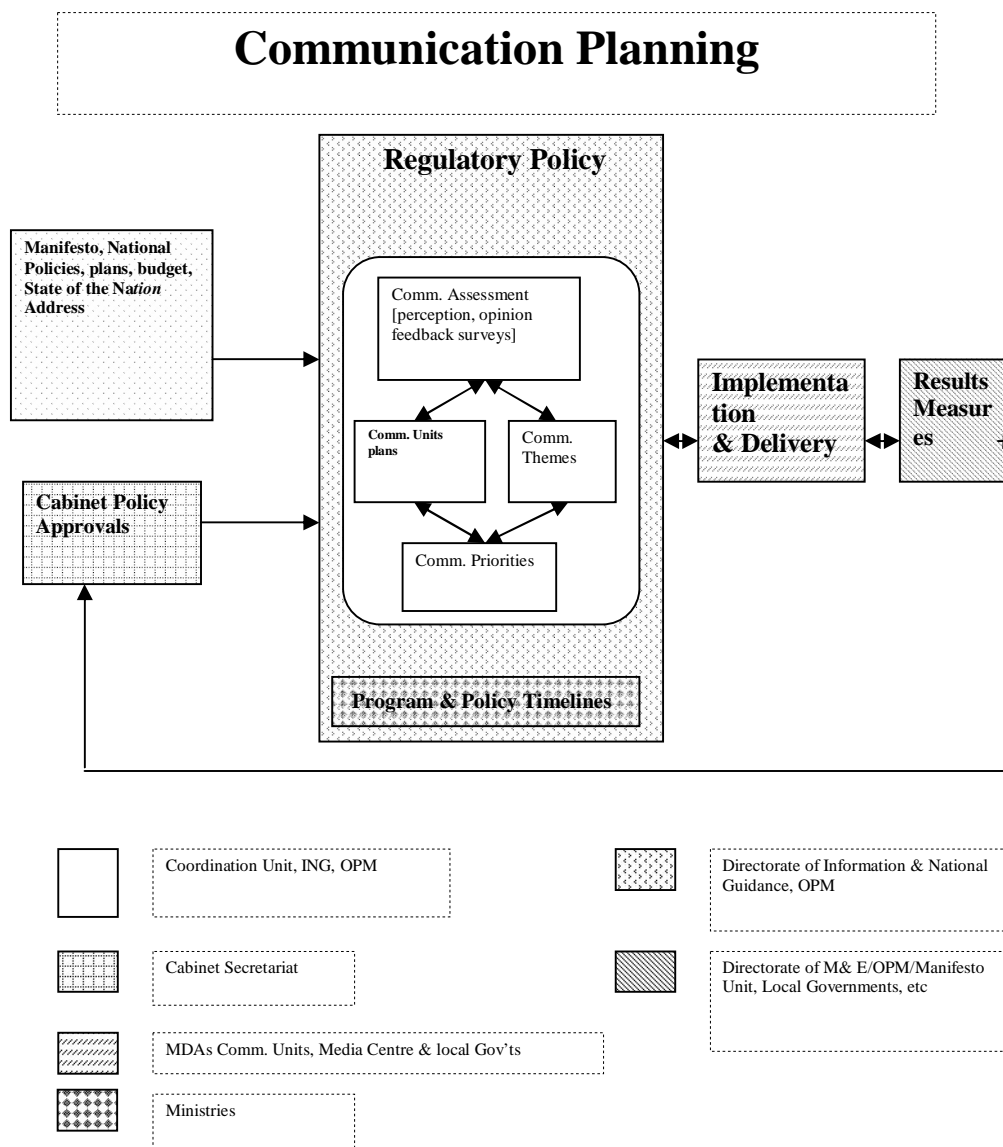
- 3.2.1 The Communication Plan identifies and clarifies key Government priorities, policies, programs and issues for Communication. The Plan establishes the core messages for each of the Key priority areas to facilitate clear and consistent Government Communication of messages to the public and stakeholders, when and how this message will be communicated.

3.3 National Objectives

- 3.3.1 Government has over the years developed policy, planning, and budgeting frameworks that are used for resource allocation, implementation and accountability. The objectives defined in the National Development Plan which is the successor to the Poverty Eradication Action Plan, and other key Government policy documents will form the basis for developing key priorities and core messages in the Communication planning framework.

3.3.2 Communication planning guides the identification of national objectives, key Government priorities and core messages, crisis management approaches related to emerging issues, define a crisis, establish a national Communication team and establish guidelines and standards for line Ministries MDAs and Local Governments to follow in performing the Communication function. See Chapter 8.0 for details on key priorities and core messages.

Fig.2: Communications planning flow chart

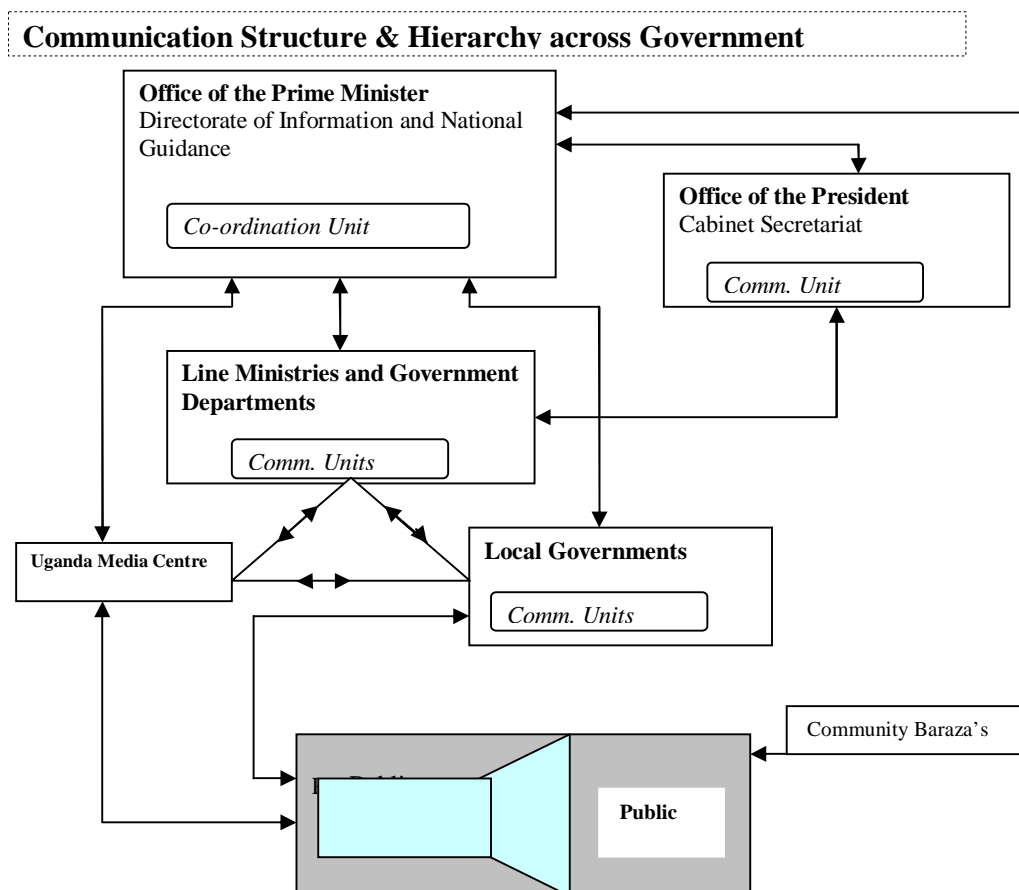


(The flow chart illustrates the regulatory environment governing the communication planning starting with the identification of sources of messages, policy and programme environment, identification of Government priorities, key players, implementation and delivery of messages and realisation of results)

4:0 INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES FOR THE COMMUNICATION FUNCTION

- 4.1.1 The successful implementation of the Communication Strategy depends on the establishment of a clearly defined Communication function, structure and reporting lines across Government.
- 4.1.2 Taking into account the findings of a gap analysis undertaken during the Communication Needs Assessment, the Strategy proposes the realignment of the hierarchy of the Communication function, key responsibilities, strengthening of the Directorate of Information and National Guidance and the establishment of Communication Units in MDAs and Local Governments.
- 4.1.3 The Strategy further emphasises that policy and Communication should be integrated, communication should be built into policy formulation, analysis and implementation and not merely added as an afterthought. As such, Information communication will be regarded as a cross cutting issue. The strategy also identifies media relations across Government, crisis and issues management.
- 4.1.4 The Strategy identified the following key institutions for the Communication hierarchy, namely:
 - i. Office of the prime Minister- Directorate of Information and National Guidance
 - ii. Office of the President- Cabinet Office, Office of the Minister for the Presidency and the Uganda Media Centre
 - iii. Line Ministries- Communication Units
 - iv. Local Governments-Communication Units
 - v. District Information offices
- 4.1.5 The diagram on page 18 presents the hierarchy of the Communication function in Government. The flow chart describes the flow of information and the relationship between the different actors across Government to ensure the smooth flow of information and ensure that Government has one consistent messaging to the public.

Fig.3: Communications Structure and Hierarchy across Government



(The flow char attempts to define the office in charge of coordination and management of the communication function across Government-DIN/OPM, and shows the inter-relationships between all the IMDAs, the public LLGs and the public)

4.2 Accountability Structure

a. Office the Prime Minister- Directorate of Information and National Guidance

The mandate of the Directorate of Information and National Guidance in the Office of the Prime Minister is to support the Communication function across Government. The Directorate will:

- i. Regulate the Media Sector

- ii. Formulate and implement policies on media and information dissemination with a view of making Government visible.
- iii. Co-ordinate the Communication function across government with an established Government Communication Coordination Unit (GCCU)
- iv. Develop the long term strategic objectives and planning and budgeting for the Communication function
- v. Work with Office of the President - Cabinet Secretariat to map out core policy and Communication priorities for the Government including integrating policy and Communication priorities by certifying line ministries' policy Communication priorities.
- vi. Synchronize line ministries' Communication function priorities (messages and materials) with government strategic Communication objectives, key messages and priorities
- vii. Develop in consultation with the Cabinet Secretariat a Communication template to incorporate in the policy and program development process by Line Ministries.
- viii. Work with MDAs to develop an environmental scan framework for enhanced government awareness of public perceptions, information needs and opinions on its policies and programs.
- ix. Develop an effective feedback management mechanism to capture public views as a means of ensuring enhanced public participation in the Communication process.
- x. Set up a Monitoring and Evaluation framework to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of message delivery on government policies
- xi. Work with the Media Centre to develop key messages
- xii. Establish a mechanism of coordinated media placement by Government.
- xiii. Carry out the role of Government Spokesperson and co-ordinate Sector spokespersons across Government.

- xiv. Prompt proactive government Communication and ensure line ministries' response to sector specific Communication issues while maintaining consistency of government messages
- xv. Coordinate Local Governments' Communication function aligned with the Government Communication objectives and priorities across policies and programmes.
- xvi. Coordinate and implement the Access to information Act and Flow of Government Information Policy
- xvii. Manage website and intranet
- xviii. Manage internal newsletter
- xix. Develop a Government Directorate
- xx. Coordinate definition of local content, electronic or otherwise, development and management plan and harmonize local content management tools and systems with built organisational capacities across Government.
- xxi. Coordinate establishment of local content resource centres, data banks and archives with clear platforms and sharable channels across Government and aligning with public-private sector local content development and management partnerships.

b. Office of the President- Cabinet Secretariat

The mandate of the Cabinet Secretariat is to support Cabinet in the discharge of its constitutional mandate of formulating, determining and implementing Government policy. To support Government in effective Communication of Government policy, Cabinet Secretariat will:

- i. Work with the Directorate of Information and National Guidance (D/ING), Uganda Media Centre (UMC) and MDAs to map out core policy and Communication priorities for the Government in line with Cabinet decisions
- ii. Integrate policy and Communication priorities
- iii. work with the D/ING, UMC and MDAs to develop key messages
- iv. Communicate Cabinet Decisions to Ministries
- v. Mainstream the information communication as a cross cutting issue in Government.

c. Uganda Media Centre (UMC)

The mandate of the Uganda Media Centre is to provide a media platform for Communication for Government and actively engage the media to promote a positive image of the Government and country locally, regionally and internationally. The political leadership for the UMC shall be the Official Government Spokesperson, the Minister for Information and National Guidance.

- i. Ensure consistency of Government key messages. The Uganda Media Centre will work with the Ministries to develop all Government Communication materials (press releases, supplements, advisories, statements, documentaries e.t.c)
- ii. Develop Communication materials for the Government Spokesperson and the President
- iii. Provide logistics for media briefings
- iv. Maintain timely information sharing with the Local Governments
- v. Monitor the media including social media
- vi. Manage and coordinate the Media Press conferences, Briefings and press releases & statements
- vii. Collaborate with the Directorate of Information and National Guidance to manage Government media placement.
- viii. Working with the Government Spokesperson and MDAs, manage emerging Issues and crises
- ix. Will undertake short term strategic planning and alignment with key messages
- x. Will conduct research and information gathering

d. Line Ministries, Department and Agencies (MDAs)

Broadly speaking, Line Ministries, Departments and Agencies have the responsibility for implementing Government policies, subject to sector specific mandates. MDAs shall support the Communication function by:

- i. Conducting sector specific research and information gathering
- ii. Developing Communication materials for the Ministry, Department or Agency
- iii. Providing logistics for communication function across Ministry events
- iv. Aligning and making available all media Communication materials to Office of the Prime Minister and Media Centre to ensure consistency with the Governments overall core messages
- v. Maintaining an updated informative and interactive website and intranet
- vi. Maintaining an internal newsletter
- vii. Providing a calendar of their sector activities that need publicity to the DING

- viii. Informing the Office of the Prime Minister of Access to Information Requests and releases of information
- ix. Establish a Communication Unit
- x. Provide recordings of their activities both soft and hard copies to DING for documenting, publicizing and archiving.
- xi. Provide adequate financial human and logistical support needed for the effective delivery of the Communication function
- xii. Designate an Officer who can provide information in case the Ministers and Permanent Secretary are not available.
- xiii. Define sector local content, electronic or otherwise, setup development and management plan and harmonize local content management tools and systems with built organisational capacities in collaboration with DING.
- xiv. Establish sector local content resource centres, data banks and archives access in conformity with clear platforms and sharable channels as coordinated by DING.

Local Governments

According to the Constitution of Uganda Article 189, clause (3), District Councils (Local Governments), shall have the responsibility for any functions and services not specified in the sixth Schedule. To support the Communication function across Government therefore, District Councils (Local Governments) shall perform the following duties:

- i. Undertake research and information gathering
- ii. Provided adequate financial, human and logistical support needed for the effective delivery of the Communication function
- iii. Establish a Communication Unit
- iv. Develop Communication material for the Local Government
- v. Provide logistics for Local Government events
- vi. Align and make available all media Communication materials to the Office of the Prime Minister and Uganda Media Centre to ensure consistency with Government's overall core messages
- vii. Maintain a website and intranet
- viii. Maintain an internal newsletter
- ix. Inform the Office of the Prime Minister of Access to Information Requests and releases of information
- x. Designate Officer to provide information about the local Government.
- xi. Provide recordings of their activities both soft and hard copies to DING for documenting, publicizing and archiving.

- xii. Define local content, electronic or otherwise, setup development and management plan at local government and harmonize local content management tools and systems with built organisational capacities in collaboration with DING.
- xiii. Establish local content resource centres, data banks and archives access at local Government with clear platforms and sharable channels as coordinated by DING.

4.3 Communication Functions/Units in Ministries

- 4.3.1 The strategy establishes Communication Units in all Line Ministries to effectively fulfil the Communication function.
- 4.3.2 The strategy recognizes and takes advantage of the existing sector spokespersons such as in the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Defense, the Uganda Police and others as best practices along which other Communication units in MDA can be modeled.

4.4 Communication Units for Local Governments

This Government Communication strategy proposes that a similar Communication unit be established at the Local Government level. This unit should be headed by a senior officer at the level of a Principal, answerable to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and working in liaison with the Coordination Unit, Directorate of Information & National Guidance, Office of the Prime Minister.

4.5 Structure and Reporting of Communication Units

4.5.1 Structure and staffing

- 4.5.2. The strategy therefore proposes to establish a Coordination Unit in the Directorate of Information and National Guidance, Office of the Prime Minister –to effectively co-ordinate the Communication function across Government. The Communication Co-ordination Unit will be charged with:

- i. Developing the long term strategic planning and budgeting for the Communication function
- ii. Working with Cabinet Secretariat - Office of the President to map out core policy and Communication priorities for the Government to ensure integration of policy

- and Communication priorities in the policy formulation process and to introduce the requirement to certify line ministries' policy and Communication priorities.
- iii. Synchronize line ministries' Communication priorities (messages and materials) with Government's strategic Communication objectives, key messages and priorities – Develop a Communication template to incorporate in the policy and program development process by Line Ministries.
 - iv. Work with MDAs to develop an environmental scan framework for enhanced Government awareness of public perceptions, information needs and opinions on its policies and programs.
 - v. Develop an effective feedback management mechanism to capture public views as a means of ensuring enhanced public participation in the Development process.
 - vi. Set up a monitoring and evaluation framework to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of message delivery on government policies
 - vii. Coordinate all Government media placement in collaboration with Uganda Media Centre.
 - viii. Develop a mechanism for proper documentation and dissemination of Government initiatives in collaboration with Uganda Broadcasting Cooperation, MDAs, and private radio, television stations and newspapers.

4.5.3 The Government Communication Coordination Unit is proposed to be within the existing structure of the Directorate of Information & National Guidance, Office of the Prime Minister with reorganisation and assignment of staffing to setup this Unit. It is proposed that the day to day operations of this Unit are to be overseen by a senior officer at level of a Director for Information and Strategic Communication reporting to the Permanent Secretary, OPM as illustrated in the organisational diagram below.

4.5.4 The Strategy also proposes a structure for the Communication function that is fully mainstreamed into the Public Service. To allow for dynamic, and flexible execution of duties, the profile of the Communication function is significantly elevated and executed by a senior level officer at the rank of Principal supported by a Senior Communication officer and a Research Officer. It is further recommended that the all Information Officers and Public Relations Officers be re-designated Communication Officers for purposes of a uniform nomenclature of cadre across Government.

4.5.5 The Communication function is assigned as a technical service offered by the Communication Officer on a regular basis with close working relationship with the Directorate of Information and National Guidance and the Uganda Media Centre and all key stakeholders.

4.5.6 The following is the proposed structure for the establishment for the Communication function.

Fig.4: Organisations structure for the Directorate of Information and National Guidance

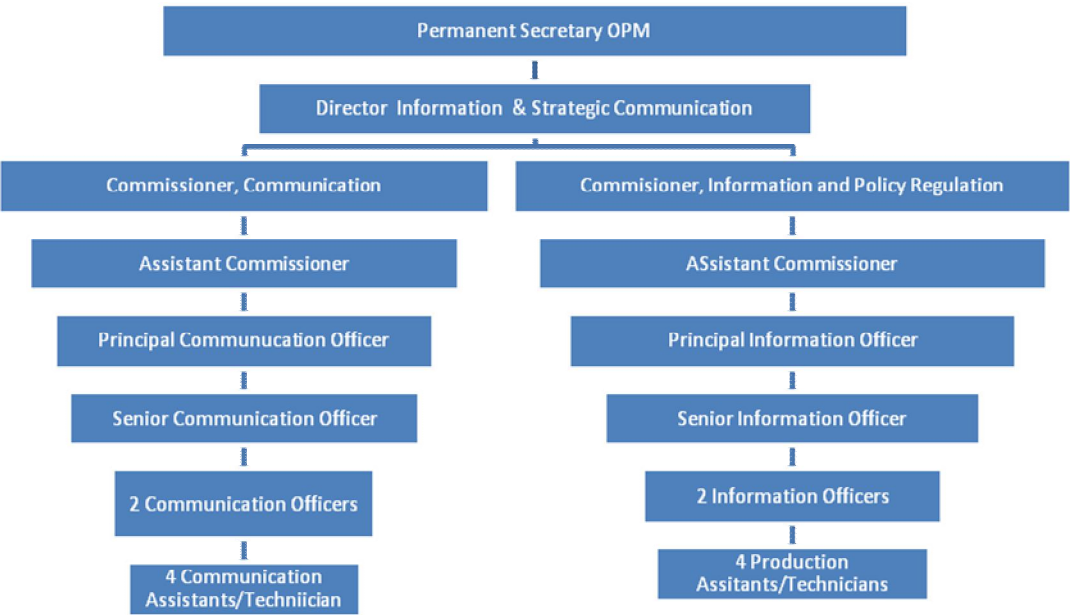
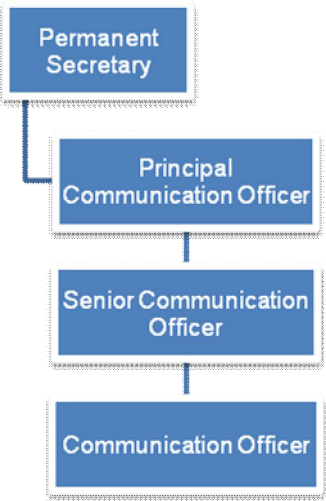


Fig.5: Structure of the Communication Unit



4.6 Responsibilities and Reporting

4.6.2 The Communication officer will provide specialized Communication services to all the departments of the Ministry, in close liaison with the Directorate of Information and National

Guidance. The Principal Communication Officer will be reporting directly to the Permanent Secretary on Communication issues.

- 4.6.3 All Ministry Communication shall be channelled through the Communication Officer with the authority of the Respective Permanent Secretary and guidance of the Directorate of Information and National Guidance.

4.7.0 Resourcing and Equipping the Communication Unit

4.7.1 Requirements:

The Communication Unit is to be supported with a fully resourced budget to enable it perform its functions. It is proposed that it should be policy for all Government projects and programmes devote at least 8% of the funds to publicity, information, dissemination and advocacy.

4.7.2 Capacity Building

- 4.7.4 The Directorate of Information and National Guidance working with the Cabinet Secretariat and the Uganda Media Centre in collaboration with MDAs will develop a capacity building programme to address the needs of the Communication function across Government so as to build a stable and skilled community of Communication professionals across Government. Journalists, communication practitioners, senior public relations officers among others will under go regular reorientation trainings at Civil Service College.

4.7.5 Learning and development

4.7.5.1 Key objectives

- i. Strengthen strategic Communication capacity for leaders and Communication staff.
- ii. Enhance professionalism of Communication staff.
- iii. Develop pool of Communication professionals.
- iv. Enhance advocacy and persuasion for government programmes.

The strategy will focus on the following training priorities:

- i. Develop capacity to identify skills gaps.
- ii. Identify key audiences for training & develop learning plans for each group (e.g. Communication officers, media spokespeople, web and intranet managers, political leaders etc).
- iii. Event Management (coordination with security, Protocol, event companies)
- iv. Train the trainers or identify external staff who can lead courses.

Year One: focus on 1-3 priority areas

- i. media training (for ministers and key spokespeople)
- ii. writing skills (including writing key messages, speechwriting, writing briefing notes, plain language)
- iii. issues management (including crisis Communication, coordination, writing issues notes, disaster management)

Year Two-Three: The strategy will focus on building capacity and expanding skills areas

- i. Strategic Communication planning – such as proactive dissemination of information
- ii. Advanced Speech Writing
- iii. Advanced Event Planning and Management
- iv. Cross Ministry conferences and Excellence Performance Awards
- v. Advocacy and lobbying skills
- vi. Team building, interpersonal skills, problem solving and conflict management
- vii. Effective persuasion
- viii. Behavioural change in communication

Table I: Training Required

	Communication Officers	Media Spokespersons	Writers/Event Planners	Permanent Secretaries	Ministers
Media Training	x	X	x	x	X
Writing Skills	X	X	X		
Issues Management	X	X	x	X	X
Speech writing	X	X	X		
Strategic Communication planning	X	X	X		
Media Events Planning and Management	X		X		
Web portal/intranet content development and management	x		x		
Advocacy and Lobbying	x	x		x	x
Team Building and conflict management	x	x		x	x

4.7.6 Rewards and Recognition

Develop a community of Communication professionals and establish over the medium-term a regular awards events, aligned with Uganda's existing code of conduct, to reinforce the sense of shared values across the Communication community and to celebrate successes.

5.0 NEW COMMUNICATION ILLUSTRATED

- 5.1 For Government to Successfully handle Crisis Management, Government has to be prepared to:
- i. Invest time in systematically monitoring issues as they emerge
 - ii. Develop and update a comprehensive Issues Management Plan
- Speak with a Single Voice and
 - i. Create an environment of open, transparent and timely internal Communication
 - ii. Centralize external Communication
 - iii. Have a disciplined approach to communicating with the media and the general public
 - Engage Stakeholders Early to:
 - i. Ensure consistent information sharing
 - ii. Enable early detection of emerging issues and correct misinformation
 - Treat the media as a Communication Partner and
 - i. Ensure openness; transparent, timely and consistent messaging at the same time

5.2 Audiences for the Communication Strategy

- 5.3 The Communication Strategy sets out to consistently reach out, share and exchange information with the core audiences at the household, community, national and international levels. These are:

Table ii: Types of Audiences

Internal Audiences	External Audiences
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The Presidency▪ The Executive▪ Judiciary;▪ Parliament▪ Public service▪ Local Governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The media▪ Traditional or Cultural Leaders▪ Religious Leaders▪ The international community - regional and beyond; including development partners▪ Civil Society Organizations▪ Citizens▪ Education/training institutions for synchronizing curriculum content with current realities

6:0 ISSUES MANAGEMENT

6.1 Reading the media and emerging issues

- 6.1.1 This refers to Governments assessment of issues in deciding the best approach to messaging to allow the Government to position itself on issues in a way that best suits circumstances at the time and decide whether to contain, confront, embrace or expand on the issue. The messaging approach described in **Table iii** below defines the approach Government would adopt to manage any emerging issue.
- 6.1.2 The Government Communication team shall actively track media actors' views, opinions and comments as well as media reports to anticipate the direction of debate and develop the best messages for the situation. This will allow Government to monitor Stakeholders' reaction and determine the political, economic and social dimension of the debate or issue.

Table iii: Messaging Approach

Messaging Approach:	Purpose:	Broad Messaging:
Contain	- To minimize spread of the issue	"We're going to review the situation..." "We'll work with our partners to come up with solutions." "We shall consult further."
Confront	- To be strong, bold and challenge your critics	"That is not correct... here is the situation." "These are the steps we have taken."
Embrace	- To join the cause and agree that action is required	"We're doing a good job, but there is more to be done." "We want to get it right – and that will take time."
Expand	- Place the issue in the context of larger considerations	"There are so many things to consider here and we are not going to rush into it." "Its part of a larger issue we are currently reviewing."
Deflect	- Don't take ownership of the issue, keep the Government on the periphery	"We have full confidence that the Government will address this issue..." "The reality is, this is a (XY) responsibility."
Attack	- To be aggressive, switch channels by questioning the record or motives of critics	"When they were in power, they had an opportunity to fix this but they did nothing." "They are in no position to be critical of our record."