

MINISTRY OF ICT & NATIONAL GUIDANCE

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GUIDELINES TO MINISTRIES, DEPARTMENTS, AGENCIES (MDAs) AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS (LGs) FOR USE OF THE PUBLIC EDUCATION AIRTIME ON RADIO AND TELEVISION STATIONS

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1. Background

Government broadcast airtime has been obtained in line with the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) Act 2013, licensing condition No. 5 which states: **"From time to time the licensee shall be obliged to allocate time to promote government programmes"**. The airtime is available to all MDAs and LGs, basically, in form of live talk shows for educating the public on Government development programmes, policies and services.

In May 2014, public and private radio and television stations in Uganda were obliged to allocate at least one hour of broadcast airtime for this purpose. This followed a series of consultations between the then Ministry of Information and National Guidance, Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) and the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB).

2. Objective

The principles are intended to enhance public access to Government information and participation in national development initiatives.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

For effective management of the programme, the roles of the different stakeholders are defined hereunder:

3.1. Ministry of Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance (MoICT&NG)

3.1.2. The MoICT&NG is responsible for overall coordination of the programme at the Central and Local Government Levels.

3.1.3. The MoICT&NG shall receive periodic reports from MDAs and LGs and prepare a consolidated report for submission to the Minister for onward submission to the Prime Minister.

3.2. Ministries, Departments, Agencies & Local Governments (MDAs & LGs)

3.2.1. MDAs and LGs shall ensure optimal utilization of the talk show programmes and submit periodic reports to the Permanent Secretary, through the respective Desk Officers at the Ministry of ICT & National Guidance.

3.3. The Resident District Commissioner (RDC)

3.3.1. The RDC is delegated by the MoICT&NG through the Office of the President to oversee the Government airtime at LG level and ensure Government officials (both political and technical) adhere to the programme schedules.

3.3.2. The RDC shall work closely with the District Communication Officer (DCO) for effective coordination of the programmes.

3.4. The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

3.4.1. The CAO shall clear Heads of Department and other technical officers in a timely manner and in writing to participate in the programmes.

3.4.2. The CAO shall endorse the programme schedules prepared by the DCO in consultation with the RDC, in a timely manner.

3.5. The Head of Department

3.5.1. The HoD shall ensure timely availability of content for the programmes.

3.6. The District Communication Officer (DCO)

3.6.1. The DCO shall be responsible for the day-to-day coordination of the programmes in liaison with the Office of the RDC.

3.6.2. In consultation with the RDC, the DCO shall prepare programme schedules highlighting the topics for discussion and panelists for endorsement by the CAO.

3.7. Districts without Radio or Television Stations

3.7.1. Districts without radio or television stations shall liaise with the neighbouring districts that have, to implement the Public Education Programmes.

3.7.2. The RDC and DCO of the neighbouring district that has radio/TV stations shall work hand in hand with the RDC and DCO in the district without, for

effective implementation of the Public Education Programmes in the deprived district.

4. Applicability

The guidelines shall apply to political and technical officials in all MDAs and LGs.

5. Requirements for MDAs and LGs

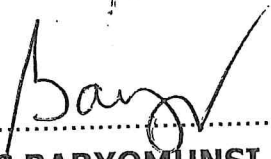
For effective implementation of the programme, MDAs and LGs are required to observe the following principles:

- i. Accounting Officers shall identify a pool of technical officials with good verbal skills from their respective MDAs and LGs and clear them in writing, to enable them freely feature on media programmes, as per the Uganda Public Service Standing Orders, 2021. Delegation should be done within the established procedures.
- ii. Senior Officials should appear on talk show programmes on any given station. Such officials include Ministers, Accounting Officers, RDCs and Heads of Department.
- iii. Accounting Officers should capture major successes and accomplishments in diagrams, still pictures and audio-visual formats for purposes of illustration, particularly during televised media programmes. These formats enhance and give more credibility to the message. Please note that these should be of broadcast quality and not adverts.
- iv. Where programmes have been scheduled and confirmed, the respective MDAs and LGs shall avail copies of the issues for discussion, including facts and figures, to the relevant media houses for preview at least three days in advance, in liaison with the Public Education Programme Desk Officers at the Ministry of ICT & National Guidance and DCOs at the LGs.
- v. Government officials scheduled for media programmes shall reach the respective radio and television stations at least 30 (thirty) minutes before the commencement time of the programmes. This will enable proper coordination with the programme hosts, adequate preparation and smooth running of the programmes.

- vi. Government officials scheduled to feature on the media programmes shall turn up without fail. Those who fail to show up shall provide written explanation to their respective Accounting Officers, copies of which shall be availed to the Permanent Secretary, MoICT&NG within 7 (seven) days.
- vii. MDAs and LGs shall submit reports of each talk show to the MoICT&NG through the respective Desk Officers. Reports should capture, among others, feedback from the public during the talk show programmes.
- viii. The MoICT&NG shall prepare consolidated quarterly and annual performance reports and raise feedback on areas that need attention with respective MDAs and LGs for corrective action. The Hon. Minister shall file periodic reports with the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister on participation of MDAs and LGs, as well as issues therefrom for any necessary action.
- ix. The airtime is strictly for public education on Government programmes, policies, priorities and services. It shall not, therefore, be allocated for any other purposes than this or to any other entity.
- x. Resource people can be drawn from other sectors outside Government but should appear together with Government officials to enrich the programmes.
- xi. Efforts shall be made to ensure people with special needs and other interest groups equally access and participate in the programmes.
- xii. Abuse of the airtime, such as non-appearance, lateness, selling the airtime, etc. shall attract appropriate sanctions. The usual sanctions under the established Government procedures shall apply.

6. Amendment

The guidelines shall be reviewed periodically as the need may arise.



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Guidance***