



MINISTRY OF ICT & NATIONAL GUIDANCE

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GUIDELINES TO MEDIA HOUSES FOR PROVISION OF BROADCAST AIRTIME FOR GOVERNMENT PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

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Guidance***

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1. Background

In Uganda, broadcast media, particularly radio and television are the most effective in terms of audience reach and message impact. Unlike newspapers and new media tools such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and Linked-In, which are still largely urban channels, radio and television have reached even the remotest corners of the country. Broadcast media, therefore, is a real opportunity for Government to mobilise citizens to participate in national development programmes.

2. Allocation of Airtime for Government Public Education Programmes

The Uganda Communications Commission Act, 2013 requires radio and television stations to avail free airtime for Government public education programmes. Licensing condition No.5 of the UCC Act, 2013 states: **"From time to time the licensee shall be obliged to allocate time to promote government programmes"**.

3. Objective

The Ministry of Information, Communications Technology & National Guidance developed these guidelines to enable radio and television stations effectively manage the Public Education airtime in a manner that will optimise value for Government programmes.

4. Applicability

The guidelines shall apply to radio and television station owners, managers and hosts of the on-air public education programmes.

5. Requirements for Radio and Television Stations

Provision of airtime for Government programmes by radio and television stations across the country shall be guided by the following principles:

- i. The programmes shall run at least once a week during morning or evening prime time broadcast hours, when listenership is at its peak. The programmes shall be aired in the morning between 7:00 am and 10:00 am as well as between 6:00 pm and 9:00 pm.

- ii. Station owners and managers shall designate a particular and specific day during the week for the Government Public Education Programmes.
- iii. Station managers, programme hosts and moderators shall demand for the talk show issues of discussion from focal persons in the Ministries, Departments, Agencies and Local Governments at least three days before the talk show, for the purpose of internalizing them and forming questions for discussion; if any.
- iv. The Ministry of Information, Communications Technology and National Guidance (MoICT&NG) shall liaise with Ministries, Departments, Agencies (MDAs) and Local Governments (LGs) to coordinate and develop schedules of issues and topics for Government media programmes.
- v. The respective Communication Units in MDAs and LGs shall arrange for appropriate well informed Political Leaders and Technical Officials to feature in the programmes.
- vi. MDAs and LGs shall ensure content availability to programme hosts at least three days in advance. Moderators shall adhere to the programme content.
- vii. Moderators shall ensure that the programmes are run professionally and meet minimum broadcasting standards. They must also ensure that feedback from listeners is screened and rendered consistent with topics and issues under review.
- viii. Moderators shall focus the discussions on Government programmes, policies and services and not politicise them.
- ix. Moderators shall stick to technical and official issues and desist from driving the conversation into politics when hosting civil servants since the Uganda Public Service Standing Orders, 2021 prohibit them from engaging in partisan politics.

- x. In case a situation arises, and any MDA or LG is unable to appear on a given show, moderators shall accept other formats, such as pre-recorded messages, documentaries, etc. These shall, however, not be adverts.
- xi. The programme host shall be present and moderate the programme all through.
- xii. If moderators do not comply with these regulations, they, together with the station owners and managers shall be held accountable.

6. Amendment

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



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