



Uganda Biodiversity Fund

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COMMUNICATION  
POLICY  
2018



# PREAMBLE

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**T**his Communications Policy sets out the guidelines governing communication with the internal and external stakeholders of Uganda Biodiversity Fund. Any institution, public or private, commercial or nonprofit, has its success hinged and connected to its reputation and the engagement of all its stakeholders both internal and external.

This policy underlines the priority UBF sets on communication. It establishes the framework procedures that define all communication activities occurring at UBF. It should be noted that while every effort has been made to comply with all legalities and regulations, should any part of this document conflict with local applicable legal positions, the latter shall take precedence.

Special salutation to the team of consultants led by Barbara Musoke Ntambi that developed the policy that will guide UBF future communications.

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# DEFINITIONS

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**For purpose of this Policy, the following definitions apply:**

- 1. Advisory Group:** Adhoc group composed by the Board whose background, affiliation or expertise are relevant to the Trust's purpose, including but not limited to: donors/ development partners, representatives of stakeholders, representatives from Government Ministries or Agencies responsible for biodiversity, Regulators, and individuals to represent beneficiaries.
- 2. Authorized Persons:** are persons designated to communicate on behalf of UBF. These are:
  - Chairperson, Board of Trustees
  - Executive Director
  - Managers
  - Fundraising Manager
  - Other individuals specifically approved by the Executive Director from time to time for specific kinds of communications on behalf of the Fund. Authorized persons are also those whose communication with Staff members and external stakeholders fall within their approved job description.
- 3. Basic Fund Information:** is any information about UBF; including its mandate, policies, strategies etc.
- 4. Confidential Fund Information:** is any organizational information that has not been made publicly available by UBF, as well as information of third parties like funders or beneficiaries that UBF is obliged to keep confidential.
- 5. External Communication:** is the dissemination of information to external stakeholders.

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- 6. External Stakeholders:** refers to Regulators, Government and other Authorities; UBF Shareholders; Funders; Partners, Media; Suppliers & Service Providers; the general public, etc.
  - 7. Internal Communication:** is the dissemination of information to internal stakeholders.
  - 8. Internal Stakeholders:** refer to UBF Staff, Management and Board of Trustees.
  - 9. Press Media:** are UBF's media partners that focus on delivering news to the general public or a target public. These include print media (newspapers, news magazines), broadcast news (radio and television), and the Internet (online newspapers, WhatsApp, Facebook, news blogs, etc.)
  - 10. Social Media:** Web pages and mobile technologies used to have an interactive discussion including but not limited to: Email, SMS, Social networks like Facebook, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Telegram, etc.; video and photo sharing websites like Youtube, vimeo, snapchat and Instagram, Blogs, Micro blogs like Twitter, Wikis and online collaborations e.g. Wikipedia, Forums, discussion boards and groups, vodcasting & podcasting, websites, etc.
  - 11. Formal communication:** a type of verbal presentation or document intended to share information which conforms to established professional rules, standards and processes; and avoids using slang terminology.
  - 12. Public Statement:** is an official speech or letter to the public usually delivered through the media or other public forums.

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- 13. Personal opinion:** a personal view, attitude, or appraisal that does not represent UBF stand on an issue.
  - 14. Crisis:** Any situations that are threatening or could threaten to harm people or property, seriously interrupt business, significantly damage reputation and/or negatively impact UBF.
  - 15. Crisis communication:** the effort taken by UBF to communicate with the public and stakeholder when an unexpected event occurs that could have a negative impact on the organisation's reputation.
  - 16. Stakeholders:** are parties or persons that have an interest in UBF and can either affect or be affected by our business.
  - 17. Environmental Trust Funds:** Independent legal entity and investment vehicle to help mobilizing, blending, and overseeing the collection and allocation of financial resources for environmental purposes. It is a country-driven solution that facilitates strategic focus, rigorous project management, solid monitoring and evaluation, and high levels of transparency and accountability. The term encompasses conservation trust funds, wildlife trusts, climate and forest funds, and other funds established to deliver environmental, social and economic benefits.

# 1.0 INTRODUCTION TO POLICY




**UBF** aims to use the communication Policy to share information about itself, promote UBF and support UBF's goal of establishing "a credible source of funding for biodiversity conservation and natural resources management in Uganda. "This Policy is designed to ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities in communication to both internal and external stakeholders. This communication policy provides guidance to UBF Board of Trustees, Management and Staff on the extent, quality and output of communication with internal and external stakeholders. Maintaining good internal and external communications is particularly important to help staff and other stakeholders to understand the Fund's mission, values, objectives, developments and issues.

It is the responsibility of Board Members, Managers and Staff of UBF to understand and comply with this Policy and associated procedures, strategies and guidelines.

## 1.1 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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1. UBF has a culture of openness and the Directors and Management Team regularly meet employees on an informal and formal basis to pass on information about current issues, respond to queries and receive feedback.
2. UBF recognizes that active communication with different stakeholders and the general public is an integral part of its Strategy.
3. UBF is committed to the dissemination of timely, accurate and quality information to its internal and external stakeholders.

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4. All internal and external communications should be aimed towards the achievement of UBF's vision and mission and should be in line with its approved Strategy for a given period.
  5. All communication should be in line with UBF Branding Manual. All UBF communication must be consistent in style and message to build stakeholder trust.
  6. All communication must be clear, concise and intentional.
  7. Regular feedback is encouraged to all UBF stakeholders and will be applied towards ensuring better service delivery.
  8. Only Authorized Persons are permitted to undertake UBF's external communications.
  9. UBF is further committed to developing two-way communications channels recognizing that all key stakeholders can support UBF to fulfill its mandate.
  10. It is the aim of UBF to continually improve communications.
  11. All information must be conveyed in a timely manner, through the appropriate and approved communication channels to UBF's stakeholders.
  12. All requests for information by stakeholders shall be responded to by the relevant Managers without unnecessary delays. A turnaround time of two (2) working days shall apply to all requests; where the information sought may require more time to deliver, an acknowledgement of the request must be made within the stipulated time period.
  13. UBF Communication should reflect the principles of confidentiality, Data Protection, Freedom of Information and other relevant legislation.
  14. English is the official communication language at UBF, when necessary interpretation should be provided.



## 1.2 PURPOSE

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### **The purpose of communicating at UBF is to:**

- Maintain good internal and external communications;
- Publicize UBF's mission, values, objectives, developments, issues and successes to all stakeholders;
- Attract investors to the Fund;
- Provide stakeholders with timely information regarding matters of interest to them;
- Enhance the commitment of all staff to the UBF's performance;
- Build stakeholder awareness of the environmental factors affecting the performance of UBF;
- Promote and enhance the reputation of UBF;



# 2.0 STAKEHOLDERS & COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

## 2.1 STAKEHOLDERS

**UBF** has internal and external stakeholders. Internal stakeholders are persons or entities who are already committed to serving the organization as board members, managers, staff and volunteers. External stakeholders are people who are impacted by UBF's work as either implementing partners, donors, beneficiaries, policy makers or others. In communication it is important to get the perspectives and communicate to both groups. The categorization of various stakeholders is detailed below:

**Table 1: Categorization of stakeholders**

STAKEHOLDER CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
Internal	Board of trustees, Management, staff, service & goods providers and volunteers
Donors/ Development partners	Embassies, bilateral organisations e.g. USAID, NORAD etc., banks, sector actors, individuals
Policy makers	Central Government, Ministries, Members of Parliament, uppers & lower local governments, Government Agencies
Media	Press, Radio, television, online outlets, social media including blogs, twitter, facebook, youtube e.t.c
Beneficiaries	General Public
Implementing partners/grantees:	CSO, academia, private sector, Government agencies;
Competitors/ collaborators	These including other Environment Trust Funds and other sector funds.

## 2.2 COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

UBF will use various channels that can effectively reach various stakeholders. These include but are not limited to:

**Table 2: Communication channels**

STAKEHOLDER	COMMUNICATION CHANNEL(S)
Internal ( Board of trustees, Management and staff)	Intranet, Emails, debriefings and information sessions, staff meetings, website, letters
Donors development partners	Email, letters, policy papers, briefs, investment portfolios, success stories, country strategies, reports etc.
Policy makers	Knowledge sharing sessions/Seminars, visits, website, newsletter, media, market reports, publications, Annual Report), brochures, leaflets and presentations
Media	Press releases, interviews, speeches, vlogs, workshops/seminars, website
Beneficiaries	Seminars, bilateral contacts, website, letters, email correspondence, newsletter, media publications/interviews, corporate presentations, speeches, other publications, brochures, leaflets and advertisement
Donors/ Development partners	Investors/ Publications, road shows website, media publications/interviews, press releases, investor presentations, other publications, brochures, leaflets and advertisement
Competitors/ collaborators	Email, letters, policy papers, briefs, investment portfolios, success stories, country strategies etc.



## 3.0 GUIDELINES FOR EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

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The support and participation of UBF's external stakeholders are crucial to its long-term success and is therefore always desired. All communication to external stakeholders should be anchored on this premise and aimed at making the stakeholders feel involved and not alienated. External communication should also promote overall knowledge and awareness of UBF, its products and services, etc., among the different external stakeholder categories.

UBF's Authorised Persons will manage all external communications with guidance from the Executive Director. All external communication must be approved by either the Executive Director through the Communication Manager or any delegated and authorized Official. The Executive Director shall approve all communication with government representatives and UBF's regulators, as well as confidential or sensitive information. Exceptions may exist in situations where such communication is part of a Group's functions. There will be designated employees with the Communication Team that will be responsible for communication including but not limited to branding, media relations, donor relations, social media etc. In some cases, employees from other divisions may be asked to assist the Communications Team with this work.

During orientation all Authorized Persons will be trained on how to represent UBF, UBF values and oriented on UBF's Brand. The Communication team will monitor all external communications for accuracy and appropriateness.

All presentations/materials for external use must be reviewed by the Communication Manager prior to exposing materials to the stakeholders to ensure brand compliance and accuracy of information related to the organization. This includes presentations to external stakeholders at meetings, seminars, conferences, etc. and materials to be uploaded to the website.



UBF's relationship with the press and media professionals and practitioners, particularly environment reporters, is at the heart of its success. The media, which serves as one of the medium through which UBF reaches its external stakeholders, is accorded high priority at UBF. As such, communication with media is to be handled with the highest levels of sensitivity and professionalism and must always be handled by the Manager Communication as this is the approved person to interface with the media. Only Authorised Persons shall be permitted to grant interviews of any sort (print, TV, online) and be quoted with respect to UBF's external communications.

The images which UBF uses in all its communication may only be used with full permission of those depicted and with legal parameters (e.g. copy right).

The Communication Manager will maintain an updated stakeholder database including contact information of all stakeholders.

### **3.1 GUIDELINES ON FORMAL EMAILS AND LETTERS**

- All printed communications should follow the style, format and templates provided for in the Brand Manual.
- As far as possible please use simple words.
- As far as possible be concise.
- Use short sentences. Sentences of more than 25 words should be avoided.
- Use conversational but professional style of writing in emails.
- Note that emails are official communications and should therefore use formal language.
- Emails at work are not private and may be viewed by Management without notice.
- Office email should be used only for official communication.



### 3.2 TELEPHONE GUIDELINES

- UBF official telephone lines should be used for official communication.
- External calls should be received with name of organization, an agreed slogan, and name of receiver.
- Employees should be sensitive to their tone of voice to portray a positive image. Staff should always be courteous and professional when receiving calls.
- Clear concise information should be passed on and if one is not clear about what to say they should consult.
- Speak clearly and professionally.

### 3.3 GUIDELINES ON USING SOCIAL MEDIA

All official social media platforms shall be managed by Authorised persons.

When using social media, it is important that a person is clear about who is being represented and take responsibility for ensuring that any reference to UBF is factually correct and accurate and does not breach confidentiality and privacy requirements.

Any communication that refers to or relates to UBF or a person's relationship with UBF will be considered as UBF communication regardless of the purpose of the communication. An employee is personally responsible for the content published in a personal capacity in any form of social media.

As representatives of the UBF Brand, employees should not post offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist or sexist information of any social media platform. Employees that are not authorized to speak on behalf of the organization should not imply that they are speaking on behalf of or as a representative of UBF or give an impression that any views expressed are those of UBF. Employees should also avoid posting content that might otherwise cause damage to UBF's reputation or public image or bring it into disrepute.

If an employee finds information to which they believe UBF should respond, the employee should contact the Communication Manager, who will prepare a response with support from the relevant subject matter expert.

### **3.4 DISCLOSURE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

UBF is committed to providing timely, accurate, and complete disclosure of its basic organisational information in an appropriate manner. Disclosure of confidential information is however strictly prohibited as detailed in the UBF Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement which is signed by all Staff members upon assumption of duty. Violation of this Agreement may attract legal redress.

### **3.5 PUBLIC STATEMENTS OF PERSONAL OPINIONS**

UBF Staff members should refrain from making public statements of personal opinion regarding UBF, its stakeholders and on biodiversity as a whole, and from presenting personal opinion regarding the environment as facts. Such public statements may include quotes given to media, contribution to blogs, twitter, Facebook, published articles, etc. Any such public statements must be approved by the Executive Director before publication.





## 4.0 GUIDELINES FOR INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

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**UBF's** internal communication is targeted at all its internal stakeholders, towards the achievement of its overall objectives. Furthermore, internal communication is aimed at strengthening the organizational culture and feeling of commitment among the internal stakeholders; thereby increasing active participation and team spirit.

Strategic Internal communication shall be handled by Managers. Communication between and amongst Staff members must be professional at all times. Staff members are to be addressed by either their first names or by their initials in all written communication, except letters which must bear the full name of the Staff member.

## 5.0 CRISIS COMMUNICATION

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### 5.1 WHAT IS A CRISIS?

A crisis is a situation that threatens to harm people, property, and the environment, to severely disrupt life and business, or to damage infrastructure and nature. For individuals, businesses, and organisations – as the case may be – a crisis could impair their reputation, erode the bottom line, affect the capability to pursue their mission, derail their performance, or undermine the viability of a cause. Every organisation is vulnerable to crisis of some sort or scale, so it helps to be prepared to effectively respond to and manage a crisis in the event that it occurs.

### 5.2 PROCEDURES AND COMPLIANCE:

UBF will ensure co-coordinated communication during a crisis.



**Table 3: Procedures to follow during a crisis**

### **1. ESTABLISH A CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS TEAM**

- The UBF Board will Identify Managers to Constitute the Crisis Communication Team.
- The Communication and Legal Managers would be the principal advisers on the team.
- A slot or two may be reserved for subject-matter experts.
- During a Crisis, the Executive Director or individual acting on his behalf will be the Authorised Person supported by the Communication Manager.

### **2. CRISIS RESPONSE PLAN**

- Executive Director and Communication Manager receive emerging facts about the crisis.
- Communication Manager verifies information.
- Communication Manager prepares a crisis brief including information about what has happened, to how, how why, when and where. It should also include a contact for whom to contact in case of need of information. Verified photos can be attached to the brief. The Brief should be up dated as frequently as new information emerges.
- Executive Director should brief the Board and relevant authority using the crisis brief.
- Communication Manager should share brief with stakeholders starting with the Board, media, staff, immediate family and others.

### **3. MAINTAIN UPDATE DATABASE OF STAKEHOLDERS**

- The Communication Manager should ensure that the Stakeholder Database is up to date and all stakeholders are listed in order of their priority to the Organisation.
- The Human Resource Manager will maintain a staff contact list including easy to communicate channels like WhatsApp contacts. He should be responsible for updating staff during a crisis. S/he should therefore be a member of the crisis team.



#### 4. FACT SHEET

- UBF should maintain a “UBF Script”/ Fact Sheet detailing facts about the organization, what they do, why they do it and to whose benefit. This provides background information about UBF during any communication.
- The Fact sheet should be accompanied with current photos of the Board of Trustees, Executive Director and Communication Manager.
- The fact sheet should be published on all communication channels to make it easily accessible.

#### 5. MANAGING THE CRISIS

- **Anticipate Crises:** UBF should be proactive and prepare for crises, have a Crisis Communications Team for intensive brainstorming sessions on all the potential crises that could occur.
- **Identify Your Crisis Communications Team:** A small team comprising of the CEO, Communications Manager, Legal Manager and Subject experts should be assembled.
- **Spokesperson Training:** Spokesperson training will teach UBF to be prepared, to be ready to respond in a way that optimizes the response of all stakeholders.
- **Establish Notification and Monitoring Systems:** It is absolutely essential, pre-crisis, to establish notification systems that will allow UBF to rapidly reach all stakeholders using multiple modalities.
- Monitoring stakeholders requires training personnel who have front-line contact with stakeholders to report what they're hearing or seeing to the Crisis Communications Team.
- **Develop Holding Statements:** Full message development must await the outbreak of an actual crisis, “holding statements,” messages designed for use immediately after a crisis breaks, can be developed in advance to be used for a wide variety of scenarios to which UBF perceives to be vulnerable, based on the assessment conducted in Step 1 of this process.

#### 6. POST-CRISIS ANALYSIS

- After the crisis, UBF Management should undertake a formal analysis of how the organization performed in response to the crisis. What went wrong? What could be done better next time?
- Information obtained should be used to enrich this strategy.



## 6.0 CONCLUSIONS

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**T**his communication policy will support achievements of UBF's strategic objectives, improve institutional relationship with stakeholders, and help raise the profile of conservation finance issues ultimately supporting the EFs mission. The policy will ensure that UBF is well perceived by stakeholder through ensuring that staff and management communicate effectively, consistently and coherently.

The policy will periodically be operationalized through a five year communication strategy and annual workplans.

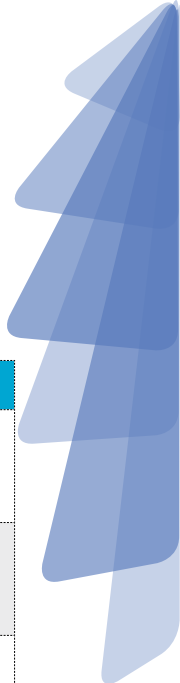
The strategy will form part of the orientation package to staff as they join UBF to ensure that they embrace UBF's communication culture.

## APPENDIX

# COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY TEMPLATE & CHECKLIST

**Table 4: Communications activity template and checklist**

<b>A: PROJECT INFORMATION</b>		
1	Activity	
2	Location – local area(s) covered & district(s)	
3	Period (start to end dates or months)	
4	Communication objective and target	
7	Communication budget available	
8	Funder(s)	
9	Implementation Status (progress as of a specific date)	
<b>B: KEY PROJECT PERSONNEL AND THEIR CONTACT DETAILS</b>		
List the three most important project personnel in order of priority as technical spokespersons or sources of information about the project.		
1	Full name	
2	Designation	
3	Primary telephone no.	
4	Alternate telephone no.	
5	Primary email	
6	Alternate email	
7	Physical office address	



## C: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1	How will the goal contribute to strategic objectives?	
2	What are the communication objectives	
3	What communication activities will be carried out?	
4	What is the key message?	
5.	Who are the primary and secondary targets for the message?	
6.	What medium will be used to reach them?	
	Press, broadcast & media relations	
	Online, digital & social media	
	Print	
	Advertising	
	Public relations	
	Community meetings	
	Workshops	
	Internal communication	

## D: BUDGET

1. Itemised costs of all inputs, products, and activities

## E: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

1. As applicable, list/ describe all inputs, products, and activities that will be delivered or undertaken in terms of:
  - Who will it target? (audience)
  - What will it be about? (content/ messages)
  - Where will it take place? (medium/place)
  - When will it take place? (timeline)
  - Why will it be undertaken? (objective)
  - How will it be undertaken? (strategy)



“Effective communication with people is vital for the conservation of biodiversity because the loss of biodiversity is often caused by humans. Planning for conservation requires managing communication to gain the commitment and cooperation of people who use, have an impact on, or conserve biodiversity.”

**IUCN**

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