



**UGANDA  
COMMUNICATIONS  
COMMISSION**

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**STANDARDS FOR RELIGIOUS BROADCAST PROGRAMMING  
IN UGANDA**

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# **STANDARD FOR RELIGIOUS BROADCAST PROGRAMMING IN UGANDA**

## **1.0 DEFINITION OF RELIGIOUS PROGRAMMING**

A religious programme is a programme which deals with matters of religion and spiritual belief as the central subject or significant portion of the programme.

## **2.0 THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STANDARDS**

Matters pertaining to religion are sensitive and capable of evoking strong passion and emotions. Broadcasters should exercise due caution when featuring the views, beliefs, practices, or activities of religious groups.

The standards are expected to meet the following objectives;

- i. To ensure that broadcasters exercise the proper degree of responsibility with respect to the content of religious programmes and their unintended consequences.
- ii. To ensure that religious programmes do not involve any exploitation of audience susceptibilities and circumstances.
- iii. To ensure that religious programmes do not involve any abusive treatment of the religious views and beliefs of those belonging to different religious persuasions i.e. they should aim to uphold the freedom of religious belief enshrined in the Uganda Constitution.

### **3.0 RULES**

The standards herein do not apply to a programme containing devotional material, an act of worship or prayerful reflection, if such practice is not abusive or offensive or derogatory to other religious denominations.

- a)** Broadcasters must exercise the proper degree of responsibility with respect to the content of religious programs. Equal opportunities and equitable airtime shall be made available to all religious groups in the community it serves.
- b)** All religious programmes shall be geared towards emphasizing the positive role of religion in the society.
- c)** Religious programming should not subversively try to promote a religion. Religious programmes must not seek to promote religious views or beliefs by stealth.
- d)** Religious broadcast, over which content, members of a specific religion exercise control, shall be presented by responsible representatives of the given religion.
- e)** Religious programmes shall be presented respectfully and accurately.
- f)** The religious views and beliefs of those belonging to a different religious denomination or faith based value system must not be subject to abusive treatment. Religious broadcast shall not contain an attack on, or a ridicule of another religion or sect or faith based value system. The broadcaster shall avoid the casual use of names, words or symbols regarded as sacred by believers of a different faith.
- g)** Where a religion or religious denomination is the subject, or one of the subjects, of a religious programme, then the identity of the religion and/or denomination must be clear to the audience. Innuendo in broadcasting with respect to other religious denominations is prohibited.
- h)** Religious programmes shall not spread false charges or accusations against persons or organizations with differing beliefs. Such programmes shall not be used to maliciously attack, insult, harass, or ridicule other religious, faiths, sects or denominations or their followers for any reason whatsoever.
- i)** Religious programs shall give due regard to the freedom of religion and religious expression.

- j)** Broadcasters shall ensure that religious programmes do not misuse or appeal or exploit the susceptibilities or vulnerabilities of any member of the audience for such a programme.
- k)** Broadcasters shall apply the principle of equitable treatment to all religious groups in religious programming.
- l)** Religion and religious activities of those belonging to a particular religion shall not be misinterpreted. Broadcasters must use their best endeavours to provide accurateness and correctness of the content of religious programmes of different religious denominations.
- m)** Individual religious groups shall not be treated inappropriately in the programme.
- n)** Religious programmes shall comply with other pertinent provisions of the Communication Act, other laws, codes and regulations in force.
- o)** Programmes which denigrate or are likely to offend the sensitivities of any racial or religious group should not be broadcast. Programmes which incite or are likely to incite racial and/or religious intolerance, or misunderstanding, should not be broadcast.
- p)** Racial and faith based stereotyping must be avoided in any religious broadcast.
- q)** References to race and religion should be presented accurately and in a dignified and sensitive manner.
- r)** Broadcasters must bear in mind the main religious faiths practised in Uganda whenever they carry programmes which make reference to or touch upon religious views or beliefs. In featuring any religious view or belief, broadcasters should ensure such views do not in any way disparage or cast other faiths in poor light unless such comparisons are based on fact.