

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE
STUDY ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF UCC PUBLIC COMMUNICATION
CAMPAIGNS/PROGRAMS**

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Public communication campaigns/programs are essential tools for regulators to promote awareness, influence behaviour, and safeguard consumers within the communications sector. Globally, effective communication interventions help regulators achieve compliance, encourage safe usage of services, and strengthen trust between industry players, government agencies, and consumers.

Uganda Communications Commission (UCC), established under the Uganda Communications Act, 2013, is mandated to regulate the communications sector and ensure that communication services are accessible, affordable, efficient, and secure. In executing this mandate, UCC has implemented multiple public awareness and behaviour change campaigns/programs to promote consumer protection, safe use of communications devices, digital safety, and responsible service use.

These include but are not limited to: -

- a) The Anti-Illegitimate Communications Devices Campaign (SIMU KLEAR)
- b) Digital Safety and Online Protection campaigns/programs
- c) Responsible Use of Communication Services campaigns/programs (Beera Steady)
- d) Consumer alert campaigns/programs (Watch Out on Bafeere)
- e) UCUSAF-supported outreach and device access initiatives
- f) Anti-Vandalism Campaign
- g) RICA Awareness Campaigns/programs – Nationwide sensitisation on the Regulation of Interception of Communications Regulations, 2024
- h) E-Waste Collection Project
- i) “Did You Know?” Campaign – Public awareness on the Commission’s mandate, consumer rights, industry issues, and regulatory updates
- j) DIS-MISS Campaign – Implemented in partnership with Nex Media to combat disinformation and fake news

UCC campaigns/programs have been disseminated through diverse channels, including radio, television, social media, stakeholder dialogues, workshops, and community outreach. However, access to these channels varies across population groups and locations. For example, some television platforms provide wide national coverage, but viewership and access tend to be more urban-centred. Subscription-based platforms such as DStv may further limit reach in

low-income and rural households, while some digital terrestrial platforms, including UBC Signet, may have coverage limitations in certain areas. In contrast, radio remains the most accessible medium for rural communities, particularly when content is delivered in local languages thus highlighting the need to assess channel reach and effectiveness across regions and settlement types.

In a rapidly evolving communications environment characterized by increasing digital adoption, diverse media consumption patterns, and heightened consumer vulnerability, it is essential for UCC to assess the effectiveness and outcomes of its public communication campaigns/programs. Such an assessment will enable evidence-based refinement of messaging strategies, channel selection, localization approaches, and stakeholder partnerships

Previous stakeholder consultations have highlighted several key issues, including limited public attribution of campaigns/programs to UCC, heavy reliance on English-language messaging, insufficient localization to major regional languages, and unclear effectiveness of different communication formats (e.g., dramatized messaging, voice-based campaigns/programs, Q&A formats, and audio-visual contents). There is also a need to evaluate the urban-rural variation in campaign impact and the effectiveness of partnerships with media and industry stakeholders.

In line with its mandate, UCC seeks to engage a competent Collaborating Partner to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the reach, effectiveness, and influence of its public communication campaigns/programs implemented within the last 5 years. The study will generate evidence to inform future communication strategies and strengthen the contribution of campaigns/programs to UCC's regulatory objectives, including consumer protection, safe usage of communication services, and improved compliance within the sector.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study is to evaluate, over the last 5 years, the effectiveness and influence of UCC public communication campaigns/programs on public awareness understanding, stakeholder engagement and behaviour change (observed adoption of recommended practices), and to generate evidence-based recommendations to enhance the effectiveness, inclusiveness, and sustainability of future UCC communication interventions in line with UCC's regulatory mandate.

More specifically the study aims to:-

1. Assess public and stakeholder awareness, recall, understanding, and attribution of UCC campaigns/programs.
2. Evaluate the comparative effectiveness of communication channels including radio, television, social media, stakeholder dialogues, workshops, and community outreach.
3. Examine public association of campaign messages with UCC relative to media outlets and other actors.
4. Assess the extent to which campaign exposure is associated with changes in knowledge, attitudes, and reported behaviours relating to digital safety, device verification, and responsible use of communication services.
5. Determine campaign reach and coverage across Uganda's regions, with attention to urban-rural differences and media access patterns.
6. Evaluate the accessibility and suitability of campaign languages and the need for broader localisation to major regional languages such as Luganda, Ateso, Luo, Lunyakitara, and others.
7. Assess the effectiveness of different communication formats and styles at an aggregate level, including dramatizations, voice messages, Q&A sessions, audio-visual contents, and humour-based content.
8. Evaluate the role of stakeholder engagement strategies, partnerships, and dissemination mechanisms in supporting campaign reach and influence.
9. Identify implementation challenges and provide actionable recommendations to improve the design, delivery, and strategic alignment of future UCC communication campaigns/programs.

3. SCOPE OF WORK AND COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITIES

The Collaborating Partner shall conduct a comprehensive, mixed-methods assessment of UCC public communication campaigns/programs, applying a standardized analytical framework across the campaign portfolio. The study shall integrate quantitative and qualitative approaches to generate comparable insights across campaigns/programs while maintaining analytical consistency and operational feasibility.

In collaboration with UCC, the Partner shall undertake the following tasks: -

Task 1: Development of the Inception Report. In this, the partner shall: -

- a) Conduct a comprehensive desk review of UCC campaign documents, communication materials, media plans, reports, and relevant datasets.
- b) Map and profile key stakeholders, including regulators, MNOs, media houses, consumer groups, and government agencies
- c) Develop a detailed methodology, including a representative stratified sampling framework covering urban, peri-urban, and rural populations, and data collection tools capturing exposure to all campaigns/programs.
- d) Propose a detailed work plan and Gantt chart outlining activities, timelines, interdependencies, and responsibilities.
- e) Pre-test data collection tools and submit a pre-test report.

Task 2: Stakeholder Consultations. In this, the partner shall:

- a) Conduct key informant interviews with stakeholders including UCC officials, MNOs, media houses, marketing agencies, consumer advocacy groups, and relevant government institutions.
- b) Undertake consultations in selected representative regions and districts to capture variations in media access, language use, and campaign exposure.
- c) Present preliminary findings and recommendations to UCC and selected stakeholders for validation.

Task 3: Data Collection and Analysis. In this, the partner shall:

- a) Recruit and train an experienced data collection team.
- b) Collect both quantitative and qualitative data, including:
 - Consumer surveys capturing exposure to all UCC campaigns/programs
 - Focus group discussions conducted in relevant local languages
 - Key informant interviews
 - Site visits to selected campaign locations
- c) Analyse data using the standardized evaluation framework to assess awareness, behavioural change, channel effectiveness, language preferences, communication styles, and regional variations.
- d) Where feasible, triangulate findings with available administrative or sector data to provide indicative insights on how campaigns/programs contribute to consumer protection, safer usage practices, and compliance-related outcomes.

Task 4: Reporting and Data Management. In this, the partner shall:

- a) Prepare and submit the inception, draft, and final reports incorporating UCC feedback.

- b) Provide evidence-based recommendations on optimal communication models, media mix, language strategy, and content design for future campaigns/programs.
- c) Analyse reported behavioural influence associated with campaign exposure using the agreed evaluation framework. Prepare additional outputs, including:
 - Weekly status updates and monthly progress reports
 - A data validation report with presentations to UCC Top Management and sector stakeholders
 - At least one publishable paper derived from the study findings
 - A PowerPoint presentation highlighting key findings and recommendations
- d) Submit all reports in English, in three (3) hard copies and electronic format (MS Word and PowerPoint).
- e) Provide UCC with clean, well-documented datasets.

4. STUDY DELIVERABLES

The Collaborating Partner shall submit the following Deliverables to UCC: -

1. Inception Report; Detailing research design, methodology, work plan, stakeholder mapping, draft instruments, and pre-test report.
2. Stakeholder Consultation Report; Summarizing insights from interviews, FGDs, and other engagements.
3. Draft Study Report and Presentation Materials; Presenting preliminary findings, analysis, and recommendations for validation.
4. Final Study Report and Knowledge Outputs; Incorporating feedback, cleaned datasets, analytical outputs, and at least one publishable paper.
5. Knowledge Transfer and Dissemination Package; Documenting workshops, knowledge-sharing sessions, and supporting materials for UCC's application of findings.

5. TIMELINE AND FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

The study shall be completed within five (5) calendar months from commencement. Funding and disbursement shall follow agreed contractual provisions and be contingent on satisfactory completion of deliverables.

6. QUALIFICATIONS OF THE COLLABORATING PARTNER

6.1 Partner Level Qualifications

The Collaborating Partner must demonstrate:

- a) Academic and research credibility in ICT, media, telecommunications policy, behavioural science, communications, or related disciplines, with peer-reviewed publications and applied research outputs.
- b) At least five (5) years of experience in policy studies, market assessments, or impact evaluations within communications, broadcasting, or digital media.
- c) Expertise in mixed-methods research including surveys, FGDs, interviews, and policy analysis.
- d) Institutional affiliation with a legally registered and accredited academic institution.
- e) Experience in comparative or benchmarking studies on media campaigns/programs, communications regulation, or consumer protection is an advantage.

6.2 Individual Team Qualifications

The proposed research team shall comprise five to six key professionals, including: -

- a) Team Leader / Mass Communications Specialist; PhD in Media, Communication Studies, Behavioural Science, ICT Policy, or related field, minimum ten (10) years of research experience, and at least ten peer-reviewed publications.
- b) Media Analyst; master's degree in journalism, Media Studies, or Communications, seven (7) years' experience in media research and analysis.
- c) Behavioural Scientist; master's or PhD in Behavioural Science, Psychology, or related field, with experience in campaigns/programs and consumer behaviour studies.
- d) Public Relations / Communications Expert; Master's degree, five (5) years' experience in public engagement, communications strategy, or awareness campaigns/programs.
- e) Data Analyst / Statistician; master's degree in data science, Statistics, or related field, with experience in quantitative and qualitative data analysis.

All team members must provide signed commitments to participate in the study.

7. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applications will be evaluated based on:

1. Technical and Academic Merit, Understanding of study objectives, methodological approach, and tools.
2. Relevant Experience; Prior involvement in similar studies, quality of previous outputs, and relevance to communications and media campaigns/programs.
3. Team Competence; Qualifications, expertise, and balance of skills across technical, behavioural, and communications domains.
4. Collaborative Capacity: Ability to work with UCC, industry, and stakeholders, and translate research into actionable insights.
5. Financial and Implementation Feasibility; Realism of proposed budget, timeline, and deliverables.
6. Institutional Arrangements; For consortia, clarity of roles, governance, and collaboration arrangements.

8. REPORTING AND GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The Collaborating Partner shall report to UCC through a designated Contract Manager, with overall oversight provided by the Director, ICT and Research to ensure alignment with UCC's strategic and regulatory priorities.

9. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY, DISCLOSURE, AND CONFIDENTIALITY

All data, instruments, analytical outputs, and reports produced shall remain the property of UCC. The Collaborating Partner shall sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement and ensure secure handling of all study-related information.