



# COMMUNICATION STRATEGY 2020



**Makerere University**  
**College of Health Sciences**  
**SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH**



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SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Makerere University School  
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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION



**M**akerere University School of Public Health (MakSPH) effectively engages the public, media and all key stakeholders to promote better health for the people of Uganda and beyond through public health training, research, and community service. The school has made big strides towards research output, innovation and teaching. It aspires to have increasing visibility of its activities, public awareness and streamlining communications and branding.

Due to limited awareness and appreciation by the general public about what is happening in the research world, there has been significant misinformation and/or misrepresentation of facts about public health. The purpose of the Strategic Communication Plan is to provide a set of goals, strategies and measurements to generate increased awareness of the School and improve relationships with internal and external stakeholders. As such, this plan serves as a

guide for annual communications priority-setting, budget allocations and evaluation.

The plan was developed by the ICT and Communications unit in the School's Office of the Dean, with extensive input from stakeholders from across the School's departments and programs, and guidance from University Marketing and Communications. See the working group

#### **Appendix 2:**

This strategy is designed in line with the four pillars MakSPH Strategic Plan 2020–2030 that include; transformative education, knowledge generation and translation, partnerships and institutional capacity development in order to support and enhance the school's planned goals. This Strategic communication plan is in line with the Makerere University's Communications Policy as well as its vision and mission. Therefore, this strategy integrates and provides synergy among the institution's plans.

This plan is a living document and will be updated and revised regularly to reflect changing University and School

goals, priorities and activities related to communications, branding and marketing.

The emergence of new media and social media has had a dramatic impact on the invariable change in communication. It is therefore impossible to ignore the influence of social media in our society, specifically in promoting public health. While it took traditional media -such as radio and television -more than a decade to reach 50 million users, it took Facebook less than nine months to reach 100 million users.

Social media are web-based media and mobile technologies for social interaction and communication, and it can include networking sites (**Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn**), **micro-blogs (Twitter, Tumblr)**, blogs wikis, and video sharing sites such as YouTube, among others.

The MakSPH communications office underscores the powerful advantage that social media has in letting users share information and contribute ideas in ways hitherto never achieved with traditional media.

Social media is an excellent tool for MakSPH to generate stakeholder engagement and dialogue, and information dissemination. Therefore, using social media for communication is ideal due to its competitive advantage over traditional media; real-time communication, online archiving and cheaper.

The formulation of a Communications Strategy for MakSPH is intended to firmly strengthen existing channels and mechanisms, ably detect and aptly address prevailing gaps, carefully identify opportunities presented in emerging technologies, and mitigate threats.

MakSPH's stakeholders/publics will be a key component in the implementation of this strategy. Other crucial factors will be the relevant and utilizable communication domains/space, a grounded and functional well-resourced communications office, and the active participation of key MakSPH administration. The strategy will employ an implementation matrix, based on the strategic objectives.

## 2.0 ABOUT MakSPH

**M**akerere University School of Public Health (MakSPH) is one of the four constituent schools of the College of Health Sciences (MakCHS). It comprises four departments namely:

- Community Health and Behavioural Sciences (CHBS);
- Disease Control and Environmental Health (DCEH);
- Epidemiology and Biostatistics (EPIBIO);
- Health Policy Planning and Management (HPPM).

In addition to the new Mulago Hospital MakSPH offices, the School also has offices at Kasangati, and the MakSPH annex in Kololo (which

houses Resilient Africa Network – RAN, Monitoring and Evaluation for - METS, Public Health Fellowship Program -PHFP, among others.

Over the years, the School has grown into “a leading public health education and research institution in sub – Saharan Africa”, expanding in terms of programs and partnerships, research and innovations, and community interventions and solutions. This growth has inevitably led to an increased volume of, and need for communication, because of the immense information generated from and to the institution with its various stakeholders and/or publics.

### Our Vision

To be a leader in public health training and knowledge generation for societal transformation

### Our Mission

To promote better health for the people of Uganda and beyond through public health training, research and community service

### Our Core Values

- Professionalism
- Integrity
- Innovativeness
- Responsiveness
- Collaborations
- Equity and social justice

## 3.0 Current State Analysis

*It is the goal of the School to ensure that imperious advances will be realized in the overarching areas that include media relations, internal and external communications, research disseminations and policy advocacy, enhanced visibility, MakSPH brand development and promotion, and investment in new and emerging media and communications technologies.*

The business of an institution of MakSPH caliber affects different stakeholder categories including policy makers, current, alumni and potential students, grant awarding agencies, development partners, the media, and the general public. The stakeholder interests and expectations are varied and dynamic because of the rising demand for public health solutions exacerbated by increasingly complex and rapidly changing public health challenges within the context of climate change, rapid urbanization and rapid population growth, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. To adequately address the communication needs, interests and demands of this diverse set of stakeholders, a carefully coordinated communication strategy is critical.

A well-coordinated strategic communication plan for MakSPH will therefore ensure that the School will continue to lead the next decade of transformation, but also benchmark communication and media space utilization in public health training, research and innovations. It is the goal of the School to ensure that imperious advances will be realized in the overarching areas that include media relations, internal and external communications, research disseminations and policy advocacy, enhanced visibility, MakSPH brand development and promotion, and investment in new and emerging media and communications technologies.





# 4.0 The Planning Process, Objectives and Priorities

## 4.1 Analysis

An analysis was conducted in August 2019 on the quality, scope and impact of the Communications office. It was established that MakSPH needed increased visibility to reach more vital stakeholders and have its research output consumed by the public in an easily understandable manner.

The school updated its website with key content and more functions, linking to

social media platforms to increase the website reach. There was also a need to continuously engage the public through new media technologies/ platforms. The school and media relations were in need of bridging gaps and having an excellent functional communications office in place.

The feedback generated was used to formulate and develop this strategy. More key information was also gleaned from

observation of the media and communication environment of MakSPH through functions and workshops attended, dissemination meetings attended, media events organized, and expressed communications needs.

Ultimately the ICT and public relations committee observed a need to enhance visibility of the school. It also underscored the need to develop a comprehensive communication strategy.

### STRENGTHS

The School has some of the leading research platforms, and has been conducting several surveys that influence policy and decision making at local, national and international levels. The School has been an invaluable partner to various national and international organizations in humanity's stand against diseases. For example, the case of Ebola in Liberia and Democratic Republic of Congo, and Uganda, due to its outstanding research work. Additionally, some staff members are trained in communication and media skills. A fully fledged communications office is also functional.

### WEAKNESSES

Internal sharing of research, proper storage of information in an easily retrievable manner, media relations, and communications resources, in addition to failure to maximize time limited communication. Lack of a communications manual, policy and guidelines on social media use, or quality and consistency of the MakSPH brand, in addition to not fully following the communications strategy.

### OPPORTUNITIES

MakSPH can continue to strengthen its position as the leading School of Public Health in sub-Saharan Africa, the favorable and media attractive Makerere University communication environment, interest media houses and individual journalists, and patch gaps in availability of credible local public health information resources, among others.

### The planning process was guided by the following questions:

- a) What has the MakSPH communications office done well?
- b) What are the existing gaps in what the MakSPH communications office has done and/or is doing?
- c) What changes have occurred in communications and media in the context of public health over the years?

- d) What are the implications of these changes to, and at MakSPH especially, the communications office?
- e) What should the MakSPH do to Adefine the communication and media agenda in the context of transformative public health, in the next 5 – 10 years?

## 4.2 Strategic Objectives

As a means of addressing the communication issues and challenges highlighted, the strategy will focus on the implementation of the strategic objectives and the key result areas/action points outlined below.

### Strategic Objective 1

Ensure communication leadership and a well-coordinated communication process that is responsive to the diverse information needs of the public.

#### Outputs and Activities

- a) Establish communication linkages with other Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and local governments for improved communications.
- b) Articulate communication structures (who communicates what, how, when and where) to eliminate conflicting communication.

### Strategic Objective 2

Provide mechanisms for the provision of timely, accurate, clear, objective and complete information on MakSPH.

#### Outputs and Activities

- a) Identifying and deploying relevant communication tools and channels for effective communication on the school, its projects and its activities.
- b) Developing a media relations plan to take advantage of the media landscape.

### Strategic Objective 3

To identify and address the public's communication and information needs and issues surrounding research and other outputs routinely and evaluate public understanding and feedback on the process.

#### Outputs and Activities

- a) Establishment of an effective feedback mechanism to capture public views as a means of ensuring enhanced public involvement in the communication process.
- b) Development and implementation of a monitoring and evaluation framework to measure the efficiency and impact of messages.
- c) Conduct periodic media monitoring and evaluation of press coverage.

### Strategic Objective 4

Develop an implementation structure for the strategy that clearly defines actors' roles and responsibilities and harnesses communication synergies from the different communication efforts.

#### Outputs and Activities

- a) Establish a coordination framework to bring together the different government institutions active in the health and education sectors.
- b) Identify and harness synergies in the parallel communication effort of other actors.
- c) Define roles, responsibility structures of all the key players in the communications process.

## 4.3 Specific Objectives

- a) Improve the existing internal communication and media sharing through mail, social media channels and quarterly newsletters.
- b) Strengthen the dissemination process of research through improved media engagement and management.
- c) Initiate and maintain focused media relations.
- d) Promote the MakSPH brand at every MakSPH function e.g. disseminations, workshops and validation meetings, and social functions, among others.

## 4.4 Target Audiences

### Internal Audiences

MakSPH internal audiences include; Students, Academic staff and the Administrative and support Staff of the University, Research Assistants, and Field Supervisors, Project Investigators, Public Health researchers, and Alumni/ Alumna.

We shall use the following channels to communicate to the School's internal audience;

- ✓ Face to face or physical communication such as Lectures/ Seminars;
- ✓ Formal letters;
- ✓ Emails/ mailing lists;
- ✓ Virtual meetings through zoom, Teams, Google meet, Jeans, WebEx, Skype etc.
- ✓ Makerere University and School website and Intranet;
- ✓ Physical meetings and Minutes of meetings;
- ✓ Notice boards;
- ✓ Intercom;
- ✓ Circulars and memos;
- ✓ Newsletter;
- ✓ Academic publications;
- ✓ Flyers, exhibitions, events and presentations;
- ✓ The official University and School Social media channels;
- ✓ Any other channel that may be identified from time to time by respective units in conformity with the university communication policy.



## External Audiences

This communication strategy positions MakSPH as a credible, high quality evidence source in Uganda for decision makers and program implementers and with health practitioners. For purposes of ensuring quality output, external audiences have been categorized as Primary and Secondary audiences.

For Primary Audiences including students, staff, and the communities where we conduct research, we intend to reach them through dissemination and dialogue events, national media, government technical working groups, technical advisory group / expert group meetings, task force meetings, one-on-one meetings, conferences/exhibitions, website, blogs, and through the School's social media channels.

With this view, the school shall make data for evidence more accessible so decision makers, researchers, advocates, and public health programmatic teams can increase their use of MakSPH research data for decision making and planning. In this regard, we will make available its research outputs to;

- ✓ Country Policy makers (legislators)
- ✓ Public health implementers in both government and private sectors
- ✓ Academics from other disciplines
- ✓ Current and potential donors/funders
- ✓ Media (both organizational and individual)
- ✓ General public/ local communities through dissemination and IEC materials among others.

For secondary audiences, prospective students, policy makers, public health implementers, current and potential donors, media, the general public MakSPH will utilize these and many other forums including; website, social media, emails, publications, capacity building seminars, meetings, webinars, communiques, result briefs, press releases, dissemination events, op-eds, talk shows and media engagements.



## 4.5 Communication Channels and Activities

MakSPH maintains the following communication channels and reserves the right to alter or eliminate channels based on ever-changing communication needs and the evolving communications landscape.

We shall exploit the following communication and media channels

- ✓ MakSPH website
- ✓ Social media
- ✓ One – on – one stakeholder meetings
- ✓ Workshops and validation meetings
- ✓ Conferences & Seminars
- ✓ Dissemination events
- ✓ Data briefs and other material
- ✓ Newspaper articles and supplements
- ✓ Press releases and opinion articles
- ✓ Journal articles and publications
- ✓ Activity reports (quarterly and annually)
- ✓ Media coverage (TV, radio, print and online news sites)
- ✓ Branding materials (Banners, brochures, calendars...)



## MakSPH Website

The school website is positioned as the primary source of information for all target audiences and also serves as the story archive for MakSPH. It features staff- and student-produced news, feature and profile stories and videos about the School's departments, programs, centers, projects, staff and students. The School looks forward to establishing personal websites of staff to link them to their profiles on the school websites.

Story teasers preferably with a photo (s) and links are shared on MakSPH's social media handles, posted on the School platforms, and also may be posted on the appropriate department and program welcome pages.

Departments and programs are encouraged to submit stories for publication on the School News section. Departments and programs are responsible for the accuracy of their content.

The screenshot shows the MakSPH website homepage. At the top, the browser address bar displays 'sph.mak.ac.ug'. The header features the School of Public Health logo and name, 'College of Health Sciences, Makerere University', and social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Navigation links include 'Alumni', 'Give/Donate', 'Careers', and 'MakSPH New Face'. A green navigation bar contains 'HOME', 'ABOUT US', 'ACADEMICS', 'STUDENTS', 'RESOURCES', 'NEWS & EVENTS', 'RESEARCH & INNOVATIONS', 'GRANTS', and 'COVID-19'. The main content area features a large illustration of a man in a suit with his hands raised, a 'MakSPH is a Fraud-Free Institution' banner, and contact information for reporting suspected fraud: '+256-414-543872' and 'dean@musph.ac.ug'.

## Social Media



MakSPH actively uses social media to share School and University news and information with target audiences in a faster, more relevant manner. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube and Instagram are the top five platforms used in higher education marketing and advancement, according to data from the 2016 Survey of Social Media in Advancement.

By the end of 2019 Social media usage in Uganda stood at 2.5 million, representing 5.6% penetration across the country, according to a report by online retailer Jumia detailing mobile trends in the country. WhatsApp is the most used social media platform in Uganda, followed by Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. The least used social media platforms in Uganda as of March 2020 are LinkedIn, Skype, Snap Chat.

With popular social media platforms growing in terms of size, each platform has a unique audience. Currently, MakSPH has presence on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Additional social channels such as Instagram, LinkedIn and Flickr will be added in order to advance MakSPH mission, enhance the visibility of its work, share innovations and extend the organization's networking opportunities.

### **Twitter**

Twitter is a fast-paced and high-volume network, allowing users to share information instantaneously. It continues to be one of the top five most popular social networks with 330 million monthly active users and 145 million daily active users as of 2020.

- a) **Audience:** Alumni, current students, prospective students, parents, staff, donors, strategic partners and the general public.
- b) **Demographics:** 37 percent of adults ages 18-35 years old use Twitter, followed by 25 percent of adults ages 36-49.
- c) **Uses:** Post blog story links, photos, short videos and gifs. We can live-tweet School events when possible and appropriate.
- d) **Frequency:** Users expect frequent updates. Post at least once per weekday. Posting multiple times per day or week is also encouraged.
- e) **Notes:** Tweets are limited to 280 characters. Tweets with images tend to get more engagement. Use hashtags and tag other University- and School-related users to build an audience. Follow and retweet other University accounts.

### **Facebook**

With more than 2 billion daily active users, Facebook is the market-leading online social networking service. In 2013, MakSPH created a Facebook page and has been growing to now over 6,000 followers and 5,822 likes as of July 2020.

- a) **Audience:** Alumni, partners, staff, parents, current students and the entire Makerere University Community, plus the members of the public. 81% of MakSPH Facebook fans are men while only 19% are females. The largest demographic of people who see the School's Facebook posts (Facebook fans) are aged between 25-34, 44% are men and 9% are women, followed by those aged between 18 and 24 with 19% men and 5% women.
- b) **Demographics:** Globally, 88% of online users of age 18-29 are on Facebook, 84% of those are aged 30-49. The number

of Facebook and internet users in Uganda keeps on growing for each and every year that goes by with current estimated internet users at 18.5 million people. By December 2019, Uganda had over 2.47 Facebook user accounts that account to 5.4% penetration rate.

- c) **Uses:** Post blog story links, photos, photo albums and short videos. Use Facebook Live from School events when possible and appropriate.
- d) **Frequency:** People expect less frequent posts from pages on Facebook. Post content three to five times a week.
- e) **Notes:** Facebook allows for a mix of media and message lengths that provides flexibility not found in other channels.

## Instagram

Instagram is a free photo and video sharing app with more than 600 million active users globally. More than 500,000 people currently use Instagram in Uganda.

- a) **Target audiences:** Prospective students, current students and recent alumni.
- b) **Demographics:** 55% of online adults ages 18-34 use Instagram.
- c) **Uses:** Post photos that capture the MakSPH student experience.
- d) **Frequency:** Post content from once per week.
- e) **Notes:** Tag the location where the photo was taken to give context and build an audience. Use hashtags to increase a post's reach. Vertical photos work better than horizontal images.

*Makerere University School of Public Health social media accounts should be logged into at least once per day to monitor*

*and respond to posts, comments, mentions, etc. Social media posts that promote the University or the School's academic pride and excellence should be liked, shared, reposted or retweeted. Posts that tag the School and whose content is a potential concern should be referred to the School's social media and the Communications team or the relevant office where the query is directed.*

## Social Media Use and Guidelines



Social media platforms provide an opportunity for everyone to help build the organization's brand. It is equally important to have a set of guidelines to ensure consistency and maximize the school's social media presence, as well as mitigate risks to staff and the organization's reputation.

For purposes of clarity, these guidelines will apply to all staff (permanent and temporary) who work, volunteer or represent MakSPH in various capacities; and school-led programs.

The guidelines will cover the following social media platforms including the **social networking**, (blogs and microblogging platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, MySpace, Bebo, Foursquare, Tumblr, Pinterest, TikTok and WhatsApp), **video- and**



photo-sharing sites, like (Flickr, YouTube and Vimeo) and online forums and discussion blogs, including comments on online news articles.

## Personal Use of social media

**MakSPH staff are the greatest asset and among the best ambassadors of the School to share news about the institution work and enhance its reach through personal social media.**

Consistent and relevant posting on social media is also a wonderful networking tool and method to share their personal expertise and efforts on behalf of the institution. These guidelines are not intended to stifle the freedoms of individuals' ideas.

To clarify any policy question you might have, we offer a series of best practices for personal social media use. These are not intended to stifle ideas of staff but to guide:

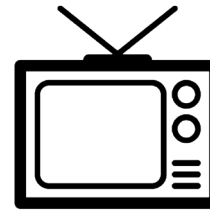
- a) Be Transparent.** The distinction between personal and professional opinions can be misconstrued in online social networks. By virtue of identifying yourself as an employee of MakSPH within a social network, you are now connected to your colleagues, managers, national and global health peers and donors. If you are discussing public health issues in your personal posts (on your personal Facebook page, Twitter account, blog, website, etc.) and have identified yourself as an employee of the School, you should let your followers know that your opinions are yours alone, and do not represent those of MakSPH. (In other words, it is important to put a disclaimer to avoid being misconstrued.)
- b) Protect MakSPH Name and Image.** The School and University name, logo, photographs and graphics should be used only for official business purposes and not to promote or endorse any product, cause, political party or candidate.

- c) Follow Employee Policies.** All posted content should be in accordance with employment guidelines or policies. This means that anything you author that can potentially tarnish the institution's image will ultimately be your responsibility.
- d) Be Discerning in What You Engage with.** The opinions, messages, memes and other content that you share may reflect back on you, and therefore on the institution — particularly if you have identified yourself as an employee online. Be abundantly discerning in the content that you engage with and share. Content or conduct that is discriminatory, including any religious, racial, ethnic, or gender- or identity-discriminatory slurs, is prohibited. Any use of threatening or intimidating content, whether online or otherwise, is prohibited.
- e) Avoid Politics.** If you plan on engaging regularly in political discussions, advocacy or advancing personal political opinions on a personal social media account, do not identify yourself as an employee of MakSPH.
- f) Protect Intellectual Property.** MakSPH develops incredible new products and processes that are admired by the national and global health community. To preserve them as the institution's, please keep any information that is considered confidential or proprietary off of social media sites.
- g) Protect Privacy.** To maintain the reputation, privacy and integrity of the people we help, refrain from identifying clients on a social media site without explicit prior permission. For example, do not post a photo of a client receiving services in a clinic without their permission. Avoid giving out your or other employees' personal contact information, such as email addresses and phone numbers.
- h) Be Considerate.** Keep your comments appropriate and

polite. Avoid becoming defensive or argumentative. Please consult with the Communications Office for advice on handling sensitive issues and topics.

- i) **Give Credit.** Partners in public health have a vast amount of helpful information that is just a click away. If you would like to highlight that material on your own social media site, we recommend you provide an appropriate credit or attribution in your post.
- j) **Address Grievances Privately.** MakSPH employees are encouraged to address any internal grievances with their supervisor and human resources office at School or Directorate at the University level. Social media is not an effective platform to air internal grievances. Contact the Communications Office for advice on handling other sensitive topics on social media.
- k) **Be Aware of the Consequences.** Your social media posts do not occur in a vacuum—anything you say, even if only meant for a small group of friends, can be indexed, copied and made available to the entire world from one social media to another, or even in other media platforms. Engaging defamatory speech, harassment or other illegal or hateful behaviors that cast a negative light on the institution can result in discipline or termination of employment, and tarnish the School's name.

## Television & Radio



Uganda has a wide spectrum of televisions and radio stations emerging everyday competing for an audience. This is an opportunity for MakSPH as a school to position itself and ensure research output and evidence gets audio-visual airplay.

With many MakSPH experts involved in key decision-making bodies in this country, there is a need to strategically lobby slots for researchers to appear on selected popular talk shows for discourses on the School's work.

Arrangements can also be made to ensure production and broadcast of short documentaries on the school, its research outputs, among others. It is important to note that this comes at a cost.

## Specific Engagement with the Media



This communication strategy identifies the media as key strategic partners and outlines specific action points to develop and maintain strong relations with the media. They include: -

### Training:

The School will provide a training package for science and public health journalists on coverage of the School's activities and research.

This training will equally benefit the MakSPH communications personnel. The school will partner with a reputable training consultant and senior journalists/editors to execute this.

### Meetings with senior editors and media proprietors:

Editors and media owners may not go to the field for information but they ultimately determine content. MakSPH shall periodically

organise and have interactions with senior editors and proprietors of media houses in Uganda to appraise them on the School's activities and the research issues and how they can work with the media. This is to ensure the School events should be well covered.

### **Press conferences:**

Organise strategic press conferences whenever key happenings occur; in addition to quarterly press conferences to provide strategic information to the media and influence media agenda towards the public health needs and issues in the country and elsewhere and other related development initiatives.

### **Media Contact List:**

Maintain a media contact list of journalists who can provide credible press coverage at short notice. *See Appendix for list of media houses in Uganda*

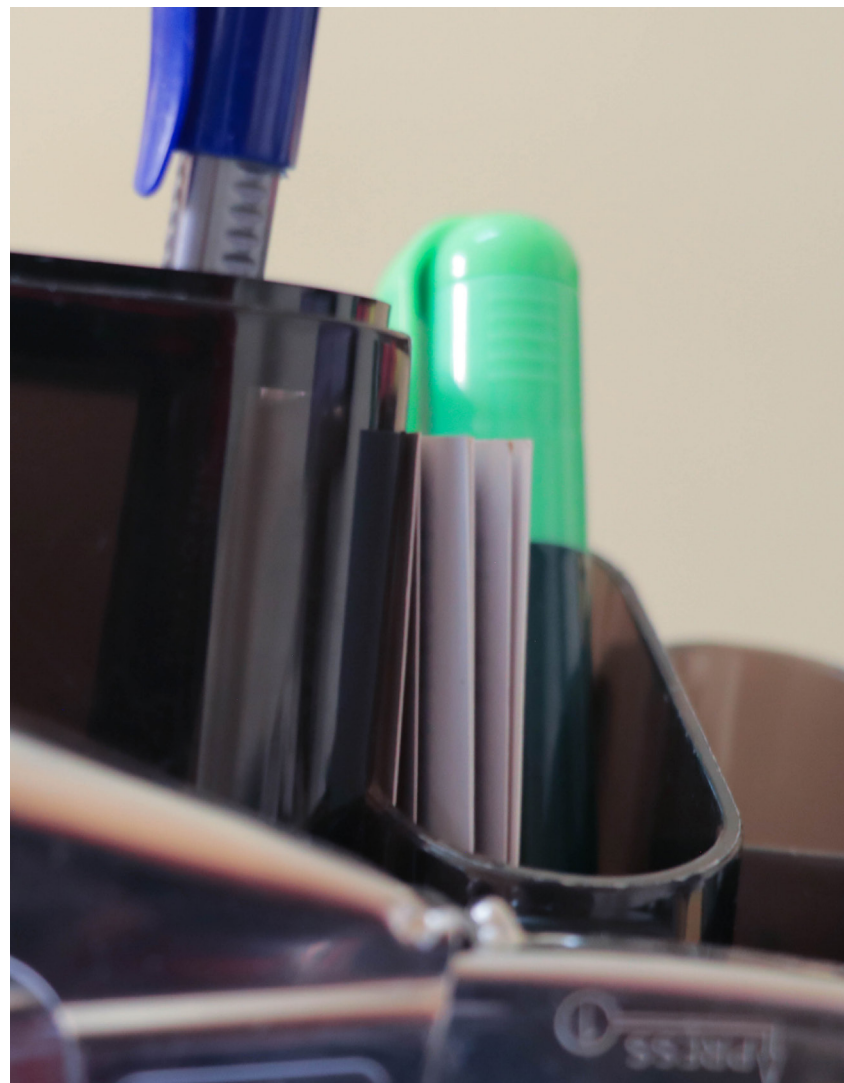
### **Designate a spokesperson:**

The Dean is the principal communications officer of the School. Through the office of the Dean, a designated spokesperson can always be available to the media on a 24-hour basis, to answer queries, provide comment and guide journalists on key issues about the school, and or its activities.

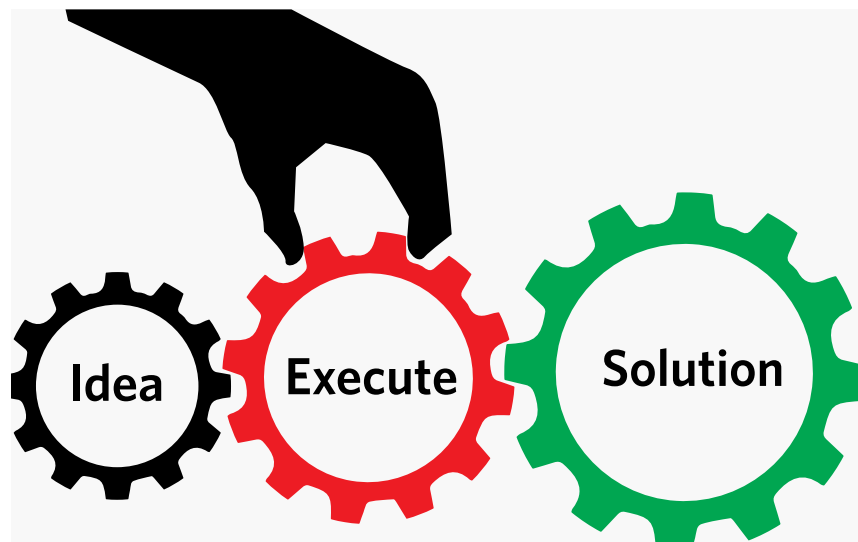
Feedback Mechanisms: It will be important to ensure that there is regular and comprehensive feedback for the implementers of the strategy to track the reactions of key stakeholders. Feedback would, inter alia, help in the following ways:

- a) Assurance that the messages have been received.
- b) Knowing that the messages were considered serious enough by the receiver to elicit a response.
- c) Evaluating whether the receiver has assigned the same meaning to the message as intended by the sender.

Avenues for feedback include: Suggestion boxes, phone calls, question and answer sessions during meetings, internet chats, registry book for generated information and queries as well as social networking media platforms.



## Implementation Framework for the Strategy



MakSPH is a leading public health education and research institution in Uganda and the region, mandated to provide training, conduct research and provide services to the community in the field of public health.

In line with the 2020-2030 strategic plan, the School aspires to play a key role in promoting the health and well-being of communities. There is a need to galvanise all these efforts into a strategic framework. This will enhance the School's capability to provide strategic communication leadership in the area of education, research and service while meeting the communication needs of the different stakeholders and ensuring participation of all relevant actors in the communication process.

The strategy is therefore intended to provide a systematic approach to communication, delivering messages and information that should positively guide discussion and public expectation on the School's work. It is flexible and designed to adapt to changes in the

communications environment hence, the strategy will be updated as and when the School deems necessary to keep it relevant to the communication needs of the School, the University and the various publics.

The implementation of this strategy will be coordinated by the Communications officer of the school in direct supervision of ICT and PR committee and the office of the Dean.

### a) Public Relations/Communications Office

The mandate of the Communications office or PR office is to provide a media platform for communication for the School and actively engage the media to promote a positive image of MakSPH locally, regionally and internationally. The communication office shall oversee the implementation, coordination and follow-up of this strategy, along with the roles and responsibilities spelled out below, including online publishing, M & E, Media engagement, events planning and production, publications development, strategy development and staff sensitization on media.

- i) Ensure consistency of MakSPH key messages on all activities and policies. The Communications office will work with the line departments, researchers on behalf of and in consultation with the Dean to develop all the School's communication materials (press releases, supplements, advisories, statements, documentaries etc.)
- ii) Provide logistics for media briefings.
- iii) Maintain timely information sharing with the Government, including districts.
- iv) Produce strategic and annual operational plans that cover communication areas of work with appropriate timelines

and budgets.

- v) Manage and coordinate the Press conferences, briefings and press releases and statements.
- vi) Edit and produce a wide range of publications including quarterly, bi-annual and annual reports.
- vii) Develop and update the current communication materials in the school including the annual report, prospectus for academic programs, flyers, brochures, banners, among others.
- viii) Supervise the production, (layout, design, editing and proofing) of flagship school publications (evidence briefs, newsletters, and or briefing papers).
- ix) Sensitization of staff on matters related to communication and public relations to enhance a proper communications culture in the school.
- x) Undertake short term strategic planning and alignment with key messages.
- xi) Research and information gathering.
- xii) Monitoring and evaluation of communication activities, as well as performing any other duties as assigned by the supervisor.

## **b) Risk Mitigation, Management and Plan for Continuity**

The development of this communication strategy recognizes the fact that the School, partner agencies and the target audiences are “living” and “changing” entities. They learn, adapt and adjust to their environments and the changing socio-political, economic and environmental circumstances. Therefore, the risk mitigation and management part of this strategy lies in the fact that it is a “living communication strategy” that learns and

adapts to stakeholders needs, trends and circumstances. The task of continuous learning, adjustments and adaptation, lies in the hands of the designated communications office that will work with all stakeholders to spearhead the continuous learning process through listening, sharing, exchange and continuous feedback.

However, the School should be aware of the following potential risk:

- ✓ Possibility of sending mixed and conflicting messages by the Communications office and other line officers involved in the information management process. Unrealistic expectations from stakeholders.
- ✓ Anxiety arising out of misinformation by some sections of the public.
- ✓ Communication overload, fatigue and competition from other policies and programmes for public attention and participation such as politics.
- ✓ Intermittent, sporadic and irregular communication and delays in feedback.
- ✓ Poor issues identification and management.
- ✓ The strategy risk mitigation/ management plan is thus premised on two elements:
- ✓ Clear and precise messaging guidelines.
- ✓ Effective issues management approaches.

## MakSPH Communications Matrix by Specific Objective

Objective	Activity	Target Audience	Communication/ Media Channel	Responsible Person
To provide clear overall communications and media direction to MakSPH in all its teaching and learning, research and innovations through proper communication and media policy and guidelines development and implementation	Establish a communications feedback mechanism	All internal	All channels	Communications Office, MakSPH management, Communications Consultants
	Distribution of related policy documents for reference			
	Communications Office Audits			
To develop and promote communications and media principles and best practices within the MakSPH community	Workshops and trainings for Communications Office	Communications Office, Communications consultants, internal audiences	All channels	Communications Office, MakSPH management, Communication Consultants
	Media Seminars for staff/ alumni/students			
	Communications Office Audits			
To strengthen the existing internal and external communications and media functions and channels of MakSPH	Communication seminars	All internal and External Audiences	All channels	Communications Office, Project Communications officers, Communications Consultants
	Stakeholder engagement analyses			
	Communication channel audits			
To strengthen existing partnerships with all MakSPH publics through timely and relevant communications and media engagements	Establishing MakSPH information centre	All internal and External Audiences	All channels	Communications Office, MakSPH Management.
	Increased information - sharing (newsletters, reports, social media channels, website, etc.)			
	Communication channel audits			

Objective	Activity	Target Audience	Communication/ Media Channel	Responsible Person
<b>To explore and harness new and emerging communications and media technologies for the improvement of existing communications and media channels at, and for MakSPH</b>	Adoption of new media channels, seminars, comparisons with peers and better - performing institutions	All internal and External Audiences	All channels	Communications Office, Communications Consultants
<b>To promote and develop the MakSPH and university corporate brand across Africa</b>	Branding at events, seminars, and all stakeholder engagements, MakSPH promotional videos, etc	All internal and External Audiences	All channels	Communications Office, MakSPH Management.
<b>To improve the existing internal communication and media sharing through mail, social media channels and quarterly newsletters.</b>	Establishing an Information resource centre	Internal Audiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Mailing lists;</li> <li>✓ Newsletter;</li> <li>✓ Face to face or physical communication;</li> <li>✓ Formal letters;</li> <li>✓ Emails;</li> <li>✓ Makerere University and School website and Intranet;</li> <li>✓ Minutes of meetings</li> <li>✓ Notice boards;</li> <li>✓ Circulars and memos;</li> <li>✓ Webinars;</li> </ul>	Communications Office, MakSPH management
	Information (dissemination highlights, etc.) through MakSPH media channels regularly			
	Develop and promote feedback mechanism			
	Communications audits			
	Updated signs around MakSPH			

<b>To strengthen the dissemination arm of research through improved media engagement and management.</b>	Initiate and lead external media engagement	Public, Funders, Policy - makers, Academia, PIs, Media outlets, Public Health implementers, RAs, REs, students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Media engagement.</li> <li>✓ TVs</li> <li>✓ Radio Stations</li> <li>✓ News Papers (Print &amp; Online)</li> <li>✓ Social Media</li> <li>✓ Policy Briefs</li> </ul>	Communications Office, MakSPH management, project communications officers
	Participate in IEC materials development and promotion			
	Timely Activity Reports			
	Branding			
To promote the MakSPH brand at every MakSPH function e.g. disseminations, workshops and validation meetings, and social functions among others	Branding items (Data briefs, banners and podiums, etc)	All stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Face-to-face</li> <li>✓ Newsletters</li> <li>✓ Flyers</li> <li>✓ Banners</li> <li>✓ Exhibitions</li> <li>✓ Presentations</li> </ul>	Communications Office, Management, project and centre communications officers, communications consultants
	Promotion of a MakSPH corporate brand			



# 5.0 Communication Policies and Guidelines

## 5.1 A Guide to MakSPH Communications

MakSPH's Communications office is dedicated to increasing the visibility of the School and its programs by providing clear, accurate and timely information about the institution and by seeking new opportunities to advance its key messages in creative and noticeable ways. In addition to serving the external audiences, we are also an internal resource for MakSPH staff who need assistance in their communications efforts. Feel free to contact communications office with any questions or comments you might have about Makerere University's communications policies or if we can provide any assistance.

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### University Policy on Marketing and Communication



All communications, print and digital, must adhere to University-approved branding guidelines. In line with the Makerere University Communications Policy, all units advertising university products or services are responsible for ensuring the information contained is accurate and appropriate.

Communications to prospective students and families should be coordinated/approved through Office of the Dean, the Academic Registrar and the communications office. Marketing and communications to alumni/donors should be coordinated/approved through the Office of the Dean.

The university communications policy provides responsibilities to each person involved in institutional communication (transmission or dissemination).

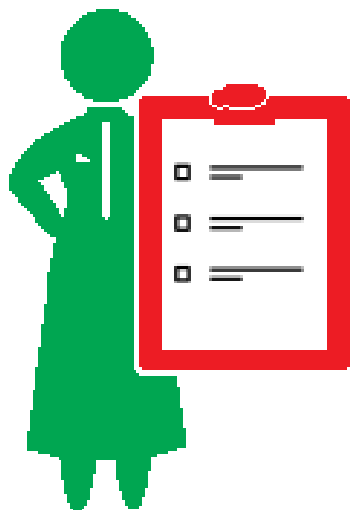
The University logo shall be included in all official communication regarding Makerere University news or events and presentations. MakSPH will always ensure this is adhered to.

All members of the various boards and committees are individually responsible for proper handling of information that comes to them in course of discharging official duties.

Staff members are free to communicate on matters within their area of expertise and are encouraged to cross check the accuracy of the information before communicating it within and outside the university.

MakSPH, in line with the University Communications Policy, shall refrain from accepting adverts that may be harmful to the positive image and brand of the University.

## MakSPH Content Guidelines



MakSPH communications will be consistent with the overall strategy of the University, while emphasizing the specific strengths, culture and character of the School. The overall theme will be the highly valuable impact the School has on its stakeholders and audiences, particularly in health promotion and prevention, public health policy and strategies. The School shall continue its role as a leading trainer of human resource for public health for career preparedness and success,

leadership and service.

This will in turn contribute to the aspiration in National Development Plan (NDPIII) through providing highly skilled human resource for public health.

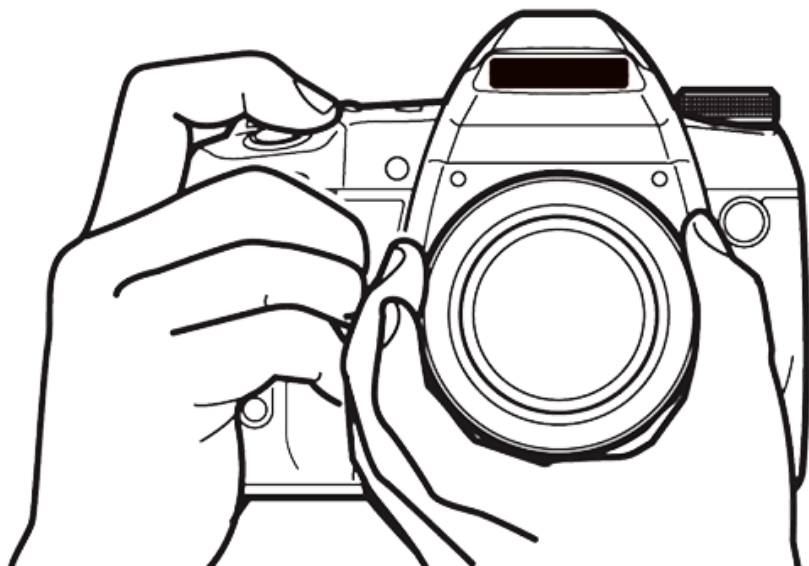
Stories about the School, both print and digital, should be written with the goal of reaching the broadest possible audience with the School's targeted messages. To ensure all publications and communications are accurate, efficient and consistent, the School follows procedural and editorial style guidelines:

- ✓ All news stories written for <https://sph.mak.ac.ug/> should avoid technical and academic jargon, or make it accessible by explaining terminology or relating it to a general reader's experience. Explain all acronyms.
- ✓ The stories should demonstrate the ways in which the School is contributing to the University's strategic vision, highlighting the

priorities of access, faculty innovation and experiential learning.

- ✓ The stories shall be kept concise, interesting and topical. Depending on the topic, story length should be between 300-700 words. However, longer stories may be necessary when dealing with complex topics or a large number of interview sources.
- ✓ All quoted sources should approve the story for accuracy before publication. This is to avoid being misquoted.
- ✓ All School stories to the website shall be edited by School Communications personnel before publication to ensure they meet University style and content guidelines.
- ✓ Videos must be recorded professionally and distributed through official School channels, and must be captioned to conform to the school vision and strategic goals. Project videos should be done in liaison with the communications office.
- ✓ Opinion articles should be shared through the communications office. Certain articles may demand an inclusion of the disclaimer clearly stating that the views expressed in the article are personal views and may not necessarily reflect official MakSPH positions on issues.
- ✓ All school events should be captured audio-visually. (Photography, audio and or video). Photos used in school reports, and any other official material of the school should never show people drinking or holding an alcoholic beverage, or show insignias from other universities.
- ✓ Makerere University PR office and the MakSPH Communications are responsible for media relations, press releases and crisis communications. All media inquiries should be referred to Communications office.

## MakSPH Photography Disclaimer



Photos will be taken as a means of documentation, however consent will be sought either verbally or via a short form that will be provided by the photographer and or organizers of the event for people to append signature. Any photographs or video taken under the direction of the School's communications office, or any other University sponsored program, may be used in news stories, on the web or in University publications. Photos may be used in publicly disseminated promotional materials. In the event of using these photos, MakSPH will ensure the source is properly accredited.

## Working with the media

Working with the media gives MakSPH the opportunity to deliver a carefully crafted message about its programs—in its own words. We should maximize every opportunity by providing stories and statements that reflect and emphasize MakSPH's mission, core competencies, expertise, innovations and successes.

### Tips for Talking with the Media

- a) **Good communication is simple, accurate and brief.** Avoid jargon, acronyms and complex medical/ scientific terminology. Remember, most people don't know scientific terms.
- b) **When talking to the media or doing an interview, remember that you are speaking on behalf of the School, not yourself.** As such, introduce yourself as a MakSPH employee and mention MakSPH as many times as appropriate to reinforce the School name and brand.
- c) **Be personal.** Tell the story of one person to illustrate the impact of the School programs.
- d) **Stay on message.** Repeat the key message you want to get across several times.
- e) **Don't guess.** If you don't know the answer to a question, say you will get back to the reporter or simply say that subject is not your area of expertise.
- f) **Everything is on the record.** If you can't say something on the record then you probably should not be saying it

## 7.0 Branding and Marketing

MakSPH currently works with and refers to the Makerere University branding and marketing policy to maintain and strengthen brand recognition. See MAK Communications <https://policies.mak.ac.ug/sites/default/files/policies/Makerere-University-Communications-Policy-March-2013.pdf>

However, to promote clear and consistent use of the MakSPH brand and reinforce its image as *“a leading public health education and research institution in sub – Saharan Africa”*, a detailed description of MakSPH branding guidelines and a full catalog of printable and downloadable resources including PowerPoint templates, certificates and logos have been incorporated (*Refer to MakSPH Branding Guidelines*)

### 7.1 Key Performance Indicators

- ✓ The implementation of this communication strategy will be spearheaded by the communications officer with support from the ICT and Communication committee and supervised by the office of the Dean.
- ✓ A completed Annual work plan in line with this strategy and with the School’s strategic Plan 2020 – 2030; and a record of work done and filed.
- ✓ A completed Annual report of the previous year by 28<sup>th</sup> February; Completed Quarterly reports a month after end of quarter.
- ✓ A monthly update of events on MakSPH communication and media channels (website, social media, email).
- ✓ Participation in ICT and PR committee meetings, with minutes written, distributed to committee meetings, and filed.
- ✓ Participation in MakSPH events for which communications and media personnel are required.
- ✓ A record of audio, visual, and audio – visual documentations of MakSPH events made per month, quarter or annually
- ✓ Mainstream media interactions initiated and attended (opinion articles, dissemination and other MakSPH events published in

the media, MakSPH events coverage on TV and radio, etc.)

- ✓ Suggestions and innovations introduced and implemented, and their impact on the visibility of the School.
- ✓ Write and produce articles for the website.

### Communication Action/Operational Plans

Promote the value of Public Health training and research for career preparedness and success, leadership and service, and champion health of the population. Communicate the ways in which the School is contributing to the University’s Strategic Vision. Increase visibility and prominence of students, staff achievement across the various publics both internal and external. Promote success among different student populations.

## Appendix 1

### Some of the key media houses in Uganda

Print	Broadcast TV	Radio Stations	Multimedia and Online media outlets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Daily Monitor,</li> <li>✓ The New Vision,</li> <li>✓ Bukedde Print,</li> <li>✓ The Weekly Observer,</li> <li>✓ The Independent Magazine,</li> <li>✓ Etop,</li> <li>✓ Orumuri,</li> <li>✓ Rupiny, Etc</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ NTV –Uganda,</li> <li>✓ NBS TV</li> <li>✓ Uganda, Broadcasting Corporation (UBC)</li> <li>✓ BBS Terefayina</li> <li>✓ Delta TV</li> <li>✓ Top TV</li> <li>✓ Salt TV</li> <li>✓ Baaba TV</li> <li>✓ Spark TV</li> <li>✓ Urban TV</li> <li>✓ TV West</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Prime Radio</li> <li>✓ Bukedde Radio</li> <li>✓ Super FM Radio</li> <li>✓ One &amp; Akaboozi</li> <li>✓ Capital Radio</li> <li>✓ X-FM, CBS Radio</li> <li>✓ KFM</li> <li>✓ Bukedde FM.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➡ Uganda Radio Network (URN)</li> <li>➡ Chimp reports</li> <li>➡ Nile Post News</li> <li>➡ PML Daily</li> <li>➡ The Pearl Times</li> <li>➡ The Street Journal</li> <li>➡ SoftPower News,</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2

- 1) Mr. Ayub Kakaire
- 2) Prof. Nazarius M. Tumwesigye.
- 3) Mr. Marvin Kansiime
- 4) Dr. Edith Nakku-Joloba
- 5) Dr. Moses Tetui
- 6) Dr. Kaddu Augustine
- 7) Dr. Simon Kasasa
- 8) Mr. Joseph Odoi
- 9) Dr. Phyllis Awor
- 10) Dr. Joan N Mutyoba
- 11) Ms. Grace Lubega
- 12) Mr. Denis Michael Wamala (Web designer)
- 13) Mr. Isa Mugabo Agaba (University Brand Manager)
- 14) Laura Wells - Senior Communications Specialist at Jhpiego.
- 15) Dr. Simon P.S. Kibira – Chairperson
- 16) Dr. John Ssenkusu – Vice Chairperson
- 17) Dr. Christine Nalwadda
- 18) Mr. Chrispus Mayora
- 19) Dr. John Bosco Ddamulira
- 20) Mr. Rawlance Ndejjo
- 21) Dr. John Bosco Isunju
- 22) Hanifah Bukirwa
- 23) Mr. Marvin Kansiime
- 24) Ms. Esther Nakasiko
- 25) Mr. Davidson Ndyabahika
- 26) Ms. Melody Kukundakwe





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