



02<sup>ND</sup> RUFORUM  
Triennial Conference  
12-16 August 2024  
Namibia



## 2<sup>nd</sup> RUFORUM TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE

### CONCEPT NOTE

#### STRENGTHENING CAPACITY OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATION OFFICERS TO SERVE AS DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION PROFESSIONALS

**Date:** 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> August 2024 **Time:** 08.30-16:00

**Venue:** Hage Geingob Campus, Room TBC, Windhoek, Namibia

**Contact:** Prof. Anthony Egeru ([a.egeru@rforum.org](mailto:a.egeru@rforum.org))

#### BACKGROUND

Africa over the last three decades has seen a forward growth trajectory with positive development outcomes. Nonetheless, there remains considerable development needs for the continent. Development underscored by social change with the promotion of physical and material progress with communication being one of the most important silent engines driving this aspiration. Communication as an important pillar in development process takes on different directions with varied focus; for example, corporate communication, internal communication, advocacy communication, and development communication. In the global north for example, development communication is geared toward addressing the dysfunctions of physical and material progress. Meanwhile in the global south, it is often concerned with the provision of physical and material infrastructure. However, it is also concerned with social change in the form of inspiring hard work, eliciting self-help, and providing education, health facilities, and other critical conditions<sup>1</sup>.

Despite reported development progress in Africa over the last three decades, the continent's progress does not match the human population growth and the required priority services and products, especially for the increasing number of young people. Thus, the growing concern is how to stimulate development and social change with young people at the leadership position. There are several development programs being implemented in the continent by governments, development partners, philanthropists, and other individuals but these require to be amplified if they are to deliver the aspired impact. Accordingly, development communication is generally accepted as an important tool for accelerating development delivery in developing countries in the global south.

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<sup>1</sup> Mefalopoulos, P. (2008). Development communication sourcebook: Broadening the boundaries of communication. World Bank Publications.



However, amplifying the role of development communication requires that the internal and institutional capacity of Communication Officers is strengthened. This is because most of the Communication Officers are often oriented towards internal communication, advocacy communication, and corporate communication but very limited capacity exists in development communication. This is even more important within the universities, where often, Communication Officers are brought to relay the results of projects already implemented rather than being part of the design and delivery. This leaves their approach and effectiveness of the communications at periphery and ineffective in influencing social change among different stakeholder groups.

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) in partnership with the Mastercard Foundation recognise the capacity gaps among universities Communication Officers in shaping the development communication in programme delivery. Accordingly, a training in “development communication” has been organised for Communication Officers from RUFORUM member universities to be held as part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Triennial Conference in Windhoek, Namibia.

## OBJECTIVES

The overarching objective of this training is to strengthen the capacity of universities Communication Officers in development communication to enhance the effectiveness in communications for catalysing social change in development interventions led by universities. Specifically, the training objectives are:

1. Strengthen Communication Officers understanding of phases and steps for development communication and development communication planning.
2. Enhance Communication Officers capacity for development communication across stakeholder groups including donor reporting.
3. Position Communication Officers as facilitators of development process and stakeholders as part of advancing university missions.

## EXPECTED OUTCOME

By the end of this workshop Communication Officers are expected to have enhanced capacities in development context articulation, segmented impact results reporting to scale out development interventions and university missions’ advancement.

## APPROACH

This workshop adopts a co-creative learning approach that incorporates brainstorming, consultative sessions, and reflective engagement.



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## PARTICIPANTS

Primary participants will be Communication Officers from RUFORUM member universities.

## ORGANIZERS

This event has been organized by RUFORUM and delivered in partnership with the Mastercard Foundation.

### DRAFT PROGRAMME (Program will further be developed in detail)

Day and Time	Agenda Activity	In-charge
<b>Day One</b>		
08:00-8:30	Arrival and settling	SPO Strategic Communication and Marketing
8:30-8:35	Opening remarks	Dr. Florence Nakayiwa, Deputy Executive Secretary, RUFORUM
8:35-8:45	Opening remarks	Ms. Rachel Nandelenga, Mastercard Foundation
8:45-9:15	Universities as development facilitators: Changing Roles	Prof. Anthony Egeru, RUFORUM
9:15-10:00	Reactions and co-creating the pathways	All Communications Officers
<b>10:00-10:30</b>	<b>Tea Break</b>	<b>Service Provider</b>
10:30-12:00	In the lens of development: Creating value through communication	Dr. Leonard Oruko, Assessment Expert
12:00-12:30	Discussions	All Communications Officers
12:30-13:00	Communication and branding within regulated and guided environment: Compliance to development partners	Ms. Rachel Nandelenga, Mastercard Foundation
<b>13:00-14:00</b>	<b>Lunch Break</b>	<b>Service Provider</b>
14:00-14:40	Introduction to development communication and understanding communications strategies	Consultant
14:45-15:45	Behavior and social change through development communication	Consultant
15:45-16:30	Immersion into research, monitoring, evaluation and learning for shaping Impact conversations	Consultant
<b>16:30 -</b>	<b>Tea/Coffee/Health break</b>	<b>Service Provider</b>
<b>Day Two</b>		





8:30-8:45	Wrap-up of day one	
8:45-10:15	Co-creating role, desired actions, and integration processes for COs	Consultant
<b>10:15-11:00</b>	<b>Tea Break</b>	<b>Service Providers</b>
11:00-12:00	Leading change with strategic communication and relationships with audiences and stakeholders	Consultant
12:00-13:00	Strategic development communication application	Consultant
<b>13:00-14:00</b>	<b>Lunch Break</b>	<b>Service Providers</b>
14:00-15:30	Strategic development communication and influencing narratives	Consultant
15:30-16:30	Ethical challenges for strategic communications	Consultant
16:30-16:45	Closing Remarks	Prof. Anthony Egeru
<b>16:45 -</b>	<b>Tea/Coffee/Health break</b>	<b>Service Provider</b>

Co-organized by:

