
COMMUNICATIONS POLICY



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FOREWARD



As the Chair of the Board of the Institute, it gives me pleasure to share our vision and the role that the Institute plays in the wildlife research and training. The Institute stands at the forefront of these efforts, offering cutting-edge research findings and specialized training programs designed to address the unique challenges facing wildlife and their habitats.

The institute is committed to producing research that informs policy, guides conservation efforts, and enhances our understanding of biodiversity. Communicating our mandate as well as our outcomes, effectively ensures that our research findings reach those who can make a positive impact in the wildlife sector. It also helps build a strong brand identity for the Institute, positioning us as a leader in our field and a trusted source of knowledge. Effective communication is the backbone of any successful organization, and it is especially vital for the Institute as we strive to protect wildlife, conduct research, and foster environmental education and awareness.

The Code of Governance of State Corporations (Mwongozo) mandates the Board to promote a positive image for the Institute. Hence, this policy is a reflection of the Board of the Institute commitment to transparency, integrity, and accountability. It outlines the standards and guidelines that govern our communications, both internally among staff and externally with our stakeholders, partners, and the public.

This policy will serve as a living document, adapting as necessary, to keep pace with technological advancements and changing expectations. As an Institute, we believe that our strength lies in our collective voice. By adhering to this policy, we can ensure that our communication is not only consistent and clear but also powerful in advancing our shared vision for wildlife research and training.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Nkedianye', written over a dotted line.

DR DAVID NKEDIANYE
CHAIR, BOARD OF THE INSTITUTE

DATE:16th May, 2025

PREFACE



The Institute is uniquely positioned to lead in this field of wildlife research to inform policy and decisions relating to sustainable use, conservation and management of wildlife. With our multidisciplinary approach to research, we offer comprehensive training programs that equip professionals with the knowledge and skills necessary to make significant contributions to wildlife research and training. This policy is more than just a set of guidelines; it is a reflection of our dedication to fostering clear, consistent, and impactful communication within the Institute and with the outside world.

Communication to the public is at the core of our mandate as a training and research Institute. Whether we are engaging with our partners, sharing our latest research findings, or educating the public about wildlife conservation, how we communicate shapes our reputation and effectiveness.

It is essential that our communications reflect our values, mission, and commitment to excellence in every interaction. This policy has been developed to provide clear direction on how we share information, collaborate, and represent the Institute across all platforms and audiences. It ensures that our messages are aligned with our strategic goals, enhancing our ability to advocate for wildlife and contribute to global conservation efforts.

Effective communication requires active participation from everyone, and I am confident that by working together, we can amplify our impact and achieve our vision for a sustainable future.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dr. Patrick Omondi', written over a horizontal dotted line.

DR PATRICK OMONDI, OGW
DIRECTOR/CEO

DATE: 16th May, 2025

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ACRONYMS

WRTI - Wildlife Research and Training Institute (WRTI)

EC - External Communication

IC - Internal Communication

PR - Public Relations

CEO - Chief Executive Officer



**WILDLIFE
RESEARCH
& TRAINING
INSTITUTE**

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DEFINITION OF TERMS

Authorised person: means individual(s) authorised by this policy to speak on behalf of the Institute;

Channels of communication: means mediums that the Institute shall use to reach the target audience, public and stakeholders;

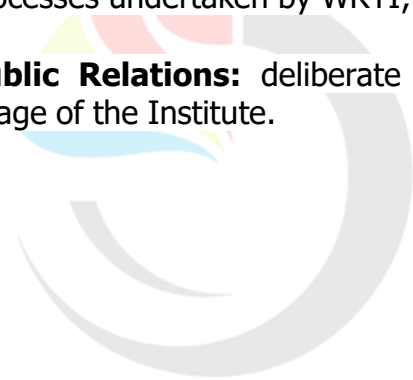
Institute: means Wildlife Research and Training Institute (WRTI);

Media: channels of communication through which information is passed from one source to the other;

Online publication: process of having information published and shared through the internet;

Policy: The systematic principles to guide decisions and the communication processes undertaken by WRTI; and

Public Relations: deliberate efforts to maintain and enhance favourable public image of the Institute.



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1.0. OVERVIEW

The Wildlife Research and Training Institute (WRTI) is a state corporation established under Section 50 of the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act. The establishment of the Institute was informed by the need to provide coordinated wildlife research and comprehensive data to inform wildlife conservation and management approaches, scientific based solutions that inform policy decisions and create innovative wildlife-based products and services in the wildlife sector.

Vision

A globally competitive wildlife research and training centre.

Mission

To conduct and coordinate wildlife research and training through innovation, Knowledge and technology transfer for sustainable wildlife conservation and management.

Core values

The Institute is guided by the following core values in its operations:

- 1) **Integrity:** We uphold honesty and transparency in all our operations.
- 2) **Professionalism:** We uphold high standards of conduct, competence and accountability in all activities to foster trust and credibility.
- 3) **Stewardship:** We nurture and foster environmental sustainability and responsible management of public resources.
- 4) **Innovation:** We endeavour to explore and adopt new ideas, approaches and technologies.
- 5) **Partnership:** We create an environment that will deliver competitive scientific output through collaborative research, capacity building and service delivery initiatives.
- 6) **Quality:** We offer excellent research and training outputs and services.
- 7) **Teamwork:** We uphold the spirit of working together to create synergy and cohesiveness towards common goals.
- 8) **Inclusivity:** We embrace gender and social diversity, equity, fairness, respect and community engagement.

The Institute seeks to manage communication with both internal and external stakeholders. Proper communication is a powerful tool for the Institute to inform, educate and keep abreast with changing trends in the wildlife sector.

1.1 Purpose of this policy

The Institute seek to communicate effectively with internal and external stakeholders, ensuring alignment with the vision, strategies, and objectives of the Institution. This Policy provides a blueprint that will guide the quality, process, design and means of communication to be used by the Institute in communicating with staff, internal stakeholders, external stakeholders, media, the Government and the general public.

The policy is in compliance with Article 31, 33 and 35 of the Constitution on the right to privacy, freedom of expression and Access to Information Act (Cap 7M) respectively, and the Data Protection Act (Cap.411C). The Access to Information Act,(Cap.7M) provides for the right of access to information by citizens, stating that public entities and private bodies shall proactively disclose information that they hold in line with the constitutional principles. This policy will link communication to the overall strategies of the Institute for effective and consistent operations.

The Institute has developed this Communication Policy to:

- (a) establish and maintain a consistent brand image for the Institute, ensuring that all communications align with the institute's mission, values, and goals, thereby strengthening its reputation as a leader in wildlife research and training;
- (b) raise awareness about the Institute's research findings, training programs, and conservation efforts, making sure that the public, stakeholders, and policymakers are well-informed about the institute's contributions to wildlife conservation;
- (c) promote transparent and effective communication with key stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, academic institutions, and the local community, fostering collaboration and support for the Institute initiatives.
- (d) ensure the effective dissemination of wildlife research outputs and training resources, making information accessible to a wide audience, including conservation practitioners, educators, and the general public to maximize the impact of Institute's work.
- (e) provide clear guidelines for communication during crises or emergencies, ensuring that the Institute responds promptly and appropriately to incidents that may negatively affect its operations, reputation, or wildlife welfare.

1.2 Objectives of the Policy

This Policy provides a guideline for the Institute and its staff to communicate both internally and externally. The Policy shall:

- (a) define the channels of communications and authorised personnel to communicate on behalf of the Institute;

- (b) provide framework through which various departments at the Institute shall coordinate communication activities;
- (c) provide guidelines for social media use and communication;
- (d) provide guidelines for communication with external stakeholders;
- (e) provide guidelines for media engagement, advertising; and
- (f) provide guidelines for handling crisis communication at the Institute.

1.3 Scope of the policy

This Communication Policy is intended for use by the Board of the Institute, Management, Staff, trainees, partners and stakeholders.

1.4 Guiding principles

The Institute shall provide its stakeholders with timely, accurate and clear information about its policies, programmes and projects, services, and initiatives. Consequently, to realize the Institute's communication goal, this policy outlines core principles of good communication practices as a guide to its stakeholders.

1.4.1 Effectiveness

The Institute shall ensure that all communication is effective, appropriate and shall convey information or respond to requests by stakeholders through appropriate communication channels.

1.4.2 Clarity

The Institute shall transmit clear, uniform and easy to understand information via publications in various forms, to reinforce clarify or authenticate communication appending the Institute's logo and using its corporate colours.

1.4.3 Pro-activity

The Institute shall continue to demonstrate leadership by proactively seeking and engaging external contacts in areas of mutual interest in line with its vision and mission.

1.4.4 Transparency

The Institute shall continue to be transparent and accountable in disclosing reasons for decisions made; while the management shall openly engage in dialogue as appropriate and necessary.

1.4.5 Efficiency

The Institute shall ensure that all information duly reaches the intended recipients.

1.4.6 Cultural awareness

The Institute shall continue to respect cultural diversity of all stakeholders in its communication.

1.4.7 Responsibility

The Institute shall ensure editorial operations and marketing of products, which constitute an integral part of the institution's communication process, reflect a high level of accountability and responsibility.

1.4.8 Integrity

Internal and external communication, like all other Institute activities, shall continue to be guided by high levels of integrity.

2.0 TARGET AUDIENCES

For effective communication, the Institute shall divide its audiences into internal and external stakeholders.

2.1 Internal Stakeholders

The internal stakeholders shall comprise of staff and students of the Institute.

2.2 External Stakeholders

The external stakeholders of the Institute include state organs, collaborating institutions, suppliers, donors, media, development partners, parents or guardians, alumni and the general public.

3.0 AUTHORISED SPOKESPERSON

The Institute recognises that according to the Access to Information Act, (Cap.7M) the Chief Executive Officer of a public entity shall be the Information Access Officer and is the official spokesman with the authority to speak on behalf of the Institute. The CEO may delegate this function to an officer, to discharge the function of the Information Access Officer.

4.0 TYPES OF COMMUNICATION

For efficiency, the Institute classifies information into:

4.1 Internal Communication

The Institute shall facilitate efficient and effective internal communication to staff and students in order to maintain a good working environment with its stakeholders. All communication shall be easy to understand and devoid of slang, obscene, offensive or discriminatory remarks, ethnic slurs, or sexist innuendoes.

4.2 External and Public Communication

External Communication (EC) is the exchange of information between the Institute and outside publics, media, audience and stakeholders.

5.0 CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

Under this policy, communication channels shall include all the means the Institute shall adopt to communicate to the intended audience and stakeholders. For effective communication, the Institute shall choose either one or a combination of channels depending on the purpose of communication:

5.1 Internal Memos

Internal Memos shall be used for internal communication within the Institute. They will convey information to employees, departments, or teams effectively and will be tailored to specific groups or the entire organization. Internal memos shall adhere to the brand manual of the Institute.

5.2 Meetings

Meetings shall be used for both internal and external stakeholders. This will enable the Institute to keep up to date, discuss ideas, make collective decisions and evaluate the performance of the Institute for improvement.

5.3 Reports

Reports shall communicate the Institute's policies and other relevant information in an organized format and for specific a specific purpose to stakeholders.

5.4 Website

The website shall be informative and interactive and easy to use for the public. It shall promote the Institute's brand by capturing the vision, mission, values and core functions.

5.5 Mainstream media

The Institute shall use either broadcast, print or digital media houses to reach the intended audience and stakeholders.

5.6 Social Media

The institute shall use social media including Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), YouTube, Instagram, Tik Tok and LinkedIn. This policy provides that the Head of Corporate Communications shall be in charge of the Institute's social media handles.

5.7 E-communication

Electronic Communication (E-communication) shall be classified as the means of passing information via electronic means as aided by technology and computers. These include e-mail, telephone, short message services (SMS), video conferencing and virtual meetings.

5.8 Periodic publications

The Institute shall publish periodic publications at regular and predictable intervals to be agreed upon by the management and communication department. These will include magazines, newsletters, brochures, flyers and posters.

5.9 Noticeboards and Posters

The Institute shall use noticeboards as a way of displaying information and communication with both internal and external stakeholders. Content displayed in all noticeboards shall be carefully monitored and managed by the Communications Team.

5.10 Seminars/ Workshops

The Institute shall organize and participate in both external and internal seminars/workshops with key target groups for communication purposes.

6.0 CORPORATE ADVERTISEMENT

The Institute shall engage in advertising and/or production of various publications to inform, educate, update and motivate the general public as well as change their attitudes on issues relating to wildlife research and training. All adverti shall be done through the Government Advertising Agency (My Gov). The Head of Corporate Communication shall be in charge of ensuring the content reflects the mandate of the Institute, has the institutional name and logo. Where there are uncertainties, the concerned parties shall consult with the Head of Corporate Communications.

7.0 MEDIA RELATIONS MANAGEMENT

The Chief Executive Office/ Director is the spokesperson of the Institute and the only one authorized to release information to the media. While giving information to the public, comments of the spokesperson shall be guided by professionalism and transparency. The CEO/ Director may delegate officers to speak to the media depending on the topics and issues at hand.

8.0 CRISIS COMMUNICATION

The Institute shall continue to proactively prevent events that are likely to lead to loss of stakeholder confidence or damage the reputation of the Institute. In the event of the above occurrence, the Institute shall manage crises in a professional way with an aim of reducing financial loss and reputation management.

A crisis shall be reported to the Head of Legal Services and Corporate Communications Departments, who shall after assessing the situation, develop mitigation strategies and immediately relay the information to the Chief Executive Officer/ Director.

8.1 Crisis Communication Management Steps

- 1) Develop a Crisis Management Plan (CMP).
- 2) Notify the Chief Executive Officer immediately who will in turn notify the rest of the staff and the Board.
- 3) Crisis assessment. Determine facts, appropriate action, create a plan for communication, develop key messages and assess the resources necessary to manage the crisis.
- 4) Release Information to relevant stakeholders through pre-arranged channels.
- 5) Keep Records
- 6) Evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy and make recommendations.

9.0 FAKE NEWS

The Institute shall regularly monitor mainstream and social media platforms for misinformation or malinformation related to the Institute. The Institute shall respond to fake news within 24 hours to prevent its escalation. The Head of Corporate Communications, with guidance from the Director/ CEO and Legal Department, shall issue factual and transparent clarifications through official communication channels, including press releases, social media, and the institute's website.

10.0 SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT

All social media postings shall respect the human dignity of all people and shall not contain materials that may reasonably be considered offensive. Such content includes, but is not limited to, sexual comments or images, racial and ethnic slurs, derogatory gender-specific comments or beliefs, national origin or physical attributes. For effective usage of social media, this policy provides as follows:

- (a) All staff shall maintain a clear distinction between the Institute's Social Media handles and personal handles to avoid conflict of interest.
- (b) Before posting any official information on social media page, the content shall be verified by the Head of Corporate Communications to ensure it conforms to the Institute's values.
- (c) The Institute's channels on social media must at all times reflect the values and stakeholders expectation on how the Institute should conduct itself.

- (d) The Institute has a duty of care to wildlife and matters appertaining to it and hence shall uphold the same in all its communications.
- (e) All official social media posts must be posted with care and caution so as not to expose the Institute to legal consequences.
- (f) The Head of Corporate Communication shall have the overall responsibility of managing the Institute's social media pages.
- (g) The Institute shall have a social media monitoring team from Corporate Communication Department to monitor activities posted on the sites.

11.0 BRAND NAME AND LOGO

Official communication shall comply with the Institute Branding Manual. The Staff shall exercise caution when using the Institute's letterhead and shall not be used for personal communication.

The Institute's name and logo shall only be used for/in advertisements with the approval of the Director/CEO. Any promotional Institute's items or materials must reflect the Institute's name, colors and logo.

12. 0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Corporate Communication Office shall;

- (a) develop appropriate strategies for monitoring and evaluation of the Communication Policy;
- (b) carry out annual evaluation on the implementation of the policy;and
- (c) define the short-term, mid-term and long-term relevant interventions based on the outcomes of the evaluation reports.

13.0 REVIEW OF POLICY

This policy shall be reviewed after 3 years in line with the emerging changes in communication.