



**National Environment Management  
Authority**

**Communication Policy**

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## **FOREWORD**

As we approach the new century, our increasingly globalized world seems more than ever divided between those suffering from information overload and the millions of others with little or no access to information. The challenge to NEMA, therefore, is to ensure that its information and corporate messages reach its targeted audiences and partners, using the new communication tools and technologies in the most cost-effective way.

To meet this challenge, NEMA has developed a Corporate Communication Policy. The result of a long and intensive process of consultation throughout the Organization, the Policy provides a timely blueprint for managing NEMA's diverse communication resources and needs. Its cardinal principles - participatory planning, corporate focus and decentralized implementation - provide the framework for coordination and cooperation among all units of the Organization in this most important endeavour.

I am confident that the Corporate Communication Policy will create a supportive, proactive environment, firmly establishing the Organization's credibility as a responsive technical organization and effectively relaying its mission as the leading global advocate of environment management.

**Mamo B. Mamo**

Director General

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This Communication Policy provides the blueprint that will guide the process, standard, context, quality, design and means of communication the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) should have with its publics including staff, internal stakeholders, external stakeholders, media and the general public.

The policy is not meant to curtail the freedom of expression for NEMA staff especially on social media but to regulate the content and mitigate and negative conclusion that can be derived from any information passed out to NEMA's key audience and stakeholders.

It is divided into two parts where the first part discuss the background information, information about NEMA, the objectives and the guiding principles on the use and application of this communication policy.

Part Two provides the detailed NEMA's communication policy including establishment on the communication department, policy on engaging both internal and external stakeholders, handling crisis, policy on media engagement, social media policy and authorised spokespersons.

We believe that with the coming to force of this communication policy, NEMA will position itself as a leading institution in providing satisfactory information and interacting with the public in a manner that is consistent with its vision and mission of conserving the environmental.

## **Abbreviations and Acronyms**

CSR- Corporate Social Responsibility

DG – Director General

DDC – Deputy Director of Communication

EC- External Communication

EIA- Environment Impact Assessment

EMCA- Environmental Management Co-ordination Act

IC- Internal Communication

NEMA – National Environmental Management Authority

PR - Public Relations

### **Definition of terms**

**Authority:** Under this policy, 'Authority' shall be used interchangeably to mean National Environment Authority (NEMA).

**Authorised person:** Refers to individual(s) authorised by this policy to speak on behalf of NEMA.

**Blogs:** Online journals/space which allows people to write commentaries and opinions

**Channels of communication:** Means and mediums through which the Authority shall use to reach the target audience, public and stakeholders.

**Internet:** The large, interconnected systems attached to computers that allow people to communicate and share information with each other.

**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 NEMA.

**Public Relations:** Deliberate efforts to maintain and enhance favourable public image of the Authority.

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## **PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

The purpose for this Communication Policy is to provide the guidelines on the standard, context and quality of the kind, design and means of communication the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) should have with its publics including staff, internal stakeholders, external stakeholders, media and the general public. It outlines all the components of effective communication policy that NEMA should adopt to meet its goals, vision, mission and mandate as provided under the Environmental Management and Co-ordination Act (EMCA) No. 8 of 1999. This communication policy is intended to position NEMA as the top state agency in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and to enhance its working relations with the public, policy makers, environment conservationists, the media and all other stakeholders who are consumers of services offered by the Authority.

### **1.2 About National Environment Management Authority (Nema)**

#### **Establishment**

The National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), is established under the Environmental Management and Co-ordination Act No. 8 of 1999 (EMCA) as the principal instrument of Government for the implementation of all policies relating to environment.

#### **Mandate of NEMA**

Section 9(i) of EMCA mandates the Authority to exercise general supervision and coordination over all matters relating to the environment and to be the principal instrument of the Government of Kenya in the implementation of all policies relating to the environment.

## **Vision**

A clean, healthy and sustainable environment

## **Mission**

To coordinate, supervise and manage all matters relating to the environment in Kenya

## **Motto**

“Our Environment, Our life, Our Responsibility”

## **Core Values**

- **Professionalism:** We aim at productivity that comply with set performance standards and response to changing work circumstances.
- **Equity:** We apply principles of fair play and equity with those we work with as well as the general public
- **Teamwork:** We collaborate with others, maintain cooperation and openly demonstrate a sense of responsibility for the success of what we seek to achieve.
- **Integrity:** We execute our mandate transparently and with the utmost respect, honesty and moral integrity.
- **Courage of conviction:** We bravely, passionately and without fear, promote and defend sustainable interaction with the environment.
- **Innovation:** We continually upgrade to new innovations, create new ways of doing things to the sustainable management of the environment.

### **1.3 Scope of the policy**

This Communication Policy is intended for use by NEMA’s board of directors, management, communication and public affairs department, all staff, partners and external environmental experts.



#### **1.4 Main objectives**

The main objective of this Communication Policy is to provide principles which shall guide the way NEMA and its staff communicate both internally and externally. It is envisaged to:

- a) Provide framework through which various departments at NEMA should coordinate communication activities.
- b) Establish channels of communications and authorised personnel to communicate on behalf of the Authority.
- c) Provide guidelines for social media use and communication.
- d) Provide guidelines for communication with external stakeholders.

#### **1.5 Guiding principles**

Cognisant of the fact that NEMA plays an integral part in conserving the environment, it should at all times engage in active communication with stakeholders and the general public to fulfil its mandate. To achieve its communication goals, the authority should always adhere to the following guiding principles:

- a) Only authorised persons shall have the exclusive mandate of communicating with external stakeholders on behalf of the Authority.
- b) The Authority shall have designated persons both at the headquarters and regional offices to speak on its behalf.
- c) Without any prejudice, the Authority's authorised persons shall take full responsibility for any information shared with stakeholders.
- d) In case of media and stakeholders' inquiries, the personnel/staff/department contacted shall refer the queries to the authorised spokespersons for appropriate response.

- e) NEMA staff shall keep certain information that come to their knowledge by virtue of their employment as confidential and should not share it with external stakeholders unless it is adjudged by the authorised persons to be in public interest to share the information.
- f) The Authority shall endeavour at all times to use the most suitable, appropriate and approved communication channel to reach the target audience.
- g) All communication shall be clear, accurate, timely, concise and consistent in the format of messaging

### **1.6 Situation analysis**

The NEMA Communication Policy development process adopted a participatory approach involving all the key stakeholders led by NEMA management and staff, key sector players and other selected stakeholders of the Authority.

Intensive review of existing policies that included the previous NEMA Communication Policies, NEMA's social media policy, the Human Resource Manual, the Authority's management structure and other environmental study reports was applied. In addition, comparative literature review of other existing communication policies for organization with similar mandate of environment conservation was utilized.

For primary data that informed development of this policy, a range of participatory approaches that included face to face interviews, telephone interviews, online questionnaires, focus groups discussions (FGD) with programme teams, Key Informant Interviews (KII) and In-depth Interviews with relevant stakeholders.

The questionnaires were well structured to identify NEMA's communication gaps and distributed randomly based on predetermined groups of stakeholders. The sampling frame was arrived at using the Survey System

Formula. The information gathered were used to identify immediate, underlying, and basic causes of NEMA's communication needs and which forms the basis of this NEMA Communication Policy.

### **1.7 Key Audience and Stakeholders**

NEMA stakeholders and audience are an integral part of this communication policy. Under this policy, the key audience and stakeholders shall include everyone who depends on services offered by the Authority. Based on NEMA's mandate as provided in the Environmental Management and Co-ordination Act, the Authority's key audience and stakeholders shall include:

- NEMA's Board of Management, Employees and support staff
- End users of NEMA Services
- Members of the public
- Government agencies
- Intermediary organisations, including NGOs
- Media organizations and journalists
- Environmentalists and registered EIA experts
- NEMA Suppliers
- Learning institutions

## **PART 2: COMMUNICATION POLICY**

### **2.1 Policy Statement**

In line with NEMA's vision, mission and mandate, the Authority shall be committed to transparency in engaging its internal and external stakeholders. To this end, the Authority shall through its authorised spokespersons disseminate timely, accurate, factual and quality information to all its stakeholders using the existing approved standards and the most suitable communication channel to reach the intended audience.

NEMA shall not however take responsibility for any unauthorised and misleading information about its operations and engagement with stakeholders. The Authority shall instead endeavour to issue a rebuttal and correct any misleading information about its operations as soon as it becomes aware of such information.

### **2.2 Authorised spokespersons**

For the purpose of this communication policy, the authorised persons to speak on behalf of NEMA on any matter shall be:

- i. The Director General
- ii. Chairman of the Board of Directors or any other Board Member authorised to speak on its behalf
- iii. Deputy Director of Communication
- iv. Regional/County Directors
- v. Any other person with direct authorisation from the Director General

### **2.3 Establishment of Corporate Communication Department**

Under the structure of NEMA Management, there is an established a Corporate Communication Department which shall be responsible for handling both the Authority's internal and external communication. The

department shall be headed by Deputy Director of Communication or any other title as provided in the NEMA leadership and employment structure. The department shall have other staff as approved by the management to assist the Director in achieving NEMA's communication objectives.

#### **2.4 Roles and functions of the corporate communication department**

The department shall be the fulcrum of NEMA's communication and to be responsible for overseeing a wide range of communication activities undertaken by the Authority. Their communication functions will be aimed at strengthening NEMA's mission, vision, brand and all publicity activities.


The department shall ensure that all NEMA employees are updated regularly on key decisions affecting the Authority's operations, build a positive image of the Authority among the public and stakeholders, and must clearly understand NEMA's vision statement, values, stakeholders, and the services that must be reflected in any communication.

As provided under the NEMA Human Resource Manual, all Heads of Departments and Sections shall liaise with the Corporate Communication Department regarding any information they wish to communicate with the public. The department shall then process the information in line with the best messaging approach as provided in this policy and disseminate it to the appropriate media channel.

Under this Communication Policy, the Corporate Communication Department shall be in-charge of the following functions:

a) Media engagement and monitoring

The department shall be in-charge of media relations and engagements as provided in this policy. It shall monitor all media coverage of NEMA to note out any publicity that requires clarification. To achieve this, the department shall:

-  Organize and oversee press conferences

- ✚ Organize press interviews
- ✚ Write and disseminate press releases
- ✚ Monitor media coverage and mentions of the Authority
- ✚ Respond to media queries
- ✚ Maintaining a database of media contacts

b) Public Relations

The department shall ensure that the Authority has favourable public image and positive attitude from stakeholders towards NEMA's activities. To achieve this, the department shall develop public relations tools including advertisement banners, organizing outdoor activities, community outreach programmes and other related activities.

- c) Overseeing the Authority's internal communication including all internal staff announcements, internal memos, communications from the Director General or the Board, and all other relevant information that the staff should be made aware of.
- d) Developing and distributing NEMA's newsletters, brochures, booklets and annual reports in conjunction with the other departments.
- e) Managing NEMA's Website, Social Media Pages and Blogs by working with content developers, posting regular updates and engaging the public on any topic of discussion through the online platforms.
- f) Organizing for Public Participation Events and Stakeholder Meetings that relates to NEMA's mandate and other Environment Impact Assessment activities.

- g) Producing all marketing materials including Media Advertisements. This should also include pitching and buying advertising space in the media.
- h) Handling crisis communication whenever there are adverse publicity or when a crisis situation takes place that requires urgent intervention

## **2.5 Internal Communication**

Under this policy, Internal Communication (IC) shall entail all the processes the Authority shall undertake to ensure there is effective flow of information among the staff. This strategy will be about enhancing communication among the staff and facilitating dialogue with all the people who make up the organization.

Since the way the Authority communicates with the employees has a great impact on their productivity, teamwork, experience and commitment, it is important that NEMA put in place a strong IC mechanisms to make the work places more productive, collaborative and engaged. To make this a success, the IC should involve communication between NEMA's top management, middle managers and all employees.

## **2.6 External and Public Communication**

External Communication (EC) in this policy means the exchange of information between the Authority and outside publics, media, audience and stakeholders. EC is very important part of NEMA's Communication Strategies because it is the only channel through which the outside world would get informed of what the Authority is doing.

Because of the nature of its mandate, NEMA communicates with its external audiences and stakeholders almost on a daily basis and for this reason, the EC must be carefully executed to have the Authority favourable image, inform the public of what it does, market its services and reduce the risk of conflicts with stakeholders.

External Communication shall include:

**a) Public Participation and stakeholder engagement**

NEMA's activities by nature of its mandate are bound to affect the public and since the Constitution dictates that the public must be involved in anything that affects them, Public Participation and Stakeholder Management is one way of enhancing EC. To this end, Public Participation should be understood as the interaction between NEMA, the public and stakeholders with a view of listening to one another before coming to a collective agreement on conserving the environment.

Because of its mandate as provided in the EMCA Act, NEMA engages in Environment Impact Assessments which requires public and stakeholder participation when planning the activities, during the actual assessment, giving the public opportunity to give their views and in approving the final decision. As part of its communication strategies during public participation and stakeholder engagement, this policy provides as follows:

**b) Corporate Social Responsibility**

As part of EC, the Authority should embrace Corporate Social Responsible (CSR) to increase its visibility among the public and enhance good partnerships. This should be done through corporate community relations in which NEMA representatives should interact with local communities where the Authority carries its activities.

CSR should thus be embedded as part of NEMA communications strategies to win over the public to support its mandate in conserving the environment as provided in EMCA Act. To actualize this, the Authority should provide a separate detailed policy on CSR that should provide for:



- ✚ Corporate philanthropy
- ✚ Community volunteering
- ✚ Responsible environment conservation
- ✚ Activism to conserve the environment

## **2.7 Crisis Communication**

Under this Communication Policy, Crisis Communication will be interpreted to mean all the communication measures NEMA shall undertake in the face of crisis situations that have the potential of damaging the Authority's reputation.

As already provided in this policy, the Corporate Communication Department shall take the responsibility of handling crisis communication in consultation with the Director General or any other appointed person authorised to speak on behalf of the Authority.

## **2.8 Channels of Communication**

Under this policy, communication channels will include all the means through which NEMA will use to pass the messages to intended audience and stakeholders. For effective communication, NEMA should choose either one or a combination of the following channels depending on the purpose of communication:

### **a) NEMA Website**

The NEMA website should be as much informative and interactive as possible to make it easier for the public/stakeholders to get information they are looking for in one go.

- ✚ The Website should be easy to navigate
- ✚ It should clearly promote NEMA brand by capturing the vision, mission, values and core functions

- ✚ Should have engaging content and as much information as possible about NEMA. This should include all the success stories and current affairs.
- ✚ The Website should have cross-disciplinary collaborations, inter-links and inter-connections with other government institutions in the environment sector.
- ✚ The Website should be regularly updated and improved to full optimization by uploading new information and developments undertaken by NEMA
- ✚ The Website traffic should be regularly checked and a personnel be in place to respond to any queries raised

#### b) Mainstream media

These are the established broadcast and print media houses at the disposal of NEMA that can be used to reach the intended audience and stakeholders. The list includes Newspapers, Television and Radio. NEMA should adhere to the following when using mainstream media:

- ✚ Always develop a plan for using mainstream media and the message you want to send.
- ✚ Spell out the mission and the target you want to achieve in using a particular media.
- ✚ Consider the target NEMA audience/stakeholders and which media channel can easily be used to reach them.
- ✚ Make clear the information you want to send and when you want it delivered before deciding on the media channel top use.
- ✚ Consider NEMA budget for publicities and which media channel is cost effective and fits within the budget.

### c) Social media

Social Media should be a critical part of NEMA's communication strategies. Although there are many social media sites, the Authority should embrace not more than SIX popular social media sites for ease of cross-communication and monitoring. The sites should include Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and LinkedIn. This policy provides that the Authority should:

- ✚ Have an authorised person to be in charge of NEMA's social media handles
- ✚ Be consistent in updating the NEMA social media pages
- ✚ Have a standard of messaging format that the public can easily identify and relate to NEMA
- ✚ Always keep an eye on trending topics that you can capitalize on to raise NEMA's profile
- ✚ Interact with NEMA audience/stakeholders on social media
- ✚ Always give feedback and answer questions asked by the public via social media
- ✚ Involve NEMA staff and other stakeholders in updating information on NEMA social media platforms
- ✚ Sponsor hashtags on matters touching environment and use social media influencers to raise the profile

### d) Blogs

Blogging has become an effective platform where writers share their views on different subjects. It is something that should be embraced as part of NEMA communication strategies to help staff, management and key stakeholders use to air their views to enhance NEMA's profile. Under this policy, blogging with NEMA's online platform should be

regulated so that only relevant content that has passed through the editorial test shall be approved for posting.

#### e) E-communication

Under this NEMA communication policy, Electronic Communication (E-communication) shall be understood as the means of passing information via electronic means as aided by technology and computers. These should include e-mail, telephone, video calling, short message services (SMS), fax machines, video conferencing, zoom chats, Microsoft teams, and virtual meetings. For effective use of e-communication, this policy provides as follows:

- ✚ Create a pool of contact persons with details of their electronic contacts, including NEMA staff.
- ✚ Categorise your information based on the contact list to know which information should be sent to which people. This would avoid the risk of sending wrong information to wrong people.
- ✚ Create an alert-based communication where you notify your target audience/stakeholders of any new information relating to NEMA's activities
- ✚ The e-communication messages should be captivating by including visual images like photos, videos and maps.
- ✚ The e-communications should be consistent, regular and tailored for each target audience/stakeholders.

#### f) Print and periodic publications

As part of the communication policy, NEMA shall adopt printed periodic publications at regular and predictable intervals to be agreed upon by the management and the public affairs and communication department. These should include NEMA magazines, newsletters, brochures, flyers and other documentations. For the effective

production of printed periodic publications, the policy provides as follows:

- ✚ There shall be established a NEMA editorial board to be chaired by the Director of Communication.
- ✚ The editorial board shall come up with styles to be used in soliciting for articles writing and to ensure all articles comply with NEMA publication standards
- ✚ The publications should focus on enhancing NEMA's profile and the writers should ensure they understand the topic they are writing on very well
- ✚ Choose interesting angles to showcase NEMA's achievements and that will keep the readers engaged
- ✚ Always encourage feedback from readers and offer answers in subsequent publications
- ✚ Ensure the publications are easily accessible to NEMA stakeholders and availed across all NEMA offices
- ✚ Consider hiring a professional editor to proofread the publication and ensure they are of good quality and high standards

## **2.9 Social media policy**

Social Media has its risks because once you press the 'send' button; the information is gone and cannot be undone. For effective usage of social media, this policy provides as follows:

- a) All NEMA employees must maintain a clear distinction between the Authority's Social Media handles and personal handles to avoid conflict of interest

- b) When an employee has clearly identified himself/herself as a member of NEMA staff, they are expected to behave appropriately in their activities on social media so as not to bring the Authority's name into disrepute.
- c) Where individuals have identified themselves as NEMA employees, they should not engage in activities on social media that may compromise NEMA's core values.
- d) Before posting any official information on NEMA's social media page, the content must be verified by the authorised person to ensure it conforms to NEMA's values.
- e) NEMA channels on social media must at all times reflect the values and stakeholders expectation on how the Authority should conduct itself.
- f) Since the Authority has a duty of care to the environment, there must be careful considerations at all times to ensure the social media posts reflect that duty of care.
- g) All official social media posts must be posted with care so as not to expose the Authority to legal consequences.
- h) Only the Deputy Director of Communication shall have the overall responsibility of updating NEMA's social media pages. However, this function can be delegated to any communication officer as advised by the CCCM.
- i) The Authority shall have a social media monitoring team from Corporate Communication Department to monitor activities posted on the sites.

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