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Effectiveness of public communication campaigns in promoting adaptation to climate change in Africa

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The objectives, strategies, and approaches of effective public communication campaigns can immensely influence the audiences' knowledge, attitudes, perceptions, and behaviour towards climate change adaptation in Africa. The paper uses Uganda's case to discuss the urgent need for a rapid adaptation to climate change in Africa. Climate change is one of the loudest emergencies on the continent. It calls for credibility, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness, if Africa has to combat its disastrous impacts successfully. The objectives of the paper are: [1] to discuss the role of communication campaigns in bridging the current information gaps by creating, raising, developing, and sustaining public awareness in Uganda and the African Union [AU]; [2] to explain the role of communication campaigns in empowering the key climate change adaptation stakeholders: parliament, central and local government environment committees, civil society and the private sector, the media, local communities, judiciary, and the international development partners for capacity building in Uganda and the AU; [3] to discuss the role of the key stakeholders in enhancing widespread access to ICTs in promoting climate change communication for sustainable development in Africa; and [4] to present the national climate change adaptation experiences, strategies, challenges, activities, and knowledge transfer to achieve and enhance adaptation capacity in Uganda at local, community, district, and national levels in Uganda. The article is based on the current national environment policy, climate change action plans and projects, national plan for 2035, current communication research, professional practice, and research findings. Results indicate that there is still very low awareness and access to ICTs in Africa, hence the urgent need to increase ICTs infrastructure, and fixing the current connectivity turbulences on the continent. Data gaps, chronic poverty, cancerous corruption, legal and policy bottlenecks, still hamper the effective use of communication campaigns to implement national environment management policy goals, strategies, and objectives in Uganda and the rest of Africa. The campaigns can help enforce compliance with the national environmental laws, policies, and international Climate Change protocols in Africa. The following conclusions can be tentatively drawn: effectiveness of the campaigns will dramatically speed up the planned climate change adaptation activities in Africa, Asia, and South America. The mass media is the most efficient means of creating, raising, developing, and sustaining public awareness – which is a precondition- for the adaptation to climate change innovations in Uganda and the rest of Africa. Effective communication campaigns will design, implement, and evaluate climate change policy awareness goals, strategies, objectives, and adaptation.