



# AFRICA POLICY CENTRE COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY STRATEGY **2021-2024**





**AFRICA POLICY CENTRE**  
**COMMUNICATION**  
**AND VISIBILITY**  
**STRATEGY** **2021-2024**

# LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>APC</b>	Africa Policy Centre
<b>C&amp;V</b>	Communication and Visibility
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organisation
<b>DVC AA</b>	Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs
<b>DVC F&amp;A</b>	Deputy Vice Chancellor, Finance and Administration
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communications Technology
<b>KRA</b>	Key Result Area
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>MoU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>SRPS</b>	School of Research and Post-Graduate Studies
<b>SWOT</b>	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
<b>UCU</b>	Uganda Christian University
<b>VC</b>	Vice Chancellor

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## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Africa Policy Centre (APC) was officially launched by the Uganda Christian University (UCU) in 2016 as a think tank that facilitates the implementation of the university's vision as "A centre of Excellence in the Heart of Africa". The primary objective of the centre is, therefore, derived from the vision of UCU – 'to be a centre of excellence in the heart of Africa in the provision of quality education, research, training and community outreach in the pursuit of good governance, integrity in leadership, peace building and sustainable development'.

As noted in the APC strategy, the primary mission of the UCU-APC think tank is to create a platform for developing indigenous capacity for ideas generation and policy formulation, analysis and research agenda setting from an African Christian perspective. The implementation was set out as follows: The initial five-year plan (2016-2020) sought to put in place and consolidate the centre's institutional capacity to become a 'policy-initiator' and alternative policy framework producer in the contemporary global order.

The APC carried out substantial work in the five-year period to develop institutional capacity and engage with the Ugandan public on matters of policy. However, there is need for further institutional capacity development, specifically in strengthening and consolidating policy dialogues through collaboration and partnerships within Uganda and beyond. This will firmly position UCU-APC as a respected national and regional research and policy focal point.

This is where the proposed three-year Strategic Plan (2021-2024) will play a crucial role in crafting the way forward and identifying key areas from the general mandate of APC for a phased implementation. The centre is currently re-organising and putting together a team to implement the specific areas identified as the central focus, which the next three years will revolve around. These include doing research, engaging policy makers, dissemination of policy through publication and other forms of dissemination.

## 1.2 BACKGROUND

The last three years of APC saw some commendable work done by providing leadership for UCU to engage in policy related matters through training, policy discussion and other activities. However, there is limited public information about the centre, beyond what is on the website.

The next three years will be critical for the APC to strategically position itself to fulfil its mandate. To achieve this, the centre needs to formulate deliberate interventions for targeted, consistent communication to make APC and its work visible to stakeholders and other audiences, specifically the general public.

As APC prepares to launch its three-year Strategic Plan in September, there will be numerous activities including trainings, research, conferences, policy discussion, webinars, partner engagements, and annual lectures, among others. These events are crucial for their role in institutional capacity building and positively influencing policy decisions through engagements with policy makers, stakeholders, and academics at UCU in order to develop APC as the alternative policy framework producer that it is designed to be.

These activities present immense opportunities for the centre to become a lot more visible and prominent than it currently is. This will inevitably strengthen existing collaborations and lay a strong foundation to expand partnerships, which will enhance resource mobilisation efforts.

To achieve this, the APC has developed this C&V strategy, which is designed to play a crucial role in driving the implementation of its three-year strategy. This will be realised through extensive publicising of the work that has been done in the last five years and ongoing activities for the next three years; sustained engagement with stakeholders to consolidate APC goals; and ensure the general public is informed about APC, its work and impact.

The C&V plan will serve as a monitoring and tracking document for the APC three-year Strategic Plan to ensure activity timelines are closely monitored for effective execution. This strategy will guide the implementation of the organisation's Strategic Plan 2021-24.

## 2 SITUATION ANALYSIS

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### 2.1 APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

#### 2.1.1 Approach

The task involved consultation with some internal stakeholders. Due to the Covid-19 induced lockdown that banned movement at the time the ground work was done, consultations were mostly done through informal phone discussions and briefings, face to face meetings, virtual brainstorming sessions, extensive analysis of the media and information consumption trends by audiences in digital and legacy media, and the APC's standing in the digital space, especially social media.

There was also broad review of the work APC has done in the last five years, mostly through assessment of the resources on the centre's website, proposed three-year strategy and work plan as well as the APC social media pages. Quick surveys were also carried out with primary stakeholders about APC and discussions with secondary stakeholders/partners.

Extensive benchmarking through review of similar centres and institutions was also carried out. This gave a valuable perspective of the competitive edge of such entities as far as visibility is concerned. It also informed the identification of areas where APC needs to improve or change its approach in engaging the media so as to build a solid presence, visibility and engagement with the public.

#### 2.1.2 Methodology

To assess the current visibility position of the APC in order to understand the gaps and opportunities, data from various media platforms were reviewed to appreciate the visibility of the centre on different media platforms. This involved analysing data on information dissemination, media dynamics in a rapidly changing industry, understanding audiences (stakeholders in this case) and effective use of these platforms to communicate about APC's work and ultimately building a sustained relationship with the public.

This C&V strategy addresses gaps identified following review of APC documents, consultation with UCU community and key stakeholders as well as the media visibility assessment stated above. The findings largely inform this document, which will be regularly reviewed given the fast changing media landscape and audience information consumption trends.

Relevant information was derived primarily from the APC formation document and crossover report, which provided an overview of the APC, work plans and strategy for the next three years. Virtual brainstorming sessions were held. An online survey was also carried with UCU administrative staff.

The centre recently changed leadership and it was possible to have engagements with the previous leadership during a face to face meeting. Information on work that the centre has done during last five years since inception was mainly accessed from reviewing the Africa Policy Centre website.

Searches on APC were also done on the websites of the main newspapers and other news sites in Uganda. Additionally, APC presence on social media – Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube – was evaluated.

More data was derived from reviewing websites of similar centres, specifically their approach to visibility and media relations. Industry peers reviewed include: Economic Policy Research Centre (Makerere), Makerere Institute of Social Research, London School of Economics, Impact and Policy Research Institute, New Delhi – India and first-hand experience on how some of the policy centres interact with the media. A number of visibility plans were also reviewed to get perspective on industry best practices.

The finding from this data collection informed a C&V strategy that is functional, feasible and measureable. Aware that APC works with partners and engages with stakeholders at various levels to achieve its objectives, it was important to outline the stakeholders and examine their relationship with the APC in advancing the centre's strategic objectives.

### 2.1.3 Data Analysis

The findings were analysed and categorised to inform the C&V. A detailed synthesis of information from a review of documents and discussion notes was done to generate the final findings.

## 2.2 KEY FINDINGS

### 2.2.1 Stakeholders Analysis

Understanding its stakeholders is essential for APC to successfully implement the C&V strategy. Various stakeholders have different mandates that in turn determine their level of interest and influence. These are summarised in Table One below.

ere will be numerous activities including trainings, research, conferences, policy discussion, webinars, partner engagements, and annual lectures, among others. These events are crucial for their role in institutional capacity building and positively influencing policy decisions through engagements with policy makers, stakeholders, and academics at UCU in order to develop APC as the alternative policy framework producer that it is designed to be.

**Table 1: Stakeholder Analysis and Mandate**

STAKEHOLDER	MANDATE	ROLE IN THE C&V STRATEGY
<b>ADVISORY COUNCIL</b>		
Advisory Council	Offer advice to APC	Raising awareness about APC
<b>BOARD OF DIRECTORS</b>		
BoDs	Oversee the management of the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervise its development</li> <li>• The Face of APC</li> <li>• Ensure allocation of resources for implementation</li> </ul>
<b>UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT</b>		
DVC AA	Supervise Director APC and offer guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervision and ensuring value for money</li> </ul>
<b>APC STAFF</b>		
Director APC	Oversee the management of APC and provide strategic direction of the institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervise implementation of C&amp;V strategy</li> </ul>
Other staff	Supervise and participate in the implementation of activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide results for APC</li> </ul>
<b>COMMUNITY OF POLICYMAKERS</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabinet, Parliament and Judiciary</li> <li>• Local Governments</li> <li>• Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs)</li> </ul>	Development of laws, policies and regulations to which APC makes a contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement with APC</li> </ul>

COMMUNITY OF SCHOLARS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researchers, Academics,</li> <li>• UCU Staff, Partners</li> </ul>	Collaboration in providing evidence for policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sign MoU, provide data and information on priorities, participate in planning, quality assurance, monitoring.</li> </ul>
Professional associations	Participation in APC activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperate in the implementation of APC Activities</li> </ul>
COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE AND PARTNERS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donors/Funders</li> <li>• Partners such as like-minded Centres</li> <li>• Church</li> </ul>	The business community is interested in developments as part of the beneficiaries of community development initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the implementation of the C&amp;V strategy</li> <li>• Collaborate in research and policy engagement</li> </ul>
Non State Actors in area of policy interest - CSOs	Collaboration in community engagement and areas of common interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partners in policy initiation, research and evaluation</li> </ul>
THE MEDIA		
Media - Print media, television, radio, online and community media	The media is a key partner in communicating milestones and asking questions on behalf of the public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To inform, educate and create awareness about APC and its work</li> </ul>
THE GENERAL PUBLIC		
The Public	The general public is interested in public policy as part of its beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in APC activities</li> </ul>

### 2.2.2 The status of Visibility on various Platforms

**Print:** To appreciate the presence of APC in the media, a search was done on the websites of the three main national publications – Daily Monitor, New vision and Observer. The print editions were not reviewed because what is published in the newspaper is posted on their website, which makes searching easier using key words. This is not possible if print editions are reviewed.

**Online:** Searches were also carried out on other conventional online publications like ChimpReports, NilePost, PML Daily, and the NTV news website. Additional searches were carried out on broadcast media clips shared on their online transmission channels such as YouTube and links through their social media pages and articles on their websites.

**Broadcast:** Broadcast media reviewed included NTV, NBS and UBC television stations; and the key radio stations: Capital FM, KFM, Radio One and Sanyu FM, and Power FM. The searches did not reveal worthwhile references to APC despite the centre boasting immense resources on the website that are news worthy. This means a lack of visibility of APC and its work beyond its website.

#### Website for APC: [africapolicycentre.org](http://africapolicycentre.org)

At the onset of the groundwork for this C&V plan, a review of the APC website was conducted. While substantial data was reviewed to make some suggestion, the website has since been offline and it is not clear if recommendations based on what were found on it are practical. Nevertheless, the website has a rich resource base that offer opportunities for visibility and resource mobilisation. However, it could do with some improvements to ease navigation.

The logo placement does not give a visitor to the site an impression that the centre is an autonomous body. It is overshadowed by the logo of the university. From the benchmarking of similar centres, the logo should stand out boldly on its own with that of the mother institution as a smaller component. They could, also, be side by side without one overshadowing the other. The purpose is to ensure visitors to the site have a lasting impression of APC.

The resource base on the website is rich but it's not widely accessed by the public given the limited information about the centre in the media and general public. Some salient resources include:

Consultation services for interested parties, advocating for certain policies, weekly Policy Labs, regular policy training, research internships. Research & reviewed publications are identified as a key part of APC work and the website points out that APC would share much of their work through publications that will be of interest to other think-tanks, policy researchers, elected officials, and thoughtful members of the public. A review done on various media platforms, however, indicate that these resources are not currently being shared beyond the APC website.

**Social Media:** Reviewed platforms: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn.

Presently, APC has a Twitter handle opened in 2017 with over 700 followers. Uganda Christian University, on the other hand, has close to 13.5 thousand followers. There is an opportunity to promote APC through the university's Twitter handle, especially when there are events.

Searches did not return a Facebook account for APC. This should be considered since Facebook is a widely used social media platform and all forms of information can be shared through it. The APC also has a YouTube channel with six subscribers and few uploads. Many of the centre's activities are uploaded by the Uganda Christian University eLearning YouTube channel.

### 2.2.3 Best practices in Communication

Although APC did not appear to be strategic in its communication and visibility is lacking, some fairly good practices existed and include the following:

**Regular Meetings:** APC regular meetings like the policy lab and research seminars were very critical for generating material for visibility.

**Medium of communication:** The APC used emails, website, social media, meetings and other Information Education Communication (IEC) materials for communication and visibility.

Best practices in similar centres: A review of other centres demonstrate good communication and visibility strategies. Centres reviewed include the Economic Policy Research Centre at Makerere University, Makerere Institute of Social Research, Impact and Policy Research Institute, New Dehli – India, and London School of Economics (Firoz Lalji Institute for Africa) among others. These Centres are within institutions but function in autonomous ways, becoming incredible brands within these institutions.

### 2.2.4 Gaps in Communication and Visibility

Despite these best practices, there were gaps identified in C&V that the strategy will have to address. These include: Communication and Visibility materials: Some visibility materials like pens and notebooks are available, often produced during the annual lecture or around major events. But the impact on visibility appears to be limited considering that APC remains largely within the university, yet even at the university, the survey conducted revealed limited knowledge of APC.

**APC Website:** The Website needs to be improved. A review of the website indicated little traffic, and much of the material has not been shared. Its interface and general look also need improvement.

**Strategic focus on communication and visibility:** Whereas materials have been loaded on the website, it appears that deliberate focus on communication and the APC visibility was limited. The APC's Communication & Dissemination policy stated on the website is that: "Beyond traditional publications, APC seeks to communicate our work in a variety of venues – including our YouTube channel, our website, in local, national, and international newspapers, and policy white papers".

From the findings, this has not been done in a deliberate, consistent, and result-oriented manner. As a starting point, it is important to make the work the centre has so far done visible. This will build confidence and trust in the centre. While academics is generally a hard sell for legacy media, it is possible to build strong partnerships with traditional media houses by showcasing what has been done and highlighting success stories of impact. Established and respected media houses are not interested in announcing what an organisation intends to do but they will give audience and space for articles of impact.

**Brand and Identity:** It appears that APC as a brand has not matured. From observations and look at the Website, it appears that both the UCU brand and Uganda Partners brand have overshadowed the Centre. Most likeminded centres are prominent despite being hosted by well-known universities. The logo also needs to be re-branded. A survey done within the university indicated limited understanding of the Centre and its work.

The APC should come up with a policy on branding and logo usage and guide logo placement and branding at APC events or partner activities where APC is participating. Other areas of branding to give APC visibility is corporate shirts/T-shirts, mugs, diaries, etc. This, for APC, is work in progress but the ultimate goal is to ensure the centre is known by the public. Beyond the logo and website presentation that gives APC identity, the overall branding should aim to consolidate the brand awareness and visibility of the centre.

Financing communication and visibility activities: At the moment there is no budget line for communication and it is not clear what happened in the past. In order to ensure sustained visibility, there is need to ensure that APC has a dedicated budget for C&V.

Human Resource: Whereas APC has in its structure a Communications Associate provided for, the person has not been recruited yet. In order to execute the APC mandate, there is need to recruit a Communications Associate who will internally manage all APC communication. A Job Description for the Communications Associate has been developed. This will provide a critical function for APC.

## 2.3 STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS (SWOT) ANALYSIS

In order for APC to distinguish itself as a strategic player both nationally and internationally, it must understand its opportunities and threats. These issues are summarised in the SWOT analysis matrix below:

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reputable university and the credibility of its leaders to leverage on</li> <li>2. Possibilities of putting a good team together - fresh recruitment</li> <li>3. Commitment of the university leadership</li> <li>4. Strong collaboration with international partners and funders</li> <li>5. The existence of a strategic plan for the same period</li> <li>6. Online presence through the website and social media</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Limited focus on C&amp;V</li> <li>2. No dedicated staff for communication and visibility</li> <li>3. No dedicated budget for C&amp;V activities</li> <li>4. Limited local funding for APC work</li> <li>5. Limited internal visibility and support</li> </ol>

OPPORTUNITY	THREATS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strong collaboration with international partners and funders</li> <li>2. Collaboration with likeminded centres</li> <li>3. A national and global environment that is forced to rethink ways of operations</li> <li>4. There is possibility to include APC logo on promotional materials of the university</li> <li>5. Availability of national print media and TV and local radio channels of information dissemination</li> <li>6. Use of social media to position APC</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. International pressure on developing countries to adopt specific policy agenda</li> <li>2. Weak partnership with external stakeholders and dependence on one partner</li> <li>3. Changing environment for universities due to Covid-19 pandemic</li> <li>4. The possible reduction of donor funding for global south due to Covid-19 pandemic</li> </ol>

## 2.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Specific action can be taken in the short term to address some of these challenges and take advantage of the opportunities. These are:

- a. Services such as consultancies for interested parties should be specific and deliberate as opposed to the general statement on the website. This should indicate how it will be done.
- b. Increase frequency of posts to drive traffic to the APC website and build organic growth. Again, social media is a great platform to share links and drive traffic to websites. Proposed content: Weekly blogs, newsletters, Op-Eds, research publications, etc.
- c. To realise resource mobilisation from potential funders who visit the website, consider making the item “Give” listed under the “Get involved” tab more prominent and preferably change it to donate, which is more easily identifiable as a resource mobilisation language. It could be made a standalone tab as is the case on many websites.
- d. The contact listed on the website for donation inquiry is a private email domain. It would inspire confidence and professionalism to display an email address that has an official domain. The APC should consider adjusting that and preferably have an institution domain, like the one listed at the top of the website.
- e. Make the website more appealing with creative use of high quality professional photos.
- f. Make upcoming events noticeable on the website
- g. Partnerships and logo, banners use (publicity partnerships)
- h. Building partnerships is central to policy engagement. Relying on our foundational partnerships with the Church of Uganda and Uganda Christian University, APC seeks to build partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders, including clergy, community leaders, elected officials, researchers, and policy advocates, in order to accomplish our mission.
- i. Collaborations where APC logo/banners are displayed at partners’ events and policy labs should be made more popular through engagements with partners.
- j. Strengthening internal visibility of APC by prominent display of Mission statements in strategic locations (offices), Newsletter shared through staff email, regular engagements with departments of the university on APC work and official email signatures to have basic information about APC.

Many of these recommendations inform the strategies that are laid in the next section to support the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

## 3.1 OBJECTIVES

### 3.1.1 Overall Objective

To achieve visibility through deliberate and consistent audience engagement and communicating APC's activities during the 2021-2024 strategic plan and beyond.

### 3.1.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this C&V strategy are:

- Sensitize key stakeholders about APC's 2021-24 strategic plan.
- Provide a framework for the implementation of the APC's strategic plan.
- Empower the UCU community and APC staff in particular to promote APC Vision and Mission.

#### Key Result Areas (Outcomes) and strategic interventions.

Each specific objective will be guided by Key Result Areas that are crucial in obtaining them.

#### KRA 1: Media-savvy UCU-APC community promoting the Centre.

This is aimed at giving trainings, master classes and technical support to close communication capacity gaps among APC staff and other internal stakeholders. The objective is to empower the internal stakeholders to be the primary promoters of APC's activities and events as outlined in the strategic plan.

#### KRA 2: Highly engaged and informed stakeholders about APC's 2021-2023 strategic plan.

The objective is to engage all stakeholders and bring them up to date with the specific activities and timelines of APC's three-year plan. This will be achieved through meetings with key partners and making use of media platforms to communicate APC's activities with the general public.

#### KRA 3: Effective and efficient implementation of APC's Strategic Plan and this C&V.

This is intended to be a performance matrix to ensure timely and effective implementation of the activities outlined in the strategic plan by tracking timelines of activities, media engagement levels and feedback tracing system, especially for online.

#### The C&V Key result area and strategic interventions

THE C&V KEY RESULT AREA AND STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS		
ITEM	RESULTS CHAIN	INDICATORS
Goal	To achieve visibility through deliberate and consistent audience engagement and communicating APC's activities during the 2021-2024 strategic plan and beyond.	Recognition of APC as an influential Centre of excellence in African Christian-inspired public policy research, analysis and talent training in sub-saharan Africa and beyond the region by key stakeholders

<p><b>KRA 1:</b> Media-savvy UCU-APC community promoting the centre</p>	<p><b>SI 1.1:</b> Training and empowering the primary stakeholders (APC staff and other internal stakeholders) and supporting them to close communication capacity gaps</p> <p><b>SI 1.2:</b> Equipping willing volunteers with necessary skills to be communication ambassadors</p> <p><b>SI 1.3:</b> Recruitment of a Communications Associate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of stakeholders who are engaged in the implementation of the strategic plan</li> <li>• Number of new development partners</li> <li>• References made to APC by external websites</li> <li>• Number of visits and feedback given through media</li> <li>• Number of trainings</li> </ul>
<p><b>KRA 2:</b> Highly engaged and informed stakeholders about APC's 2021-2024 strategic plan</p>	<p><b>SI 2.1:</b> Engaging various stakeholders with up to date information on specific activities and timelines of APC's three-year plan</p> <p><b>SI 2.2:</b> Community engagements as a sensitisation drive about APC and using community radios, UCU student publication, APC website and other media platforms for publicity</p> <p><b>SI 2.3:</b> Producing variety of branding and promotional materials for information sharing and publicity. These may include: Newsletters, flyers, branded shirts/tees, branded mugs, umbrellas, etc.</p> <p><b>SI 2.4:</b> Improve APC website for smooth navigation, frequent uploads of relevant, appealing content</p> <p><b>SI 2.5:</b> Growing APC's social media presence with regular updates with consistent use of a specific hashtag (for Twitter) dedicated to the centre</p> <p><b>SI 2.6:</b> Produce a well-researched documentary a year tracing the journey of APC and highlighting key achievements, challenges and opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of active, involved stakeholders in the APC strategic plan implementation</li> <li>• Number of content on APC activities on partner's websites</li> <li>• Number of regular appearance of APC in the media</li> <li>• Increase in traffic on APC website, social media pages (this can be tracked by digital team)</li> </ul>
<p><b>KRA 3:</b> Effective and efficient implementation of APC's Strategic Plan 2021-2024</p>	<p><b>SI 3.1:</b> Support monitoring to ensure timely and effective implementation of the activities outlined in the strategic plan by tracking timelines of each activity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M&amp;E Framework</li> <li>• Budget</li> <li>• C&amp;V implementation framework</li> </ul>

### 3.1.3 Strategies for effective use of media channels

**Newspaper and online Op-Eds/Commentary:** Researchers and other UCU-APC staff should write regular articles in newspapers and recognised online media platforms as referenced earlier. These may include commentary on topical issues preferably where APC may be doing research on. Research findings can be summarised into a 650-700 word Op-Eds and published in newspapers.

**Sponsored content /promotional features:** Sponsored content, otherwise known as native advertising, should be considered at least once a year, preferably just before APC's biggest annual event to draw attention to the activity and update the public about APC.

Sponsored features would be the preferred option for APC because it follows a typical editorial content format except for the page label and footnote disclaimer. It gives the advertiser room to be more elaborate and exhaustive. The client - in this case APC - would also have a significant level of control over the content. It gives more value than conventional advertising.

**Press conferences/ releases:** APC should hold occasional press briefings and press releases. While a press conference may be held once in a while to announce an important event or comment on crucial arising issues, regular press releases about policy issues, Bills of interest in Parliament, topical issues in the news that touches on APC's mandate, are important for impact and visibility.

Some press briefings may be internal and disseminated through the UCU publication, Standard, the UCU and APC websites or newsletter.

**Interviews and talk shows:** Through media engagements and close collaborations, APC should arrange interviews for key staff like the director and other academic staff of UCU whose research work is of public interest. Regular appearance on media platforms – print and broadcast – is important to build and strengthen visibility, thus making UCU-APC an influential, trusted policy centre.

Some industry peers assemble a list of experts in various fields and actively engage the media to interview/quote their staff. This should be a progressive approach based on gradual relationship building as opposed to aggressive lobbying for media attention and presence.

Some individuals and institutions are very proactive in the sense that the moment a significant news item breaks, they prepare well researched, insightful quotes (with their bios) in both writing and recorded (for digital platforms) and share it with either editors or reporters they work closely with. This saves reporters and editors the struggle to make endless calls to experts when they are racing against deadlines. It is a win-win scenario for both parties. Additionally, the media tends to follow people who already appear in the media.

**Broadcast talk shows and interviews:** TVs and radios offer opportunities for visibility through appearance on talk shows by key staff members, sponsored talk shows on radio, collaborations with TVs for webinar screening (this may be expensive), ad mentions during prime news, radio features and community radio talk shows for outreach programmes.

**Media partnerships:** Through meetings with relevant editors and reporters, APC can identify areas where they can collaborate and sign partnerships for content sharing. Other partnerships can be less formal individual agreements with well known (importantly knowledgeable) media personalities as moderators at events, panelists, etc.)

**Social media pages:** APC and UCU both have social media pages that can give the centre an edge during webinars, conferences, and other events that are of benefit to the general public. Engagement and visibility can be achieved through:

Briefing social media team on key messages to package and share on Facebook and Twitter. Also, the need to agree on hashtags to use beforehand (for Twitter) and it should be used consistently with every tweet. This helps with tracking online engagement. It's preferable to have one permanent hashtag for the centre (such as #APCEngagements, and varying ones for each event such as #APCAnnualLecture, #APCBlogs, #APCNewsletters, etc.). This also helps the communications team and APC management to review levels of engagement and appraise their approach if visibility was not satisfactory for some events.

**Livestreaming events:** This is important for webinars, policy perspective/talks, annual lecture, and conferences. They should be streamed on the APC YouTube channel, zoom, APC website, Facebook live. Explore Twitter Spaces as well. Short video summaries of such events should be shared on social media channels with links to longer, full versions on either the APC website or YouTube channel. This drives more traffic to the various APC online channels.

During live streams, social media posts should constantly share links to the sessions with each post to drive traffic and increase engagement. As APC would invite journalist to press conferences, the same applies to webinars that are streamed so invites should always be sent to media organisations to attend such virtual events.

Weekly Blogs and the e-newsletter: A blog being a critical avenue to communicate APC work, the weekly APC blog will play a key role in communicating activities and updating stakeholders and the wider public about what APC is doing. Popular blog posts on topical issues can be republished by newspapers and online publications with credit to the APC website. This is applicable to other articles and resources on the APC website. The focal person should be proactive in promoting topics that can sell in legacy media. Book reviews, articles that tackle current news topics (e.g., Covid-19), research findings, policy positions on contentious Bills in Parliament, etc., are areas to explore.

Likewise, the newsletter, expected to have a detailed coverage on APC work progress, should be emailed to partners and key stakeholders, especially in the media, etc.

**APC website:** This is the primary visibility platform for the work of the centre. It's important to share links from broadcast platforms about APC on this website and other social media pages.

**The Standard newspaper:** The UCU publication can offer space for regular updates of APC work in form of a column by one of the team members. Alternatively, this can be done through an article giving updates on events, etc.

## 3.2 PLATFORMS FOR COMMUNICATION

The APC has lined up a detailed list of events to run throughout the year. The Centre will use these events to generate engagement with the media and achieve visibility through effective use of available media platforms as shown below.

### Communication platforms and action

VISIBILITY OPPORTUNITIES AND TOOLS		
AREA	PLATFORM/TOOLS	RELEVANT ACTIONS
Primary APC activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshops</li> <li>• Seminars</li> <li>• Roundtables</li> <li>• Webinars</li> <li>• Panel discussion</li> <li>• Press conferences</li> <li>• Conferences</li> <li>• Annual lecture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• APC Logo and other identifiers like vision and mission statement are displayed on all material (handouts, banners, etc.) at events</li> <li>• Reference made to APC in all correspondence, associated web content, etc.</li> <li>• Photos taken during the event displayed (online and/or at subsequent events)</li> <li>• Publications (or those of initiatives which have stemmed from APC displayed and distributed to participants/relevant parties</li> <li>• Submission of news worthy items on traditional media</li> <li>• Maintain/enhance transparency of APC by making available its reports</li> <li>• Involve media in key APC activities</li> <li>• Promotional materials like flyers, newsletters, and other branded items like t-shirts, mugs, umbrellas may be distributed to guests, speakers and panellists</li> <li>• Email signatures to vary with reference to upcoming events</li> </ul>

Secondary events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University functions,</li> <li>• International conferences</li> <li>• Events attended by management</li> <li>• Community outreach</li> <li>• Partnership and collaborative engagements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Logo displayed on all relevant material (handouts, presentations, banners, etc.)</li> <li>• Reference made to the organisation in all correspondence and web content</li> <li>• Publications displayed and distributed to participants/relevant parties</li> <li>• Photos to be displayed online and/or at subsequent events</li> <li>• Save the Date issued in lead-up to events and displayed at head office</li> </ul>
Digital visibility	Websites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of an extensive resource base APC website and partners</li> </ul>
	Databases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contacts of key stakeholders</li> <li>• Previous engagements and their actors</li> </ul>
	Social Media/User-generated content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube (develop documentaries and short videos for publishing on YouTube)</li> <li>• Uploading broadcast reports on APC website and YouTube channel, sharing links on APC social media platforms, republishing digital content on APC website (with permission from original publisher)</li> <li>• List of ongoing activities – save the date</li> </ul>
	Other online resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Photo bank - online repository of photos, multimedia content, including training support materials, Google Books and publications online (weekly blog and monthly newsletter)</li> </ul>
APC Brand	Logo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree on logo use with partners and stakeholders by introducing standard guidelines and requirements for use of logo and promotional material, particularly when relating to partnerships</li> <li>• Logo on all vehicles, letters and publications</li> </ul>
	Brochure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Available at Programme's activities;</li> <li>• E-version for online</li> </ul>
	Media Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Save the dates, Media advisories, Press releases, Opinion editorials (Op-Eds), Video news releases (VNR) and Background footage (B-rolls)</li> </ul>
	Media Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore partnership agreements and Memoranda of understanding which have been signed with several newspaper companies and TV networks to provide coverage on programme related activities</li> <li>• Keep media records of APC through newspaper filing</li> </ul>

### 3.3 IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

Activities	2021				2022				2023				2024			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Hold Press conference for Annual Lecture				X				X				X				X
Hold Press releases						X				X				X		
Create Content for online media – weekly blog, YouTube etc			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Create content for print media				X				X				X				X
Participate in radio/TV talk shows.					X				X							
Engage media houses for coverage				X				X				X				X
Participate in international events			X				X				X				X	
Produce brochures, fliers and teardrop.			X				X				X				X	
Print corporate shirts					X				X				X			
Produce billboards			X				X				X				X	
Working Papers			X		X		X		X		X		X		X	
Annual Reports				X				X				X				X
Develop a documentary (organisational journey)				X				X								X
Produce e-Magazines quarterly			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Post content and collect feedback on Facebook regularly.			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Create; Twitter, Instagram and YouTube accounts.				X												
Recruit a staff member responsible				X				X								
Train staff on social media and online security															X	
Train staff on content creation for online use					X				X				X			
Train staff on communication, M&E and reporting					X				X				X			
Produce reports				X				X				X				X
Policy briefs							X							X		
Produce C&V materials for fundraising drives - calendars, year planner etc			X				X				X				X	
Reviews of the C&V strategy				X				X				X				X
Evaluate the C&V strategy										X						X

## 4

# BUDGET FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE C&V STRATEGY

In order to successfully implement the C&V Strategy, there is need to have a budget. This modest budget can be adjusted when funds become available to APC. Projects specific communication budget will also be factored in when grants become available.

## 4.1 FINANCIAL RESOURCE: THE C&V BUDGET

Strategic Interventions	Annual Budget in UGX ('000)				Total ('000)
	2021	2023	2021	2021	
Sensitization, advocacy activities and dissemination of research outcomes	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	40,000
Production of communication and visibility materials including branding	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	60,000
Equipping APC staff to communicate, monitor and report on the C&V.	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	20,000
Equipping UCU community and researchers to harness the opportunities in the C&V strategy.	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	12,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>33,000</b>	<b>33,000</b>	<b>33,000</b>	<b>33,000</b>	<b>132,000</b>

## 4.2 HUMAN RESOURCE

The Africa Policy Centre C&V strategy has a comprehensive outline of activities that will drive the implementation of the centre's three-year work plan. For this strategy to be turned into practical actions to achieve the specific objectives and, by extension, the overall goal, the implementation timelines should be given due attention and tracked.

This plan being APC's roadmap, it sets objectives and performance targets, monitoring and tracking of activities for successful implementation.

The success of the C&V strategy, therefore, reflects on the overall success of APC's three-year strategic plan. To achieve this, it is important to have personnel dedicated to overseeing its implementation.

There is, therefore, need for a Communications Associate to lead the implementation of the plan. As stated in the strategy, APC has a lot of work to do in the area of visibility, without which the centre's existence remains peripheral and their work, largely unknown beyond the key partners and UCU community.

The communications person will work alongside the director for guidance and have cross functional responsibilities, including working closely with researchers and other staff members like the communications team of UCU as will be outlined in the job description.

It is apparent that, in order to improve the visibility of the organisation, different actors have a role and responsibility to play. The table below give an overview of who can play what role.

UCU - APC	Resource	Roles and Responsibilities	Comment
	Board Members, Advisory members, and high profile members of UCU	To promote APC within respective institutions/networks	To promote APC's Vision
	DVC AA	To oversee the management of APC and communication	Engage the Director
	Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To act as a leading figure in promoting the vision of APC</li> <li>To conduct meetings in a professional manner</li> <li>To communicate with stakeholders –especially donors and development partners on a regular basis and update staff</li> <li>To promote the APC among current and potential donors and partners</li> <li>Mobilise resources for APC</li> </ul>	The ED is the chief promoter of the APC brand
	APC Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To promote the aims and priorities among key audiences, at the highest level</li> <li>To raise awareness of activities</li> <li>To ensure smooth coordination of APC activities</li> <li>To promote APC at national/regional level, including donors at this level who may be interested to complement APC activities</li> <li>Support Director in mobilisation of resources</li> <li>Ensure visibility of APC (e.g. logo displayed at events, photos and news items published on websites and those displayed at field office, etc.)</li> <li>To provide reports (implementation/evaluation reports) of a high standard and in a timely manner</li> <li>To provide tools to promote the organisation through media services i.e. online, TV/Radio and Print</li> <li>To spearhead the creation of content to be published on various media platforms</li> <li>To advise management on suitability of communication tools/resources in order to maximize visibility</li> <li>To assist the Director in ensuring websites and other social media platforms are kept up-to-date and are of a professional standard</li> </ul>	Staff will own the C&V strategy and embed it in their activities and ensure its implementation
	Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure reference is made to APC</li> <li>Include APC's logo in their branding material contribute to its visibility</li> <li>To include links to APC on websites</li> </ul>	Director APC to coordinate

# 5

## ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS OF THE C&V STRATEGY

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The communication strategy aims at supporting the strategic plan of the APC. The key result areas are broad and cover:

- i. Creation of a media-savvy UCU-APC community promoting the Centre;
- ii. Highly engaged and informed stakeholders about APCs 2021-24 strategic plan; and
- iii. Effective and efficient implementation of APC's Strategic Plan 2021-24.

The indicators include the number of activities implemented as per the strategic plan and also influence on policy as a result of APCs work. The other indicators of progress will include the number of partnerships developed, feedback received from the public, level of interest as a result of APC work, and financial support given to APC.

### 5.1 DISSEMINATION OF THE C&V STRATEGY

The C&V strategy plan will need to be integrated with that of the strategic plan in order to ensure that all parties appreciate their roles in delivering the plan and also the implementation plan of this strategy is adhered to. The C&V strategy is to support the work of APC, engage with stakeholders better and accelerate their impact. The strategy will be shared and discussed with staff so that each group can understand their roles.

## 6 CONCLUSION

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The communication and visibility strategy is a critical tool in the implementation of an organisation's communication mission and its larger strategic plan. Defining the roles and responsibilities of actors is important if progress is to be made. This C&V aims at providing a critical framework for the implementation of APCs work plan.

