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- BRIDGING THE PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE  
DIVIDE: EXPERIENCES IN  
COMMUNICATING IN UNIVERSITIES

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# OVERVIEW: LECTURE CONTENTS

- Introduction and Objectives
- Innovative approaches on communication in the university
- Challenges in communication in universities  
Opportunities in communication in universities
- Case study 1: Communicating to the public
- Key issues in public communication
- Summary and Discussion

# Introduction and Objectives

- Introduction:
  - i) Internal communication- students, lecturers and other employees
  - ii) external communication- parents, researchers, policy makers, media
  - iii) public relations- Public relation departments/managers?

- **Objectives**
- To identify innovative approaches on communication in universities
- To propose effective communication in universities to various stakeholders
- To present practical experiences on university communication
- To do SWOT analysis of university communication and develop effective public communication

# Innovative approaches in communication

## **Within universities**

- Information desks- at main administration, colleges, faculties, departments
- Telecenters- information kiosks
- University radio
- Interactive voice response
- E-learning
- Mobile phones and wireless phones

# (Continue)

- Internet

## **With other stakeholders/clients**

- publications
- Trade fairs
- Mass media
- Public lecturers/ Inaugural lectures
- Public debates
- Peaceful demonstrations; peaceful strikes
- ...Mention more approaches ???????...

# Major Challenges in communication in universities

- Policy and regulatory framework
- Poor information management
- Inadequate coordination of information based services
- Inadequate resources
- Inadequate human resources
- Inadequate involvement of private sector
- Poor infrastructure

# Opportunities for communication in universities

- To refocus resources to information and communication management
- Increased budgetary allocation for physical, human and institutional resources
- Effective and efficient repackaging of information for different stakeholders
- Attitude change in university administration and staff
- Formulation of communication policy guidelines in universities



# Case study 1: Communicating to the public

- Electronic media
  - Land grabbing (KTN, October 10, 1997)
  - Documentary on IPM of common beans in Western Kenya (KCB, 1997)
  - Documentary of Bush and climbing beans in Western Kenya (CIAT, 1997)
  - Universities and Trade Unionism (July 2003-August 2005)

(continue)

- Graduation ceremonies (2006-2008)
- RUFORUM Workshop ( October 2008)
- GMO debate (November & December 2008)
- GMO seminar (23th February 2009)

# Print media

- Universities and Trade Unionism (July 2003-August 2005)
- GMO Debate November –December 2008
- Feature articles from specialists (GMO Debate-December 2008)

# Broadcast media

- Organic agriculture (2003-2004)
- Universities and Trade Unionism (July 2003-August 2005)
- An interview during Workshop on AICM(July 2006)

# Key issues in public communication

- Formulate policy guidelines
- Allocate resources
- Active lobby and advocacy skills
- Provide feedback to public communication providers
- Ready and willing to release information and innovations
- Information sources
- Innovative technologies

# (Continue)

- Language the audience can understand
- Current information eg GMO, Food security

More points??????????

# Summary and conclusions

- This is an effective means of communication in the universities
- Its channel is accessible to greater audience, broadcast current information and is relatively affordable as a unit production cost

**CONCLUSION:** Universities should do SWOT analysis and identify critical strategic issues (gaps in public communications)

- PLEASE NOTE THAT FEW PEOPLE ARE INTERESTED IN PUBLIC SPEAKING OR ENGAGEMENT