

**Creating a critical Mass of  
Science Communicators  
Presentation at  
Pre-CHOGM Science and  
Technology Symposium at  
Mbarara University of Science  
and Technology.**

**13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>-07**  
Ssempe Nurudean Norman  
Programmes Director ASTAU.



- **Knowledge of Science and Technology has become a new form of human capital which can allow those who possess it to achieve quick return**

# Problems facing Science and Technology education in Uganda

- **Rural students especially females perform poorly in science subjects. Learners are intimidated rather than challenged.**
- **Scientists are viewed as complicated folks with white coats, yellow acid fingers and living a miserable life.**



## **How to solve it**

- **'Success is 10%, inspiration and 90% perspiration'**

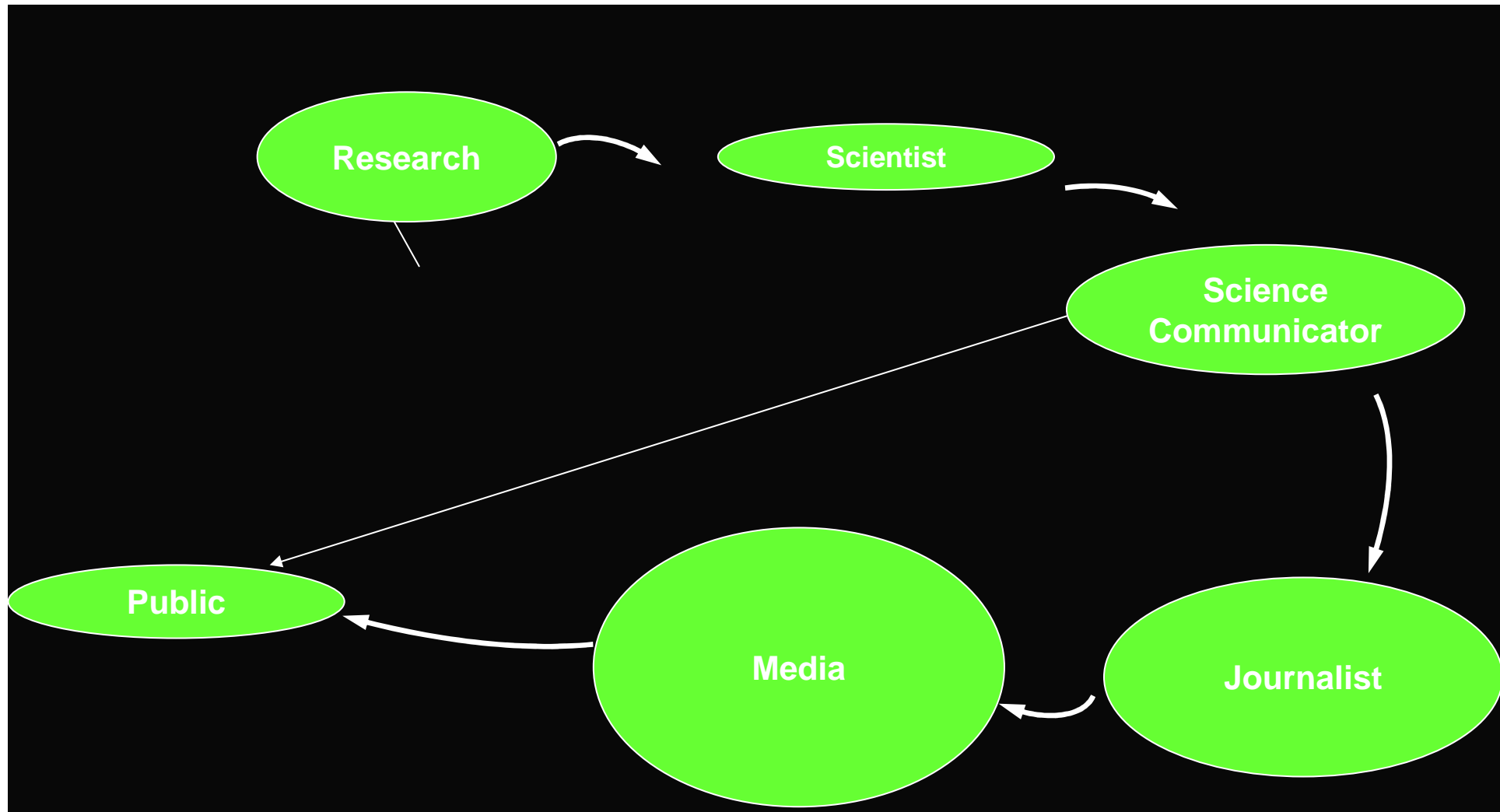
## **Science communication**

- **Science communication is about dialogue, respect of audience and engagement of folks on how science matters to them.**
- **This can be done not only through scientific journals but also through drama, fun science shows, music or art.**

# Science communication

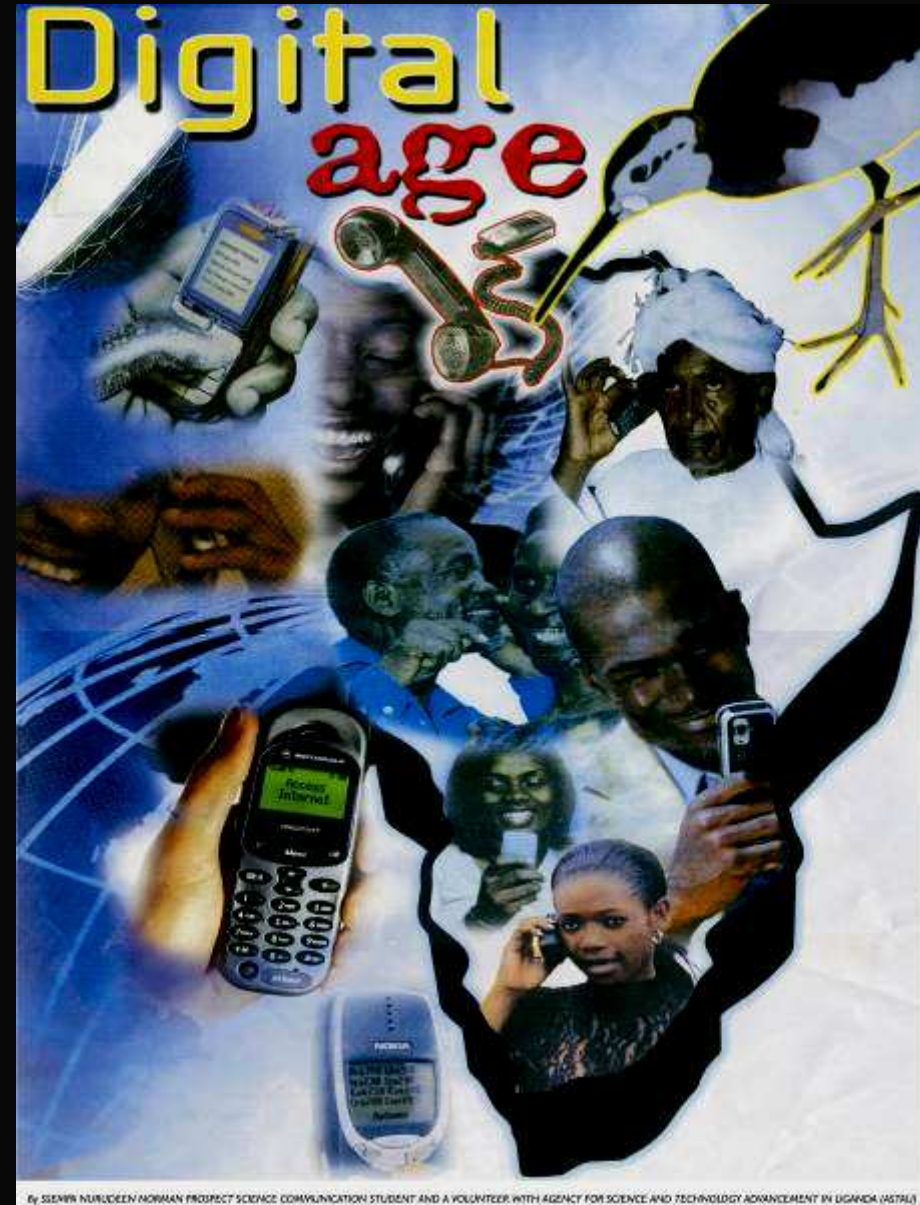


- Science communication is about scientists as key factors.



**Building Bridges  
Scientist-Science Communicator-Journalist**

- This can be done not only through scientific journals but also through drama, fun science shows, music or art.



By SEMEN NURULDEEN NORMAN PROSPECT SCIENCE COMMUNICATION STUDENT AND A VOLUNTEER WITH AGENCY FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ADVANCEMENT IN UGANDA (ASTRA)

- **Imagine it is the moment for questions and in the middle of the suit and tie crowds, an individual raises his hand, you can tell by his looks that he is not a member of any academy.**
- **He then asks for a microphone and says: 'excuse me, I am not from the university, but I'm here because I like science. What you've been saying is very interesting.'**

# What are we trying to achieve?

- Inspire the youth with lifelong interest in Science and Technology



- Identify and nurture latent talent in Science and Technology



# Breaking down stereotypes about Scientist and Engineers

Relevance of science every day  
and future



Develop Science communication  
culture and skills.

# How to inspire interest

- **Target**

- school learners
- teachers
- parents

**To learners, we  
provide role models**



# ■ Science communication activities

## articles on notice board, inspirational materials, fairs, essays and quiz

University.  
I had done well both science and arts subjects and while science teachers thought I was for physics, Biology and Chemistry (PCB)," says Halima.


"My turning point was after Senior Four, when I had done well both science and arts subjects and while science teachers thought I was for physics, Biology and Chemistry (PCB)," says Halima.

"I chose sciences (PCB/M) where there were few girls. With Allah's grace, I managed to excel for a bachelor's degree in Medicine and Surgery", adds Halima.

"So I believe that there are so many other girls who are even better than me but who just don't make it because they think science subjects are difficult and are for boys. This is not true", adds the Medical student.


On why she chose science subjects, "My father who is a teacher was very supportive and his dream was to have all my other brothers and sisters become doctors and engineers."

She finds the course demanding but very interesting and fulfilling.



**TUMUHAIRWE MAURINE**  
TUMUHAIRWE MAURINE is a Senior Five

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**MISSION:**  
To Popularise Science and Technology for Sustainable development

PLEASE CONTACT US ON THE ABOVE ADDRESS IF YOU'RE AN INTERVIEWEE.  
IN RESPONSE OR IF YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION TO SHARE WITH OUR HEADQUARTERS.

### WOMEN in SCIENCE

#### Women are Scientists



**AGENCY FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ADVANCEMENT IN UGANDA (ASTAU)**

- To teachers- networking; providing an avenue for rural and urban science teachers to meet share knowledge and skills.

Agency for Science and Technology Advancement Uganda (ASTAU)

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Peter Wanyama Biology Teacher, St. Lukes College, Mukono (05 May 2007)

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- **To general public we communicate....**

**Create Science, Technology ministry**

Science and Technology is increasingly assuming an important place in the world's economic development and survival.

There is a growing recognition of the relationship between quality research and development in Science and Technology and stable economic growth and also the need to begin to prepare students more effectively for future scientific and technological employment.

There is need to foster the establishment of Science and Technology that are appropriate, practical and applicable within our community to improve the quality of the lives of people in the community. It is important to promote Science, Technology and Innovation at an early stage of our education system.

This calls for an establishment of a ministry of Science, Technology and Innovations. Some of the work done by the ministry of industry and technology presently, can be shared by the created ministry and the investments ministry.

The created ministry under the ministry of education and sports, can be charged with design and evaluation of programmes aimed at reducing the huge gap that exists between science and society, streamline and educate the masses about the intellectual property rights among other programmes. This will accelerate research, development and innovations.

Of course all this can be done in collaboration with other stakeholders like Uganda National Academy of Sciences, National Agricultural Research Services, National Council of Science and Technology and the civil society.

Doing this will not only save us time and resources, but also tangible results will be realised.

Otherwise countries like Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and South Africa with empowered Science and Technology ministries have moved some steps ahead of us in this sector.

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*Readers name (even when they request that their names be withheld) will be considered for responding to was published. Short concise letters are preferred. Write to The Letters*

**DAY'S PICK**

**Use media to promote science education**

In this new information age, knowledge has become a springboard for economic growth and development. Countries that are weakly connected to the rapidly emerging global knowledge system will find themselves at an increasing disadvantage. Therefore, the promotion of science education that supports its creation and dissemination is a vital task.

The recent survey by Timedly Africa reveal peoples tastes in East Africa as the most visited media websites as the Nation Media Group, Daily Monitor, and The New Vision in Uganda and the ITP Media of Kenya as the most visited websites in Africa.

It is undeniable that the major role in stimulating public debate about science and issues is to promote public awareness and television programmes portray science as a big stakeholder for scientists, government and the civil society. Currently in the Ugandan media, science articles and news are hardly run and don't receive high audience preference ratings. Indeed some television programmes portray science as being in a world of its own and obscure for the average folk.

A recent study shows that only 10% of the young people in Uganda are interested in Science and Technology information, the largest areas of interest being sports 45% and politics 40%.

Cautiously raising interest in science among young people is necessary for increasing the number of future professionals, improve the quality of life for public and political support.

The media is at the entrance level of a process which turns people into scientific literate citizens. It can present science and knowledge to lay people. And it is well packaged to be accessible or documentaries can compensate for what school systems fail to achieve. Get people interested and may be a lot excited about the wonders of science.

Ssempe Nurudean  
Programmes Manager  
Agency for Science and Technology Advancement in Uganda

*Josephine Nansamba Masaka 13/4/10*

*ASTAU*

*USE MEDIA: Bitamazire*

**....science via print and electronic media.**

# Challenges

- **Expensive transport costs.**
- **Unreliable or no electricity in most rural schools to power computers**
- **Limited capacity in ICT and science communication**
- **Limited Internet access to view and access information websites**

- **Despite challenges, there success stories which can be shared**
- **'I fee more encouraged and convinced that I can do Electrical Engineering at University.' Says Margret Namuyanja of Serwanga Lwanga Memorial school Kalangala.**

- **'There is no doubt my interaction and exposure to leading scientists, propelled me to work harder and pass highly.....' says Tumuhairwe Maurine who sat her A-level at Kabowa High School, commenting about how she passed mathematics with grade A in UACE to qualify for her dream course on government sponsorship.**

- **We have a sharp eye on the millennium development goals, and working to create a network of young minds passionate....**

**....about science and technology careers for improved quality of life.**



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