

Nangobi transformed communications and culture at URSB

Nangobi expanded the Public Relations department, Bureau's first PR publication to document its growth and emerging business trends. She also led a comprehensive rebranding initiative that reshaped organisational culture.

BY GEOFFREY OYET OKWERA

Provia Nangobi describes herself as a communications expert with a strong inclination toward partnership and stakeholder management, as well as a dedicated mentor. Deeply passionate about nature, she has a profound love for plants and embraces a green lifestyle, consistently advocating for environmental preservation and the protection of natural ecosystems. Her long career has taught her that life requires patience, one does not simply walk into their dream careers or preferred job placements. Instead, the journey requires determination, resilience, and a deep sense of passion while keeping sight of the ultimate goal.

As many children growing up, Nangobi set her sights on a better life and began working steadily towards it. Her journey started in primary school under the guidance of her mother, who ensured all her children were raised within a humble Catholic doctrine, instilling discipline, values, and a strong moral foundation that would later shape Nangobi's aspirations and determination.

Education

Unlike many whose education journeys are defined by long treks to rural schools, Nangobi's path began in more privileged settings. She attended Iganga Girls Secondary School for her Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE), before proceeding to Rubaga Girls School for her Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education (UACE).

She later joined Makerere University, where she pursued a Bachelor's degree in Tourism, laying the foundation for her professional journey. Driven by a desire to grow in leadership and people management, she went on to undertake a Master's in Leadership and Human Relations Studies.

This academic progression ultimately steered Nangobi into the field of communication. She further sharpened her expertise with a Master's in International Communication Management from The Hague University of Applied Sciences, and a Diploma in Public Relations from University of Nairobi, credentials that anchored her evolution into a seasoned communication professional.

Starting out

Nangobi's professional journey began at the grassroots, where she worked with a Community-Based Organisation

(CBO), gaining first-hand experience in community engagement and development work. She later transitioned into the corporate space, joining Vantage Communications, a Public Relations firm then based in Kampala.

Her early career was closely intertwined with continuous learning, as she balanced work with further studies before fully immersing herself in the corporate world. This blend of academic grounding and practical exposure positioned her for broader opportunities beyond Uganda.

She subsequently secured a role as a communication expert and volunteer with Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO), in which she was selected to support a programme in Dhaka, Bangladesh. After undergoing the necessary training and preparations, she awaited her visa and deployment.

However, as she stood on the brink of this international assignment, another opportunity emerged with the Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB). This marked a pivotal moment in her career, presenting her with a choice that would shape her next professional chapter.

Joining URSB

Faced with a defining career decision, Nangobi had to weigh the prospect of relocating to Bangladesh, an opportunity that would require her to leave her children in Uganda, against taking up a role at the Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB). In the end, she chose to stay in Uganda to take up the URSB opportunity.

"I decided to join URSB as Senior Public Relations Officer, and was later promoted to Head of Public Relations and Corporate Affairs, a position I held until October 2024," she recalls.

During her tenure at URSB, Nangobi played a central role in strengthening the institution's communication function. She spearheaded the growth of the Public Relations department from a modest team of two to about 10 staff members, an expansion she says was necessary to match the Bureau's institutional growth and the increasing demands of both internal and external stakeholders.

She also championed the development of URSB's first Public Relations publication, designed to capture and reflect emerging business trends, particularly the Bureau's growing client base. For Nangobi, documenting the institution's journey was not just a communication tool, but a strategic effort to showcase its evolution and impact.

While at the URSB, Nangobi spearheaded a comprehensive rebranding initiative that went beyond visual identity to shape organisational culture. From redesigning logo applications and standardising font styles to introducing corporate wear for staff, the effort was aimed at fostering a strong sense of belonging and institutional pride.

FAMILY

Nangobi was born into a family of nine children and was raised by their mother, who was widowed at an early stage following the death of their father. His death ushered in a period of hardship, but their mother showed remarkable resilience, single-handedly raising the family and ensuring the children stayed on course.

Today, Nangobi is married with six children in a blended family, three of whom are her biological children. Her deep-rooted humanitarian spirit has since shaped her path, inspiring her to join Rotary, where she currently identifies with the Rotary Club of Kampala Muyenga Breeze, a platform through which she continues to serve and impact communities.

The initiative quickly took root. Staff embraced the culture of wearing corporate outfits particularly on Fridays, without the need for reminders, a practice that gained traction and support from top management. This alignment between leadership and staff helped entrench a unified corporate identity both internally and during public engagements.

Nangobi also led the introduction of URSB's social media presence, a move that initially came with challenges. Early engagements exposed staff to criticism and, at times, negative online behavior from users.

"However, we kept pushing on, embracing social media through training a specialised team to handle online presence for the bureau. This then improved our presence online, and more clients started appreciating this, which eventually culminated in an award I got from the Justice Law and Order Sector in 2019," she says.

Through resilience and strategic adaptation, Nangobi not only strengthened URSB's digital footprint but also demonstrated the power of communication in

shaping public perception and institutional growth.

Nangobi was also part of the team that opened the URSB regional offices in Gulu, Arua, Mbale and Mbarara.

Current employment

Nangobi works at the National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA) as Manager and Principal Licensing and Regulations. In this department, she oversees stakeholder interests and ensures timely marriage registration and verification services. Her responsibilities include managing relationships with leaders of places of worship, marriage registrars, heads of missions, and Ugandan citizens, as well as overseeing the licensing process for places of worship.

She notes that her background in communication has enabled her to build strong relationships with key stakeholders, most of whom are leaders of faith-based organizations.

Her primary responsibility is to ensure that marriages conducted by various religious leaders are formally registered in the national marriage register, which is currently managed by NIRA.



Provia Nangobi works at the National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA) as Manager and Principal Licensing and Regulations. PHOTO/GEOFFREY OYET OKWERA.