

PUBLIC INFORMATION

AND MEDIA SKILL

TRAINING


TRAINING WORKSHOP
CONVENED BY
THE KENYA
FOOD SECURITY
STEERING GROUP

*NAIROBI, PANAFRIC HOTEL,
13-14 NOVEMBER 2003*

PREPARED
IN COLLABORATION WITH
THE FIVIMS SECRETARIAT
BY A TEAM FROM

KENYA FOOD SECURITY
STEERING GROUP (KFSSG)

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS
ROME 2005



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BACKGROUND TO THIS DOCUMENT

This document is a summary of presentations given at a two-day training workshop on public information and media skills hosted by the Kenya Food Security Steering Group (KFSSG) on 13–14 November 2003 in Nairobi.

The training was for KFSSG key decision-makers and potential spokespeople charged with issuing information to mainstream media, for technical members who deal with the food security data and information, and for government representatives who deal with the media as part of their responsibility. Members of the media were also invited as it was recognized that they can play a key role in preventing famine by ensuring that the information on food security generated on a monthly basis by the Kenya KFSSG is communicated to the public in a balanced manner. Altogether, the workshop brought together 17 participants drawn from members of the KFSSG and the government.

The training was part of the broader effort to increase capacity in disaster management in the country. The need for training arose from an awareness of two key issues:

1. the tendency of the media to exaggerate food security situations with limited or no tangible field verification;
2. an awareness that the term “famine” was frequently used by the media to refer to any food stress situation in the drought prone areas of the country.

The training offered the participants a forum to brainstorm, share ideas and interact with journalists, and also the opportunity to acquire skills that would enable them to improve relationships with the media.

The FAO Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems (FIVIMS) Project funded the training while the World Food Programme (WFP) facilitated the training.

TRAINING OBJECTIVES

The training set out to:

- improve KFSSG media relations and contribute to a more balanced and constructive media coverage;
- enrich members’ skills in dealing with the media;
- identify the main issues and strategies for improving media relations.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

At the end of the training, the following outcomes were expected:

- enhanced media skills;



- increased knowledge on how to deal with journalists and the mainstream media;
- the development of a media strategy for the Kenya Food Security Coordination Structure (KFSCS).

T RAINING METHODOLOGY

The training focused on key issues that members needed to take into account while dealing with the media. Key presentations were made by a marketing expert, journalists, and facilitators with vast experience in food-security issues, and a *participatory* approach was used. Plenary sessions, professional presentations, mock media interviews, role plays and group discussions were held to enrich the learning process through sharing. For instance, mock interviews involved videotaping participants followed by discussions on good and bad interview practices. The role plays involved mock interagency meetings to demonstrate coalitions and conflict resolutions.

The training tempo was set by the introductory remarks by Mr Mahboub Maalim, the Chairperson of the Kenya Food Security Meeting (KFSM), followed by the official opening speech by Mr Dave Mwangi, the Permanent Secretary for Provincial Administration and National Security, OP (read on his behalf by Mr S.K. Maina, Director of Programmes, OP).

P RESENTATIONS

The first day of training was devoted to topics on “building media relations”. **Mr Nicolas Bidault** made the first presentation, “Branding: how to get messages across about products” and outlined the dos and don’ts of choosing appealing names and messages (see Section 2). This presentation was followed by a group exercise on developing messages for KFSSG branding and procedures that needed to be considered. The participants then formulated recommendations on the way forward (see Section 6.3).

This was followed by a presentation on key issues in press relations from **Ms Anja du Toit**, WFP, who discussed the experiences and understanding of the press, how to create good media relations and how the media can be useful to the KFSM (see Section 3.2). Two practising journalists, **Ms Jocelyn Muhutu-Remy** of Reuters/*Africa Journal* and **Mr Josiah Obat**, *Voice of America*, followed with short talks on more practical issues such as what motivates journalists, what type of food security information gets national and international coverage and the improvements KFSSG would need to consider in how to deal with journalists (see Section 3). **Mr Ben Watkins** of WFP then gave a detailed presentation on preparing press releases, and summarized the basic rules for making a press release appealing to consumers (see Section 4).

On the second day, participants were taken through interview and presentation skills and development activities. **Ms Anja Du Toit** made presentations on interview skills for radio and television: participants were introduced to, for example, basic dress for television interviews, body language, speech patterns and preparations (see Section 4). **Mr Ben Watkins** and **Mr Allan Kute** then moved on to discuss public presentation skills, scenario briefing and role plays. Their presentations outlined the basic rules for public presentation and the use of visual aids (see Section 4). They also gave detailed and wide-ranging presentation on coalitions and conflict resolution (see Section 5).

EVALUATION OF THE WORKSHOP

Eighty percent of the participants indicated that the training objectives were achieved and that training contents were useful (see Section 7). Issues articulated by participants for consideration included:

- follow-up/further training in media skills and negotiations;
- training of journalists on food security and disaster issues;
- inclusion of local media houses in follow-up training.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Group discussions helped cement issues raised in the presentations and gave participants an opportunity to formulate recommendations on the way forward. These are:

- developing a brand name for the KFSSG;
- establishing a secretariat within KFSSG to deal with media issues;
- developing a media strategy for the KFSSG;
- identifying “link” journalists to deal with food security and disaster management issues;
- holding regular press briefings and issuing statements by the KFSSG on the food-security situation in the country;
- capacity building in media skills for all KFSSG members;
- creating interest in media relations within the government institutions, international agencies and non-governmental organizations.



OPENING ADDRESS

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

In his introductory remarks, Mr Mahboub Maalim, welcomed all participants to the training workshop. He pointed out that KFSM/KFSSG had undertaken coordination of disaster-related food insecurity since the 1999-2001 drought emergency and important lessons had been learned regarding press releases on the food security situation. He underscored the need to reflect on critical issues in how food security information is communicated to the consumers. Mr Maalim congratulated the KFSSG for organizing the training and expressed his hope that it would go a long way in improving dialogue with the mainstream media.

Mr Mahboub Maalim

Chairperson,
KFSM and National Project Coordinator, ALRM

OPENING SPEECH

In a speech read on his behalf by Mr S.K. Maina, the director of programmes, Office of the President, Mr Dave Mwangi extended a warm welcome to the participants and pointed out that the training marked yet another milestone in efforts to build capacity in disaster management in Kenya. He expressed his hope that the outcome of the training would ensure that facts on food security were communicated to the audience in a balanced manner.

He noted that in the recent past media coverage on the food insecurity situation in the country had a tendency to use the word “famine” for food stress. He attributed this to, among other issues, the lack of dialogue with objective experts – especially in the Kenya Food Security Coordinating Structure – coupled with a tendency to interview local politicians, NGOs and religious leaders who could have a biased perspective.

In addition, Mr Mwangi noted that the KFSM produced a joint monthly food security update with information on agro-climatic conditions; crop production; commodity prices; pastoral food security; and ongoing programmes and activities to address food insecurity. However, these reports had not received the coverage they should.

He observed that the media played an essential role in preventing famine through raising awareness and mobilizing resources, and that much could be done to improve the quality of international and national journalism and the way members related to journalists to ensure that they presented the facts in a balanced way.

Mr Mwangi pointed out that the government recognized the need for accurate and up-to-date information in the field of disaster management and that if the public was fully informed on disaster preparedness, the impact of any disaster would be reduced greatly. Hence, time spent in capacity building was time well spent. He added that because the objectives of the training workshop were to improve the media skills of members of the KFSSG, he was confident that if these were achieved, it would have made a major contribution to helping the Kenyan populace reduce the effects of disasters. Additionally, he expressed his hopes that the key issues that emerged, and were addressed during the workshop, would help to shape important recommendations to improve the relations with the mainstream media.

In conclusion, he thanked the FAO and the WFP for facilitating the important training to build capacity for the KFSCS.

Mr Dave Mwangi
Permanent Secretary for
Provincial Administration and Internal Security



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The training was made possible because of the joint efforts of the Office of the President (OP), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP). Funding was provided by the EC Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems (FIVIMS) project and the training was facilitated by the WFP.

We are grateful to the chairperson of the Kenya Food Security Meeting (KFSM), Mr Mahboub Maalim (OP, Arid Lands Resource Management Project [ALRMP]) and the chairperson of the KFSSG, Mr Ibrahim Maalim (OP, Department of Relief and Rehabilitation) who provided leadership, to Mr Bruce Isaacson, FAO representative in Kenya who offered valuable contributions towards the training organization. We would also like to thank Mr Ben Watkins, Mr Allan Kute and Ms Anja Du Toit of WFP VAM for their valuable contributions to the training and Mr John Owuor, food security information advisor, OP, ALRMP for organizing the training overall. Finally, we would like to thank the speakers from the media – Ms Jocelyn Muhutu-Remy (*Reuters/Africa Journal*) and Mr Josiah Obat (*Voice of America*) who made presentations and participated in discussions ■■■



ACRONYMS

ALRMP	Arid Lands Resource Management Project
EC	European Commission
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FAQs	Frequently Asked Questions
FIVIMS	Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems
GoK	Government of Kenya
KBC	Kenya Broadcasting Corporation
KFSCS	Kenya Food Security Coordination Structure
KFSM	Kenya Food Security Meeting
KFSSG	Kenya Food Security Steering Group
MUAC	Middle Upper Arm Circumference
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
OP	Office of the President
R&R	Department of Relief and Rehabilitation
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VAM	Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping
WFP	World Food Programme



1. INTRODUCTION: THE MEDIA AND FOOD SECURITY

Without doubt, the media can play a key role in preventing famine. Nonetheless, it could be argued that much more can be done to enhance the quality of international and national journalism in Africa. While we cannot force journalists to get our message across – they are doing their job, which is to sell news – we can improve the way we relate to journalists and do more to ensure that they get the facts across in a balanced way.

According to economist Amartya Sen¹ a free press can help to prevent famines because it can (1) provide early warning of famine in remote areas (Sen trusts this much more than conventional early warning systems); (2) mobilize normal people to put pressure on governments to do something about famine; (3) allow opposition parties to put pressure on the government to do something. Other important positive roles of the media include:

- drawing international attention to the famine/food insecurity issue to mobilize global responses;
- ensuring accountability and spotting misappropriation;
- letting people know their ration entitlement;
- getting the environmental early warning across to people.

While it is clear that the media have a positive role to play, it can be argued that Sen assumes that the media get the message right, that they do not exaggerate information or manipulate it for political ends. This also presupposes that press reports are timely: the press does not wait for starving children. As *Censorship News*² has pointed out:

- the press can fail to capture the complexity of food insecurity/famine issues;

- local expertise is not often properly drawn upon – the international press is looking for easy stories, sound bites and photos;
- media rarely focus on underlying or structural causes and defective long-term policies;
- press do not always have the budget to visit remote areas;
- famine reporting is often too late to be of any use in early warning;
- in fact, local media in Kenya can frequently exaggerate food insecurity problems, often announcing “famines” without any factual background. This can be seen to reflect a lack of dialogue with impartial sources such as the KFSSG and an overreliance on information from local politicians or NGO/religious leaders who tend to have biased perspectives.

It is clear then that it is very important that members of the KFSSG improve the ways they deal with the media. This can be achieved by enhancing how key factors in relation to the media are dealt with. These include:

- branding;
- press relations;
- dealing with journalists;
- interview skills;
- preparing press releases;
- holding press conferences;
- giving public presentations and;
- forming coalitions with other organizations.

OBJECTIVES OF THIS DOCUMENT

The overall objective of this document is to improve your media skills in order to allow you to contribute to a more

¹ Amartya Sen, “Public Action to Remedy Hunger”, Tanko Memorial Lecture, London: August 1990 (<http://www.thp.org/reports/sen/sen890.htm>)

² “Ethiopia: Still in Starving in Silence? Famine and Censorship Revisited”, *Censorship News* Issue 57, May 2001. (<http://www.article19.org/docimages/1034.htm>)

balanced and constructive media coverage. In the long term, this will enrich public understanding of food security issues and help build demand for and hence political support for the appropriate mobilization of resources.

The specific objectives are to:

- illustrate the main issues and strategies for improving media relations;
- improve skills for dealing with the media.

LAY-OUT OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document presents key ideas in how we can improve how we relate to the media. Section 2 looks at branding and its importance in publicizing any organization. It outlines key ways of “branding” an organization effectively.

Section 3 moves on to examine ways of dealing with the press – outlining what the press needs in terms of information and resources from key food-security personnel and the types of information journalists need

to do their job. It also looks at how to improve relations with the media.

Section 4 then discusses the tools necessary for working with the media. It looks at interview practices, for example describing the dos and don'ts of a good interview. It also discusses the importance of announcements and press releases and shows how to prepare a press release in order to win space. The section then outlines how to prepare for and hold a press conference. It concludes by discussing how you can ensure an effective public presentation. Section 5 discusses the importance of forming coalitions and details ways of negotiating conflict. Section 6 looks at the next steps and discusses key recommendations that arose from group discussions at the original workshop – for instance, how to go about branding in practice and ways of improving dialogue with the media.

Section 7 gives participants' evaluation of the workshop while the annexes in Section 9 give examples of the scenarios from the two-day training and also the training schedule and lists of contributors and participants ■

2. BRANDING: GETTING THE MESSAGE ACROSS

WHAT IS A BRAND?

A brand can be described as the sum total of all human experiences, perceptions and feelings about an organization. It depicts a trademark, which to consumers represents a particular and appealing set of values and attributes. Examples of brand names include *product* brand names, such as Coca-Cola or Colgate; *company* brand names, such as Amazon.com or Mnet; and *agency* brand names – for example, CARE and UNICEF.

WHAT IS BRANDING?

“Branding” then is the process of making products and organizations into brands. It is all about building an experience for the consumer. Successful organizations spend years developing and maintaining their brands. The branding has been successful when just saying the “name” or “the short message” invokes the whole “product” experience.

BUILDING A BRANDING EXPERIENCE

Brand messages aim to convey an *experience or an aspiration*. For instance, Coca-Cola target young consumers, so their commercial displays use young, beautiful, sporty people. Other organizations want to communicate a message that emphasizes their skills and *know-how* – showing what they can do and how they can do it. The World Food Programme or engineering companies, such as Alstom, are examples of these. Lastly, the message may be trying to appeal to

pure emotions: for instance, UNICEF uses images of children in famine situations.

Building the branding experience involves choosing:

- a name;
- a message;
- the type of brand communication – images, logo, soundbites.

CHOOSING A NAME

Clearly, the first step is to choose a brand name. This can be something meaningful or something funny, but above all, a name must be short, catchy and easy to remember. There are two main things you should not do when choosing a name. Do not choose (1) complicated acronyms (these can be difficult to remember and can be confused with other acronyms) or (2) long names.

CHOOSING A MESSAGE

The brand’s message will convey your *mission*. Whatever message you decide on, make sure that it is *short, clear, catchy and attractive*. It must not confuse the consumers: you are aiming to make them want to be “part of” your organization. For instance, Kencell Communications replaced the initial name “Kencell – The Answer is Yes!” with their brand name – “Yes!”

WHAT NOT TO DO

You want to make sure that your consumers remember how the message starts and can recall its meaning quite easily. You are probably familiar with the Nike brand’s message (“Just Do It!”): this is because it fulfils the criteria of being short, clear, catch and attractive. So, make sure that you avoid:

- boring long messages;
- messages that are too technical;
- messages that give too much detail.

CHOOSING BRAND COMMUNICATION

You can opt for a variety of ways to communicate your brand. You can choose from:

- TV ads, short clips;
- radio messages;
- newspapers;

- logos;
- the internet.

Remember, successful branding is when just saying the “name” or “the short message” can bring about the whole “product” experience (see Section 6 for workshop recommendations) ■

3. KEY ISSUES IN PRESS RELATIONS

WHAT JOURNALISTS NEED

Many journalists in Kenya feel that they don't have enough access to information from government institutions. It is also vital to address the problem of chronic food insecurity in a *structured* way – and not just when an emergency arises. This calls for a strategy that involves the media more fully: they can play a major role in raising public awareness and attracting donor funding. The media therefore need full cooperation from the people who have information on food security issues and topics. In turn, those of us dealing with the media need to do so in a structured way.

MAIN PROBLEMS JOURNALISTS FACE IN KENYA

Some of the main problems journalists face in Kenya are a lack of factual statements and a lack of transparency. This is because of an overreliance on foreign and NGO reports, which in turn can breed too many alarmist reports. This then leads to problems with verification, as there is no possibility of counterchecking the information from the government experts. The consequences of these problems are misrepresentation, rumours and sensational reporting.

Throughout the world, journalists interact with government officials in two different ways:

1. In many *developed* countries there are designated press officers who journalists can contact, there are organized trips, and there is easy access to technicians.
2. In many *less developed* countries relationships can be more easy and informal and phone numbers can be accessed without problems.

In Kenya, however, it is a different story. Journalists find it difficult to obtain adequate information, and can feel very frustrated trying to cover a new story. While there are many experts and highly specialized technicians in Kenya (“dream targets”), when an editor asks a journalist to cover a story, it can prove very difficult to gain access to experts unless the journalist knows them personally.

FEAR OF THE MEDIA

A key problem seems to be fear of the media. For example, experts can become “paralysed” when contacted by the press. Many experts’ response in fact is to ask that the journalist call them later or they direct them to someone else or ask for a formal letter.

WHY JOURNALISTS NEED EXPERT HELP

Journalists need to follow up on stories to verify them and to check facts. For example, the story below will need several facts verified:

Kenya is suffering from its third serious drought in 10 years with the north and north-west worst hit. WFP and GoK have launched an appeal of 83 million dollars. The drought is causing localized conflict, inter-clan fighting due to competition over water and grazing land, several people have been displaced and prices of basic foods have gone up ...

To follow up, many facts and details needs to be checked:

- Is the current drought the third serious one in 10 years?
- Localized conflicts: really, where, between who? An expert from the government must have gone to these places and can give details;
- Population displaced: how many, to which areas?
- What are the prices of basic items?

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WORKING WITH JOURNALISTS

More *accessibility* to food-security experts is needed, and there is also a need to identify journalists who can cover food security issues. Key recommendations for improving working relationships with journalists are:

- KFSSG needs to make factual statements on food security;
- statistics need to be published – for example, the issuing of frequently asked questions (FAQs) sheets;
- making food security information accessible;
- the availability of a spokesperson who can summarize food security data and information;
- active involvement of the media and cooperation from “experts”, the people who have information;
- a list of contact journalists – those dealing with food security issues;
- a media strategy – because the media can play a major role in public awareness.

IMPROVING RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE MEDIA

As you have seen above, journalists are people who are *trying to do their job*. The press aims to be a provider of non-controversial information in various sectors to their readers – the people of Kenya. The press can be useful to advocate any cause, to attract international attention and donor funding, which are necessary for alleviating food-security problems. In order to do this, drawing attention to issues where public awareness is necessary is vital. In addition, it is important to inform local people about the organization’s role and efforts. This is where the press steps in: it is essential for disseminating important information at both a national and an international level.

Here, we examine the key issues in press relations and discuss how to improve relationships with the media. We shall look first at some common experiences of dealing with the press, how these can be useful to the KFSSG and finally we shall examine how to create and maintain good media relations.

To gain an insight into your understanding of the press, ask yourself some key questions:

- What are your experiences with the press?
- Have you ever talked to the press? Why? Why not?
- How do you perceive the press? Why do you think they want information from you?
- Do you think they are right to ask you? If not, who should they ask instead?

How can good relations be created with the press?

Keep in mind how beneficial reports and broadcasts are for highlighting any cause. We shall now examine how you can create good relations with the press when (1) they contact you for information and (2) when you contact them.

WHEN JOURNALISTS CONTACT YOU

There will be occasions when journalists ask you for information. The following points can act as a guide when reporters contact you directly:

- be polite when they call – remember, you are dealing with individuals not institutions;
- listen carefully to their questions, note them down, and repeat them, “so you want to know about the drought in District A and how many people it is affecting and what government is doing to help the situation, is that right?”;
- if you do not have the answers on hand, tell them you will get back to them and around what time;
- make sure you do get back to them with the information you managed to collect. If you did not get the information, give them a name and telephone number of the person who will be able to assist. Remember to notify this person so they can be prepared. (See also Section 4.)

WHEN YOU CONTACT JOURNALISTS

At other times, you will want to contact the media yourself – usually when you have some news that you want publicized. Before you do, make sure that you have a media list: this will contain contacts details of media and journalists that cover your field, and will make contacting the appropriate person simpler and faster. Once you do decide to make contact with the media, keep the points below in mind:

- identify what news in your work could be interesting to the media;

- pick out the news criteria – Is it a news story at all (new and different)? Is it interesting? How many people does it affect? Is it relevant to the media's readers (e.g. 15 people killed in family feud in Uruguay)?;
- remember that journalists look for the *sensational different* news. This can be unusually *good* – for instance, your response to a certain food security problem, *unexpected* (sudden floods) or unusually *bad*;
- in a bad scenario, do not give additional publicity to bad news by attempting to rebut. We can all make mistake or create misunderstandings. Do not try and blame nor speculate ■

4. TOOLS FOR ORGANIZED MEDIA RELATIONS

There are four main tools you can use to organize and take control of your relationship with the media. These are:

1. interviews;
2. announcements;
3. press releases;
4. press conferences and briefings.

We shall examine each in detail now.

INTERVIEWS

If you have been asked to do an interview with the media, make sure you have done your homework. On other occasions, you may offer to do an interview in order to raise publicity about a report that is to be published or a new development in your organization. Remember, journalists need full and complete stories and will be relying on you to give facts and figures. As interviewee, your job is to demonstrate that: (1) *you* are the expert and that (2) you have *credibility*. You can ensure both if you prepare properly for the interview in advance.

Before you even meet the journalist, establish the subject – be very specific on topics or subject areas to be covered so that you can get relevant statistics, names, places, facts beforehand. You can also make a list of what you want to say in advance. And ensure you find out the time and place of the interview so that you turn up at the *right* time and at the *right* place.

When you do meet up with the interviewer, make sure you are factual. Don't make anything up and back up anything you do say with evidence. And never forget to be fair, truthful and knowledgeable.

SIX SIMPLE STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEW

When it comes to the interview itself, try to keep these following points in mind. They will ensure that you get

your point across in the best way possible.

1. Keep your answers short, straightforward and candid. Concentrate on a few key points.
2. If you cannot answer a question, say so! If you can promise answer later, do so. *Do not* guess or speculate!
3. Never get sidetracked into unrelated or unimportant subjects. Point out that you would prefer to focus on the most important issues. If the reporter focuses on issues you consider to be less relevant, answer – as *briefly as you can* – and then point out the information of greater importance. Take the initiative and draw the journalist's attention to some issue she or he has ignored.
4. *Never* let the journalist put words in your mouth. If they start a question with "You mean to say that ...", counter with "What I said was ...". *You* decide what you say publicly – not the journalist.
5. Support the statements with facts and third-party evidence.
6. Never argue or make general statements about the bias of the media. Keep balanced, together and calm.

THE "DOS" OF AN INTERVIEW

Here are some of the things to remember that you should do when giving an interview. First of all, you must *prepare*. Find out all questions or areas of interest to the journalist so that you can anticipate difficult questions or controversial areas. At the interview itself, identify yourself formally: give your *name, organization, title*. (Check that the journalist gets it right.)

Most importantly, always remember to explain how food security issues affect *people*: put them first. Food security is about people not about metric tonnes of food or cubic litres of water. So, use simple language and be conversational. Try not to use ministry or academic

jargon, acronyms and abstractions. For instance, don't say people are "suffering from a state of chronic food insecurity", say people are "hungry" or "starving".

Be concise: simple concise language is particularly important for TV or radio. If you find yourself getting yourself trapped in a confusing web of words, stop and rephrase. Do not hesitate to ask the interviewer to repeat the question. *Answer the questions you are asked.* Don't give more information than required, unless the journalist has overlooked something or you want to change the focus or add positive information. State important facts first, and stop when you have answered the question. Keep in mind that the perfect "soundbite" is 8 seconds or 25 words.

Be honest: *never* lie. You can be discreet and avoid telling things you know if the situation requires. Do not get pushed: it is your *right* to *withhold sensitive information*. Respond only with information of which you are sure: no one has to answer every question – if you do not know, say so. You can always volunteer to supply the information later on. If you do, ask for a deadline and call back in time. If you have agreed to call back in 30 minutes, *do* it.

Make sure you correct any incorrect statements: If you are misquoted, contact the reporter. If the error is serious, ask the reporter or editor if a statement correcting the error can be published. Follow up with letter to the editor providing the correct information.

And finally, stay calm!

THE "DON'TS" OF AN INTERVIEW

Here are some things you should try not to do at the interview. For instance, do not answer speculative or hypothetical questions. Be careful that you do not propagandize: "don't tell it, show it". Don't *argue* or *attack*, and never denigrate or criticize your colleagues' work or the work of collaborating agencies, donors, government or individuals. Speak for yourself! You can always refer the reporter to the other organization if she or he wants comments. Do not attempt to interpret the actions of others. State what you know as facts, but avoid expressing negative value judgements. Do not point out the obvious: journalists can see for themselves – so let them.

Appearing on television

There will be times when you may need to appear on

television. This of course, has its own demands. You may be nervous or self-conscious, and feel anxious about what impression you will give – particularly if it will be a live broadcast, such as a news programme. These simple rules, which you can apply, will mean that you will appear at your best if the occasion demands.

What to wear and what to bring

Wear solid coloured clothing (no checks or bold stripes). If you are outside, do not wear sunglasses or a cap pulled down low over your forehead. Bring a handkerchief or powder to dab your face: it gets very warm in a TV studio with all the "flood lights". Take off your watch if it is electronic and turn off your phone ... so that neither beeps during the interview.

What to ask for

Ask for a chair that does not revolve. Otherwise you might find yourself swaying across the TV screen. Sit upright: it will help you appear organized and neat. If you are standing, try not to sway.

What to remember

Remember that the camera is on you all the time. Do not make faces or nasty expressions in reaction to a question. Do not smoke on air. Look at the interviewer, *not at the camera*. Maintain eye contact with the questioner and do not let your eyes wander. Do not fidget with pens or paper or twist your fingers, etc. This looks exaggerated on TV.

What to say and how to say it

Discuss the questions with the interviewer before the interview begins. Concentrate on the most important point first because the taped interview will be edited down. Make short statements. Avoid jargon: use simple language – imagine you are speaking to your neighbour or grandmother.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

You will make *announcements* to inform the media of routine events, such as:

- the publication of reports or food security updates;
- the arrival of an evaluation mission;
- the holding of training seminars;
- changes in high-level staff;
- the arrival of visiting dignitaries at an international food security meeting.

PRESS RELEASES

WHAT IS A PRESS RELEASE?

A press release is a largely factual text (often with accompanying material), which is aimed at getting a message and information covered in the media. It is normally:

- *short* – not more than A4 pages distributed as a document attachment, email message, fax;
- *unsolicited* – nobody has asked for it (unlike a solicited response, you must convince the journalist to publish);
- *time-bound* – reflecting an issue of current importance;
- *public* – circulated to the entire press corps, or those most likely to cover the story.

WHEN DO YOU ISSUE A PRESS RELEASE?

Press releases are issues that *need* coverage. It is vital to keep in mind that if you send too many press releases, journalists will ignore all of them. For very important messages and issues, the press release may be accompanied by a press conference. Therefore, you will issue a press release only when the event you want to publicize is of such significance that it warrants more than a simple announcement.

A press release is particularly suitable when you want to make sure an event gets a high profile. So, you would issue a press release to publicize:

- emergency operations;
- the approval of a new project;
- an increase in the budget of an operations project;
- signing a letter of understanding;
- mark the anniversary of a project;
- changes in the food security coordination structures;
- end of the year account of volume of assistance to Kenya Districts.

HOW TO ENSURE CONVERGENCE

When you are issuing a press release, keep in mind that you are *competing for space*. For most journalists, the main problem is not too few stories, but *too many*. As a result, he or she must decide which stories merit a write-up. It is very important *where* your press release appears in a newspaper or at what time it appears on television or radio. For radio and television there is a big

difference between prime viewing or listening at two in the morning.

For instance, print coverage comes in different forms, which you can allocate points to: *front page leader or editorial* (10 points); two-page middle spread (8 points); short column on page 11 (5 points); brief reference in an article on other related issues (2 points). finally, if the press release is ignored, you will get no coverage (0 points).

Clearly then, you need to make sure that *your* story engages the press sufficiently so that they will be willing to cover it. For example, which story do you think they *won't* they pick from the list below?

- George Saitoti resigns from politics: “I want a quiet life.”
- Kenya rugby team beats South Africa.
- Three Matatus crash on the Mombasa road, 20 dead and 30 injured.
- Miss Kenya admits: “I was once a man.”
- Inter-agency “Food for Work” project implemented in Baringo.

It is quite likely that the last statement will be lost amidst the interest value of the preceding four. Why is this? It is because it doesn't fulfil the criteria listed below:

- Will people want to read it?
- Is it interesting? Remember, papers sell because they are interesting, not because they contain facts.
- Journalists and editors compete with one another for broadcast time, print space, and readership.

What is interesting?

Newspaper articles or televisions features are interesting if they contain at least one of these three ingredients:

- *sympathy value* – people can identify with the problems and concerns of the people interviewed;
- *human interest* – scandal and curiosity (it doesn't have to be sensational) it might just be unexpected or unusual;
- *breaking news* – a big story or scoop.

Specialist interests such as new tools in vulnerability don't get coverage unless they have global implications. *The Journal of Applied Econometrics* may be of interest to economists, so they go to the library to buy it. Nobody buys a paper to increase their specialist knowledge.

PREPARING A PRESS RELEASE

Before you begin to prepare a press release, check that you can answer the questions below:

- Have you *defined a primary target*? Something that might interest general readers?
- Have you *identified the main message*? What really captures the main point you are trying to make?
- Is it *eye-catching*? Is the strength right? Don't add more spice than the recipe requires.
- Is it *short and simple*? Consider how it will look in column format and imagine you are reading a paper in a bus, not on a quiet Sunday afternoon.
- Are the *main facts up front*?
- Does it have too many *confusing facts and figures*?

Structure

The *headline* and the *lead* (the first sentence) are the most important part of a press release. This is because they will determine whether the journalist reads any more or hits "delete message". In addition, the journalist may cut and paste or cite directly from the headline and first few lines, not more.

Any new item or press release should follow the rules of the *information pyramid*. So, try to structure the press release in this way:

- the *main message* – two or three short sentences that get it across;
- *basic facts* – a couple of lines of facts to support the main message;
- *supporting colour* – witness accounts (two paragraphs);
- *supporting facts* (two paragraphs);
- *related information* of interest and relevance (one or two paragraphs).

There are no hard rules, and you should avoid strict formula. The most important thing is *not* to save your best ammunition until last!

Language

The style must be journalistic, which is half way between "official" and "colloquial". Use short words, and avoid technical jargon, acronyms and unfamiliar words. The language should be *clear* and *simple*: imagine you are writing for your mother-in-law and always make sure that a non-subject specialist reads it over for clarity. Use *active verbs* in the present tense, for example, use "X accuses Y of assassinating Z" rather than "Y has been accused by X of having been the assassin of Z".

Clarity

Make sure you use short sentences and short paragraphs with easy 'cuts'. The structure should *flow* and key points must move logically from one sentence to another. Watch out for statements that can be misinterpreted – try to avoid speculation ("might be", "maybe", "should be"). Try not to make any statement that could be cited out of context: compare: "WFP stands accused of diverting food aid resources. We deny this false accusation" (Journalist just quotes the first sentence "WFP stands accused of diverting food aid resources") with "We deny the false accusations of food aid diversions".

Supporting details

The supporting details should be succinct: don't ramble too much. They should also be *factual*: include figures but not too many and add examples if the figures are self-explanatory. Give specific times, dates and places. Evidence must always be accurate: check and double-check all the facts. Drop them if you can't verify them. Remember, if you deny something, be sure the journalist will check up on it. So be honest.

Give direct quotations from people who know what they are talking about. But always cite your sources – for example, for quotes always explain who has given the quote. Ideally, a direct quotation should be:

- *direct speech with speech marks*: "Camels were dropping dead on their way to the borehole", said Official X;
- *not indirect speech*: "The official said that he had seen camels dying on the way to the borehole";
- *not too colloquial*, but realistic speech;

Be careful not to quote out of context, misquote, or partially quote. Don't break up a quote if this changes the sense. *Never* make up quotes. Make sure that official quotes are checked with the originator.

Add some colour: for instance, real human stories including a personal touch, as long as it is relevant, or if there anything unusual about the place you are writing about, mention it.

Unlike a ministerial statement or brief, the personal touch is essential for a press release. This can include eyewitness and victim accounts or testimonies of people who are directly involved in the situation in the field.

Round up or down figures and don't overload with numbers. Only use tables if you really have to.

“HOUSEKEEPING”

If a journalist wants to cover the story, he or she may want additional information. Include this vital information on the press release:

- contacts, staffed telephone, fax and email;
- website addresses or links;
- mission statement of organization issuing the release.

Wherever possible, attach this information:

- background on the issuing organization;
- photos or video material;
- embargo or release time clearly indicated;
- background statistics and links.

Check your mailing list regularly, whenever you send out a release. Call by telephone to confirm that the entire target group has received the release.

PRESS CONFERENCES AND BRIEFINGS³

You will hold a press conference when you need to provide more information than a news release. A press conference is especially suitable because you are able to meet everyone at once rather than spend time in several different interviews. Usually a press conference is most appropriate when:

- it is more efficient to meet everybody at once;
- the story is of interest to all media in Kenya;
- the news is “big” and will attract national or worldwide attention.

PREPARING FOR A PRESS CONFERENCE

Before you announce a press conference make sure that you have booked the most suitable speakers, have set an agenda and decided the order of who will speak and for how long. You need to find a venue – this can be an office if there is space. Have you chosen a suitable time? Keep in mind that *press deadlines* are in the afternoon so mornings (10 o’clock, for example) are best.

Your next step is to *issue invitations* to the appropriate media (remember your media list!) – these

are usually sent five working days before the event. Follow them up to ascertain who and how many will attend. Make sure you can provide enough tables for speakers and chairs for journalists.

For most press conferences, you will give out a *press kit*. This is background material on what the food security coordination structure is, the press release, fact sheet on the issue in focus, photos, references to more information and contact persons.

DURING THE PRESS CONFERENCE

At the press conference, provide plenty of copies of the press kit and of the statement being made, and emphasize the human side of development.

Let’s now look at how you go about preparing for and giving any type of public presentation, including press conferences.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

PREPARING FOR THE PRESENTATION

On occasion, you will need to give a presentation. This may be in the form of a press conference for the media, or you may need to report on your finding to government ministries, or it may be that you need to present new training or developments to other staff members. But before you even think of giving a public presentation, make sure you are prepared. Begin by thinking about your audience. Find out what they are interested in and on what issues they are expecting clarification. For example, you might evaluate their level of technical knowledge or their language skills, or what their particular interests are so that you can make sure the presentation is given in a way that they find engaging and relevant. It may be useful to run through preparations with a colleague who does not know the subject matter.

When will the presentation take place: after lunch? Late afternoon? Adapt accordingly. (Keep in mind that mornings are best when dealing with the press briefings.) Where will it take place? Will the setting support fancy technology?

CONTENT

Before you begin to prepare your content, identify what you want to achieve. Define your *key message* and make

³ In case of briefings, these are appropriate if there is a major press interest but no significant news for example, to present background information.

sure it is repeated at the beginning, middle and end. A clear introduction and conclusion, with a clear closing message and a Thank You are very important. For longer presentations, always give map of the structure of the presentation up front. Anticipate difficult questions.

Break the content into clear discrete thematic areas with links between them. The presentation should *flow*: there must be linkages from one section to the next. Try to illustrate points: use examples or tell stories – this will give the presentation a human interest flavour. But don't go overboard.

Don't fire too many numbers, but if you do, be precise! And always state your source. Where possible, use overhead or PowerPoint to present numbers in graphical, map or tabular form. Check all the facts first: then double-check them.

Keep it simple and to the point and *short*: remember that people start losing concentration after 20 minutes. Keep in mind that the audience wants to know about the subject matter, not about you.

VISUAL AIDS

Are you going to offer handouts after the presentation or before? The danger with giving out handouts before a presentation is that they can distract the audience – do you want to have to speak over the sound of turning pages? It can also make the audience feel as if there is no point in listening to *you* if all the information is there in front of them. So, it is often best to keep handouts until after you have spoken.

If you are using PowerPoint, remember it should *aid* your presentation, not distract. Presentations (overheads, slides, PowerPoint) must be totally smooth. If you do use PowerPoint, use large fonts that are visible from the back of the room. Don't use too much animation – it can be very distracting. In the same way, limit your use of colour and fonts – too much can be very confusing. Keep in mind that you should use the same colours and same fonts (and font sizes) to make similar points or link like themes. Backgrounds should be non-distracting with serious images. And make sure your computer desktop is tidy! Never read from a PowerPoint or overhead.

Always load it on the hard disk before the presentation: test it the day before and on the day itself. Don't run on a portable battery as it might not last the

distance. Be ready for technical failure: make sure you have a full print-out.

ON THE DAY

Tailor your outfit – usually this means dressing marginally smarter than your audience. Check your physical appearance: for instance, avoid distracting jewellery or other adornments such as a loudly decorated tie.

When you get to the venue, *before the audience arrives*, run a few simple checks: make sure that the microphones are working. Check the working projector if you are using PowerPoint and do test runs. *Figure that anything that can go wrong will go wrong.*

Once the audience arrives, request that all mobiles are turned off, and don't start until everyone is seated and focused. Leave as much time for discussion as for the presentation itself.

GIVING THE PRESENTATION

Move confidently to the lectern, and don't lean on it. If possible, stand in a balanced position facing the audience. When you are speaking establish eye contact with people (occasionally switching) and always project your voice to the back of the room. Remember, be confident about yourself and confident about your message. If you feel nervous, breathe regularly and pause for reflection.

Make sure you have memorized what you want to say beforehand. This means you won't have to keep looking at your notes. You should never read from handouts or prepared text. Avoid monotonous speech: try to intonate and de-tonate!

Try not to use idioms or jargon. It is fine to use humour to keep the audience's interest but do not tell long irrelevant – or vulgar – jokes. Avoid using acronyms, highly technical language, or too many figures. Don't use double negatives and long-winded complicated sentences.

Keep an eye on your audience. Are they asleep or just bored? Looking perplexed? Beginning to slouch on their chairs? Reading background materials? Looking at you? Keep in mind that you can always adapt the length, technical and presentation style as you go based on how your audience is reacting. Always take their questions seriously, and never lose your temper ■■■

5. COALITIONS AND NEGOTIATION

COALITIONS

Coalitions, alliances, consortiums and networks are all forms of collaborations. KFSSG is basically a coalition of agencies concerned with food security, NGOs, government and so on. When two or more organizations decide on joint action, they can act as joint decision-making mechanisms and share or jointly plan resources. A coalition can be semiformal or formal – there may be even legal contracts. It is usually a long-term arrangement, which means there is a low risk of ‘default’.

This means that coordinated activities and/or advocacy can also take place. However, media and advocacy for a coalition is much more complex than for a single organization. This section will explain the advantages and disadvantages of forming a coalition and outline the pitfalls to avoid.

WHAT IS A NETWORK?

A *network* involves information sharing, and may be temporary. It is usually voluntary and there is no obligation for joint action. Neither is there necessarily any leadership.

WHY FORM A COALITION?

There are several reasons why you might decide to form a coalition. These include the intention to:

- pursue a common objective;
- pursue complementary objectives;
- achieve synergy and cost saving – reducing duplication of efforts;
- achieve a cartel;
- attack a common enemy.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF COALITIONS?

Inevitably, there will be risks in forming a coalition. These

can include free-riding and competition between members. Or it can happen that the standards and expectations of members cannot be reconciled. Another risk is a lack of trust between partners, which can lead to information not being shared fully. This in turn can lead to asymmetric information, moral hazard, adverse selection and breach of contract.

There may be worries about loss of identity and effects on member's reputations. And it is vital not to have too many members or too high transaction costs in maintaining the coalition, or too many meetings.

KEY INGREDIENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE COALITION

For a coalition to work, it must contain several vital ingredients. It must have *common goals* held higher than individual organizations' interests. Regular interaction and long-term commitment from all members is vital.

It needs *solid basic structures*, including clear agreements, membership, and ground rules for discussions. It will include mechanisms for monitoring and reviewing the coalition and also mechanisms for conflict resolution. It must also be *flexible* so that it can change with time and learn from mistakes.

A coalition needs a *strong* but democratic leadership and a *proper secretariat* and full accountability/transparency. All partners need to be willing to *compromise*. And, finally, avoid coalitions within coalitions!

PRESENTING A “COMMON FACE”

Any coalition must present a “common face”. The coalition will have an identity of its own which means that members should lose their individuality. It follows then that the spokesperson speaks *only* for the coalition and not for their native organization. Coalition mechanisms should be simplified from the start in order

to agree a spokesperson who is considered by all coalition members to be neutral.

When dealing with the public, don't commit publicly to an agreement if it is still under negotiation. And don't air differences in public: sort it out beforehand. When problems are encountered, it is important not to gloss over them. Deal with major problems, and keep in mind that solutions should be emphasized.

EFFECTIVE NEGOTIATION

Perhaps the most important element of effective negotiation is a willingness to *understand the others' position*. This means you need to keep a broad vision of the issues at hand and keep in mind that the benefits of partnership are not just about resources.

A focus on common interests and an objective of joint victory are vital. Therefore, don't hold out for an

individual victory – keep your ego outside negotiations. And when you are bargaining, don't stick indefinitely to a hard or extreme position. Finally, don't give up the search for solutions even if they are not ideal.

TOUGH NEGOTIATION AND CONFLICT

There will of course be times when you will have to "toughen up" your negotiating skills. Here are a few clear guidelines to follow when you encounter difficult negotiation situations:

- get to the bottom of it – What is the real issue of conflict?
- define best deal and minimum acceptable deals;
- always look for solutions outside the box;
- keep it professional and be nice – focus on issues of disagreement not on personalities or organizational reputations;
- know when to quit – when there is a zero sum game ■■■

6. NEXT STEPS AND GROUP DISCUSSIONS

The participants agreed that the name for KFSM/KFSSG should be branded to be understood easily and clear enough to catch the eyes of both donors and government. The participants resolved that branding of KFSM/KFSSG would consist of a strategy to deliver the brand distinction (see sections Developing messages for KFSSG and Improving dialogue with the media below) and the brand development, which is the process to find that distinction.

THE PROCESS

The branding and brand development consist of moving KFSM through the following process:

- *awareness creation* – do national media know our food security coordination structure?
- *image* – what do the media think of us?
- *preference* – so they want to do business with us?

THE STRATEGY

The strategy for improving media relations was discussed. This decided that a number of actions were required:

1. The formation of a *secretariat* to identify appropriate methods through which periodic press releases can be made. Shaabani Salim (OP, ALRMP), Douglas Kaunda (OP, Public Relations), Timothy Mcharo (National Operations Centre), John Owuor (OP, ALRMP) were selected as focal points for developing media relations/contacts. The team was tasked with preparing the media strategy for KFSM.
2. The identification of *spokesperson* for the KFSSG/KFSM. The Chairperson and the Alternate of KFSM were selected as the spokespeople for the coordinating structure on food-security issues.

3. The briefing of the wider KFSM on the training and the proposed strategy at 27 November 2003 meeting.
4. The establishment of media contacts: identification of journalists to cover food security issues.
5. Further training of the spokesperson and the alternate and other KFSM members on media skills.
6. The branding and launch the NEW KFSSG/KFSM name.
7. The development of brochures for the NEW KFSM/KFSSG brand name and its mission.
8. The creation of interest within GoK, UN, NGOs on media relations.

DEVELOPING MESSAGES FOR KFSSG

BRANDING KFSSG?

The group exercise was a follow-up of the session on branding with members resolving that there is need to develop a brand name for KFSSG. In the brainstorming session, the following issues were raised to help in brand development:

- what is KFSSG?
- outputs of KFSSG;
- key words for branding KFSSG;
- key words for developing a message.

WHAT IS KFSSG?

The group agreed that the KFSSG is:

- a multi-agency body, with GoK leadership;
- an advisory body to stakeholders on issues of drought management and food security;
- coordinator of effective management of food security and drought management information (data collection, analysis, dissemination) and appropriate response measures;
- fundraiser.

OUTPUTS OF KFSSG

KFSSG outputs are:

- coordination;
- monitoring and evaluating;
- fundraising.

KEY WORDS FOR BRANDING KFSSG

- Timely and accurate food security information;
- information dissemination;
- coordination;
- response;
- networks/coalitions.

SUGGESTED WORKING ACRONYMS

- THINK – Tackling Hunger In Kenya;
- FIRST – Food Information and Response Team;
- KEFOSA – Kenya Food Security Alliance.

KEY WORDS FOR DEVELOPING A MESSAGE

- Time, accuracy, action, response;
- togetherness, knowledge, solutions, preparedness.

SUGGESTED WORKING MESSAGES:

- “We prepare for and respond to food insecurity in Kenya”;
- “Together we tackle hunger”;
- “Finding solutions to hunger”;
- “Food for ALL Kenyans”.

IMPROVING DIALOGUE WITH THE MEDIA

This group exercise was aimed at identifying issues and strategies for improving the relationship between KFSSG and the national and international media.

The session involved brainstorming, looking back at the lessons learned – for instance, the lack of effective dialogue, the use of word “famine” to refer any food insecurity problem, among others.

A summary of issues raised on Kenya Food Security Coordinating Structure (KFSSG/KFSM) are presented below:

- Develop a new brand name that is simpler, catchy and attractive. Journalists should be present at the launch of the brand name.
- Develop a brochure with clear information on, mission, objectives, strategies and institutional framework.
- Establish a secretariat for media relations.
- Appoint a spokesperson.
- Train journalists in food security jargon.
- Identify link journalist(s) who deal with food security and disaster issues.
- Issue regular briefings and press statements on food security.

Overall, it was agreed that a media strategy was necessary ■■■

7. PARTICIPANTS' EVALUATION OF THE TRAINING

The participants evaluated the workshop through a questionnaire covering achievement of the objectives, the training organization, time spent on each session, training contents, group discussion/group work/role plays and any other comments relating to the workshop. Out of a total of 15 participants, 10 completed the evaluation questionnaire. The percentage distribution of the responses are presented below

How would you rate the training organization?

	% of participants (n=10)			
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Training facilities	30	50	20	0
Selection of participants	60	40	0	0
Training organization	40	60	0	0

To what extent did the training achieve its objectives?

	% of participants (n=10)
Completely	80
To some extent	20
Not achieved	0

How would you assess the time allocated to the session?

Session	% of participants (n=10)		
	Not enough	Just right	More than enough
Training	0	100	0
Plenary discussion	0	100	0
Group work/role plays	20	70	10

How would you assess the time allocated to the session?

Training content	Quality of content* (%)					Usefulness* (%)					Level of interest* (%)				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Developing a message (n=9)	0	0	0	44	56	0	0	0	56	44	0	0	0	38	62
Basic issues in press relations (n=8)	0	0	13	25	62	0	0	0	14	86	0	0	0	38	62
Presentations by journalists (n=9)	0	0	22	22	56	0	0	0	44	56	0	0	11	33	56
Preparing a press release (n=9)	0	11	11	33	55	0	0	0	44	56	0	0	11	33	56
Interviewing techniques (n=9)	0	0	0	44	56	0	0	0	44	56	0	0	0	44	56
TV interview techniques (n=9)	0	0	0	44	56	0	0	0	33	67	0	0	0	33	67
Public presentation skills (n=10)	0	0	10	50	40	0	0	0	60	40	0	0	10	40	50

Participants' comments on the training

- "There is need for follow up/further training in media and negotiations."
- "Train journalists on food security."
- "Overall, this training was a good idea."
- "Training was conducted very well and the contents extremely useful."
- "The role play were very educative."
- "Local media house especially Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) should have participated."

ANNEX I

DON'T BELIEVE EVERYTHING YOU READ IN THE PAPER

This is the website version of *The East African Standard* story complete with errors – it is not a hoax or a joke.

East African Standard, 27/09/03

MASSIVE FAMINE STALKING NORTHERN KENYA

By Dauti Kahura.

It's now official: a severe famine will hit Northern Kenya in the next few weeks sparking off a food crisis of unprecedented proportions in the region. The disaster is likely to displace thousands and trigger mass migration into urban centers.

The alarm bells are already tolling.

Unless Government and relief organizations step in to forestall the disaster, thousands of livestock will die and hundreds of pastoralist families will stare starvation in the face. Herdspeople who will not have been weakened by hunger at the time the famine peaks will have walked miles in search of food and water. According to experts, the short rains expected anytime from now are unlikely to reverse the impending catastrophe.

In an early warning signal, the Kenya Meteorological Department, is asking the people from these regions, which are prone to drought, every so often, to brace themselves in the coming months, for one of the worst droughts, in many years.

The Department is also putting the Government on notice that they need to start stocking up and boost food supplies by asking for help from world food organizations – that is if they have not already done so – in preparation for the hard times ahead.

Early this month, North Eastern Provincial Commissioner, Abdul Mwaserrah, issued an alert saying that a severe famine – a result of many months of drought in the area – was looming large.

Earlier on, at the beginning of the month, 11 members of Parliament also from North Eastern Province had put the Government on alert, warning that the region was already reeling under a severe drought.

Stanslaus Gachara, an agricultural meteorologist, cautions that this year and the season that runs up to 2004, has – and will continue to experience – one of the worst rainfall deficit years for the ASALs since 2002. This happened immediately after that infamous 1997–98 weather disaster – the severe floods that wreaked havoc in many parts of the country and that came to be known as El Nino.

“The coming drought is as a result of the cumulative prolonged drought that has persisted since 2002”, Mr Gachara observes.

“In some parts of Kenya”, he adds, “the drought that commenced in mid 1998 continued unabated to this year – 2003, even with the recent heavy rainfall in late April and early May”.

After the El Nino, the North Eastern and North Western parts of the country were seriously affected by drought. The official attributes this drought, despite the recent heavy rains, to the fact that the rains were concentrated over very short time periods within the rainfall season.

“In other words”, he notes, “the total seasonal rainfall was a result of short-lived intense heavy precipitation events”.

This is to say that the rains, instead of being spread over a period of time and therefore under an even distribution pattern, came spasmodically, in torrents and storms.

“The impact of such torrential rains immediately following a prolonged dry spell is to cause flash floods and wash away the fertile topsoil from the vegetation, no doubt, causing soil erosion”, Gachara explains.

These observations are defended by the Acting Assistant Director of Forecasting, Peter Ambenje, who reveals that the rainfall data collected through the year 2000 were on average “the lowest on record since 1961, which, although not known to many Kenyans, was worse than the rain shortage of 1984”.

The year 1984 will be remembered as one of the worst famine years in contemporary Kenya, that forced the country to import yellow maize to heavily subsidize the acute staple food shortages, occasioned by failed rainfall and drought.

Some points worth considering

- Who did the journalist speak to?
- Did the journalist actually visit North Eastern?
- Where is the alleged famine?
- How is the 2000 emergency ‘merged’ into the current situation?
- How many inconsistencies are there?
- How has Mr Gachara been quoted and misquoted?
- What happened to the boy who cried wolf? ■■■

ANNEX II

PRESS RELEASE ON SIMULATED EMERGENCY

THE SCENARIO

It is 16 December 2003, a KFSSG mission has returned from the 2003/04 Short Rains assessment mission in Baringo District. The mission comprised representatives from the Save the Babies (STB), OP, UNICEF and WFP.

In eight days the team visited Nginyang, Tangelbei, Kollowa, Barwessa, Bartabwa, Salawa, Makutani and Marigat Divisions to assess the impact of the short rains on food security conditions. You were not on the team and the report is not out yet. You have de-briefed the STB team member in detail and collected information in Nairobi. The STB team member reported back on some interviews in Baringo and you have already phoned around Nairobi.

This is all that you know about the situation:

- The short rains started on time but there was a break in rains in November 2003 affecting all the lowland areas of Baringo, but particularly Kollowa, where the KMD says that only 45 mm of rainfall were received during the short rains compared to 160 mm in a normal year. The short rains is critical for pasture and crop production in the Kollowa area.
- NDVI values for October and November are critically low in Kollowa.
- Goat prices in Kollowa are only 50 KSh but are 'normal' elsewhere.
- Pokot raiders entered Kollowa some time in early November and stole large numbers of cattle and local reports are that 20–30 people were killed, but you can't confirm the number of dead.
- Fatuma Abdikadir, the newly appointed Permanent Secretary for Provincial Administration and Internal Security has said: "Are you sure this isn't just some political nonsense? Anyway, try to get to the bottom of it. If the Kollowa situation is as bad as people are making out, the Government of Kenya will do everything in its power to ensure that nobody goes hungry."
- The mission found that although food security conditions are by no means stable in lowland Baringo, only in Kollowa is the situation critical. About 40,000 people will need food assistance in Kollowa.
- Kollowa is famous for a special type of goat's cheese that is considered a rare delicacy but goat milk yields are down. It is also known for the Red Eland, only found in East Pokot, a rare species of antelope – but the drought has resulted in their virtual extinction.
- Malnutrition data from the Arid Lands Resource Monitories Project suggests a global acute malnutrition Rate using MUAC of 28 percent of under-fives, the highest recorded in Kollowa since February 2000.
- There has been a serious malaria outbreak, and the District Health Officer reports 45 deaths in Kollowa.
- Save The Babies, with OP food resources, has started a food-for-work (FFW) programmes in Kollowa, catering for 20,000 households.

While international donors have been contacted, there have been no positive responses yet. In your phone call to Bruce Isaacson, Head of USAID, you got this response: "We are waiting for the mission report. We would love to be able to help, but to be honest we don't normally provide tools, and we don't have any plans to donate oil and corn soy blend (CSB) to Kenya. Sorry."

- The UNICEF member of the team said that the water situation is critical, and there would be a need for emergency tankering by late December for at least 30 villages. The existing borehole and shallow well capacity cover only 45 percent of water demand. She also thinks that there might be a risk of a cholera outbreak because people are drinking from a highly polluted pond in a village, but she couldn't remember the name of the village and added that she was not a health specialist.
- The mission thinks the FFW activity should be doubled if the problem is to be tackled.

- There have been logistical and financial problems financing non-food items for the food-for-work (FFW) programme and the OP is only able to provide maize and some beans. There are no resources in the pipeline for an expansion.
- Two Baringo MPs have issued a statement saying: “About 500,000 people in Baringo district face immediate famine. In Kollowa they are dying like flies. And the government is doing nothing about it.” This was reported in *The Afternoon Standard*.
- Nancy Mutunga, who has eight grandchildren and lives near a borehole 20 km from Kollowa Town says: “We lost all our cattle in the raid. Two of my grandchildren are ill with malaria. Their parents have gone south to look for work. I don’t know how we are going to survive until the next rains.”
- Mahboub Maalim, the Baringo District Commissioner says: “The Pokot are the real cause of the problem here. Things are really bad in Kollowa but in other places it is nothing like it was in 2000, when there was the big drought.”
- A local Community Based Organisation (CBO) called Water Matters dug two boreholes around Kollowa in

2002, but the pumps are out of diesel. Save The Babies has reconditioned one of the boreholes, provided diesel and is ready to start tankering if funds are made available.

You are the Public Information Officer for Save The Babies (STB). Founded in 2001, STB is an international NGO with 20 staff in Kenya, mainly working in Baringo. STB’s mission statement is: “Giving babies their rights”. STB’s headquarters are in Rome, Italy. STB’s annual budget is US\$300 000. The address is PO Box 768209, Nairobi. Your email is press.officer@STB.org and the organization’s website is www.savethebabies.com. You have just got this email from the head of the STB mission in Kenya. It reads as follows:

Most of your donors are meeting tomorrow afternoon to discuss NGO budgets for the next 6 months. I want them to eat the Kollowa story for breakfast so we need it straight in tomorrow morning’s papers. Make it clear that the assessment and our programmes fall under Kenya Security Steering Committee.

Please do a press release, not more than 350 words long ■■■

ANNEX III

EMERGENCY TEAM BUILDING

NEGOTIATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS: KFSSG MEETING AND SCENARIOS

The Kolowa crisis reached international press. The Nairobi Donor Consortium is alarmed about the situation and has decided to pledge unspecified but large amounts of money not exceeding US\$350 000. The donor money can go to anything, provided the donors are convinced of a strong need and that the resources will be used effectively. They need a preliminary budget breakdown for each proposed activity. They need evidence that other agencies are contributing their own resources.

It is getting to the end of the year. The Nairobi Donor Consortium must make an urgent decision on the allocations. If the KFSSG does not present a convincing argument, the resources will be allocated to the Global Fund for Education. The donor consortium meets this afternoon and is expecting a presentation from the KFSSG.

To recapitulate: the recent Mission to Baringo found that there are four main priority areas for intervention in the Kollowa emergency operation:

1. increasing food-for-work for the most insecure households;
2. supplementary feeding for children at high risk of malnutrition;
3. emergency borehole repairs;
4. emergency water-tankering for most cholera risk areas.

The rough estimated costs of intervention are:

- Food-for-work (including hand tools and a full ration) for an additional 20,000 people for 3 months will cost US\$250 000.
- The additional full costs of water tankering are US\$78 000.
- Supplementary feeding for the 15,000 at risk children will cost US\$100 000.
- Emergency borehole repairs and required new drilling will cost US\$90 000 ■■■

ANNEX IV

KFSSG SPECIAL MEETING SCENARIO

Chair

- Office of the President

Participants

- Save the Babies
- UNICEF
- WFP

Agenda

- Review of priority areas for intervention in Kolowa and intervention modalities.
- Define who will do what for all the proposed interventions.
- Preparation of presentation for Nairobi Donor Consortium.
- AOB.

Unfortunately, you only have 45 minutes to prepare the 15-minute presentation based on the following resources that the KFSSG partners are willing to provide.

- Wants to handle trucking and for all food pledges to go through WFP.
- With single pipeline wants to introduce commodity tracking from post to FFW project site to make sure

that commodities do not go missing.

- WFP already has some resources pledged, including oil and CSB, but needs additional pledges for food for 20 000 people. The total WFP resources are about US\$150 000.
- WFP has had previously difficult working relationship with Save the Babies and will only collaborate if all resources are pledged to WFP and WFP subcontracts transport to OP and distribution to STB, with clearly defined legal contracts.
- The main issue came up in a WFP report that suggested that STB lacks systems for controlling commodity leakage and tends to give local chiefs a cut of the food aid to ensure that they remain cooperative.
- WFP would consider floating a tender for implementation of the project to get another NGO involved.
- WFP has about US\$50 000 worth of supplementary feeding, which it is willing to donate to UNICEF, provided a reliable NGO partner is on the ground to implement. The CSB expires in two months time and needs to be used up quickly ■■■

ANNEX V

TRAINING PROGRAMME

DAY 1. 13 NOVEMBER: BUILDING MEDIA RELATIONS

Session	Timing	Type	Session title	Facilitator/presenter
Register	8:00			
1	8:30–8:45	Address	Opening Address	Permanent Secretary
2	8:45–9:00	Address	Welcome and Introductory Address Government of Kenya policies on media Importance of getting the message across	M. Maalim
3	9:00–9:30	Presentation	Workshop Contents and Expectations Food security, famine and the press – review of the issues (BW) Agenda for the workshop (JO) Discussion with participants: Training workshop expectations and ground rules (JO) Housekeeping (JO)	B. Watkins, J. Owuor
4	9:30–10:00	Presentation	Developing a Message: How to get the brand across How messages work Logos, sound bites, and mission statements Pitfalls: jargon and bureaucratic sermons	N. Bidault
Tea	10:00–10:15			
5	10:15–11:00	Group Exercise	Develop Messages for KFSSG	N. Bidault
6	11:00–11:40	Presentation	Basic Issues in Press Relations How to establish and maintain good press relations Tools for media relations (informal, press statements, press conferences, talking points, photo archives) Media opportunities (field trips, visiting dignitaries)	Anja Du Toit
7	11:40–12:10	Talk	International Journalist Reuters, Africa Journal What motivates journalists? Should we be scared of journalists? What food security issues get international press coverage? What journalists like and do not like (how they expect to be treated) When will the press crucify you? Maintaining press contacts – the basics	Jocelyne Muhutu
8	12:10–12:40	Talk	Short Talk by Journalist Voice of America What attracts national media attention? National media perceptions of famine and response mechanisms in Kenya Does the media know whom to talk to? What improvements would the media like to see in Kenya?	Josiah Obat
Lunch	12:40–1:40			

ANNEX V

9	1:40–3:00	Group Work	Improving KFSM Dialogue with the National and International Media Discussion of priorities for improving media relations Drafting of action points and areas for improvement	J. Owuor
Tea	3:00–3:15			
10	3:15–3:45	Presentation	Preparing a Press Release The message pyramid: the structure of a press release Language and style issues Presenting data Other elements of a press release	B. Watkins
11	3:45–4:30	Group Exercise	Press Release for Simulated Emergency Participants to draft press release Feedback to the group Group discussion	B. Watkins
12	3:45–4:30	Group Exercise	Feedback Session and Evaluation Open discussion: what have we learned? How are we getting on? Mood meter Additional housekeeping?	J. Owuor
Close	4:30			

DAY 2. 14 NOVEMBER: INTERVIEW AND PRESENTATION SKILLS

Session	Timing	Type	Session title	Facilitator/presenter
Morning: Interview skills for radio and television				
1	8:30–9:15	Presentation	What is Good Interview Technique? Basic dress for television interviews Body language and poise for interviews Speech patterns, preparation	Anja du Toit
2	9:15–9:45	Group Work	TV Interview Technique Video on good and bad interview practices Group discussion: What makes a good TV Interview?	Anja Du Toit
3	9:45–11:00	Group Work	Mock TV Interview Practice Sessions Briefing on disaster scenario (BW) Each participant to do a mock TV interview Review of videos and feedback and comments session Tea taken at intervals	Anja Du Toit
4	11:00–12:00	Presentation	Public Presentation Skills and Tools Getting it all wrong: a sketch (AK) Group feedback: Catching the mistakes Short talk on preparation, appearance, manner, behaviour and content Group discussion on visual aids and PowerPoint	B. Watkins, A. Kute
5	12:00–12:45	Presentation	Scenario Briefing and Role Play Coalitions and conflict Resolution Briefing on role play Getting into character Mood meter	B. Watkins, A. Kute

Lunch	12:45–1:45			
6	1:45–2:45	Group Exercise	Emergency and Team Building Exercise Mock KFSSG meeting Presentation preparation Relaxation exercise	B. Watkins, A. Kute
7	2:45–3:30	Group Exercise	Donor Presentation Individuals will present verbal presentations Group discussion and analysis of presentations Tea break when convenient	J. Owuor, B. Watkins
8	3:30–4:30	Group Discussion	Evaluation and Next Steps Discussion of issues arising from the workshop Feedback on workshop and evaluation Next steps for strengthening KFSSG media relations	J. Owuor, B. Watkins
Close	4:30			

ANNEX VI

LIST OF TRAINING PARTICIPANTS

<i>No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Post Office Box</i>	<i>Telephone/Cell</i>	<i>E-mail</i>
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16	Josiah Obat	Voice of America	10190-00100 Nairobi	225622 0722-727014	jobat@lon.voa.gov
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