

DEALING WITH THE MEDIA



OCHA

United Nations Office
for the Coordination of
Humanitarian Affairs

What information is the media looking for?

- Facts and figures to help clarify the situation
- A clear understanding of what has happened
- Things that have not been reported before
- High quality analysis
- Scandal or incompetence
- We need everything QUICKLY

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Media Policy

- Who can speak to the media?
 - RC/HC
 - HoO/Team Leader
 - Designated Spokespersons
- What can you say ?
 - Key Messages
 - Sitrep
 - Key Facts & Figures

Media Policy

- Speak only on operational / humanitarian issues
- Speak only within your area of competence
- Provide facts, not opinions or comments
- Verify information
- Seek guidance on sensitive issues



Ground Rules

All UN officials should normally speak to journalists on the record

- **On the record:** “everything I say can be attributed to me by name”

- **Not for attribution** (on background): “don’t attribute this to me by name, but rather to a UN official”

- **On deep background:** “use my ideas but not my words; don’t attribute to anyone”

Interview Preparation

- Find out what sort of interview and what the questions will be
- Are you the right person to speak ?
- Plan what you want to say
- Have some ‘anecdotes’



Interview Preparation

- Decide your Key Messages
 - One simple message
 - 3 supporting points
- Anticipate and rehearse difficult Q & As
- Have examples of what has been delivered / done



Bridging

- Address the question and then immediately move to your message without giving the interviewer an opportunity to insert another question

ABC

- Acknowledge/Answer
- Bridge
- Communicate



Speaking to the media

Interview

- Stay on message
- Be accurate & brief
- Don't antagonize journalists
- Use simple language
- Be visual
- Avoid internal jargon



To do or not to do ?

- What do you want to achieve?
- What are you risking?
- The story will be done
- Risk not getting the story told your way
- Understand the journalist's motivation



Presentation during the interview

- Body language
- Language; NO JARGON!
- Appearance; hair and clothing.
- Eye-line
- Voice



What to do

- Confirm what you can discuss and agree to first question
- Check your appearance. No glasses if possible, no stripes or complex patterns, remove badges/ID lanyards etc
- Switch off your phone
- Check background shot
- RELAX! We do not bite.
- Be truthful

What not to do

- Speak in jargon!!!! Blacklisted words like-capacity building, stakeholders,
- Blame people, speculate or wander off topic
- Talk off the record on camera
- Misinform
- Move excessively or fidget. Also don't sit uncomfortably still
- Wear sunglasses or glasses if you can help it
- Speak normally.. Not like a jackhammer or like you are reading to a child

Do not be afraid to...

- Ask to stop and start in pre-recorded interviews
- Take time to think about the question
- Ask the interviewer to repeat the question
- Ask the interviewer if they would like you to sum that up again
- Say that you don't know something and offer to provide follow up information
- SMILE!



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Coordination Saves Lives

La coordination sauve des vies

La coordinación salva vidas

Координация спасает жизни

بالتنسيق تنقذ الأرواح

致力协调，挽救生命