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!