



Some of the participants representing different media houses, Government and INGOs

## Report: HSNP Media Workshop

Held on 8th December 2014 at Laico Hotel, Nairobi

### ABSTRACT

This report summarizes the discussions held by participants during a HSNP Media Workshop. The participants represented several media houses both National and International. The purpose of the workshop was to enlighten the media on HSNP, its work and showcase the impact of the programme in the four Arid counties of Turkana, Mandera, Marsabit and Wajir. The intention was to create a working relationship between HSNP and the media- where more stories on positive impact and also challenges faced by HSNP communities receiving cash transfers are captured and shared through various media outlets.

Carrie Ndoka

Communications, HSNP



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## Hunger Safety Net Programme

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A presentation on HSNP was shared with the participants.

HSNP is an unconditional social protection programme that delivers regular and predictable cash transfers to targeted poorest and vulnerable households (100,000HHs approx. 720,000 ppl) in the four Counties of Turkana, Mandera, Marsabit and Wajir. Current value is Kshs. 4,900 every 2 months. HSNP is a GoK led programme, under Ministry of Devolution and Planning, managed by National Drought Management Authority (NDMA). Funded by Kenyan, UK (UKaid) and Australian Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Governments. It is also one of the five (5) cash transfers under National Safety Nets Programmes. In addition, in times of emergency, HSNP plans to scale up and provide short term cash transfers to additional households (302,000HHs approx. 2.7million people) based on the targeting criteria and available resources.

Delivered in two Phases. Phase 1, the pilot (2008-2012) cost Kshs. 5.5billion funded by DFID & DFAT and Phase 2 (2013- 2017) costing Kshs. 15.8billion. HSNP is a poverty based cash transfer programme. *The full presentation on HSNP can be downloaded from [www.hsnp.or.ke](http://www.hsnp.or.ke)*

After the presentation, the participants were keen to find out:

1. Why is it that a large number of registered beneficiaries (Group 1- 15,000hhs and Group 2- 92,000hhs) do not have valid National IDs? The issue was why is it people in the Northern Counties are still not assessing what is their right as citizens. Some of the reasons include:
  - a) Previously, there has been no need- until a programme like HSNP creates the need by opening Bank Accounts to deliver payments. A valid National ID is a CBK requirement.
  - b) The citizens especially in the border Counties have to undergo rigorous vetting process to ascertain their nationalities. The process can be intimidating especially when NSIS AND Police are used. At time, documents such as birth certificate or National IDs of parents are required and yet are not available.
  - c) Laxity by NRB staff who are often under facilitated- limited resources.
2. What the Government is doing to ensure that deserving beneficiaries without National IDs do not miss out on HSNP support?It was shared that NDMA together with DFID are facilitating NRB to register and issue National IDs not only to HSNP registered beneficiaries but also the wider Community members.
3. If HSNP has ever engaged with the media from the start of the programme is it a new need? Yes, HSNP has engaged at different levels both National and International media. At the moment, HSNP is using local radio stations in the four Counties to disseminate messages on mobilization for Mass Bank Account opening, and general programme messages. HSNP plans to aggressively engage with the media as it moves into the implementation phase of HSNP2.

Participants were divided into four County specific groups to discuss on:

1. How can the media support HSNP?
2. How can HSNP position itself to work with the media both National and International?
3. What factors inhibit media engagement in the four Arid Counties?

Moses Nyandika Head of information and Communications, Ministry of Devolution and Planning of which HSNP is under, shared that:

1. HSNP being a flagship programme, the Ministry was keen to highlight it to the mainstream public.
2. The Ministry has developed a robust Media Engagement Strategy.
3. The Ministry was also keen in developing documentaries of all the programmes is implementing including HSNP- in the coming financial year 2015/16.

He shared that the Ministry has plans of engaging with the media and that this workshop was just but a start.

## 1. Feedback on group discussions

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### 1.1 How can the media support HSNP?

- a) Creating awareness to the general public on how taxpayers money is being used in supporting a social assistance cash transfer programme in the arid Counties. This is to enhance their understanding and in the process create space for discussion on social protection in the main stream.
- b) Informing and educating HSNP communities on how to engage with the programme activities e.g. Bank Account Opening, access to cash.
- c) Highlighting the impact (success stories) and innovations (best practices) from implementing such a programme in the arid context. This is to trigger support from the relevant sources e.g. other Government Ministries, County Government, INGOs, private and corporate sector. At the same time, the success stories can trigger other communities members not in the programme to emulate some lessons that can add value to their livelihood e.g. concept of saving and starting small scale IGAs.
- d) Highlighting some of the challenges that hinder uptake of such a programme e.g. lack of National ID which is right of every Citizen; infrastructure and communication networks, insecurity etc.
- e) Highlighting opportunities for engagement e.g. County governments that are willing to channel funds for absorbing more people can learn on how to go about it.
- f) Holding implementing partners and other service deliverers to account by educating the communities about the HSNP and their rights e.g. use of local radio stations to disseminate programme messages. HSNP communities can use the media to provide feedback on any aspect of the programme e.g. complaints, requests for clarity etc.
- g) Critiquing the programme on some of the policy decisions, impact and effect of the programme e.g. dependency

### 3.2 How can HSNP position itself to work with the media- both National and International?

- a) Having a focal contact person in each of the media houses. Agreed that each media house would propose at least two key persons that HSNP can easily engage with.
- b) Developing and sharing on a regular basis key information about the programme- the past, present and future. For the media to fully understand what HSNP is all about. Online sharing (website, emails, YouTube) was most preferred. Develop a system for alerting the media focal person on key HSNP news.
- c) Developing a series of HSNP documentaries that highlight different aspects of the programme and share with the media.
- d) Carrying out regular media monitoring to find out what the media is saying not just about HSNP but also the four Counties. This will guide in developing stories that resonate with what the media is highlighting.
- e) Engaging directly and regularly with the media houses (key focal persons, media personalities) :-
  - i) joint media workshops (quarterly)
  - ii) facilitate media field visits
  - iii) press releases of key information the programme needs to share
  - iii) invite media in key programme workshops both at the National and County level e.g. launches.
- f) Working closely with Government media, Kenya News Agency (KNA).
- g) Engaging media consultants who can be involved in developing newspaper commentaries and ensuring their publication.

### 3.3 What factors inhibit media engagement in the four Arid Counties?

- a) Politics that competes with virtually all other news. Is HSNP news “sellable?” Need to find a strategic way of packaging it.
- b) Limited media correspondents in these Counties who can easily and quickly develop stories and news feature.
- c) Language barrier- there are limited home grown journalists based in these Counties. Interviews are often complicated and at times meaning lost in translation. Limits on how deep a journalist can delve in covering a story- might miss the real story.
- d) Insecurity- the current terrorist attacks in Mandera and Wajir. Even if the journalist might be able to access the area, the news would predominantly be on terrorism as opposed to impact of cash transfers.
- e) Most of the media personalities that pull the crowd - to reading and watching news- miss out on the real issues when covering the Arid counties. They prefer aerial coverage- photos from helicopters rather than engaging with Communities on one to one.
- f) Limited media access in some Arid Counties e.g. there is only one FM (SIFA FM) in Mandera. Unless one has a decoder which is expensive. National newspapers are expensive and not easily accessible to majority- newspapers arrive in Mandera a day late and is double the price. Also levels of illiteracy is high.

- g) Poor infrastructure- road and communication networks makes it expensive to travel. The media houses have to make decisions on whether its value for money to engage.
- h) Harsh climatic conditions and vastness of the areas.
- i) High suspicion of why communities are being interviewed and might react with hostility or withhold information. This emanates from historical injustices, marginalization and cultural issues.
- j) Political issues and interference- if it happens that the political leaders are not in agreement with
  - i) particular media houses ii) specific news features, they will incite the communities from engaging. They are the elitists and they influence what is to be shared which might not be necessarily what the majority might need.

## Way forward

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It was agreed:

1. Form a HSNP media working group that is closely linked to the governance structure (National to the sub-County) with each of the media proposing a focal person(s) who can engage at different level. All participants in this workshop form HSNP Media working group.
2. Develop key media contact list that include other media houses that could not make it to the meeting.
3. HSNP develops a publicity strategy that is aggressive and consistent.
4. Develop and share a media activity plan that highlight the facilitated field visits and workshop for at least 6months.
5. Develop and share HSNP materials- information packs (immediately)
6. Engage in unique campaigns of positioning HSNP in the media and wider public e.g. public exhibitions, special news features on both print and TV. To emulate other programmes that have successfully worked with the media e.g. Uwezo fund, Round Table business of the Deputy President's wife

## List of participants

Name	Title/Media/Organization	Email	Mobile
Alfred Litunya	CDIO-NDMA Turkana	<a href="mailto:Alfred.litunya@ndma.go.ke">Alfred.litunya@ndma.go.ke</a>	0714790720
Umuro Hassan	CDIO- NDMA Moyale	<a href="mailto:umuroh@yahoo.com">umuroh@yahoo.com</a>	0721976914
Omar A. Abdi	CDIO- NDMA Wajir	<a href="mailto:Omarabdullahi2010@gmail.com">Omarabdullahi2010@gmail.com</a>	0722106717
Hussein Mohamud	CDIO- NDMA Mandera	<a href="mailto:huseinolaat@hotmail.com">huseinolaat@hotmail.com</a>	0722221279
Andy Kagwa	Standard Group	<a href="mailto:andykagwa@gmail.com">andykagwa@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:akagwa@standardmedia.co.ke">akagwa@standardmedia.co.ke</a>	0722799157
Chris Neale	Senior Programme Manager- DFAT	<a href="mailto:Chris.neale@dfat.gov.au">Chris.neale@dfat.gov.au</a>	0726217628
Kizito Maruti	CIO- Turkana Ministry of Information	<a href="mailto:Km9238406@gmail.com">Km9238406@gmail.com</a>	0723638408
Sebastian M. Miriti	CIO- Marsabit, Ministry of Information	<a href="mailto:miritikna@yahoo.com">miritikna@yahoo.com</a>	0722329764
Misheck Muchira	CIO- Wajir, Ministry of Information	<a href="mailto:gatanamuchira@gmail.com">gatanamuchira@gmail.com</a>	0722768975
Dickson Githaiga	CIO- Mandera, Ministry of Information	<a href="mailto:Dicksongithaiga84@gmail.com">Dicksongithaiga84@gmail.com</a>	0710599935
Salome Ngángá	Freelance Journalist- Nairobi	<a href="mailto:ngangasalome@yahoo.com">ngangasalome@yahoo.com</a>	0724845344
Michael Arunga	Communications Consultant- HSNP	<a href="mailto:michael@michaelarunga.com">michael@michaelarunga.com</a>	0721213236
Susan Mwangeli	CCTV (China Central TV)	<a href="mailto:suemwangeli@yahoo.co.uk">suemwangeli@yahoo.co.uk</a>	0721259609
David Muchui	Nation Media Group	<a href="mailto:Dvdmuchui39@gmail.com">Dvdmuchui39@gmail.com</a>	0711320163
Wanyama Chebusiri	BBC	<a href="mailto:Wanyama.chebusiri@bbc.co.ke">Wanyama.chebusiri@bbc.co.ke</a> <a href="mailto:nakhalia@yahoo.com">nakhalia@yahoo.com</a>	0733793754
Joy Odero	DFID- Deputy Head, Communications	<a href="mailto:j-odero@dfid.gov.uk">j-odero@dfid.gov.uk</a>	0722756030
Abraham Ali	Commissioned Photographer- HSNP	<a href="mailto:info@imageworksafrica.com">info@imageworksafrica.com</a>	0733598400
Hussein Idhoro	CDIO-NDMA Marsabit	<a href="mailto:lengatuna@gmail.com">lengatuna@gmail.com</a>	0710771616
Mukalo Kwayera	The People Daily	<a href="mailto:kwayeram@yahoo.co.uk">kwayeram@yahoo.co.uk</a>	0722975899
Omondi C. Paul	Learning & Knowledge Management Officer HelpAge International	<a href="mailto:Charles.omondi@helpage.org">Charles.omondi@helpage.org</a>	0722975493
Kate Murugi	Senior Journalist Reuters	<a href="mailto:Kate.reuters@thomsomreuters.com">Kate.reuters@thomsomreuters.com</a>	0722135634
Willis Raburu	Senior Reporter, Citizen News	<a href="mailto:willisraburu@citizentv.co.ke">willisraburu@citizentv.co.ke</a>	0733296718
Daniel Onyancha	Senior Communication Officer- Deputy President Press	<a href="mailto:onyanchadaniel@yahoo.com">onyanchadaniel@yahoo.com</a>	0721328931
Bethuel Kaino	Senior Communications Officer- Deputy President Press	<a href="mailto:bethuelkaino@gmail.com">bethuelkaino@gmail.com</a>	0723838992
Moses Nyandika	Head of Information & Communications, Ministry of Devolution and Planning	<a href="mailto:mosesnyandika@yahoo.com">mosesnyandika@yahoo.com</a>	0727750795
Carrie Ndoka	Communications- HSNP	<a href="mailto:Carrie.ndoka@hsnp.or.ke">Carrie.ndoka@hsnp.or.ke</a>	0721272892

For more information on HSNP go to [www.hsnp.or.ke](http://www.hsnp.or.ke)