

2019

Solution Based Journalism Training



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BRIEF REPORT ON SOLUTION BASED REPORTING

Introduction

SIKKA in collaboration with Advance Family Planning organized a two days journalist training focusing on Solution Based Journalism, Human Resource for Health (HRH) and Family Planning (FP). HRH session was facilitated by Atuswege Mwangomale, FP session by James Mlali and Solution Based Journalism by Kenneth Simbaya.



Media play significant role in creating public awareness and influencing demand for change in the role and structures of the state¹. It can influence all aspects of people's lives, including health and well-being, and can be harnessed to promote health by informing, motivating and empowering people to change behaviour and by providing a platform for advocating healthier policies and civic action. Ndakala et reports that mass media have been

shown to have the power to disseminate information that need public attention. Studies have shown that apart from creating public debate, when an issue is given priority it can sometimes influence the policy change.

Both print (news papers, magazine) and electronic (social) media exist in Tanzania. The two have helped and continue to play the significant roles to inform, educate, entertain and to mobilize the public in different matters including health². Before making information available and accessible to the targeted audience, it is crucial for the media to be well informed with the content of the subject matter to facilitate comprehension of news. Experience has shown that most of media coverage particularly are found to be 'shallow and reactive, and lack investigative depth that provide solutions to the issues of concerns³. Further, it is documented that media in

¹ Vincent R, 2007: *Health journalists: Mistrusted and sensationalist, or important allies for researchers? Examining the barriers to effective health journalism*

² James et al, 2005: *Leveraging The Power Of The Media To Combat HIV/AIDS*

³ Oronje et al, 2009: *Engaging media in communicating research on sexual and reproductive health and rights in sub-Saharan Africa*

Sub Saharan Africa, lack interest and motivation, skills and capacity to understand, interpret, and report research findings on health issues, including HRH and Family planning⁴.

Shortage of Human resources for health is one of the key challenges in the health sector that required public and policy attention. It affects quality of health services provision such as family planning and as result compromises quality of health sexual and reproductive health services. Despite of existence of media in the country less are being documented on these important issues.

Sikika in collaboration with the Advanced Family Planning (AFP) would like to strengthen the capacity of the Journalists to equip them with knowledge and skills that will enhance their ability to effectively report health with focus on human resources for health as well as sexual and reproductive health (SRH).

The two organizations providing technical and financial resources for Two days training for the 20 journalists. These Journalist were initially trained by the AFP on SRHR reporting. The two advocacy partners envisage a community of Journalists equipped with knowledge and skills to report on HRH and FP issues from a Solution Based Reporting.

Session organization

The training participants were recruited from different media houses i.e mwananchi, the Guardian, Habari Leo, ITV and Radio One, East Africa Radio, The Citizen, Radio Ushindi, Radio Kwizera, Star TV, Channel Ten, Ebony FM and the Daily News. A participator approach was used in the training where by participants were asked to share the stories they have been reporting on health. This was done by each participant and the rest of the group were able to contributed on how it could have been done better by including solutions to the reported issue.

Day One

On day one participants were oriented on the health sector building blocks but the facilitator from Sikika focused more on status Health workers and other related factors that contribute to their availability at health facilities.

Participants were oriented on the existing health workers in the health sectors. The facilitors shared information on the HRH gap which is stand at 52 % as per the National Human Resources

Africa: experiences and lessons learned

⁴ Ibid

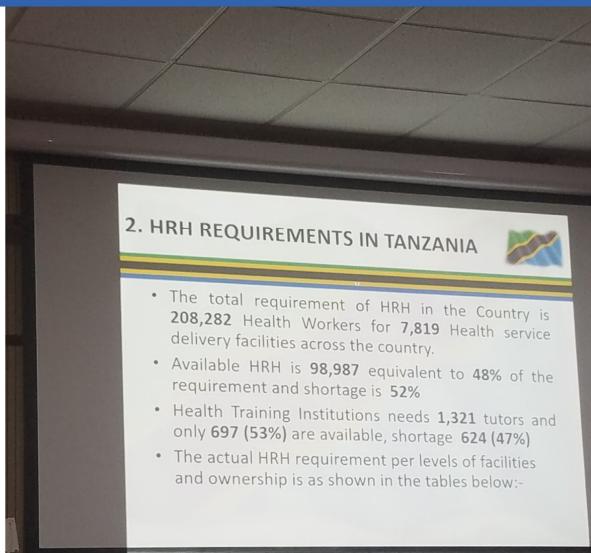
for Health strategic plan 2015/19 and the contributing factors such as inability of government to consistently recruit trained health workers in the past two decades and migration of staff due to unfavorable working environment. Futher, the participants were informed about Mal-distribution of health workers in the country where the most affected areas are rural compared to urban. Since participants are doing some sort of advocacy work on health, the facilitator informed them that their agenda to ensure there there access to quality health servies, would be achieved if there is adequate health workers which among the health sector building block.

SRH and rights

This brief session was tailored to enable participants understanding the concept of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRH&R). It started by orienting the participants on Sexuality; Sexual Health; Sexual Rights as often people think sexual rights means right to have sex and it brings alarms when one talks about it in the context of adolescent health. Participants were also taken through reproductive health and rights connected to it and finally the interrelationship between Sexual Health and Reproductive Health that jointly are referred to as SRH&R. It was emphasized that people have different perceptions about sex relationship e.g. is meant for adults and young people should wait until they get grown up (sex for reproduction). On the other side, young people are mostly for the recreation and not reproduction and that contribute to the existing dilemma on whether or not to access young people with SRH&R information, education and services.



HRH Status



SIKKA Retweeted

Wizara ya Afya Tanzania · 4d
"Tunauhitaji wa watumishi wa Afya takribani 200,008 katika vituo vya Afya vya Serikali kuanzia ngazi ya Zahanati mpaka ngazi ya Hospitali za rufaa za Mikoa, huku watumishi waliopo ni takribani 98,000, hivyo pengo likiwa ni 52%, Zahanati zikiwa ndio waathirika wakubwa" @umwalimu

Ummy Mwalimu, MP and 8 o

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SOLUTION BASED JOURNALISM

The training participants were taken through the solution journalism overview where by a definition too the subject matter was provided as an approach to news reporting that focuses on the responses to social issues as well as the problems themselves. Solutions stories, anchored in credible evidence, explain how and why responses are working, or not working.

It was added that solutions journalism is rigorous and compelling reporting about responses to social problems.

It investigates and explains, in a critical and clear-eyed way, examples of people working toward solutions. It focuses not just on what may be working, but how and why it appears to be working, or alternatively, why it may be stumbling. Using the best available evidence, it delves deep into the how-to's of problem solving, often structuring stories as puzzles or mysteries that investigate questions like: What models are having success reducing the dropout rate in public schools? How do they actually work? What are they doing differently than others that's resulting in a better outcome?

It is reporting on something that is happening now, and the effect it is producing. In this context training participants are expected to look at FP and HRH and the effect they are producing. (positive or negative).

Below are ten questions journalists should ask themselves when doing solutions focused journalism

1. Does the story explain the cause of the problem?
2. Does the story present an associated response to that problem?
3. Does the story get into the problem solving and the how to details
4. Is the problem solving process central to the narrative?
5. Does the story present evidence of results linked to the response
6. Does the story explain limitations of the response
7. Does the story convey an insight or teachable lesson?
8. Does the story avoid reading like a puff piece
9. Does the story draw on sources who have a ground level understanding, not just 30,000 foot expertise
10. Does the story give greater attention to the response than to leaders/innovators/ do-gooder



WHAT WENT WELL

From the training participants: Feedback from participants had it that, they were excited to be walked through Solution Based Reporting. According to Neema Msafiri one of the training participants Solution Based Reporting fits well with public expectations from journalists. It is needed now more than any other time.

From facilitator's perspectives: The training went very well as the class was active and eager to learn. This was evidenced by interactions between the facilitator and the audience.

WHAT DID NOT GO WELL

From training participants: Participants who spoke to the facilitator highlighted that, the training room was small, content too packed, noting that more time was needed to allow in-depth understanding.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The media plays a very constructive role in today's society. Media play an important role in increasing of public awareness and collect the views, information and attitudes toward certain issue. Media is

the most powerful tool of communication in emerging world and increases the awareness and presents the real picture of the society. In this era of knowledge and awareness there is a huge and grand role of media, it is all around us when we watch on Television, listen to on the radio, read to the books, magazines, and newspapers, every where we want to collect some knowledge and information and a part of this media has to present a very responsible role for our society. Without the media, people in societies would be isolated, not only from the rest of the world, but also for the total formation of creditable world.

However for the media cannot perform this function, without capacity building and proper engagement. Without capacity building the media cannot report HRH, FP nor HIV/AIDS issues well.

This is well put by Malcom X

"The media's the most powerful entity on earth. They have the power to make the innocent guilty and to make the guilty innocent, and that's power. Because they control the minds of the masses." - Malcom X

This is supported by Thomas Jefferson, The 3rd United States of America president.

"Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the later"

- The power of the news media to set a nation's agenda, to focus public attention on a FP and HRH issues, is an immense and well-documented influence.
- The media has not been effectively and strategically engaged in the response to HIV/AIDS in Tanzania. Media engagement has been sporadic on and off, or through press releases or being invited to cover events only. This kind of engagement cannot make the media contribute effectively to ending HIV in the country.

- When supported through capacity building, logically (provided with evidence, resources etc) the media has proved to be a very effective tool for driving change, addressing stigma and discrimination and rallying people for the common good.
- This capacity building will help journalists to hold accountable on what duty bearers are doing and what they are not doing. The media will also help to highlight available services and where such services can be accessed.
- It is expected that after this training, training beneficiaries will be able to drive the accountability needed to meet women and girls FP needs as well as HRH staffing needs. The Government of Tanzania is a signatory to regional and global commitments regarding, health such as FP 2020.

At the end of the training, participants were provided a worksheet to plan for reporting.

MEDIA ADVOCACY REPORTING WORKSHEET 2019

REGION	Health workers	FP
Story Line (What are you going to cover?)		
Technical Assistance Needed		
Timeline June – December 2019		

Journalist's Name		
Media House		