



CAtalyzing Strengthened policy aCtion
for heAlthy Diets and resilienCE

MEDIA TOOLKIT ON NUTRITION



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
Netherlands



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We recognise and appreciate the efforts of the communication and project teams in preparing this toolkit and engaging with various stakeholders to bring it to fruition. The contributions of the implementing county nutrition players and health and nutrition media champions familiar with the project have been invaluable in shaping this guide.

The dedication of nutrition experts, who worked tirelessly to validate the key messages and consolidate relevant nutrition facts, has ensured the clarity and impact of the messages presented here. Their efforts have also aligned the toolkit with the project's objectives, ensuring its effectiveness.

Special thanks go to CARE & GAIN technical teams and consultants from LEAD SPEAK REACH for their relentless dedication: From organising validation sessions and media training to meticulously refining the content, their hard work has streamlined the messages to make this guide practical and meaningful.

This media toolkit is poised to play a pivotal role in harmonising communication, enhancing nutrition literacy, and strengthening media engagement efforts across the CASCADE project.

We eagerly anticipate a successful collaboration that will contribute to advancing nutrition awareness within the CASCADE project and the broader community.



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Purpose of the Media Toolkit on Nutrition

This media toolkit provides a guiding document for the CASCADE project media champions, CASCADE staff, and the project's nutrition subject matter experts at the counties. Its purpose is to equip them with knowledge of the key project messages, harmonise messaging by the project media champions, and improve their nutrition literacy levels.

Additionally, the toolkit will work to enhance their nutrition advocacy capacities while addressing the existing nutrition challenges in the project counties. It further points to the need for collaborative action, promoting proper nutritional practices, and advocating policy enforcement using different media platforms. Ultimately, this toolkit will contribute to accurate and timely nutrition message transmission and the nutrition literacy of the communities engaged in the project.

This work has relied on available nutrition information and the CASCADE project interventions to develop the key messages that will guide the media champions' engagements on different platforms.

It has provided messaging for the following topics: Nutrition facts – national and project counties, basic concepts on nutrition advocacy, fortification, nutrition-sensitive social protection, nutrition financing, the role of Private Service Providers (PSPs) in advancing the nutrition agenda, resilience building towards climate and price shocks, the importance of Multi-Sectoral Platforms (MSPs) at county levels, the use of food systems data in policy decision making, women empowerment in nutrition decision making and community.



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Definition of Terms

Anaemia: A medical condition that presents as a nutrition deficiency due to the lack of enough healthy red blood cells or when the haemoglobin count within the cells is lower than usual.

Biofortification: The breeding of crops (biotechnology) to increase their nutritional content naturally.

Food Nutrients: The essential substances in food that the body utilises to maintain health.

Home Fortification: A method allowing individuals to add micronutrients to their meals at home by using fortified powders mixed into various foods.

Micronutrient Deficiencies: The lack of essential vitamins and minerals required in small amounts by the body for proper growth.

Malnutrition: A condition where the body doesn't get the right amount of nutrients and presents as micronutrient deficiencies, overnutrition and undernutrition.

Mass Fortification: This is a Kenya Government effort to address micronutrient deficiencies through industrial fortification, where food processors add nutrients to their products such as iodised salt, fortified edible oil and fat, fortified maize meal and wheat flour.

Overnutrition: Occurs when the body gets too much of certain nutrients, often from overeating or consuming too many unhealthy foods. It leads to problems like obesity and related health issues.

Stunting: A form of malnutrition where a child is significantly shorter than expected for their age.

Undernutrition: When the body does not get enough food or essential nutrients, leading to weight loss, stunted growth, and weakened immune systems.

Underweight: When a person, especially a child, weighs less than what is considered healthy for their age and height to gain weight.

Wasting: A case where a child is too thin for their height, showing rapid weight loss or failure.

Introduction

Catalyzing Strengthened Policy Action for Healthy Diets and Resilience (CASCADE) is a Dutch-funded project aiming to increase access to and consumption of healthy diets, as well as increasing the resilience of households to economic and climate change-related shocks in at least 333,202 Women of Reproductive Age (WRA) and Children under 15 years in Nakuru, Nyandarua and Nairobi Counties with cross-cutting effect at national levels. Implemented by CARE International Kenya and the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), CASCADE focuses on strengthening government bodies to implement nutrition policies, engaging private service providers to offer quality nutrition services, empowering communities to improve essential nutrition services, enhancing women's capacities to consume healthy diets, and promoting collaboration among stakeholders.

This toolkit guides the CASCADE project media champions, CASCADE staff, and the project's nutrition subject matter experts at the counties in their media engagements related to the project. It also improves their nutrition literacy levels, summarises the key project messages, and equips them with skills for relaying this information to the media.

Additionally, the toolkit builds nutrition advocacy capacities by amplifying the existing nutrition challenges in the project counties and the need for collaborative action, promoting proper nutritional practices, and advocating for policy enforcement using different media platforms. Ultimately, the toolkit contributes to building the capacity to accurately communicate and rely on nutrition messages and grow the nutrition literacy of the communities engaged in the project by focusing on nine nutrition topics under the CASCADE project.

The toolkit has provided messaging for the following topics: nutrition facts – National and project counties; basic concepts on nutrition advocacy; fortification; nutrition-sensitive social protection; nutrition financing; The role of Private Service Providers (PSPs) in advancing the nutrition agenda; resilience building towards climate and price shocks; and the importance of Multi-Sectoral Platforms (MSPs) at county levels. At the same time, the Kenya Food Systems Dashboard is included since it is a key tool in providing valuable insights into the nation's food order, women's empowerment and strengthening community structure to root out negative norms.



Media & Nutrition Literacy



Nutrition information and knowledge currently in the public domain owe much of this dissemination to the media and the awareness it accords messaging. Many causes have depended heavily on the media to share their ideas and get information to their stakeholders. Thus, the key role of media has stood on these four functions: inform, educate, persuade, and entertain.

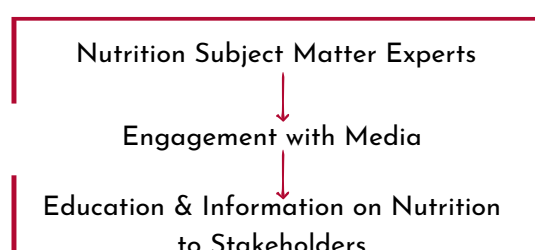
Even with the emergence of the social aspect of media in tandem with the diminishing role of traditional media as a gatekeeper, these functions have remained stoic. However, those advocating for different causes must understand that the free flow of information amongst different publics requires a high level of discernment and commitment to truth sharing as trust is more fragile than ever in the face of unverified information and sources.

The dissemination of nutrition literacy must remain guarded against misinformation, which has become standard on present-day media platforms. As such, equipping media champions and readying subject matter experts on media engagement in nutrition remains a primary focus.

A 2022 article published by the South African Journal of Clinical Nutrition (SAJCN) exploring the relationship between nutrition information and social media points to rife nutrition misinformation. However, the survey leading to the findings concluded that dietitians and nutrition subject experts remain preferred as primary nutrition educators despite this trend. Such research and related findings provide evidence for the decision to equip media champions and spokespersons to speak accurately on CASCADE's domains.

Subsequently, this equipping will preserve the subject matter of nutrition literacy, guarded from trumped-up facts across media platforms. Additionally, the media champions and the subject matter experts also select and filter the information shared from the project to the different stakeholders of the CASCADE Project.

While pitching for media opportunities, positioning the media champions and subject matter experts as credible sources on nutrition establishes credibility and the relationship that media engagement requires to dispense accurate information.



Nutrition Facts



Nutrition is the science of food and its components (nutrients), how the body utilises these nutrients, and their relationship to health and disease. These nutrients are classified into macronutrients and micronutrients. Macronutrients are needed in more significant amounts and include carbohydrates (Provide energy for the body; proteins build and repair tissues and are essential for immune function) and fats (Provide a concentrated source of energy, support cell structure, and help absorb specific vitamins) Water: (Vital for nearly all bodily functions, including digestion, circulation, and temperature regulation). On the other hand, the body requires micronutrients, which are crucial for various functions. These are vitamins such as A, C, D, E, K, and B and minerals such as calcium, iron, potassium, and zinc. The table below relates the nutrients, their benefits and their food sources. Good nutrition is said to be present when nutrients are available to the body in the right amounts.

Nutrient	Key Benefits	Food Sources of Nutrients
Vitamin A	Supports vision, immune function, and skin health.	Carrots, sweet potatoes, spinach, kale, liver, fish, dairy products, red bell peppers, and eggs.
Vitamin C	Antioxidant; promotes healthy skin, bones, and blood vessels; aids in wound healing.	Citrus fruits (oranges, lemons), strawberries, kiwi, bell peppers, broccoli, and tomatoes.
Vitamin D	Enhances calcium absorption for bone health; supports immune function.	Sunlight exposure, fatty fish (salmon, tuna), fortified dairy products, mushrooms, and eggs.
Vitamin E	Antioxidant that protects cells from damage; supports immune function.	Nuts (almonds, hazelnuts), seeds, vegetable oils (sunflower, safflower), spinach, and avocado.
Vitamin K	Essential for blood clotting and bone health.	Leafy greens (kale, spinach), broccoli, Brussels sprouts, green beans, and cabbage.
B Vitamins (B1, B2, B3, B6, B12, Folate,	Support energy production, red blood cell formation, brain function, & DNA synthesis.	Whole grains, meat, fish, eggs, dairy, legumes, leafy greens, and fortified cereals.
Calcium	Crucial for strong bones and teeth; supports muscle function and nerve signalling.	Dairy products (milk, yoghurt, cheese), leafy greens, almonds, fortified cereals, tofu, and sardines.
Iron	Essential for hemoglobin formation, which carries oxygen in the blood.	Red meat, poultry, fish, lentils, beans, spinach, fortified cereals,
Potassium	Maintains fluid balance, supports nerve signals, and helps muscle contraction.	Bananas, potatoes, oranges, tomatoes, spinach, beans, and yoghurt.
Zinc	Boosts immune system, promotes wound healing, and aids in DNA synthesis.	Meat, legumes, seeds (pumpkin), nuts, dairy, and whole grains.
Carbohydrates	Primary source of energy for the body, especially for the brain and muscles.	Whole grains (brown rice, oats), fruits, vegetables, legumes, and starchy foods like potatoes.
Fats	Provide long-lasting energy, support cell growth, protect organs, and aid in absorbing fat-soluble vitamins.	Avocados, nuts, seeds, oil, fatty fish, and dairy products.
Proteins	Build and repair tissues, support enzyme and hormone production, and boost immunity.	Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, dairy, legumes, nuts and seeds.
Water	Regulates body temperature, aids digestion, removes waste, and maintains fluid balance.	

Nutrition Facts



The CASCADE programme seeks to tackle malnutrition among women of reproductive age and children. Malnutrition is a condition in which the body doesn't get the right amount of nutrients, which presents as undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, and overnutrition, leading to obesity and related health issues.

The Kenya Demographics and Health Survey of 2022 cites undernutrition as a significant issue among children's population of 6.3 million. About 18% of children under five are stunted (too short for their age), a condition associated with long-term malnutrition. Around 5% suffer from wasting (too thin for their height) as a result of acute malnutrition. Further, 10% are underweight and 3% are overweight. In addition, micronutrient deficiencies exist in many parts of Kenya, and vital vitamins and minerals are lacking.

In the counties where the CASCADE project operates (Nyandarua, Nakuru, and Nairobi), data indicates as follows: In Nyandarua county, 2 in every 10 children under the age of 5 are stunted, which is 18% of children in the County's households. The same is true in Nakuru county: 2 in every 10 children under the age of 5, or 19% of children in the County. In Nairobi county, 1 in every 10 children under the age of 5 is stunted, or 11% of children.

Micronutrient deficiencies present more challenges, with approximately 32% of children in Kenya diagnosed as anaemic, as reported by the Kenya National Micronutrient Survey (KNMS, 2011). Further, a key demographic of the CASCADE programme is women with iron deficiency. The survey points to as much as 60% of Kenyan women affected. This increases the risk of maternal deaths due to haemorrhage during childbirth, infant mortality, fetal growth retardation, and low birth weight.

Key Information

When engaging with the media, subject matter experts and media champions can incorporate this information to expound on the key messages. A lack of access to nourishing foods, poor dietary choices, and limited knowledge about what constitutes a healthy diet, along with issues in the food supply chain—such as the production and marketing of cheap, low-quality foods—contribute significantly to micronutrient deficiencies in Kenya.

These deficiencies can be addressed by encouraging interventions with policymakers to educate and provide access to nutritious and easy food. Effectively communicate the need to incorporate iron-rich foods into the diet, including fortified grains, liver, red meat, poultry, fish, legumes like lentils and beans, dark leafy vegetables such as spinach and kale, and nuts and seeds like pumpkin and sesame seeds, in the diets of women and children.

Target Audience

Policymakers, mothers, healthcare workers and food production merchants

Key Messages



Stunting, wasting, and underweight conditions are prevalent among children in the CASCADE implementation counties, primarily due to poor diets composed of starches and a limited intake of proteins, vegetables, and fruits.

Iron deficiency in pregnant women leads to higher risks of maternal, specifically reduced birth weight, which puts the child at risk of developing Non-Communicable Diseases later in life.

Educating households on the importance of iron supplements where access to iron-rich foods is limited is paramount.

Because Vitamin A deficiency is linked to frequent infections, ensuring children receive Vitamin A supplementation as part of routine immunisation services can help counter such infections.

Zinc deficiency is a serious problem in Kenya. An estimated 37.5 million Kenyans (three-quarters of the population) suffer from it, yet zinc is essential for maintaining healthy immune status, fertility, metabolism, child growth and development, and heart health.

Nearly a third of women (32%) in Kenya have folate deficiency, exposing their unborn babies to poor cognitive development and brain and spinal cord defects.

Proper Vitamin A Supplementation (VAS) training for Healthcare Workers and Community Health Volunteers can bridge the disparity gaps in documentation, reporting, and double dosing and bedevil the national coverage target of 64%.

Collaboration between government and food production stakeholders can work to ensure better quality moderately priced foods through subsidies and fortification efforts.

Basic Concepts of Nutrition Advocacy



Nutrition advocacy centres on promoting policies, practices, and investments that support access to nutritious, safe, and adequate food for all individuals. Effective advocacy communicates the importance of nutrition as a fundamental human right and drives the commitment of resources and policies towards sustainable, equitable food systems. Advocacy involves various stakeholders, including governments, NGOs, the private sector, and communities, working collaboratively to elevate nutrition as a national priority. Advocacy ensures that nutrition issues are effectively addressed by raising public awareness, mobilising support, and holding stakeholders accountable, particularly for vulnerable populations. The overarching goal is to foster environments where all individuals, regardless of socio-economic status, can access and afford healthy diets to lead productive and fulfilling lives.

Key Information

Because Kenya loses 374 billion shillings (6.9% GDP) (Cost of Hunger in Africa Study, 2019) annually due to the effects of malnutrition on health, education and economic productivity, nutrition can guarantee better financial outcomes. Mitigation that can focus on nutrition investment is at the core of nutrition advocacy. A World Bank Investment framework on nutrition in Kenya has insisted that interventions targeting vulnerable populations prevent diseases, reduce healthcare costs, and save lives. Further, it ascribes an attractive return on the benefits-to-cost ratio for nutrition interventions, placing it at USD 22 for every dollar invested.

Target Audience

Non-governmental organisations, potential nutrition sector investors, community leaders, community health workers and policymakers at county and national governments.

Key Messages

Everyone has the right to access nutritious, safe and adequate food for a healthy and productive life, and advocacy for policies that promote sustainable food systems can guarantee this.

Collaboration among governments, NGOs, private sectors, communities, and multi-sectoral approaches that prioritise nutrition can achieve better nutrition outcomes.

Advocating for an enabling environment for maternal, infant and young child nutrition grants a child a deserved nutritious start to life.

Early detection of acute malnutrition allows for timely treatment. Scaling up services for early detection and treatment of acute malnutrition in children will lead to better health outcomes.

Food Fortification



Food fortification refers to adding vitamins and minerals to food to improve its nutritional quality. It is a powerful, cost-effective tool that addresses "hidden hunger"—micronutrient deficiencies that often go undetected but can affect health, immunity, cognitive development, and overall productivity.

There are three common forms of food fortification. The government of Kenya steers mass fortification to address micronutrient deficiencies through industrial fortification. The obligation placed on food processors to add nutrients to their products, such as iodising salt, fortifying edible oil and fat, maize meal and wheat flour, ensures this requirement is met. Secondly, individuals can add micronutrients to their meals in home fortification, using fortified powders mixed into various foods. Thirdly, engaging biotechnology to increase their nutritional content naturally translates to biofortification, enhancing the levels of essential nutrients in staple foods like rice, sweet potatoes, and legumes.

Fortified foods have been shown to prevent nutrient deficiency-related conditions, like anaemia, which affects one in four Kenyan women. Iron fortification improves blood health, and folic acid fortification has been linked to reduced congenital disabilities. The Government of Kenya also introduced a fortification logo—*alama ya kuboresha afya*—to help consumers identify fortified foods, promoting their safety, accessibility, and significant health benefits.

Key Information

The *Alama ya Kuboresha logo* is a visual way to identify fortified foods. The logo was adopted in 2016 after the government made fortification mandatory in an amendment to the Food, Drug and Chemical Substances Act of the Laws of Kenya. The regular monitoring and enforcement of fortification standards is a guarantee that foods consistently deliver the intended health benefits to consumers in addition to being accessible. Therefore, government regulation and manufacturers' compliance work to tackle the malnutrition burden. Currently, fortified foods include wheat and maize flour, salt and oil.

Target Audience

Mothers, community health care workers, food manufacturers and the general public.

Key Messages

Keep your family healthy by looking for the fortification logo on the packages of maize, wheat flour, cooking fat, oil, and salt you purchase.

Food fortification is a proven, cost-effective strategy to address micronutrient deficiencies, improving the health of millions.

Fortification does not alter the fortified food's taste, texture or colour.

Fortification ensures that women of reproductive age have enough stores of vital nutrients to support a healthy pregnancy.

Congenital Disabilities such as spina bifida (incomplete closure of the spine) in babies are associated with folic acid deficiency in the mother. They can be avoided by eating maize and wheat flour fortified with folic acid.

Nutrition Sensitive Social Protection



Nutrition-sensitive social protection refers to social programs that integrate a focus on nutrition within broader support measures. These programmes aim to uplift vulnerable populations by holistically addressing food insecurity, poverty, and malnutrition. Such programmes encompass a range of services: cash transfers, food vouchers, school feeding programmes, and agricultural support. These are designed to improve nutrition and health outcomes. Initiatives like Kenya's School Feeding Programme additionally empower local agriculture by sourcing food from nearby farms, thus doubly impacting community nutrition and income.

Integrating agricultural support within social protection programmes addresses food production and access to diverse, nutritious foods. Through subsidies, small-scale farmers access fertilisers and seeds, allowing them to cultivate nutrient-rich crops that benefit household nutrition. Kitchen gardens, encouraged by some social protection programmes, enable families to grow vegetables, directly improving dietary quality and food availability.

Key Information

Nutrition-sensitive social protection programmes offer far-reaching benefits: They reduce poverty and inequality by ensuring access to adequate food, healthcare, and education, particularly among vulnerable groups like women and children. Additionally, they foster community resilience, helping families maintain food security during crises and empowering women by targeting resources directly to them. The programmes have the potential to break the cycle of poverty and malnutrition, creating a ripple effect that improves health, boosts productivity, and enhances well-being across generations. As a cost-effective approach to promoting national and global nutrition goals, nutrition-sensitive social protection is essential for sustainable progress, equity, and resilient livelihoods. Leveraging existing social protection delivery platforms to deliver nutrition interventions can enhance programme reach and impact, efficiently addressing malnutrition at scale.

Target Audience

Social entrepreneurs, policymakers at national and county levels, community leaders (*Nyumba Kumi Initiative*), teachers, women's groups, NGOs and donor foundations.



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Key Messages



Social protection helps reduce inequality, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their economic status, have the opportunity to lead healthy, nourished lives.

Nutrition-sensitive social protection involves integrating nutrition goals into social protection programs and agricultural support.

Investing in nutrition-sensitive social protection is cost-effective, as it reduces healthcare costs, enhances productivity, and promotes economic growth.

Linking cash transfers with nutrition education and social protection programmes can promote better food choices and dietary practices among beneficiaries.

Nutrition-sensitive social protection is essential for achieving national and global nutrition goals.

Nutrition-sensitive social protection encourages community participation and fosters local solutions to improve food access, dietary habits, and health outcomes.

Nutrition-sensitive social protection measures can help break the intergenerational cycles of malnutrition by increasing women's access to education and resources while considering their workload and time constraints.

Nutrition Financing



Nutrition financing is essential for sustainable development, impacting health, education, and economic productivity. Adequate funding begins with governments developing clear, costed nutrition plans to set realistic targets and identify funding needs. Currently, national and county-level nutrition programmes in Kenya are underfunded, which hampers efforts to combat malnutrition and improve public health outcomes. To close funding gaps, governments should prioritise nutrition financial planning and adopt nutrition-sensitive budgeting practices across key health, agriculture, and education sectors. Tracking mechanisms are critical to ensure that resources are directed effectively and funding gaps are addressed. Increased government investment in nutrition yields significant returns: As such, reinforcing economic and social benefits. By securing consistent, data-driven, and transparent funding, Kenya can build resilience, reduce malnutrition-related health costs, and ensure a healthier future.

Key Information

In Kenya, malnutrition is estimated to accrue equivalent to 6.9% of GDP (Cost of Hunger Study). This indicates that investing in nutrition can contribute towards sustainable development. Banking on Nutrition interventions has been cited as an effective way for countries to achieve and sustain economic well-being (Innovative Finance for Nutrition Discussion Paper 14).

Target Audience

Government, financial institutions, funding institutions, social entrepreneurs, small & medium size enterprises (SMEs) & venture capitalists

Key Messages

The government should invest in nutrition as a development agenda by prioritising it in annual plans and budgets because health is wealth.

When the government makes data on-budget and off-budget finances directed to nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive sectors available, access to and use of real-time data informs decision-making and effective planning.

The Government should prioritise financing options for Maternal, Infant, and Young Child Nutrition (MIYCN), as proper nutrition during pregnancy and early childhood is critical for the healthy development of individuals and communities.

Nutrition funding drives progress towards sustainable development.

Role of Private Service Providers (PSPs) in Advancing the Nutrition Agenda



The private sector is vital in advancing the nutrition agenda by ensuring that nutritious foods are accessible, affordable, and safe. Private Service Providers (PSPs), including maize millers, wheat millers, and processors of edible oils, fats, and salt, are at the forefront of food fortification, enhancing staple products with essential vitamins and minerals to combat micronutrient deficiencies across Kenya. These fortified foods reach a broad audience, improving population health outcomes.

Moreover, PSPs drive innovation in food development, creating nutrient-dense, affordable options that address diverse dietary needs. Their investments in nutrition education empower consumers to make healthier choices, while targeted marketing promotes nutritious diets and reduces demand for unhealthy foods.

Key Information

Under CASCADE, the private business and consumer associations include school feeding programmes, surveillance and compliance, business associations, financial institutions, food processing & fortification and Scaling up Nutrition Network (SUN). Partnerships with governments and NGOs allow PSPs to scale their nutrition initiatives, extending impact to remote areas. Their contributions also strengthen local economies by sourcing locally and supporting sustainable agricultural practices. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programmes further enhance community health. PSPs fund school feeding programs, support workforce nutrition and invest in facilities that promote maternal and child health. The private sector is indispensable in driving sustainable nutrition solutions, fostering healthier communities, and creating a stronger economic foundation for future generations.

Target Audience

Policymakers in national & county governments, long-term investors, food manufacturers & cottage industries

Key Messages

Private Service Providers (PSPs) are critical in advancing the nutrition agenda by improving access, availability, and affordability of nutritious foods.

Private Service Providers are crucial in driving innovation in product development, enabling the creation of affordable, nutrient-dense foods that meet diverse dietary needs.

Private Service Providers play a pivotal role in enhancing food safety and quality standards, ensuring the supply chain consistently delivers safe and nutritious products to consumers.

The private sector helps bridge gaps in nutrition service delivery by expanding distribution networks and making nutritious products more accessible, reaching consumers in remote and marginalised areas.

Private Service Providers can influence consumer behaviour through targeted marketing strategies, promoting the consumption of healthier foods and reducing the demand for unhealthy options.

Resilience Building Against Climate and Price Shocks



Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) defines resilience as the ability to prevent disasters and crises and to anticipate, absorb, accommodate, or recover from them in a timely, efficient, and sustainable manner. Climate change affects food production, leading to reduced crop yields, livestock losses, and increased food prices, all threatening nutrition security. Building resilience against climate and price shocks is essential to protect vulnerable communities from food insecurity and malnutrition, particularly during times of crisis.

Key strategies include crop diversification and climate-smart agriculture, such as using drought-resistant crop varieties, agroforestry, conservation agriculture, and water-efficient practices like rainwater harvesting. Farmers can buffer against adverse weather and price fluctuations by reducing reliance on single crops. Investing in resilient food systems and improving food storage and preservation techniques are also crucial, as these measures help maintain food availability and quality during shortages. Expanding agricultural extension services provide farmers with timely, localised support, while business support, financial literacy, and social safety nets empower farmers and households to withstand economic & market disruptions. At the same time, access to credit, savings, and microfinance strengthens household resilience by providing a financial cushion during crises.

Capacity building is vital, equipping farmers with skills to adapt to evolving environmental challenges. Gender empowerment further enhances resilience, as women often play a central role in household nutrition and are instrumental in adaptation efforts. Community cooperation, early warning systems, and inclusive policies also play pivotal roles in strengthening resilience by encouraging local collaboration, preparing for natural disasters, and addressing the needs of marginalised populations. Through these integrated approaches, communities become better positioned to navigate climate and price shocks, protect nutrition, and ensure long-term health and stability.

Key Information

Climate change and price-related shocks impact women and children, which can be countered by building resilience and protection measures for this demographic to shield them. Ensuring citizens can maintain living standards and good health in the face of shocks and stress requires building communities' resilience and strengthening health systems' ability to support and reach them.

Target Audience

Agricultural experts, climate change & agriculture sector investors, financial institutions, entrepreneurs, communities, the general public, government and farmers.

Key Messages



Sensitisation efforts encourage communities to consume a variety of crops and foods and help reduce dependence on single commodities that are vulnerable to climate or price shocks.

Climate-smart agriculture techniques, such as planting drought-resistant crops, help farmers adapt to changing weather patterns and ensure a stable food supply even in adverse conditions, safeguarding food and nutrition security.

Digitisation of agricultural extension services overcomes barriers to farmers' access to information.

Adequate and appropriate food storage facilities reduce post-harvest losses and increase food availability during climate-induced shortages.

Market access strengthens smallholder farmers' ability to withstand price shocks, improving income stability and access to nutritious foods.

Financial literacy, financial services, and access to credit allow smallholder farmers and local businesses to invest in climate-resilient technologies and diversify their activities.

Nutrition-sensitive social safety nets provide a lifeline during crises so families can still afford healthy diets.

Local food production reduces dependence on imports, minimising the impact of global price shocks on household food security and nutrition.

Climate monitoring and forecasting enhance the capacity to provide accurate and timely climate forecasts to farmers and businesses for better planning.

Women's empowerment in agriculture strengthens community resilience since they are often key managers of household nutrition.



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Importance of Multi-Sectoral Platforms (MSPs)



Multi-sectoral platforms (MSPs) are essential collaborative frameworks that unite diverse stakeholders from government, civil society, the private sector, and academia to address complex issues like nutrition. These issues span various areas, including agriculture, health, and social protection. MSPs foster a coordinated approach that mobilises resources, pools expertise, and aligns efforts across sectors, making interventions more sustainable and impactful.

MSPs are instrumental in mobilising funding and technical support by highlighting synergies and minimising duplicated efforts across sectors. They also promote shared ownership and accountability, engaging all stakeholders in setting goals, tracking progress, and measuring impact. This collaborative setting enables transparent decision-making, reduces conflicts of interest, and provides a forum for addressing challenges jointly.

Furthermore, MSPs drive innovation, leverage sector-specific strengths, and allow for knowledge sharing and scaling of best practices. They create a strong, unified advocacy voice to attract investments in nutrition from governments and donors while promoting inclusivity and addressing the needs of vulnerable groups such as women, children, and marginalised communities. By facilitating data sharing, joint analysis, and comprehensive monitoring, MSPs provide a holistic understanding of nutrition challenges and support evidence-based decision-making.

Key Information

MSPs enhance community engagement by connecting local needs with national decision-making and ensuring that interventions are contextually relevant. MSPs establish a sustainable framework for ongoing nutrition improvement through these coordinated, inclusive approaches, building a resilient foundation for lasting progress in population health and well-being.

Target Audience

Communities, county governments, community health care workers, nutrition experts, administrators, and national government policymakers.

Key Messages

Synergies created through MSPs to optimise resource allocation and avoid duplication of efforts save time and resources.

Meaningful engagement with local community voices in decision-making ensures effective policy implementation, community ownership of policy interventions and decision-makers' ability to develop real-time interventions.

Joint programme implementation of nutrition programmes through MSPs promotes joint planning, monitoring, and evaluation.

Accessible and reliable nutrition-related information promotes self-care and efficient decision-making practices.

A firm policy and legislative nutrition environment is fundamental in guiding and monitoring coordinated progress towards addressing malnutrition.

Use of Food Systems Data in Policy Decision Making



Food systems data refers to collecting, analysing, and interpreting information related to all aspects of food production, distribution, and consumption, as well as their impacts on health, the environment, and socio-economic factors. Food systems data, such as agricultural data on crop yields and land use, can inform policies that support resilient and diverse food supplies. In contrast, economic data on food prices and employment can shape strategies to enhance food affordability and accessibility.

Robust food systems data empower policymakers to make data-driven decisions that address malnutrition, food security, and access disparities. By utilising these insights, policies can be designed to prioritise food quantity, nutritional quality, and diversity, addressing immediate food needs and long-term health outcomes. Additionally, timely data allows for swift responses to food crises, such as droughts or price shocks, helping to safeguard vulnerable populations.

Transparency in data use fosters trust among stakeholders and promotes collaborative policy formulation across sectors like agriculture, health, and education. Such collaboration ensures comprehensive approaches to nutrition, integrating the expertise and resources needed to tackle complex, multi-dimensional issues. Food systems data are indispensable, enabling policymakers to set clear priorities, respond proactively to challenges, and drive equitable, impactful nutrition policies.

Key Information

The Kenya Food Systems Dashboard (FSD), hosted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, integrates key indicators across the food system, offering a centralised tool for policymakers to monitor nutrition status, food availability, and socio-economic variables. This dashboard also allows county-level customisation so policies can be tailored to the specific needs of Kenya's 47 counties, facilitating targeted and localised decision-making. The Kenya FSD provides information related to all aspects of food production, distribution, and consumption, as well as their impacts on health, the environment, and socio-economic factors in one place.

Target Audience

Policymakers at national and county levels, health investors, agriculture sector investors and education stakeholders

Key Messages

The Kenya Food Systems Dashboard is essential for informed policy decision-making.

The Kenya Food Systems Dashboard promotes targeted interventions, resource allocation, and food safety and quality.

The Kenya Food Systems Dashboard has access to information that allows global benchmarking learning in nutrition policy.

Women Empowerment and Gender Transformation



Women's empowerment promotes their sense of self-worth, ability to determine their choices, and right to influence social change for themselves and others. Ensuring for instance, that women can access the essential nutrition package right from the time they conceive to the time the child reaches five years and beyond works to diminish child morbidity and mortality greatly. A Lancet Nutrition series cited by the Ministry of Health in Kenya places this reduction by 25% for infant mortality and morbidity and 30% for child malnutrition. The First 1000 Days booklet produced by the Ministry of Health provides an excellent blueprint for caregivers and mothers that works to achieve the two-pronged result of improved nutritional status for women of reproductive age and the same for children under five years. These outcomes align with CASCADE's foundational role in the areas of operation.

Key Information

Burdening women with household chores during pregnancy and when breastfeeding can lead to termination of pregnancy, unintended abortions, and reduced time for mothers to feed and breastfeed, which will result in a malnourished mother and child- Family members should support women with household chores.

Target Audience

Government at the National & county Level, Community Leaders, Political Leadership and Private Sector players.

Key Messages

Women should be able to make decisions on when and how many children to have.

Empowered women can make critical decisions on household diets and purchase nutritious foods.

Nutrition-sensitive social protection empowers women by providing financial support and education on healthy eating for their families.

Collective action by women can break down barriers to better nutrition and health in marginalised communities.

Every woman, background notwithstanding, can influence change in nutrition policies that impact your family and community.

Strengthen Community Structures; Reducing Negative Social Norms



Strengthening community structures is vital for reducing harmful social norms that adversely impact nutrition, particularly in vulnerable populations. Social norms—the unwritten rules governing behaviour within a community—can significantly influence dietary practices, food choices, and overall health outcomes. These norms may include beliefs around body image, nutritional restrictions, or stigma associated with certain foods, often leading to harmful eating habits and poor nutrition.

Community engagement and empowerment are essential to effectively addressing these issues. Initiatives should foster inclusive dialogues that challenge harmful norms and promote positive attitudes towards nutrition. This can be achieved by involving community leaders, health workers, and local organisations in educational campaigns that raise awareness about the importance of nutritious diets and healthy eating practices.

Key Information

Building strong community networks facilitates support systems that reinforce positive behaviour and encourage individuals to adopt healthier lifestyles while providing a platform for sharing knowledge and experiences. Sessions such as workshops, cooking classes, and nutrition education programs can empower community members to make informed choices, breaking the cycle of harmful norms perpetuating poor nutrition. In addressing and reshaping negative social norms surrounding nutrition, communities can pave the way for improved health outcomes, reduced malnutrition, and enhanced overall well-being. This comprehensive approach strengthens community structures and fosters a culture that prioritises health and nutrition for all members.

Target Audience

Local community administration, national & county governments, community leaders, educators and communication experts.

Key Messages

Open dialogue about health and nutrition is essential in breaking down harmful myths and traditions.

Community leaders, community health workers, and influencers are key advocates of healthy behaviour during community assemblies (such as *barazas*)

It is essential to provide education on the benefits of consuming a diversified, fortified, balanced diet, proper food preparation, personal hygiene, and physical activity.

Training for Community Health Workers (CHWs) and Community Health Extension Workers (CHEWs) on antenatal care and iron & folic acid supplements can break harmful social norms around nutrition.

Creative use of local media, such as radio, community theatre, and local storytelling traditions to share positive messaging can help shift attitudes.

Understanding the Media

MEDIA CONSUMPTION TRENDS

Data-driven storytelling is growing, with media companies relying on analytics to tailor content and engage audiences through data-driven insights. This, coupled with the emergence of the influencer journalist, has quickly blurred the lines between traditional journalists and social media influencers, resulting in more interactive and engaging media. Additionally, hyperlocal news platforms are becoming vital for local information, driven by affordable smartphones and social media.

In contrast, TV viewership and online access have experienced a significant surge, doubling between 2014 and 2023, according to the Media Council of Kenya. The emergence of niche content specialised platforms and hyperlocal news sites is an interesting trend. These are thriving and catering to specific interests and passions. These include sites such as *Tuko* and *Kenyanwallstreet*. There is a trend in the rise of niche podcasts and the rapid growth of *X* Spaces, which are popular for rallying audiences toward causes. In 2024, spaces became a rallying call for the infamous Gen Z protests set off the contents of the Finance Bill 2024 of Kenya. Eventually, this bill had to be withdrawn owing to the rallying calls calling for its refusal, all of which were driven 100% by social media conversations on *TikTok* & *X*.

A war for trust in which fact-checking, source verification, and media literacy campaigns will combat disinformation and build greater trust in news sources remains central to current media trends.

Media Engagement

While preparing to engage with the media, one must understand the media house's editorial agenda, social and political bias, long-term trends vs short-term dynamics in the sector, and generalist or specialist readership. What is the frequency of publication/broadcast as this dictates the reporting cycle and the appetite for news or feature-led coverage? The competition for stories will determine the importance of exclusivity in content – particularly around breaking news or scoops - and drive research into new angles and topics. Finally, consider the commercial agenda and weigh the potential for interference by detractors and preferential treatment in editorial coverage for advertisers.

Understanding the Media

A press release is usually the first point of contact with a media house outside of the invitation for an interview. The release is a pitch of your story to the editorial team. This pitch is competing with other news stories and priorities, and thus, the following should be considered when preparing a release:

1. What is your headline? Is it catchy and attention-getting? One sure way of getting this done is to focus on the key messages shared on this toolkit and hone in on the focus.

a. **Express the key message in the following parts:** what the issue is, why it is important and what the call to action is. This tactic effectively creates press releases that grab the attention of the editorial desk handling the request.

b. **Focus on the release's first paragraph:** Use the 5Ws and H method: Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How. This way, one captures the story's most relevant and noteworthy parts early on. As much as possible, cite a credible source.

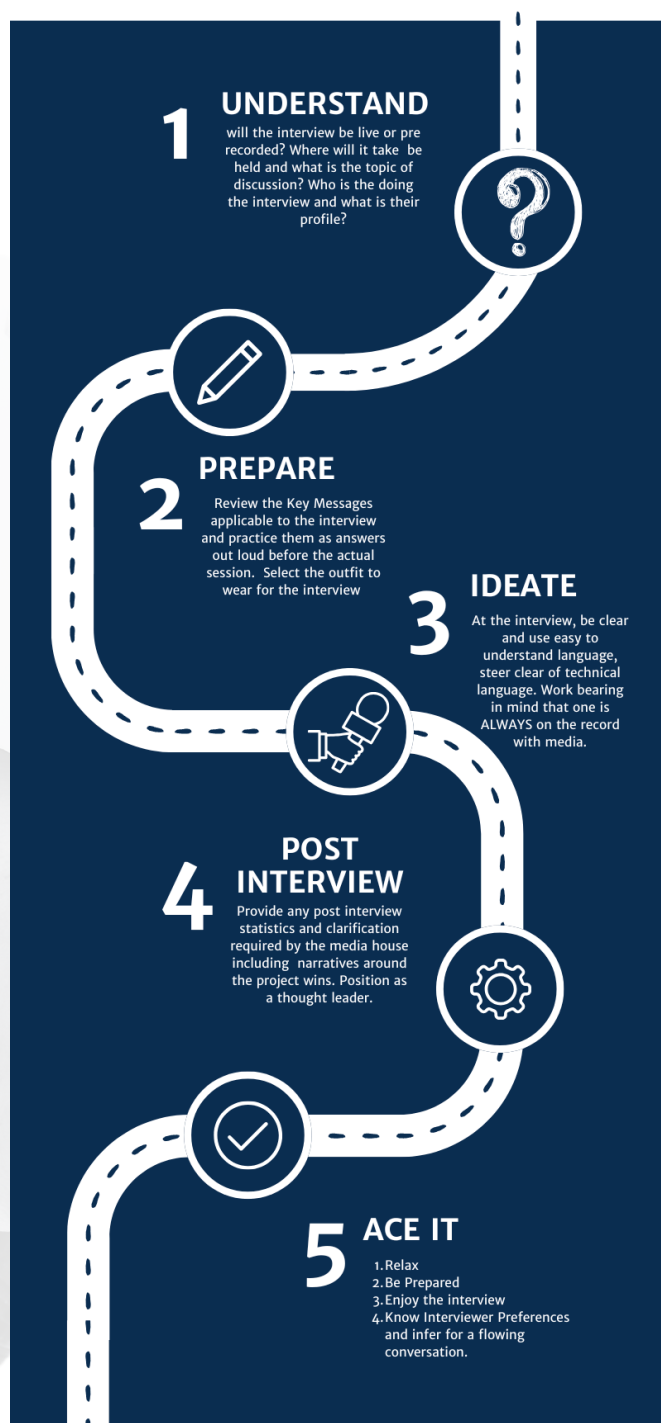
c. **Add the key details of the organisation:** Including the project and key resource persons. Create a boilerplate template beforehand to make this easy.

d. **Contact the media house:** First, contact them by phone and then with a follow-up email. Be confident, clear and concise in the pitch.

An invitation to an interview at a media house is a statement of affirmation. Because of the potent strength of the media, however, preparing for an interview must take centre stage. Other tools available include op-eds, letters to the editor, press conferences and editorials.



MEDIA INTERVIEW PREPARATION



Developed by Lead Speak Reach

Public Speaking Guide

All media engagements will require skill building in public speaking, a demanding but deceptively 'easy' skill. Ray Martes's development of these fundamentals will provide a useful guideline as one prepares for speaking to the media. However they can also work for different public engagements as required.

Know the purpose of your speech	Knowing the purpose of your speech helps you to communicate clearly the message that you want to convey to your audience. Consider whether your purpose is to persuade, inform, inspire, motivate, or entertain.
Know your audience	Identify who your audience members are. Develop your presentation to meet their requirements and needs.
Develop great content	How do you develop great content? Developing great content means knowing your audience well and using stories and anecdotes to engage them. It means doing the required research for the main points of your presentation (key messages) and using supporting material.
Have great speech organisation	Having great content alone in a presentation is not sufficient. Learning how to organise that content effectively is a fundamental. Learning effective speech structure ensures that you have a clear introduction, body, and conclusion for your presentation. The beginning of the presentation should attract the audience's attention, the body supports your main points and the conclusion summarizes your main points.
Be conscious of your language usage	Use powerful words when you write your presentation. Use clear and descriptive words that will communicate your message.
Use your voice for maximum impact	Your voice is like an instrument that you use to communicate. When delivering a presentation, remember to use vocal variety and be aware of your volume, pitch, and rate of speaking. A key skill is learning how to use pauses for maximum impact.
Use your body language and gestures effectively	Your body is the vehicle through which you communicate. Do make sure that your nonverbal language accurately matches your message. 93% of your communication is non verbal which makes understanding body language crucial.
Know how to use your visual aids	Visual aids such as PowerPoint presentations and video reels help you communicate or emphasise your message. Please practice beforehand to make sure that you are using them effectively.
Authenticity	When delivering a speech or another type of presentation, be yourself. Whether it be a personal or professional endeavour, be authentic. Being authentic means doing the required work to use your gifts, talents, skills, and strengths to deliver the best possible speech or presentation that you can deliver.

The Social Media Space

What works with mainstream media will not necessarily work on social media. As such, a strategic approach is essential because different social media work differently. Storytelling, creative content presentation, humour, and creative information planning formats are required when presenting key messages on social media. Caroline Brisett's guide (below), will provide insights into social media content creation guidelines.

Set goals	Your goals for your social media content goals outline the key metrics or results you want to achieve as a brand on social media. Goals can range from increasing brand awareness, driving more website traffic, increasing sales and lead generation, and more engagement. Your goals will help define your content plan of action.
Know your audience	Identify your audience to tailor your content more purposefully to meet their interests and desires. Look at your social media metrics and demographics to develop your buyer personas, such as: age, gender, education, income, interest, and geographic location. Most apps provide audience data, but third-party tools like social listening will also help.
Define brand personality	Your brand's personality is shaped by how people perceive your social media interactions and online presence. Your brand persona can help you present your brand in the way that best fits your goals and needs, from a more friendly and entertaining approach to a professional, knowledgeable resource in your industry.
Define the of content	It is important to set up a strategic approach to content creation. Diversifying the types of content you share can captivate your audience and differentiate your brand from your competitors. There are four different types of content that can help you increase your online presence: visual content, informative content, engaging content, and user-generated content. By understanding each type and how to use them effectively, you can develop a well-rounded content strategy that resonates with your audience.
Choose social media platforms	Each social media network has its unique audience and features. Some factors to consider include your target demographic, the type of content you plan to share, and your overall marketing goals. The right social media platforms for a brand will optimise content for each social media channel. The goal should be to choose the channels that will allow you to reach and engage with your audience the most effectively to ensure your brand can grow.
Create a content calendar	A content calendar allows you to plan future content and ensure your content is spread evenly across all social media platforms. Content schedules also help maintain momentum and retain an engaged audience. Your posting schedule should follow your brand resources and goals.
Measure social media content success	Prepare a social media report by gathering metrics and data that highlight your marketing objectives. Metrics and data to measure performance can include likes, shares, tweets, comments, & new followers.

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CARE International and the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) have extensive experience addressing malnutrition in programme countries. Together, they form a consortium implementing the CAatalyzing Strengthened policy aCtion for heAlthy Diets and resilience (CASCADe) Project in Nakuru, Nairobi, and Nyandarua counties in Kenya. The overarching objective of the project is to enhance food security and contribute to reducing malnutrition among at least 5 million women of reproductive age and children under 15 in Benin, Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Mozambique.

A MEDIA TOOLKIT IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS TO BE ABLE COMMUNICATE NUTRITION MESSAGING WHILE POSITIONING AS MEDIA CHAMPIONS.

Contact



CASCADE



<https://www.care.org/our-work/food-and-nutrition/nutrition/cascade/>