**CARE Philippines Humanitarian Partnership Platform**

**Media and Communications Protocol in Emergencies**

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Process Leader: CARE Philippines Media, Communications and Learning Manager

Process involvement: CARE Philippines Country Director and staff

Head of partner organization and staff

1. **Purpose**

CARE established Humanitarian Partnership Platform to prepare and respond to humanitarian emergencies in the Philippines. This protocol outlines the process for managing media and communications in emergencies by CARE and its partners.

1. **Policy**

A major objective in CARE's Humanitarian and Emergencies Strategy 2013-2020 is that **"CARE is consistently one of the first NGOs in the media following a major emergency."** Emergencies make news, and there is a short window of opportunity to gain media coverage for CARE's emergency response. Media relations are therefore an integral part of CARE's emergency response and high visibility is critical to raise funds, mobilize public support and influence policy.

The media shapes public understanding of an emergency. CARE seeks as much as positive media attention about the emergency response as possible. This includes television, radio, print and online media. CARE’s media goals are to explain how and why we are responding, why we need help from donors, and to support our advocacy objectives.

CARE's communications and advocacy should reflect that **“CARE is an independent, non-partisan, non-sectarian organization dedicated to ending poverty and providing humanitarian assistance.”** CARE's media work in emergencies should:

* **Uphold the dignity of those affected.** CARE is signatory to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief , which stipulates that in our communications and media work, we shall recognize disaster survivors as dignified people, not hopeless victims. We will highlight the severity of a situation and the needs and rights of survivors, but also their resilience and their ability to be equal partners in the recovery and response.
* **Focus on women and girls.** CARE places special emphasis on reaching and empowering women and girls in emergencies, recognizing that they are disproportionately affected by disasters. Our communications should emphasize CARE's work to help women and girls as well as how women and girls are specifically affected by the emergency.
* **Do no harm.** We will make every effort to ensure that CARE's communications will not endanger lives, relationships, programs or funding, and have the goal of helping/benefiting the people we serve in the country/situation.
* **Be grounded in CARE's expertise and program experience**, and based on a thoughtful, credible and supportable analysis of what we know about the issue and impact on the people we serve in the country/situation. We use a serious, authoritative and generally non-confrontational tone.

1. **Instructions**
   1. Ensure media and communications are in your Emergency Preparedness Plan. What support will you need if an emergency hits? Are there any sensitive issues you need to be aware of, like ethnic divisions, political controversies, government view of NGOs? How will you manage communications in an emergency if there is an Internet outage or the mobile network is down?
   2. Identify your spokespeople. This will likely be the Executive Director and Emergency Coordinator. Ensure they have undergone media training.
   3. Identify your media focal point. Who will handle media requests or provide photos/videos to CARE? This will likely be your Communications Officer if you have one, or your emergency coordinator.
   4. Implement a Media Policy. Ensure your staff know what to do if they are approached by a journalist. Monitor national news for information relevant to CARE and partner’s work.
   5. Have communications equipment on hand. Ensure you have a digital camera or smartphone with extra batteries/powerbank, clothing with visibility and logo stickers, etc.
   6. Clarify your approval procedures. Who do you need to sign off your press releases or statements?
   7. Develop a list of key contacts: photographers, journalists, videographers etc.
   8. Take a lot of pictures during assessment. It’s important to take photos of damaged houses, fallen trees, debris, affected people, food distributions and other poignant scenes. Also provide photo captions.
   9. Take video clips. A 10-second video of the typhoon’s onslaught can be used by the media and CARE’s team for fundraising. Take landscape videos of the damaged houses, rice fields, affected communities etc.
   10. Take personal quotations of affected people. Interview some affected vulnerable people especially women, PWDs, senior citizen, pregnant or lactating mothers. Ask them about what happened in their area, what they have experienced, what they feel, and what their immediate needs are. Much better if you could also video record it.
   11. Write short stories or blogs. Stories of the affected people will give a more personal touch to the messages CARE and partners convey to public. A story/blog could be about a story of a mother of five who experienced the wrath of the typhoon and worries about her children’s welfare. Or it could be a personal account/observation of a CARE or partner emergency responder after visiting a community, narrating what the community urgently needs.
   12. Use CARE and partner’s logos and branding in pictures, reports and media, and consider donor branding requirements. Before conducting an emergency relief distribution, make sure to include CARE and partner’s logo (as well as donor logo if applies). This will send a message to the public that CARE and partners are already on the ground responding to the needs of the affected people.
   13. Take media interviews. It is the responsibility of CARE’s communications manager to link with international and local media for interviews. It is CARE and partners’ role to disseminate important information about the emergency that would benefit the general public. CARE will provide talking points to partners to prepare for instances when media request for partners for an interview.
   14. Share gathered photos, video clips, testimonials and stories. CARE set-up communication platforms for partners to share information and communication materials. The partners must use these platforms if there is mobile phone signal or Internet connection or upload photos to their respective Facebook and Twitter accounts. In case communication lines are down, partners may opt to try other options like providing updates through a satellite phone or radio.
   15. Be mindful of media ethics. Before taking photos and videos of specific people, always ask for their approval first. Also when interviewing people, make sure that you explain the purpose of your activity. CARE has also a consent form that partners may use.

***Things to consider: Emergency Communications Officer Go Kit requirements***

* Laptop computer and charger (a car charger cable is also recommended)
* Web cam and headset  (for Skype calls and Skype video calls)
* Printer and printer paper, basic stationary supplies (only necessary if responding in a location where CARE does not already have an office and supplies are likely unavailable)
* Plug adapter and converter
* Camera (4 megapixels minimum), extra batteries, charger, memory cards (2GB minimum).
* Video camera or a camera that can also shoot video. Extra batteries, charger, memory cards.
* Flash drives (memory stick)
* Business cards
* Satellite phone, depending on the location
* CARE visibility materials including CARE T-shirts and caps, large CARE stickers (for cars and trucks) and CARE flags (for food/NFI distribution points, warehouses, temporary office)
* Flashlight/torch, mosquito net, bed sheet etc. depending on location

**Annexes:**

Answering Media Interviews / Talking Points for Partners

Photo and Video Documentation in Emergencies

Interviewing, Story Gathering and Assessment Report Writing