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THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
Advocacy Strategy for Orphans &
Other Vulnerable Children

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Foreword

To be written by the Minister.

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Acronyms

CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CBS	Community-based Services
CDO	Community Development Officer
CSO	Civil Society Organization
LGBP	Local Government Budget Framework Paper
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
MTEF	Mid-term Expenditure Framework
OVC	Orphans and other Vulnerable Children
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PPA	Priority Planning Area
PWO	Probation and Welfare Officer

Background and Context

In February 2007, the Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development (MGLSD) released *Findings to Guide the Development of a National Advocacy Strategy to Support Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children*, a qualitative research report. The purpose of this study was to better understand the strengths and limitations of the national response to OVC, and to identify factors that impact policy makers' willingness to allocate resources to OVC programming. The qualitative study¹ laid the foundations for this advocacy strategy.

The study found that despite frequent references to OVC as a category deserving urgent attention, these children actually receive low priority in budgeting and programming. This is true at both central and local levels. The report recommended several actions to raise the profile of OVC issues.

Key recommendations from the qualitative study include:

- **Using Data to Influence Policy Decisions.** Coherent and convincing arguments for devoting additional resources to OVC are vital to advancing OVC interests. Technical analysis and good research are essential to influence government budgets and programs. By packaging this information in a clear and logical format and disseminating it widely, the MGLSD can make a stronger case for supporting OVC.
- **Making OVC Issues a Policy Priority.** National priorities such as poverty reduction take precedence during planning and budgeting. OVC advocacy should therefore emphasize the relationship between OVC issues and poverty; and show how addressing these issues will directly contribute to eradicating poverty. Investment in OVC should be well articulated in economic growth and poverty reduction terms.
- **Strengthening Collaboration between civil society groups.** Child-focused agencies such are key advocates for OVC. Their contribution can be maximized through greater openness in discussion and decision-making. Encouraging collaboration and networking among those stakeholders will support the emergence of a more powerful collective voice.
- **Improving Media Coverage of OVC Issues.** Media coverage of OVC issues remains sporadic, sensational and superficial. Journalists often fail to perceive OVC as part of a larger, socio-economic issue. The MGLSD should develop a closer working relationship with the media by identifying journalists who routinely cover children's issues and providing them with information about the Ministry's activities, programs and successes.

¹ Copies of the study are available from the OVC Secretariat, e-mail ovcsecretariat@mglsd.go.ug.

A small working group² composed of representatives from MGLSD, UNICEF and civil society carefully reviewed this ##-page study to set out the parameters for OVC advocacy. The working group noted the need for coordinated and focused advocacy, whereby the Directorates³ and Departments⁴ within the Ministry work together to inform, consult, and network with stakeholders according to a common goal.

Although primary responsibility for the implementation of the strategy rests with the OVC Secretariat in the Department of Children and Youth, all MGLSD directorates and departments are expected to actively contribute to this effort through a Technical Working Group. In addition, the strategy is designed to inform key partners outside the Ministry, including development partners, and technical service organizations who are working on behalf of the Ministry to expand the quality and availability of services for OVC.

This advocacy strategy should not negate or take away from other issue-based advocacy activities, where Ugandans bring attention to the urgent need for protection, care and support of OVC. Instead, it should complement such efforts, by focusing on the broader issues that impact allocation of resources to OVC at the national and district levels.

For more information on this or other advocacy effort, contact the OVC Secretariat at the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development; telephone 0414-253-372, e-mail ovcsecretariat@mglsd.go.ug.

² The Working Group Members included the following MGLSD staff: Willie Otim, Commissioner for the Department of Youth and Children; Francis K. Mondo, Assistant Commissioner, and James Kaboggoza, Principle Youth Officer/OVC; UNICEF representatives: Sheila Coutinho

³ The current structure in MGLSD includes a Directorate for Gender and Community Development and a Directorate of Labour includes the Department of Occupational Safety and Health; and Department of Labour, Employment and Industrial Relations.

⁴ The Department of Disability and Children; the Department of Poverty Eradication, Economic and Civil Rights; the Department of Youth and Children; and the Department of Gender, Culture and Community Development are housed within the Directorate for Gender and Community Development. The Department of Occupational Safety and Health; and Department of Labour, Employment and Industrial Relations are housed within the Directorate of Labour, Employment and Industrial Relations.

The Advocacy Strategy

GOAL:	Every orphan and other vulnerable child will actively contribute to Uganda's social and economic development.			
YEAR I OBJECTIVES:	<p>(NATIONAL) By September 2008, Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children will be an explicit poverty-reduction priority in the PEAP and other key planning frameworks.</p> <p>(DISTRICT) By June 2009, at least four districts will increase their allocation of funds to the Community-based Services (CBS) Departments for OVC programming by at least 50 percent.</p>			
STRATEGIES:	<p>STRATEGY 1 Establish the relationship between poverty reduction & OVC investment</p>	<p>STRATEGY 2 Strengthen networks, partnerships and coalitions</p>	<p>STRATEGY 3 Involve influential leaders in policy change at national, district & sub-county levels</p>	<p>STRATEGY 4 Work closely with the media to generate support for OVC</p>
ACTIVITIES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce technical and non-technical reports and support material to demonstrate the economic benefits of investing in OVC protection, care and support. • Disseminate technical and non-technical reports in high-level meetings, workshops and events. • Prepare district-specific policy briefs to make a case for OVC as a national poverty reduction priority. • Disseminate policy briefs at high-level meetings, workshops and events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and form closer alliances with groups involved in OVC programming. • Strengthen ties to CBS Departments. • Collaborate with CSO to support increased funding for OVC programs and services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform and persuade (1) government leadership, (2) development partners, and (3) civil society to support expanded investment in OVC through changes in planning frameworks and district budgets. • Identify and work with partners to lead district-level advocacy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build relationships with key reporters to boost coverage on OVC investments as a poverty-reduction measure. • Identify, coach and support spokespersons for OVC-related issues. • Discourage sensational journalism emphasizing ethical and content-driven reporting. • Increase quality media coverage by sponsoring awards for excellence in OVC journalism.

Goal

Every orphan and other vulnerable child will actively contribute to Uganda's social and economic development.

The advocacy goal is the long term vision which guides all advocacy efforts. It recognizes the need for every Ugandan to contribute to the social and economic development of the country. It also recognizes the need to create safe and conducive environments that enable even the most vulnerable populations to participate and benefit from social and economic advances.

Although it is improbable that a 3-year advocacy strategy will result in the achievement of this goal, the goal forms part of the broader national goal of achieving 'prosperity for all'. More than 50% of the Ugandan population under age 18, and a large percentage of this group is living below the poverty line. The country desperately needs to engage this population to achieve social and economic prosperity.

Objective: National

By September 2008, orphans and other vulnerable children will be an explicit poverty-reduction priority in the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) and other key planning frameworks.

OVC issues need to be taken beyond the technocratic level to the political level so that OVC issues become an essential part of the political commitments which local and national leaders made. Consequently, the national planning frameworks, such as the PEAP, the Social Sector Development Investment Plan, and the National Strategic Plan/Framework for the Uganda AIDS Commission need to explicitly mention OVC. The Ministry will develop coherent and convincing arguments to demonstrate how addressing the needs of OVC will directly contribute to poverty reduction, and 'prosperity for all'.

To achieve these results, the following audiences will be targeted:

- MGLSD Heads of Department and Directors
- Ministry of Finance, Planning & Economic Development,
- Ministry of Local Government.
- National policy-makers (especially in the relevant Sector Working Groups).

Objective: District

By June 2009, at least four Local Government Development Plans will increase funding to Community-based Services Departments for OVC programming by at least 50%.

There is a need to bring attention to the tangible outputs of the MGLSD through its implementing partners, especially the Community-based Services (CBS) Departments.

Local government and lower administrative levels have limited direct funding for OVC initiatives, yet they have a mandate and responsibility to protect children. Decision-makers at these levels need to understand the magnitude of the problem and how investing in OVC directly contributes to economic growth and poverty reduction. In addition, decision-makers need understand what the District Community-based Services Departments currently does and can do in the future, with specific and tangible outputs related to the care and protection of OVC.

To achieve these results, the following audiences will be targeted:

- District Policy Makers,
- Local and Traditional Leaders, and/or Members of Parliament,
- Chief Administrative Officers,
- District Planners, including the Technical Planning Committee
- Local Council Members.

During the first year of implementing the advocacy strategy, the Ministry will provide support to eight districts⁵, to negotiate an increase in the budget allocated to the child protection activities of the Probation and Welfare Office and Community Development Officers. The experience from these lower-level advocacy initiatives will be carefully documented and evaluated to establish SMART⁶ district-level advocacy initiatives in the second and third year of the implementing the strategy. The documentation will support the remaining districts to replicate and perhaps surpass the achievements of the initial eight districts.

⁵ The first year of implementing the advocacy strategy focuses on a limited number of districts to facilitate some degree of success. During the second and third year of implementing the advocacy strategy, the Ministry will revise the advocacy objective and provide tools that will support

⁶ Advocacy objectives must be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound (SMART).

Strategies

Four strategies have been selected to achieve the national and district-level advocacy goals.

Strategy 1: Establish the relationship between poverty reduction and OVC investment. Advocacy activities for OVC must clearly explain the economic benefits of investing in protection, care and support for OVC. National and district level data is needed to support such arguments.

Strategy 2: Strengthen networks, partnerships and coalitions. Within MGLSD, there is a need to expand the number of voices advocating for increased resources for OVC. This includes creating a shared understanding on the importance of investing in OVC for economic development and for including OVC in the social protection policy and framework that is currently being developed.

With and within civil society, the Ministry must encourage more open and frequent exchanges among and between civil society organizations and MGLSD/CBS Departments. With the emergence of a collective voice on key OVC issues and priorities, the Ministry can engage more allies to influence decision-makers at both the national and lower levels.

With the District CBS Departments, the Ministry has a counterpart at the district level that is mandated to protect children. In a decentralized setting, the Ministry needs to support and strengthen district-level counterparts to ensure that the effort to prioritize OVC at the national-level is mirrored at the district-level.

Creating allies within MGLSD, with the CBS Departments, and with civil society will expand the number of voices working to influence key decision-makers to increase attention and resources for OVC.

Strategy 3: Involve influential leaders in policy change at national, district & sub-county levels. Due to the cross-cutting nature of the OVC situation in Uganda, the needs of OVC cannot be fully addressed by a single organization or effort. Influential leaders from the different Line Ministries at the national and district level (listed on page # of the strategy) need to integrate and give priority (affirmative action) to OVC within their respective plans and budgets.

Strategy 4: Work closely with the media to generate support for OVC. The media can bring much needed attention to the plight of OVC, 'giving a human face' to the problem, and explain the long-term economic and social costs of ignoring/limited investment in OVC.

Activities

The activities within the strategy are grouped according to each of the four strategies. In summary, the activities will include:

Strategy 1: Establish the relationship between poverty reduction and OVC investment.

- Developing policy briefs (national and district-specific).
- Developing wall charts and other aids for presentations during high-level meetings (national and district-specific).
- Developing templates for a letter-writing campaign.
- Developing public service announcements.

Strategy 2: Strengthen networks, partnerships and coalitions.

- Support Advocacy Technical Working Group to guide the implementation of the Strategy.
- Disseminate research and tools to support lower-level advocacy.
- Hold regular meetings with CBS staff.
- Mobilize and train spokespeople for OVC advocacy.
- Work with CBS staff to compile, analyze data, and disseminate data on OVC issues.

Strategy 3: Involve influential leaders in policy change at national, district & sub-county levels.

- Sponsor radio talk shows, discussions and debates to highlight OVC issues.
- Deliver presentations at high-level meetings.
- Disseminate key research on links between poverty reduction and investments in OVC.

Strategy 4: Work closely with the media to generate support for OVC.

- Identify and support a media contact person for the media.
- Create a media resource directory.
- Support media spokespeople to work with the media.
- Hold press briefings for the media.
- Confer an award for “Excellence in OVC Journalism”
- Hold skills building workshops for the media.
- Hold an Annual Journalist’s Breakfast.

Work Plan: Year 1

Strategy/Activity	Responsible	Partners	YEAR I											
			O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S
Complete qualitative research and finalize study report.	DRT		x	x	x	x	x	x						
Strategy 1: Demonstrate the relationship between poverty reduction investing in OVC.														
Produce report (technical and non-technical policy briefs).	MGLSD,CIU							x	x					
Produce wall charts, and PowerPoint presentation to present policy brief.	MGLSD,CIU								x	x				
Produce public service announcements (radio and television).	MGLSD,CIU												x	x
Train national and zonal-level partners to present the policy brief at national and district-level fora.	TSO									x	x	x		
Produce 8 district-specific policy briefs (1/district).	MGLSD/CIU										x	x	x	
Produce presentation and wall charts for 8 districts (1/district).	MGLSD/CIU										x	x	x	
Develop templates for letter-writing campaign.	MGLSD,CIU													
Strategy 2: Involve influential leaders in policy change at national, district, and sub-county levels.														
Inform and persuade government and civil society leadership (disseminate policy brief during high-level meetings, press briefings, and other major events.)	MGLSD									x	x	x	x	x
Identify and work with partners to lead district-level advocacy in 8 districts.	MGLSD,CIU, TSO											x	x	
Work with CBS staff to compile data on budgetary allocations for OVC programming, and the services currently provided to OVC or requested by OVC, OVC caregivers, CSO.	MGLSD,CIU	DIO									x	x	x	
Hold radio talk shows to highlight the urgent needs of OVC, the success of the CBS department in supporting OVC in 8 districts.	UNICEF	DIO												x
Strategy 3: Strengthen networks, partnerships, and coalitions.														
Identify and form alliances with groups involved in OVC programming								x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Establish and orient Advocacy Technical Working Group.								x						

Strategy/Activity	Responsible	Partners	YEAR I											
			O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S
Develop and disseminate 'Advocacy Kits' for TSO and CSO.										x	x	x	x	x
Provide TA and tools (including sample letters) to TSO to carry out district-level advocacy.	MGLSD/CIU	UNICEF											x	x
Strengthen ties to CBS Departments (quarterly visits/meetings to document success stories and challenges).	MGLSD, CIU, TSO									x	x		x	x
Collaborate with CSO to increase visibility of OVC issues and needs.	MGLSD, CIU, UNICEF											x	x	
Train spokespeople to present the case for more attention, resources devoted to OVC.	MGLSD, UNICEF													
Strategy 4: Work closely with the media to generate support for OVC.														
Build relationships with Editors and key reporters to boost coverage on OVC investments as a poverty-reduction measure.														
Designate media contact person within MGLSD.	MGLSD								x	x				
Create Media Resource Directory for radio, print, and television journalists.	CIU	UNICEF World Vision						x	x	x				
Hold discussions, debates, and talk shows to highlight OVC issues.														
Identify, coach and support spokespersons for OVC-related issues.	MGLSD, CIU, UNICEF									x				
Discourage sensational journalism emphasizing ethical and content-driven reporting. (national AND district level)														
Hold press briefing to disseminate advocacy-related data and research. (national AND district level)	MGLSD, CIU	World Vision									x	x		
Create a media calendar to link OVC issues with key events. (TSO???) (national AND district level)	MGLSD CIU							x						
Prepare news releases to announce and disseminate key OVC data and reports. (national AND district level)	MGLSD	CIU, UNICEF	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Increase quality media coverage by sponsoring awards for excellence in OVC journalism.														

Strategy/Activity	Responsible	Partners	YEAR I											
			O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S
Provide skills-building workshops on OVC reporting.	UNICEF ?													x
Hold annual Journalist's breakfast.	UNICEF ?												x	
Launch Award 'Excellence in Reporting on Children' for radio, print, television media.	MGLSD, UNICEF?													
Write Letters to Editor and invite radio journalists to disseminate research findings and other achievements in OVC programming.	MGLSD	CIU, UNICEF					X	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Work Plan: Years 2 and 3

The Advocacy Technical Working Group will monitor the effects of the activities implemented during the first year of the advocacy strategy and develop the work plan for years 2 and 3 according to changes in the policy environment in Uganda.

Monitoring and Evaluation

In addition to the activities included in the Year 1 Work Plan, MGLSD will conduct a number of activities to monitor the advocacy effort. This will include meetings of the Advocacy Technical Working Group to consider the progress toward the objectives and to consider opportunities for revising or adjusting activities. In addition, the group will document lessons learned and strategy recommendations on a quarterly basis.

Annex

Implementation Notes: Work Plan Activities

Strategy 1: Demonstrate the link between poverty reduction and investment in OVC.

National Level Activities

1.1. Produce technical and non-technical reports and support material, e.g. policy briefs, wall charts, public service announcements, advertorials.

- Review existing literature on the economic impact of a growing OVC population in Uganda (and other African countries). Summarize key findings.
- Using this evidence, reframe Uganda's OVC issues in poverty reduction terms, developing compelling economic arguments for investing in OVC as a means to reduce poverty. Describe how neglecting OVC needs will undermine national poverty reduction efforts. Portray the consequences of an expanding OVC population on Uganda's economy.
- Ascertain the per capita government expenditure per child per year (all sectors).
- Quantify all these arguments using existing data or extrapolating where data are unavailable.
- Tie these arguments to attainment of the Millennium Development Goals.
- Conclude with recommendations to revise the PEAP and other budgetary frameworks to explicitly include OVC.
- Prepare a technical report, wall charts, and PowerPoint presentation on the activities above. *Target Audience: Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development*
- Prepare a non-technical and user-friendly version of the report and presentation. *Target Audience: Policy Makers, Development Partners, Civil Society Organizations (CSO) and Media.*
- Prepare public service announcements for broadcast on television, radio.
- Prepare advertorial(s) to include in popular magazines, such as African Woman, and Parents.

1.2. Disseminate materials.

- Provide report to national-level policy-makers (especially in the relevant Sector Working Groups), Ministry of Finance, Planning & Economic Development, MGLSD planners and leadership; Ministry of Local Government.
- Provide report to influentials in civil society (child-focused advocacy groups, development partners, research organizations).
- Post report on relevant websites and electronic fora.
- Broadcast public service announcements.

Local Level Activities

1.3. Prepare 8 district-specific policy briefs (1/district).

- Modify the national report to reflect a district level focus. Using local data, tailor the report to the selected districts. Visit districts to identify existing information and understand the context. Meet with CBS Managers and CSO partners.
- Argue for allocating specific funds to address OVC needs. Conclude with recommendations for but districts to allocate additional funds to CBS Departments for OVC affirmative action.
- Produce a clear, non-technical report, wall charts for the selected districts. Target Audience: Local Policy Makers, Development Partners, CSOs and Media.

1.4. Disseminate policy briefs.

- Provide report to district level influentials, including CAOs, District Planners, District Probation Officers, Secretary for Children's Affairs, District Information Officers, Community Development Officers, Community Development Assistants, and Members of Parliament and religious leaders.
- Send report to district media and make follow-up contact with journalists and District Information Officers.

Strategy 2: Involve influential leaders and decision makers in policy change.

National Level Activities

2.1. Inform & Persuade Government Leadership

- Present technical report to the Planning Unit and other appropriate senior managers in MGLSD. Note areas for further investigation.
- Present non-technical report to entire MGLSD senior management. Solidify MGLSD support for revising the PEAP.
- Draft MGLSD's recommended changes to the PEAP for submission to the Ministry of Finance, Planning & Economic Development (MFPED) during the PEAP revision process.
- Present the reports and the national advocacy strategy to relevant ministers such as the Minister of State for Children and Youth Affairs. Seek their support.
- Present report to the Uganda AIDS Commission (UAC) and National Council for Children (NCC). Explain the advocacy strategy and gain their support. Ask them to submit supportive letters to the MFPED.

- Present report to pertinent committees (such as the Parliamentary Council on Gender, Parliamentary Forum for Children) and ministries (such as the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, etc.) Seek their support. Ask them to express their support to the MFPED and to other influential policy makers.

2.2. Inform & Persuade NGOs & CSOs

- Meet with Development Partners. Present the MGLSD's rationale for modifying the PEAP. Discuss how they will benefit from this change. Seek their support. Ask them to contact influential individuals in government in support of this effort.
- Urge Development Partners to recommend similar changes during the revision process. Provide them with a copy of MGLSD's recommended changes.
- Identify and contact national poverty reduction fora (Uganda Debt Network, PMA, NUSAF). Brief them and gain their support.

Local Level Activities

2.3. Identify and work with partners to lead district-level advocacy in 8 districts.

- Determine selection criteria for districts--for example, high level of organization, presence of UNICEF and other child-focused CSOs, committed MP, high probability of success, etc.
- Select initial 8 districts based on these criteria.
- Share report with Members of Parliament (MP) or traditional leaders in potential districts to spark their interest. Obtain a formal commitment of support from influential group before formally selecting the district.
- Meet with a few key people and institutions in each district to assess their receptiveness to an affirmative action approach.
- Based on all these criteria, select 8 pilot districts.

2.4. Inform & Persuade Government Leadership.

- Use report as a springboard for promoting funding increases to CBS departments in select districts; use radio talk shows. (CDO)
- Together with allies, present report to CAO, District Planner and other influentials and propose increasing allocation to CBS Department.
- Follow up with MP and invite him/her to visit the district together and lobby district government to allocate funds to OVC (MGLSD).
- Engage MP to help lobby district officials.

Strategy 3: Strengthen partnerships, networks and coalitions.

National Level Activities

3.1. Identify and form closer alliances with groups involved in OVC programming, especially CBS Managers, Technical Service Organizations, and CSO awarded grants under the MGLSD Civil Society Funding Mechanism.

- Orient Technical Service Organizations (TSO) to advance this advocacy agenda.
- Brief national level child-focused CSOs on the strategy as well as HIV/AIDS CSOs. Gain their involvement and support.
- Present economic arguments and advocacy strategy at poverty reduction fora (e.g. UDN, ACCORD, ActionAIDS, etc.). Ask for their help in moving this effort forward, such as by writing Letters to the Editor
- Provide all these organizations with sample letters to the MFPED supporting these changes.
- Provide TA to TSOs to build advocacy skills and enhance their effectiveness at the district and lower levels.

Local Level Activities

3.2. Strengthen Ties to CBS Departments.

- Conduct regional staff conferences with CBS managers. Promote advocacy strategy for pilot districts and solicit interest.
- Inform CBS Managers in pilot districts that they will play a leadership role in building collaborative relationships with partner organizations. In zones with a TSO, the TSO may be asked to carry out leadership and convener functions.
- Orient CBS managers, TSOs and District Information Officers to the strategy and goal. Explore how this change will benefit participating organizations and OVC.
- Maintain quarterly contact with CBS Manager in pilot districts.
- Write up success stories describing advocacy efforts that resulted in increasing resources for CBS Departments.

3.3. Collaborate with CSO.

- Identify and support organizations and individuals involved in OVC programming through training individuals as spokespeople and providing materials
- Inform them about the district research and advocacy strategy. In places with an active NGO Forum, touch base. Seek their support.
- Build alliances with pressure groups. Gain their commitment to help achieve this agenda.
- Seek conditional grants from Development Partners matching the district allocation to CBS Departments.

Strategy 4: Work closely with the media.

National Level Activities

4.1. Build relationships with key reporters to boost coverage on OVC investments as a poverty-reduction measure.

- Designate a media contact person within the MGLSD.

- Create a Media Resource Directory for radio, print and television journalists including media type, types of stories covered, contact person, contact information, etc. Share it with partner organizations.
- Publicize research results through press releases and press briefings.
- Identify and build consensus on a few key media messages on poverty reduction and OVC; Include these messages in press releases, fact sheets and all information provided to the media.

4.2. Identify, coach and support spokespersons for OVC-related issues.

- Provide training to MGLSD spokespersons and other visible advocates on preparing for media interviews and conducting effective presentations.
- Identify and build relationships with journalists who regularly cover child-related issues and those sympathetic to OVC issues.
- Hold discussions, debates, and talk shows to highlight OVC issues.

4.3. Discourage sensational journalism emphasizing ethical and content-driven reporting.

- Create a media calendar linking holidays and seasonal events to OVC issues, e.g. the new school year and children who cannot afford to attend.
- Pitch story ideas to journalists in advance of these dates, giving them some background, and contact information to make their job easier.

4.4. Increase quality media coverage by sponsoring awards for excellence in OVC journalism.

- Conduct journalist skills-building workshop on OVC reporting. Emphasize media guidelines for ethical reporting on children.
- Hold a journalists' breakfast coinciding with release of research linking OVC support to poverty reduction
- Prepare a fact sheet on OVC and poverty for journalists that includes relevant statistics and Ministry contacts
- Six months in advance, announce launch of "Excellence in Reporting on Children Award" for each major media (correct details from UNICEF).
- Confer awards in a public ceremony with media coverage.

Local Level Activities

4.5. Discourage sensational journalism emphasizing ethical and content-driven reporting at the district level.

- Contact national media about district OVC reports and their recommendations.
- Identify media in pilot districts. Identify journalists who cover or are sympathetic to OVC issues. Obtain name and contact information.
- Provide copies of district and national reports to journalists in these districts. Offer to meet and discuss the issues.
- Write letters to the editor and invite radio journalists for an interview about the research findings and efforts to increase funding for OVC.
- Introduce journalists to OVC who understand this effort and can express themselves well.
- Produce TV spots promoting districts that have increased OVC funding.
- Build relationships with journalists. Provide them with story ideas for OVC coverage.