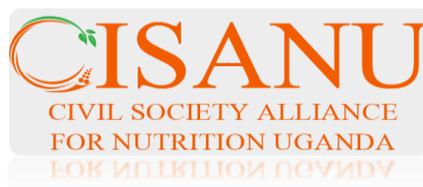

JOURNALISTS' NUTRITION REPORTING SKILLS

SURVEY REPORT - 2019

SEPTEMBER, 2020

Produced by



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2020 SURVEY REPORT ON JOURNALISTS' NUTRITION REPORTING SKILLS

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Kampala, September 2020

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To the media, thank you for being extremely obliging when it comes to disseminating nutrition information to the masses.

Let us work together in the fight against malnutrition in Uganda.

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ACRONYMS

| | |
|----------|---|
| CISANU | Civil Society Alliance for Nutrition Uganda |
| NDP | National Development Plan |
| NMB | Nutrition Media Briefing |
| OPM | Office of the Prime Minister |
| UHCA | Uganda Health Communication Alliance |
| UNAU | United Nations Association of Uganda |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| COVID 19 | Coronavirus disease 2019 |
| NACS | Nutrition Advocacy and Communication Strategy |
| UNAP | Uganda Nutrition Action Plan |
| UBOS | Uganda Bureau of Statistics |
| UDHS | Uganda Demographic Health Survey |
| DHO | District Health Officer |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Nutrition is an important pathway to a healthy life. More than ever, the media has an extremely powerful and challenging role to play when it comes to disseminating nutrition information to the masses. The challenge is now fully felt with the current technology advancement where traditional forms of media and information dissemination are evolving rapidly. It is therefore very crucial today to strengthen journalists' nutrition reporting skills, to ensure accurate, quality and adequate coverage of nutrition issues.

The current survey found out whether journalists across the country have been exposed to any form of training on nutrition reporting so that ways are established to strengthen their ability to produce related stories. Civil Society Alliance for Nutrition Uganda (CISANU) with support from Uganda Health Communication Alliance (UHCA) and United Nations Association of Uganda (UNAU) undertook the study in May 2019. The results of the study generated proposed recommendations intended to improve nutrition reporting in Uganda.

A total of 160 journalists out of the 200 targeted responded to the survey. These journalists have worked in various media types across Uganda. The respondents gave information on their work experience; training in journalism, and on nutrition reporting; frequency of publishing or broadcasting a nutrition story and their recommendations regarding training on reporting about nutrition, among others.

The survey revealed that many journalists have not received any form of training on nutrition reporting and the few who have had an opportunity to get some training, their level of confidence in reporting nutrition stories is still very low. Their skills to produce nutrition stories are very minimal and this has had an effect on their capability to communicate messages around good nutrition and healthy diets. This revelation deduces that media's contribution to providing the public with verified information on nutrition and helping people to make informed decisions on food choices as well as healthy diets is trifling.

By and large, the findings of the study also revealed that the biggest challenge affecting the coverage of nutrition issues are:

- i. Inadequate knowledge and absence of easily accessible information on nutrition issues
- ii. Inadequate skills to produce and report nutrition stories
- iii. Lack of interest from journalists to report on nutrition issues
- iv. Inadequate support from media houses
- v. Lack of opportunity or access to trainings on nutrition reporting

BACKGROUND

The '2020 Global Nutrition Report' released on 12th May, discloses how malnutrition remains a pressing global challenge especially amidst the current pandemic of COVID 19. It elucidates the global burden of malnutrition where today, one in every nine people in the world is hungry and one in every three is overweight or obese. The report reveals that malnutrition is the leading cause of poor health and death globally accounting for 19% of all deaths.

Similarly, the 2019 'The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World' report released on 5th July 2019, New York, disclosed that an estimated 820 million people did not have enough to eat in 2018, up from 811 million in the previous year, which was the third year of increase in a row.

The pace of progress in reducing the number of children who are stunted and the number of babies born with low birth weight is too slow, which also puts the SDG 2 nutrition targets further out of reach. According to the report this underscores the immense challenge of achieving the Sustainable Development Goal of Zero Hunger by 2030.

Through the National Development Plan (NDP II), government of Uganda suggested a culmination to all forms of malnutrition by 2030. This comprises realizing the internationally agreed targets on preventing stunting and wasting in children less than five years of age and addressing the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women as well as older persons by 2025.

Today, Uganda still faces various nutrition challenges; 29% of children aged 6-59 months are stunted, 4% over weight (high weight for their age) and 4% are wasted (low weight for their height) according to the 2016 Uganda Demographic Health survey (UDHS).

As for stunting, its risk is at 33 percent higher among first-born children of girls under 18 years, and as such, early motherhood is a key driver of malnutrition (Fink et al. 2014). Other drivers of malnutrition include lack of access to clean water and sanitation, high disease burden, especially childhood diarrhea and malaria, and poor infant and young child feeding practices.

While 66 percent of children, 0–5 months are exclusively breastfed, the percentage drops to 43 percent among children 4–5 months. Only 15 percent of breastfed children 6–23 months receive a minimum acceptable diet (UBOS and ICF 2017).

Adequate nutrition is essential for human development and socio-economic wellbeing thus optimal maternal nutrition is an important contributor to the survival of both the mother and child, and promotes women's overall health, productivity, and well-being.

The Government of Uganda developed the first Nutrition Advocacy and Communication Strategy (NACS: 2015 - 2018) with the second one (2020 – 2023) currently in progress to support the Uganda Nutrition Action Plan (UNAP).

The strategy provides ways to increase urgency and accountability around nutrition programming and change of attitudes through community dialogue. It recognizes the detrimental effects of malnutrition on individuals and the country as a whole, from harming physical and mental development to lowering Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

The Nutrition Advocacy and Communication Strategy is built under four thematic pillars with Pillar 2; Promoting healthy Ugandan diets; focusing on the recognition that families including young children can be well-nourished with a diet of locally grown and produced foods, promoting the production and access to these foods and their use and schemes to improve food storage and preservation.

It is against this backdrop that Civil Society Alliance for Nutrition Uganda (CISANU) found it wise to conduct a Nutrition Media Skills Survey because of the limited media coverage on nutrition issues. The purpose of the survey was to establish whether journalists across the country have been exposed to any form of training on nutrition reporting. It is necessary in helping to empower journalists to report accurately and widely on nutrition issues with confidence hence increasing awareness.

The increasing availability of nutrition and health information has not always increased the knowledge of the general population.

While communicating scientific knowledge to the general public, several challenges are encountered. Therefore, the correct technical information needs to be disseminated in a non-technical manner for clear understanding by the audience.

This phenomenon will also help them to understand and navigate better the health-care systems made available to them.

The media has an extremely powerful and challenging role to play when it comes to disseminating nutrition information to the masses. Being one of the stakeholders in the fight against malnutrition in Uganda, it plays the following roles;

- i. Advocating for the importance of good nutrition and its benefits.
- ii. Reaching out and empowering families to prevent causes of under nutrition, like diarrhea, malaria, poor infant feeding practices and poor hygiene practices.
- iii. Advocating for correct health and nutrition behavior, such as promotion of breastfeeding, hand washing practices, use of toilets and consumption of safe drinking water.
- iv. Influencing families and communities to dispel myths, taboos related to nutrition and changing behavior by adopting positive practices.
- v. Promoting nutrition, health care and family support during pregnancy. All of which helps in ensuring the health of the mother and the new born baby thus reducing the risk of low birth weight.
- vi. Laying emphasis on the care of children, adolescent girls and pregnant women.
- vii. Disseminating information about government programs to enable better utilization of services.
- viii. Disseminating updated scientific information on nutrition and health related issues to the public.

Media plays a vital role in creating awareness and influencing policy within the country. Their role goes beyond conventional reporting to being partners who take a lead in communicating information that promotes inclusive agricultural productivity growth, better nutritional outcomes and strengthened livelihood resilience.

It is important to improve the media's capacity in informing the nation about nutrition. Consequently, enhancing media capacity in understanding nutrition issues becomes vital in this era since it improves sound reporting on food availability, food access, and food utilization for communities.

Objectives of the survey

The media contributes a lot in providing the public with verified information on nutrition, thereby helping people to make informed decisions. The survey was aimed at;

- i. Finding out whether journalists had been exposed to any form of training on nutrition reporting.
- ii. Establishing ways of strengthening the skills of journalists to produce stories on nutrition.

Training journalists on nutrition reporting is one of the activities CISANU undertakes to increase media coverage of nutrition programs and promote nutrition awareness.

At present, there is limited media coverage on nutrition issues and this can be pointed to reasons such as; inadequate knowledge on nutrition issues and lack of easily accessible information about the multifaceted relationships between agricultural production, food security and nutrition resulting in difficulty in reporting.

Continuing to involve the media to produce meaningful content on nutrition purposed to educate the public will contribute to the fight of ending malnutrition in Uganda. It is therefore important to empower the media to promote good nutrition through informed reporting.

METHODOLOGY

CISANU commenced the Nutrition Media Skills Survey on 10th May 2019 and completed in June 2019. The goal of the study was to establish whether journalists across the different regions in the country have had any form of training on nutrition reporting. The selected regions included Central region, Eastern region, Northern region and Western region of Uganda.

The method chosen for gathering information for the survey was questionnaires which were drafted in English and distributed both physically and online to journalists.

Study Design

With focus on the four main regions in Uganda, the design required random selection of journalists' from various media houses in each target region. The goal of the survey was to obtain at least 100 completed filled in questionnaires for a target of 200 journalists'. 160 journalists out of the 200 targeted responded to the survey, an equivalent of 80% response rate. No cash incentive was given to journalists as the survey was voluntary.

Survey Sample

To conduct the Survey, a total of 200 journalists' were selected with allusion benchmarks on geographical distribution, institutional affiliation and gender. Concerning the distribution by geographical origin, 51.9% came from central, 18.1% from Eastern, 21.9% from Northern and 8.1% from Western region.

Survey Instrument

The questionnaire had 14 questions in total and was designed to capture some of the core scopes on nutrition reporting in Uganda. The questions were organized along two thematic blocks. The first one looks into the demographics while the second focuses on nutrition reporting skills. The questionnaire combined open-ended questions and multiple-choice questions. For these questions, an optional space was provided to elaborate on the answer. This open part is considered of great importance for a survey of this kind as it contributes to improving the interpretation of its overall results and provides additional valuable information.

The choice of using questionnaires was due to some of the following reasons; they are relatively easy to analyze, a large sample of the given population can be contacted at a fairly low cost, they are simple to administer and the format is familiar to most respondents.

Qualitative Approach

Qualitative description was used, a rational research method which provides rich, in-depth insights of the data. It uses general qualitative means like questionnaires and coding data into analysis. Questionnaires were used and were organized along two thematic areas. This permitted for the data to have an enriched level of detail to it, which provided further chances to get clear understanding from it during analysis. It also offered additional opportunities to gather important clues about journalists' nutrition reporting skills avoiding limited perception about it.

Data Analysis

All data were analyzed using SPSS.

FINDINGS

Background

Respondents tried to answer each of the questions in the questionnaire and through data analysis and interpretation; CISANU was able to ascertain the gaps in nutrition reporting. To further appreciate the reliability of the survey findings, journalists' background data with respect to gender, age, experience, type of media house they work for and the area of coverage was identified. Thus from the findings CISANU drew deductions and recommendations.

| Table 1: Shows the Gender of respondents' | | | | | |
|---|--------------|------------|--------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| | | Frequency | Percent (%) | Valid Percent (%) | Cumulative Percent (%) |
| | Male | 89 | 55.6 | 55.6 | 55.6 |
| | Female | 71 | 44.4 | 44.4 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 160 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Source: Primary data, 2019

The respondents' Gender was of importance to this survey because either sex has a different perspective about nutrition reporting. According to Table 1 above, majority of the respondents 89 (55.6%) were male as compared to female who were 71 (44.4%). This indicates that the males were more positive in responding to the questionnaires and participated more in the survey compared to females; males were, therefore, more willing to provide information. Males were also more confident, informed and easily approachable than their female counterparts who were hesitant to fully participate in the study.

| Table 2: Shows the Age bracket of respondents' | | | | | |
|--|------------|--------------|--------------|---------|------------------------|
| | Frequency | Percent (%) | Valid (%) | Percent | Cumulative Percent (%) |
| 18 - 25 years | 37 | 23.1 | 23.1 | | 23.1 |
| 26 - 35 years | 104 | 65.0 | 65.0 | | 88.1 |
| 36 - 45 years | 16 | 10.0 | 10.0 | | 98.1 |
| 46 and above | 3 | 1.9 | 1.9 | | 100.0 |
| Total | 160 | 100.0 | 100.0 | | |

Source: Primary data, 2019

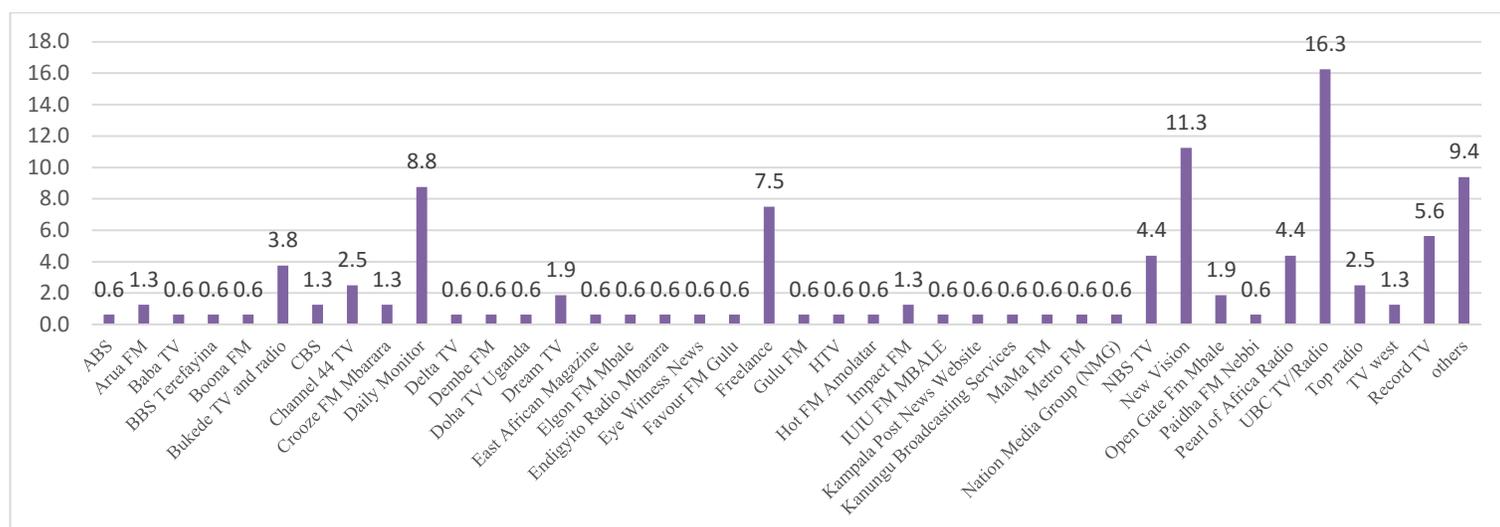
This survey was keen on age because respondents from different age brackets comprehend nutrition reporting differently. According to Table 2 above, majority of respondents 104 (65.0%) were in the age bracket of 26 – 35 years, followed by 37 (23.1%) of the respondents who were in the age bracket of 18 - 25 years, then 16 (10.0%) who were in the age bracket of 36 – 45 years and lastly 3 (1.9%) of the respondents who were above 46 years. This denotes that the researcher was able to interact with mature respondents who understood the subject of the study. Besides, this age bracket is conversant with nutrition information thus making the study easier to be completed in time.

| Table 3: Shows the type of media the respondents' currently work in | | | | |
|---|------------|--------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| | Frequency | Percent (%) | Valid Percent (%) | Cumulative Percent (%) |
| Radio | 69 | 43.1 | 43.1 | 43.1 |
| Television | 49 | 30.6 | 30.6 | 73.8 |
| Newspaper | 21 | 13.1 | 13.1 | 86.9 |
| Blog | 9 | 5.6 | 5.6 | 92.5 |
| Magazine | 1 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 93.1 |
| Newsletter | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Other | 11 | 6.9 | 6.9 | 100.0 |
| Total | 160 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Source: Primary data, 2019

According to the findings from Table 3 above, majority of the respondents accounting for 69 (43.1%) currently work in Radio as a media type, followed by 49 (30.6%) working in Television, 21 (13.1%) currently work in Newspaper, then 9 (5.6%) do blogging, 1 (0.6%) work for a magazine whereas 11 (6.9%) currently work for other media types. This reveals that majority of journalists' working in Radio were able to give information and they understood coverage of nutrition programs and promotion of nutrition awareness. The type of media house the respondents currently work was of interest because it is an important element as far as nutrition reporting is concerned since different media types have various house styles for publishing or broadcasting nutrition stories.

Figure 1: Shows the media houses respondents are working with



Source: Primary data, 2019

Figure 1 above indicates that majority of respondents' rated at 16.3% work with UBC STAR TV/Radio, followed by 11.3% who work with New Vision, 9.4% accounted for respondents' who work with other media houses, 8.8% accounted for those who work with Daily Monitor, 7.5% accounted for freelancers. There were 22 media houses with the least number of respondents' who accounted for 0.6%.

| Table 4: Shows the geographical coverage of the media house the respondents' are working with | | | | | | |
|---|------------|--------------|--------------|---------|----------------|---------|
| | Frequency | Percent (%) | Valid (%) | Percent | Cumulative (%) | Percent |
| Local | 42 | 26.2 | 26.2 | | 26.2 | |
| National | 69 | 43.1 | 43.1 | | 69.4 | |
| Regional | 27 | 16.9 | 16.9 | | 86.2 | |
| International | 22 | 13.8 | 13.8 | | 100.0 | |
| Total | 160 | 100.0 | 100.0 | | | |

Source: Primary data, 2019

Table 4 above shows that majority of the respondents are working with a media house of national geographical coverage rated at 69 (43.1%), followed by local geographical coverage at 42 (26.2%), then regional geographical coverage at 27 (16.9%) and finally international geographical coverage rated at 22 (13.8%).

These findings infer that respondents are affiliated to media houses that have a national geographical coverage thus the subject of study is familiar nationwide. Geographical coverage was of interest to this study because respondents from various media houses covering different geographical areas perceive nutrition reporting differently which influences the response to the survey.

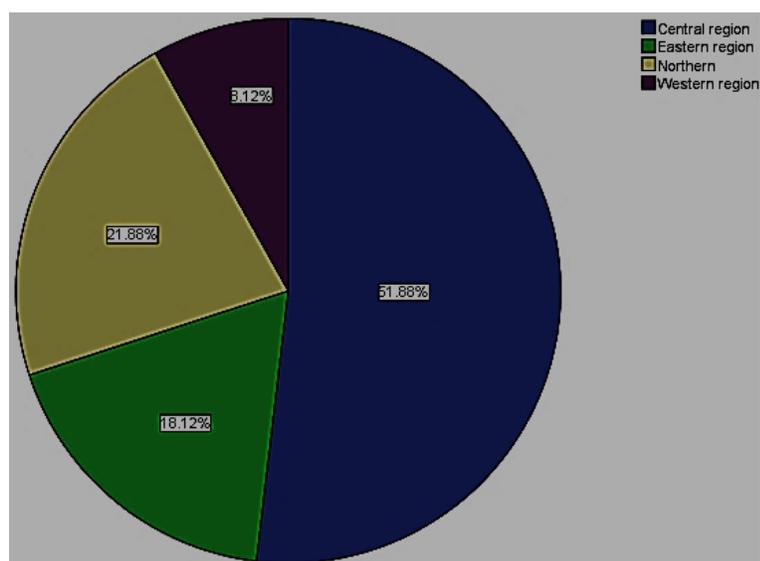


Figure 2: Shows primary target for media house with a local geographical coverage

Source: Primary data, 2019

According to Figure 2 above majority of respondents whose coverage is local revealed that Central region is their primary target accounting for 83 (51.88%), followed by Northern region with 35 (21.88%), then Eastern region with 29 (18.12%) and finally Western region had the least primary target with 13 (8.12%). This implies that most local media houses have a primary target of central region.

Table 5: Shows how long the respondents' have worked as journalists (experience)

| | | Frequency | Percent (%) | Valid (%) | Percent | Cumulative (%) | Percent |
|--|----------------|------------|--------------|--------------|---------|----------------|---------|
| | 0 - 2 years | 25 | 15.6 | 15.6 | | 15.6 | |
| | 3 - 5 years | 63 | 39.4 | 39.4 | | 55.0 | |
| | 6 – 10 years | 55 | 34.4 | 34.4 | | 89.4 | |
| | 10 years above | 17 | 10.6 | 10.6 | | 100.0 | |
| | Total | 160 | 100.0 | 100.0 | | | |

Source: Primary data, 2019

According to the findings as indicated in Table 5 above, majority of respondents with a work experience of between 3 – 5 years accounted for 63 (39.4%), followed by those with 6 – 10 years of experience represented by 55 (34.4%), then respondents with 0 – 2 years of experience were rated at 25 (15.6%) and finally 17 (10.6%) accounted for respondents with above 10 years of experience as journalists. This variation connotes that the respondents have equitable experience in journalism practice thus the researcher was able to get information from respondents who could easily comprehend what nutrition reporting is all about. Therefore, work experience was momentous to this survey because respondents have different levels of experience in their field of practice and their responses and understanding to the survey varies.

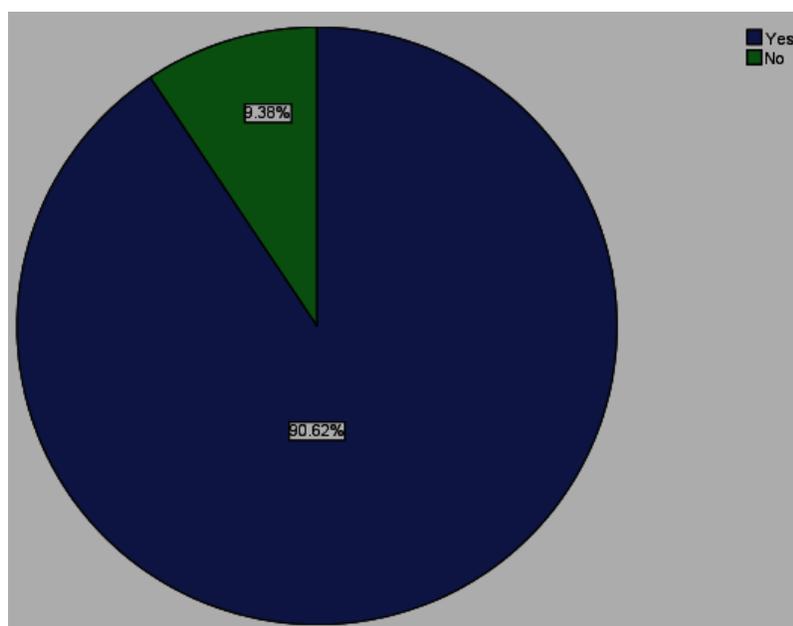
| Table 6: Shows the respondents' level of education | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------|------------|--------------|--------------|---------|------------------------|
| | | Frequency | Percent (%) | Valid (%) | Percent | Cumulative Percent (%) |
| | Certificate | 15 | 9.4 | 9.4 | | 9.4 |
| | Diploma | 52 | 32.5 | 32.5 | | 41.9 |
| | Degree | 92 | 57.5 | 57.5 | | 99.4 |
| | Master's degree | 1 | 0.6 | 0.6 | | 100.0 |
| | Total | 160 | 100.0 | 100.0 | | |

Source: Primary data, 2019

Findings from the study, as indicated in Table 6 above shows majority of respondents 92 (57.5%) revealed their level of education as Degree; while 52 (32.5%) revealed their education level as Diploma; 15 (9.4%) revealed Certificate as their level of education and lastly 1 (0.6%) revealed a Master's Degree as their level of education.

This distinction in education levels implies that information was got from respondents who could easily understand the aim of the survey. Respondents' education level was substantial in this study because they possess different levels of comprehending information especially in regards to nutrition as well as general knowledge.

Figure 3: Shows whether respondents' have received any training in journalism



Source: Primary data, 2019

Figure 3 above indicates that majority of the respondents accounting for 90.62% disclosed to have received some training in journalism whereas 9.38% accounted for those who said they had not had any training in journalism. According to the findings, it suggests that many journalists' have undergone training in journalism.

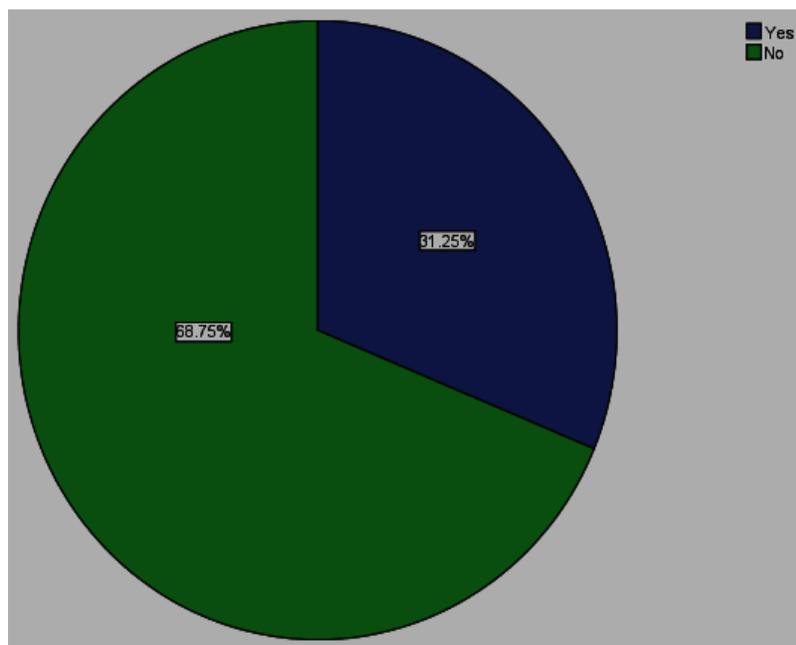
Table 7: Shows respondents' level of training in journalism

| | Frequency | Percent (%) | Valid Percent (%) |
|--------------|------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Certificate | 45 | 28.1 | 28.1 |
| Diploma | 54 | 33.8 | 33.8 |
| Degree | 61 | 37.5 | 37.5 |
| Masters | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| PhD | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Others | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 160 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Sources: Primary data, 2019

According to findings from Table 7 above, majority of the respondents accounting for 61 (37.5%) have a Degree as their level of training in journalism, followed by those with a Diploma rated at 54 (33.8%), whereas 45 (28.1%) possess a Certificate as their level of training in journalism. There were no respondents who held a Master's Degree, PhD or any other level of training in journalism. This denotes that many journalists' have a Degree for their level of training in journalism. Thus, majority were able to understand the connotation of the study.

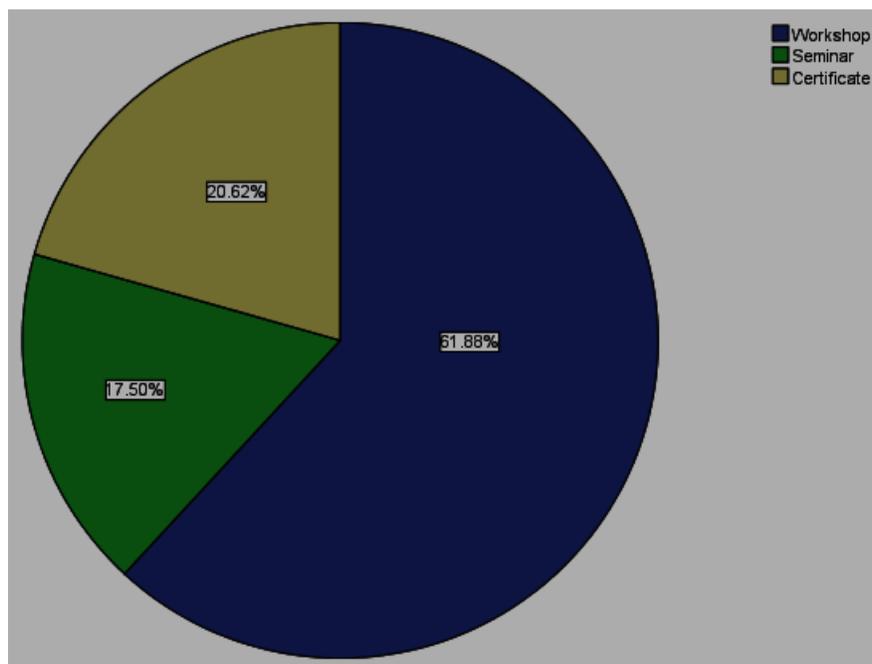
Figure 4: Shows whether respondents' have had any training on Nutrition Reporting



Source: Primary data, 2019

According to Figure 4 above majority of respondents rated at 110 (68.75%) said they have not had any training on nutrition reporting while 50 (31.25%) revealed to have had training on nutrition reporting. These findings indicate that a big percentage of journalists' have not had any form of training on nutrition reporting much as they broadcast or publish nutrition stories. Thus media's capacity in informing the nation about nutrition issues needs to be improved.

Figure 5: Shows the kind of training respondents' have had on Nutrition Reporting

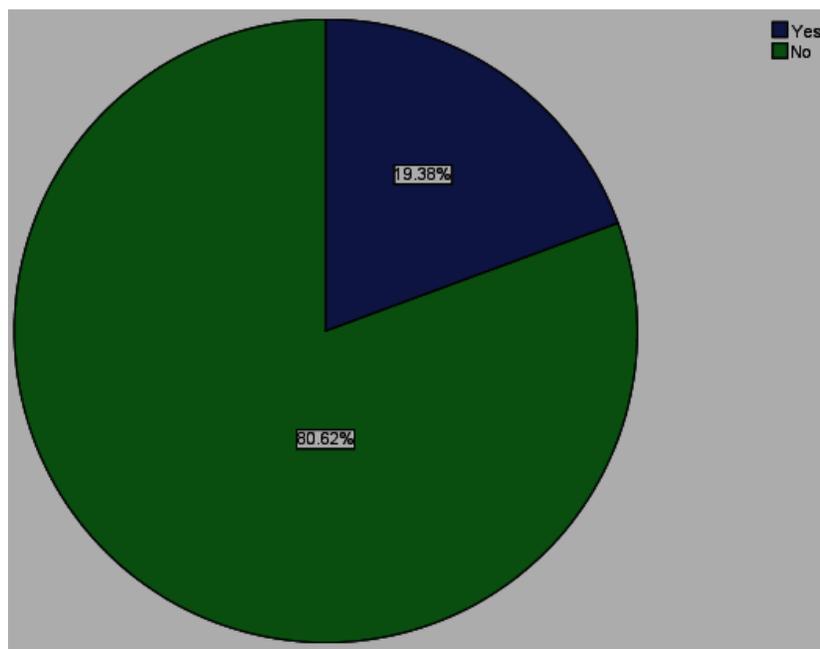


Source: Primary data, 2019

Findings of the study as shown in Figure 5 above indicate that majority of the respondents, 99 (61.88%), had received training on nutrition reporting from a workshop, while 33 (20.62%) had undergone a certificate course training, 28 (17.50%) received training from a seminar. There were no respondents who had received training on nutrition reporting in other ways except for a workshop, seminar and certificate course. The majority of the journalists therefore received training on nutrition reporting from a workshop, this kind of training is inadequate.

Their expertise to produce nutrition stories is very minimal and this has effects on their ability to communicate messages around good nutrition and healthy diets.

Figure 6: Shows respondents' level of confidence to report on nutrition as a result of the training



Sources: Primary data, 2019

According to the study findings, as indicated on Figure 6 above, majority of the respondents, 129 (80.62%), revealed that they were not confident enough to report on nutrition as a result of the training they received; 31 (19.38%) said they were confident to report on nutrition after the training. This denotes that a huge number of respondents despite receiving some form of training on nutrition reporting still have no confidence to report on nutrition. Therefore, media's contribution to providing the public with verified information on nutrition and helping people to make informed decisions on food choices as well as healthy diets is trifling.

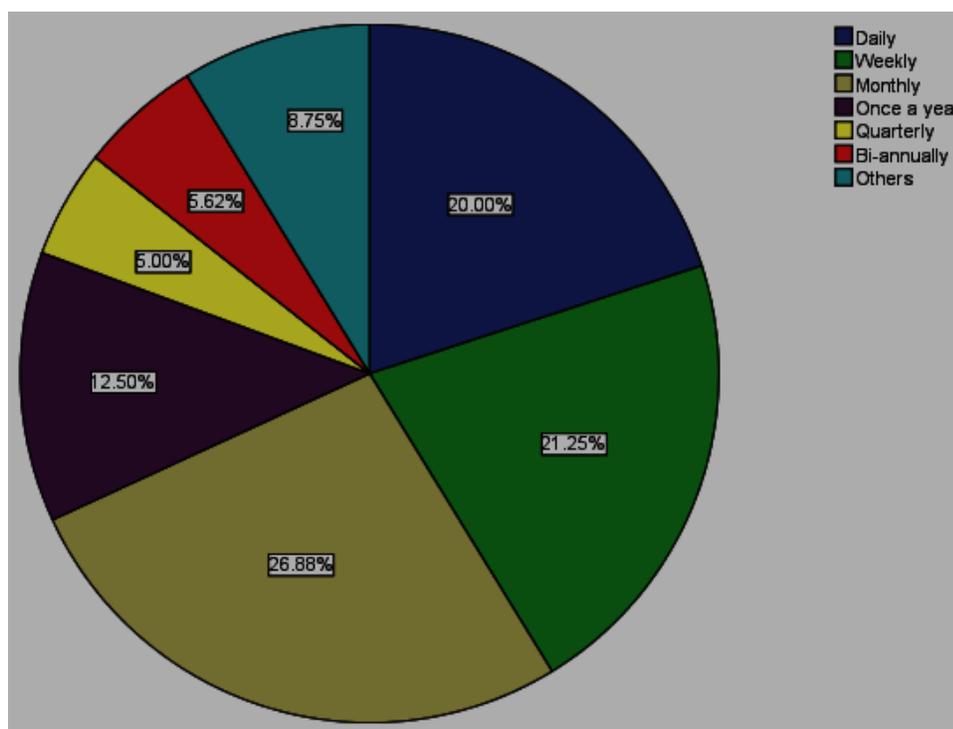
Why the lack of confidence to report on nutrition as a result of the training?

Study findings revealed the following reasons as to why respondents were less confident to report on nutrition.

- i. They are not knowledgeable enough even after undergoing a training
- ii. They need to acquire more skills to better their nutrition reporting

- iii. They want more frequent trainings because nutrition is wide and a less exploited area of reporting

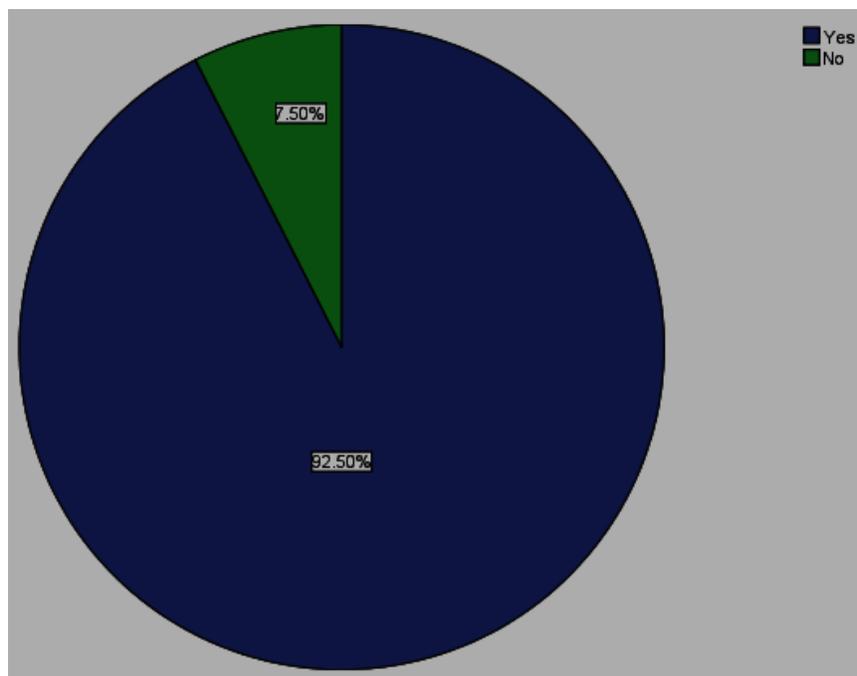
Figure 7: Shows frequency of publishing or broadcasting a Nutrition story



Source: Primary data, 2019

The findings in Figure 7 above indicate that majority of respondents, 43 (26.88%), said that they publish or broadcast a nutrition story on a monthly basis, followed by 34 (21.25%) who said that they publish or broadcast on a weekly basis, whereas 32 (20.00%) said they publish or broadcast a nutrition story on a daily basis. Those who publish or broadcast once a year are 20 (12.50%), while 14 (8.75%) are the respondents who neither publish nor broadcast a nutrition story daily, weekly, monthly, once a year, quarterly and bi-annually. Meanwhile, 9 (5.62%) are the respondents who have published or broadcasted a nutrition story bi-annually and finally, 8 (5.00%) revealed they publish or broadcast on a quarterly basis. This suggests that respondents often publish or broadcast a nutrition story on a monthly basis. Consequently, it justifies the limited media coverage on nutrition issues.

Figure 8: Shows whether respondents recommend for journalists to be trained on reporting about Nutrition



Source: primary data, 2019

According to Figure 8, above, majority of the respondents, 148 (92.50%), recommend that journalists should be trained on reporting about nutrition while 12 (7.50%) did not recommend for training of journalists on reporting about nutrition. This indicates that a big number of respondents would want journalists to undergo training on nutrition reporting. Hence giving justifying reason for this study.

Why the recommendation for journalists' to be trained on reporting about nutrition?

The study findings revealed the following reasons as to why respondents recommend that journalists should be trained on reporting about nutrition;

- i. It will help them exploit the area of nutrition and frequently give the subject better media coverage
- ii. Journalists are people's voices; they (journalists) will not only educate people about nutrition but also show people's perceptions of the subject.

- iii. Training will help journalists to be more knowledgeable on matters concerning nutrition
- iv. Trained Journalists authoritatively increase awareness about nutrition
- v. Training will make them sensitize the masses from an informed point of view
- vi. Training will sharpen their reporting skills
- vii. Trained Journalists will report about nutrition with more confidence
- viii. It will increase on the coverage of nutrition stories; this increased coverage will lead to an informed society which will be more conscious of its nutrition habits.

Table 8: Age Vs having any training on Nutrition Reporting

| | | Have you had any training on Nutrition Reporting? | | Total |
|-------|--------------|---|------------|------------|
| | | Yes | No | |
| Age | 18-25 years | 14 | 23 | 37 |
| | 26-35 years | 31 | 73 | 104 |
| | 36-45 years | 5 | 11 | 16 |
| | 46 and above | 0 | 3 | 3 |
| Total | | 50 | 110 | 160 |

Sources: Primary data, 2019

When comparing the Age of respondents who had received any form of training on Nutrition Reporting, majority of respondents who had no training on nutrition reporting are rated at 73 against 31 who had received training; these reporters were between the ages of 26 – 35 years, as indicated on Table 8 above. Therefore, many young experienced journalists have not received any form of training on nutrition reporting which contributes to limited media coverage and inaccuracy on nutrition issues stories.

Table 9: Shows Gender Vs having any training on Nutrition Reporting

| | | Have you had any training on Nutrition Reporting? | | Total |
|--------|--------|---|-----|-------|
| | | Yes | No | |
| Gender | Male | 26 | 63 | 89 |
| | Female | 24 | 47 | 71 |
| Total | | 50 | 110 | 160 |

Source: Primary data, 2019

Gender of respondents was compared because informants' gender has bearing on training. From the findings shown on Table 9 above, of the 89 (55.6%) male respondents, 63 (70%) said they had not received any form of training on nutrition reporting, while 26 (29.2%) disclosed to have received training in nutrition reporting. Out of the 71 (44.4%) female respondents, 47 (66.2%) said they had not received any form of training on nutrition reporting, while 24 (33.8%) said they had had some form of training on nutrition reporting.

This indicates that respondents from both gender have a high percentage of those who have not received any form of training on nutrition reporting. This can possibly be attributed to either lack of opportunity or access to the trainings proven by the journalists' responses when they were asked if they would recommend for a training to be undertaken for them. Female radio journalists' said the trainings would "improve on their reporting skills and help them better sensitize the mass while knowledgeable".

Table 10: Shows type of media respondents currently work in Vs having any training on Nutrition Reporting

| | | Have you had any training on Nutrition Reporting? | | Total |
|--|------------|---|-----|-------|
| | | Yes | No | |
| In what type of media do you currently work? | Radio | 22 | 47 | 69 |
| | Television | 20 | 29 | 49 |
| | Newspaper | 4 | 17 | 21 |
| | Blog | 2 | 7 | 9 |
| | Magazine | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | Newsletter | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Other | 2 | 9 | 11 |
| Total | | 50 | 110 | 160 |

Source: Primary data, 2019

The type of media respondents currently work in was compared with training on nutrition reporting because various types of media have impact from training on nutrition reporting. According to the findings on Table 10, respondents who work with Radio were 69 with 47 of these saying they had not had any form of training on nutrition reporting and 22 said they had received training on nutrition reporting. Respondents who work in Television were rated at 49 with 29 disclosing they had not received any training and 20 accounting for those who had received training, whereas respondents' who currently work for a Newspaper house were rated at 21 with 17 of these disclosing they had not received any form of training on nutrition reporting and 4 said they had had training. Respondents who work in other types of media accounted for 11 with 9 disclosing they had not had any form of training on nutrition reporting and 2 said they had received some training. Respondents who blog accounted for 9 with 7 saying they had not had any form of training and 2 agreed to have undergone some training in nutrition reporting, while 1 respondent who works for a magazine had had training. There was no respondent working for a Newsletter.

Considering the findings above, the highest percentage of journalists who have not had any form of training on nutrition reporting currently work in radio.

With the number of radio stations in the country today, there is a possibility that lack of facilitation to journalists, poor pay and lack of interest from journalists are reasons for the high percentage.

Table 11: Shows responds level of education Vs having any training on Nutrition Reporting

| | | Have you had any training on Nutrition Reporting? | | Total |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|---|-----|-------|
| | | Yes | No | |
| What is your level of education? | Certificate | 5 | 10 | 15 |
| | Diploma | 21 | 31 | 52 |
| | Degree | 24 | 68 | 92 |
| | Master's degree | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | PhD | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Others | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | | 50 | 110 | 160 |

Source: Primary data, 2019

The level of education of the respondents was compared with training on nutrition reporting because respondents' education level has a bearing on their ability to comprehend nutrition issues. According to table 11 above, of the 92 (57.5%) respondents with a degree, 68 (73.9%) said they had not had any training on nutrition reporting and 24 (26.1%) said they had received training. Respondents with a Diploma 52 (32.5%) accounted for 31 (59.6%) who said they had not received any training on nutrition reporting and 21 (40.4%) disclosed that they had had some form of training on nutrition reporting. Respondents with Certificate as their level of education accounted for 15 (9.4%) with 10 (66.7%) disclosing that they have not had any training on nutrition reporting while 5 (33.3%) said they had undertaken some training on nutrition reporting. Only one respondent had a Master's Degree who has had training in nutrition reporting. There were no respondents' for PhD level of education.

Given the findings above, majority of the journalists with a degree as their level of education have not had any form of training on nutrition reporting.

This can possibly be attributed to either lack of opportunity or access to the trainings. Radio journalists' from western, eastern and northern Uganda said the trainings would "improve on their reporting skills and knowledge so that they sensitize masses while they are knowledgeable".

Table 12: Shows how often a nutrition story is published or broadcasted Vs the type of media respondents currently work in

| | | In what type of media do you currently work | | | | | | Total |
|--|-------------|---|------------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|------------|
| | | Radio | Television | Newspaper | Blog | Magazine | Other | |
| How often do you publish or broadcast a nutrition story? | Daily | 13 | 9 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 32 |
| | Weekly | 18 | 11 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 34 |
| | Monthly | 16 | 16 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 4 | 43 |
| | Once a year | 10 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 20 |
| | Quarterly | 1 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 8 |
| | Bi-annually | 0 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 9 |
| | Others | 11 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14 |
| Total | | 69 | 49 | 21 | 9 | 1 | 11 | 160 |

Sources: Primary data, 2019

According to Table 12, above, the frequency of publishing or broadcasting a nutrition story was matched with the type of media respondents currently work in since several media types have different frequencies for publishing or broadcasting a nutrition story. The findings indicated that the highest frequency of publication or broadcast being monthly rated at 43 (26.9%), followed by weekly rated at 34 (21.3%), then daily at 32 (20%), Once a year rated at 20 (12.5%), others at 14 (8.8%), bi-annually 9 (5.7%) and finally quarterly 8 (5%). Also Radio has the most broadcast of nutrition stories accounting for 69 (43.1%), followed by Television with 49 (30.6%), then Newspaper at 21 (13.1%), other types of media at 11 (6.9%), Blog at 9 (5.6%) and Magazine at 1 (0.6%).

In view of the findings above, publishing and broadcasting a nutrition story is often done on a monthly basis, with Radio having the highest frequency in airing these stories.

This implies that there is a low occurrence of getting nutrition information to the public which maybe possibly attributed to lack of training on nutrition reporting. This is demonstrated by journalists' responses when asked if they had had any form of training on nutrition reporting. A huge percentage (68.75%) said 'no'. Similarly, their response when asked if they would recommend for training on reporting about nutrition can also prove that lack of training on nutrition reporting highly contributes to the low frequency of publishing or broadcasting a nutrition story by various media types. Most journalists (92.50%) revealed they would recommend for training on reporting about nutrition. And they justified this by saying "it will promote better sensitization of the masses, help them improve on reporting skills, increase on the coverage of nutrition stories, build on their confidence, present an opportunity to exploit further on reporting about nutrition, help produce all round journalists and increase on their knowledge base".

Training journalists on nutrition reporting is one of the activities CISANU undertakes to increase media coverage of nutrition program and promote nutrition awareness. At present, there is limited media coverage on nutrition issues and this can be pointed to various reasons.

Thus, continuing to involve the media to produce meaningful content on nutrition purposed to educate the public will contribute to the fight in ending malnutrition in Uganda. It is therefore important to empower the media to promote good nutrition through informed reporting.

Table 13: Shows whether respondents' have received any training in Journalism Vs if they have equally had any training on Nutrition Reporting

| | | Have you had any training on Nutrition Reporting? | | |
|---|-----|---|-----|-------|
| | | Yes | No | Total |
| Have you received any training in journalism? | Yes | 48 | 97 | 145 |
| | No | 2 | 13 | 15 |
| Total | | 50 | 110 | 160 |

Source: Primary data, 2019

Comparing if the respondents had received both training in journalism and training on nutrition reporting was significant to this study because either training have an impact on the coverage of nutrition issues. According to Table 13 above, out of the 145 (90.6%) respondents, 97 (66.9%) said they had received training in journalism but not on nutrition reporting while 48 (33.1%) disclosed to have had both trainings. Meanwhile, of the 15 (9.4%) respondents, 13 (86.7%) said they had not had any of the trainings while 2 (13.3%) disclosed to have had training on nutrition reporting and not journalism.

The findings show that a big percentage of journalists have been trained in journalism but not on nutrition reporting; perhaps due to lack of opportunity or access to trainings on nutrition as well as lack of interest from the journalists. Consequently, contributing to the limited media coverage on nutrition issues which can be pointed to reasons such as; inadequate knowledge and absence of easily accessible information. This is supported by journalists' responses when they were asked how often they publish or broadcast a nutrition story with many saying they did on a monthly basis.

Augmenting aptitude of the media to comprehend and address issues regarding nutrition becomes imperative as it advances comprehensive reporting on food availability, food access, and food utilization for communities.

LIMITATIONS AND STRENGTHS

The sample selection was systematic enough for the findings to be generalizable to the media population. Also the use of a standardized questionnaire means findings can be compared to other studies of a similar nature.

The findings from the survey could have been subject to a certain level of bias, hence not reflecting true opinions among all respondents. All participants were however assured that their responses would be treated with at most confidentiality in order to reduce on the bias.

These findings will be important in enhancing media's capacity in understanding and informing the public about nutrition as well as empower them to promote good nutrition through informed reporting.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

Media plays a significant role on how information is disseminated and how societies are wrought and operate. For that reason, it is vital to fathom the way media works and provide them with resources and tools to enable them execute a robust role in ensuring accurate and adequate coverage of nutrition issues.

Unfortunately, it was discovered that many journalists have not received any form of training on nutrition reporting and the few who have had an opportunity to get some training, have very low level of confidence in reporting nutrition stories. Their skills in this regard are very minimal and it has an effect on their capability to communicate messages around good nutrition and health diets. This discovery also deduces that media's contribution to providing the public with verified information on nutrition and helping people to make informed decisions on food choices as well as healthy diets is trifling.

Generally, findings of the study revealed that the biggest challenge affecting coverage of nutrition issues are:

- i. Inadequate knowledge and absence of easily accessible information on nutrition issues
- ii. Inadequate skills to produce and report nutrition stories
- iii. Lack of interest from journalists' on nutrition issues
- iv. Inadequate support from media houses
- v. lack of opportunity or access to trainings on nutrition reporting

Proposed Recommendations

Findings form a basis to enhance media's capacity in understanding and informing the public about nutrition as well as empower them to promote good nutrition through informed reporting as follows:

- i. Have a nutrition media training guide that will be a baseline to skilling journalists in nutrition reporting.

- ii. Have a standardized curriculum to ensure journalism training is comprehensive
- iii. Encourage frequent skills training to strengthen reporting skills on nutrition
- iv. Encourage investigative reports that will tell a robust story on nutrition since much of the reporting is still based on covering events
- v. Provide mentorship opportunities and fellowship programs to improve reporting on nutrition and health-related issues.
- vi. More effort should be put to improve the media's understanding of nutrition issues so as to better the accuracy and quality of nutrition coverage.
- vii. It is important to build journalists' capacity development, but further work in ensuring support at the top level of management and editorial policy making is also necessary to ensure improvement in reporting on nutrition.

Media's role in creating awareness and influencing policy within the country is significant and this goes beyond conventional reporting to being partners who take a lead in communicating information that promotes inclusive agricultural productivity growth, better nutritional outcomes and strengthened livelihood resilience.

It is important to improve the media's ability in informing about nutrition hence, enhancing their capacity in appreciating nutrition issues becomes vivacious as it improves sound reporting on food availability, access, and utilization for people.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX ONE: Nutrition Media Skill Survey Questionnaire (Journalists)

The media have a big role to play in providing the public with verified information on nutrition, thereby helping people to make informed decisions. It is therefore important to empower the media to promote good nutrition through informed reporting. This survey conducted by Civil Society Alliance for Nutrition (CISANU) is aimed at finding out whether journalists have been exposed to any form of training on nutrition reporting. This is aimed at establishing ways of strengthening the skills of journalists to produce nutrition stories. The training is one of the activities being undertaken by CISANU to increase media coverage of nutrition programs and promote nutrition awareness.

Please note that this survey is voluntary, non-commercial and by participating, one is confirming to have given informed consent.

1. Gender: (Please tick appropriately)

- a) Male
- b) Female

2. Age: (Please tick appropriately)

- a) 18 – 25
- b) 26– 35
- c) 36 - 45
- d) 46 and Above

3. In what type of media do you currently work? (Please tick what applies)

- a) Radio
- b) Television
- c) Newspaper
- d) Blog
- e) Magazine
- f) Newsletter
- g) Others: Please specify

4. Which media house are you working with?

.....
.....

5. What is the geographical coverage of the media house you are working with?

- a) Local
- b) National
- c) Regional
- d) International

6. If your coverage is local, which region of Uganda is your primary target?

- a) Central region
- b) Eastern region
- c) Northern region
- d) Western region

7. How long have you worked as a journalist?

- a) 0 - 2 years
- b) 3 - 5 years
- c) 6 - 10 years
- d) More than 10 years

8. What is your level of education?

- a) Certificate
- b) Diploma
- c) Degree
- d) Masters
- e) PhD
- f) Others (specify).....

9. Have you received any training in journalism?

- a) Yes
- b) No

10. If yes what level?

- a) Certificate
- b) Diploma
- c) Degree
- d) Masters
- e) PhD
- f) Others (specify).....

11. Have you had any training on Nutrition Reporting?

- a) Yes
- b) No

If yes, what kind of training was it?

- a) Workshop
- b) Seminar
- c) Certificate course
- d) Others (specify).....

If yes, are you now more confident to report on nutrition as a result of the training?

- a) Yes
- b) No

Please explain

.....
.....

12. How often do you publish or broadcast a nutrition story?

- a) Daily
- b) Weekly
- c) Monthly
- d) Once a year
- e) Quarterly
- f) Bi-annually
- g) Others (specify).....

13. Would you recommend that journalists should be trained on reporting about nutrition?

- a) Yes
- b) No

14. Please explain

.....

.....

Thank you for your response

ANNEX TWO: Photos of CISANU Conducting Regional Nutrition Media Briefings (NMB)



NMB in Gulu: CISANU Convener Mr. Richard Baguma (left) and Mr. Boaz Musiimenta (right) from OPM speaking to journalists



NMB in Fort portal Kabarole: Mr. Boaz Musiimenta from OPM speaking to journalists as CISANU Program Officer Ms. Georgine Obwana looks on

ANNEX THREE: Photos of CISANU Conducting Regional Nutrition Media Briefings (NMB)



NMB in Jinja: CISANU Convener Mr. Richard Baguma (left) and Mr. Boaz Musiimenta (right) from OPM briefing journalists' looking on (white coat) is the Director Jinja Referral Hospital



NMB in Arua: CISANU Program Officer Ms. Georgine Obwana (left) and Mr. Paul Onzubo DHO Maracha District (right) speaking to journalists

ANNEX FOUR: Photos of CISANU Conducting Regional Nutrition Media Briefings (NMB)



NMB in Kampala: CISANU Convener Mr. Richard Baguma (left) and Mr. Boaz Musiimenta (right) from OPM speaking to journalists' on the promotion and consumption of Ugandan local nutrient-rich Diets

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