



# **KISII UNIVERSITY**

## **ATTACHMENT REPORT**

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**COURSE : COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA**

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**ORGANIZATION: MINISTRY OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND  
TECHNOLOGY [KNA, HOMA BAY]**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report is organized in the following order.

### **Chapter One: Introduction**

This chapter explains the purpose, scope and limitations. It also gives an introduction to the Kenya News Agency, including its background, mission, vision and main business.

### **Chapter Two: Project Background**

This chapter summarizes the background information of the Kenya News Agency as well as the student's responsibilities.

### **Chapter Three: Training, Research and Implementation**

This chapter discusses the training and research done by the students, as well as the results of the implementation.

### **Chapter Four: The Attachment Conclusion**

This chapter gives the overall conclusion of the industrial attachment and further recommendation for improvement.

### **Chapter Five: References**

This includes the references used by the student.

## **DECLARATION**

I, Otieno Lawrence, hereby declare that this training report is my original work and has not been submitted before for any academic award either in this or other institutions of higher learning for academic publication or any other purpose. The references used here from other journals or materials are indicated in the references section.

Name: Otieno Lawrence.

Signature..... Date 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2016.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

First, I want to thank the Almighty God for bringing me this far and keeping me sound and safe with good life during the entire field attachment period.

The development of this report took the effort, support and guidance of a number of people whom I wish to thank.

I am grateful to my course COD Dr. Vincent Moracha for his guidance and constructive criticisms.

I also wish to pay tribute to my attachment field supervisor, Mr. Dan Oduor who edited my submitted copies and guided me on ways of improving my skills in gathering news and writing better feature stories.

I also thank my mother Peres Onyango whose moral and financial support has remained unrelenting, my sister Phenila Onyango, dear friends and colleague journalists at KNA whose motivations during the field attachment kept me moving.

I cannot end this list without paying tribute to the entire Kisii University FIST Lecturers particularly those from the department of Communication Studies for their constructive training and the knowledge they have imparted in me throughout the three years training. May God bless you all.

## **DEDICATION**

I wish to dedicate this work to my mother Peres Onyango whose moral and financial support has remained unrelenting, and my sister Phenila Onyango.

## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this report is to provide the details of the institution of attachment, a description of all the activities undertaken during the attachment period, the lessons learnt and challenges faced during the same.

Katherine B (2013) Argues that, a robust media is a key pillar in any democratic nation and the robustness can only be achieved by practicing objective journalism without fear or favor.

The need to conglomerate the old media and modern technology has transformed the media landscape dramatically offering a steadily swelling flow of materials through many channels and the goal to address the increasing need to have access to an enormous and diverse array of knowledge on televisions, magazines, internet, radio and even mobile phones calls for creativity and the writing of ‘the day two’ story, Josephine Kinuthia – Head KNA.

This project which contributed to part of the above allowed me to acquire the vast knowledge of objective journalism and mainly focusing on Peace journalism.

Jane and Annabel (2005) describes Peace journalism as solution oriented, giving voice to the voiceless, humanizing the enemy and exposing lies on all sides.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Intro** is the first paragraph of a story.

**An Industrial Attachment** is a structured, credit-bearing work experience in a professional work setting during which the student applies and acquires knowledge and skills.

**Ministry** is a government department under the direction of a Cabinet Secretary.

**Headline story** is a newspaper's/Magazine's main story placed on the front page.

**Point and shoot camera** is a camera specifically designed for still photography.

**HDV Video Camera** is a high definition video camera for quality videography.

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

- 1. KNA – Kenya News Agency**
- 2. ICT – Information, communications and technology**
- 3. KBC – Kenya Broadcasting Corporation**
- 4. FIST – Faculty of information studies and technology**
- 5. IT – Information Technology**
- 6. ADI – Assistant director of information**
- 7. CIO – County Information Officer**
- 8. DSLR – Digital Single Lens Reflex**
- 9. HDV – High Definition Video**
- 10. COD – Chair of department**



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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Industrial Attachment was introduced to inspire the students with practical and technical skills, as a partial fulfillment for the award of a Certificate, Diploma or a Degree and to introduce the students into working life.

The training time allows the students to link the theoretical principles learnt in the higher learning institutions and the real life professional and technical application.

It gives the students the practical skills and the work environment philosophy, to use their skills and principles learned in class to serve the institutions and the society in general.

Due to the above reasons, Kisii University has organized 12 weeks of training in any institution of students' choice to give every student an opportunity to apply the skills and knowledge achieved during the course of study and to acquire new skills in managing relationship and carrying out the jobs assigned.

This is the reason why I joined KNA to be trained in order to get practical skills and cut a niche for myself in the communication industry.

### **1.1 PURPOSE**

The industrial attachment program fulfils part of the requirement for the award of a Bachelor's Degree in Communication and Media (BCM) in Kisii University.

This report therefore provides a summary of the activities and duties carried out, as well as experience gained during my attachment period.

## **1.2 SCOPE AND LIMITATION**

The training is all round and not limited to print or broadcast journalism. The field activities though covers a limited geographical scope with a major focus on Homa Bay County.

The County is constituted of eight Sub Counties; Rachuonyo North, South and East, Mbita, Suba, Rangwe, Homa Bay and Ndhiwa in which my practical application revolved.

However, I was at times involved in various activities within the South Nyanza Region which covers Homa Bay, Migori, Kisii and Nyamira Counties.

## **1.3. The Kenya News Agency**

Abbreviated as KNA

### **1.3.1 History of Kenya News Agency**

The work of the Kenya News Agency as a national news gathering operation began decades earlier with the Kenya Information Service (KIS) formed in 1939 to disseminate information on World War II, in 1945. After the war, the service changed its name to the African Information Service (AIS) and it served as an information unit mainly for the white settlers of the colonial British government.

Between 1953 and 1954 the AIS became the Department of Information with the appointment of the first Director of Information and the first press officers. The new Department consisted of several sections – Administrative, African, Press, Films and Photographs, Provincial Organizations and Information and Reference sections. It was administered from the Office of the Chief Secretary, who at the time was Richard Turnbull. The Department of Information served mainly as a propaganda machine especially during the state of emergency between 1954 and 1960

In 1962 in the lead up to independence, the Department was moved to the Ministry of State for Constitutional Affairs and Administration under then Hon. Ronald Ngala. On December 5, 1963, the agency was rebranded to the Kenya News Agency. On December 12, 1963 Kenya attained self-rule and the Office of the Prime Minister was established with Jomo Kenyatta as the first Prime Minister of Kenya. Kenyatta convened his cabinet with the Hon. Achieng Oneko as the first Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Tourism. The Ministry's functions then included Information Service (including Publications & Photographic Services) and the then newly created Kenya News Agency and Press Office.

As a state-owned agency the Kenya News Agency was expected to project a positive image of Kenya and promote the work of the Government. With a national network, the Agency was initially the primary source of news report from outside the capital Nairobi, but as the road networks expanded and internet infrastructure improved, access to the rural areas became easier and more affordable for private sector news organization to send their own reporters to cover news outside Nairobi.

The agency's headquarter is in Nairobi and is currently run by the Department of Information under the ministry of ICT. News reports are created by KNA reporters in 72 County and Sub-County offices and disseminated from the National Editorial Desk (Press Office) in Nairobi to subscribers made up of news media companies in Kenya and around the world. Their services also include Electronic/TV News Unit, Mobile Cinema and Photographic Services.

Being a state owned news agency, KNA works hand in hand with KBC and its affiliate stations to fulfil its information dissemination mandate.

KNA has in the past produced the following publications:

- *Habari* [1921 Monthly]
- *Habari za Vita* (News of the War) [Weekly]
- *Baraza* [1939]
- *Pamoja* [1939]
- Kenya Today

And is currently producing a magazine dubbed ‘The Eye’

### **1.3.2. Main Functions**

Like any other classical information agency, The KNA prides itself of living to its dreams which include;

#### **i. To inform**

The agency has continuously updated its adverse mass audience by relaying breaking news, informative communications among others by the use of the different state broadcast media and the internet.

#### **ii. To educate**

Through its several products, the house has educative programmes aimed at enlightening its mass audience. For instance, KBC has an array of health and other critical programmes that educates viewers on various health issues.

**iii. To entertain**

KNA and the KBC have several programmes both in print and broadcast with entertainment as sole aim. For instance Home Grown Live on KBC is tailored to entertain audience.

**iv. To agenda set**

Through its editorial and other articles, The KNA, like any other information agency has continuously set agenda for the nation. For instance, during the nationwide CORD demonstrations that lasted for about one and half a month, the house carried stories on the demonstrations with the aim of pushing the government and opposition to reach amicable solution.

All these are achieved through reporting, publishing and broadcasting relevant and timely content through the group's talented and professional staff across all the multimedia platforms.

**1.3.3. Mission, Vision and mandate**

**Vision:** To be a leading news and information provider globally.

**Mission:** To gather, process, package and disseminate news and information for national development in line with the constitution of Kenya Vision 2030.

**Mandate:** To provide news and information to enable the public make informed decisions on matters pertaining their welfare.

**Key Objectives**

- Gather, process, package and disseminate news and information for development to the public through the agency's networks.

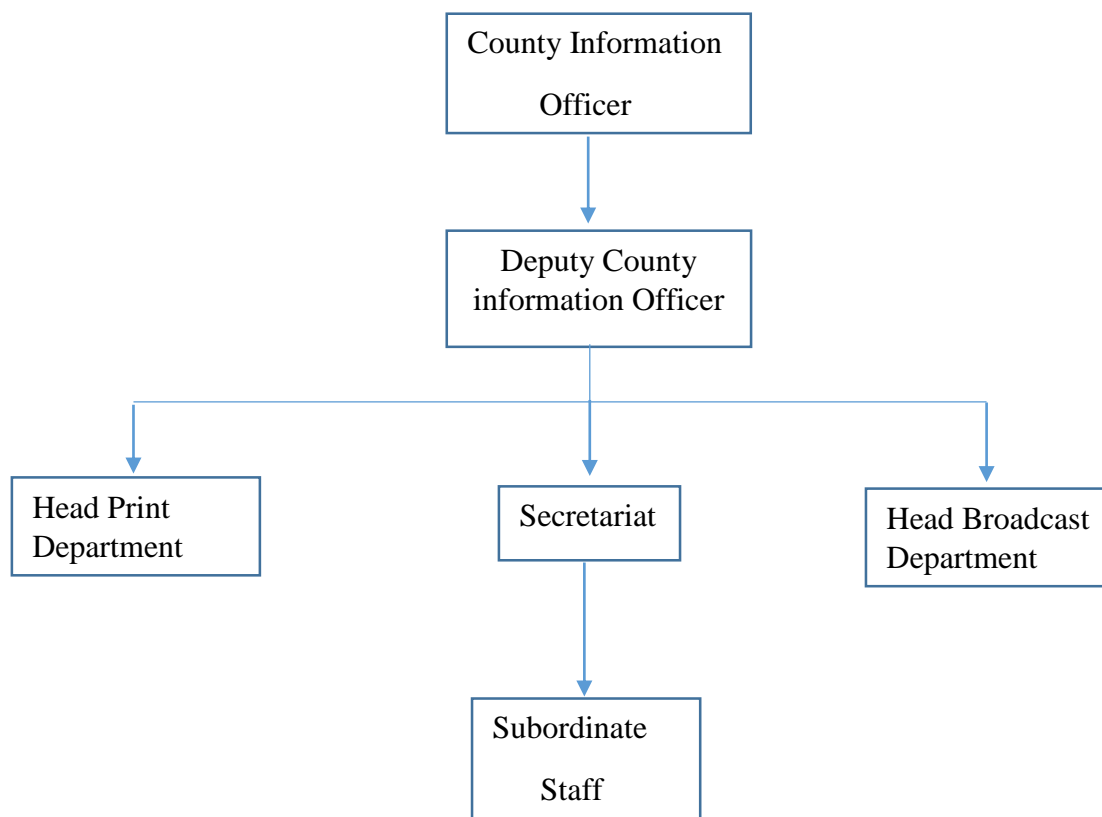


- Tap and utilize modern technology to avail accurate, timely and quality news and information to the public.
- Sensitize members of the public on the constitution in collaboration with relevant stakeholders.
- Popularize Kenya vision 2030 through rural press publications and mobile cinema services.
- Interpret, analyze and propagate government policies and programmes through information services.
- Digitize and archive historic information materials for current and posterity use.

### 1.3.4. Organizational structure

*Table 1.1*

#### KNA, County Headquarters' Organogram



KNA which has its headquarters in Nairobi has a centralized system of management with major decisions being made by the top most management.

At the regional level, like South Nyanza, Bureau chief acts as the regional editors assume the administration role of supervising other staff and implementation of directives from the head office.

He/she helps the company identify personnel who can work for the group at various levels within the region.

KNA has three departments;

➤ **Editorial department**

This is the department that execute the core mandate of the agency of gathering and disseminating information to the mass audience among other roles as mentioned above.

The department is headed by the Editorial director, Chief Editor, Managing Editor and supported by several other senior editors.

This department has editors, reporters, correspondents, camera persons, photographers among other journalism professionals.

➤ **Commercial department**

Though the agency is owned by the state, the services are never provided for freely.

This team is involved in looking for clients to place advertisements in both the print and broadcast platforms.

It is a very crucial department since advertisement forms the major source of income for any media outlet.

The department works hand-in-hand with the editorial department in executing its roles for example journalists help in writing supplementary among other interlinked roles.

The department is headed by Commercial director and supported by other staff holding managerial positions in the department.

Those engaged in the sales and marketing for advertisements are known as executive officers.

➤ **Sales and circulation department**

As the name suggest, this department deals with sales and circulation of the agency's products.

They ensure the group's products like magazines reach consumers in time in all parts of the country.

The department assign magazine vendors and other players in the sale of the group's products.

**1.3.5. Management structure of Editorial department**

The group is headed by a board of directors. The directors are supported by assistant directors who are in-charge of their various regions.

The editorial department is headed by Editorial Director, Chief Editor and Managing Editor in that order.

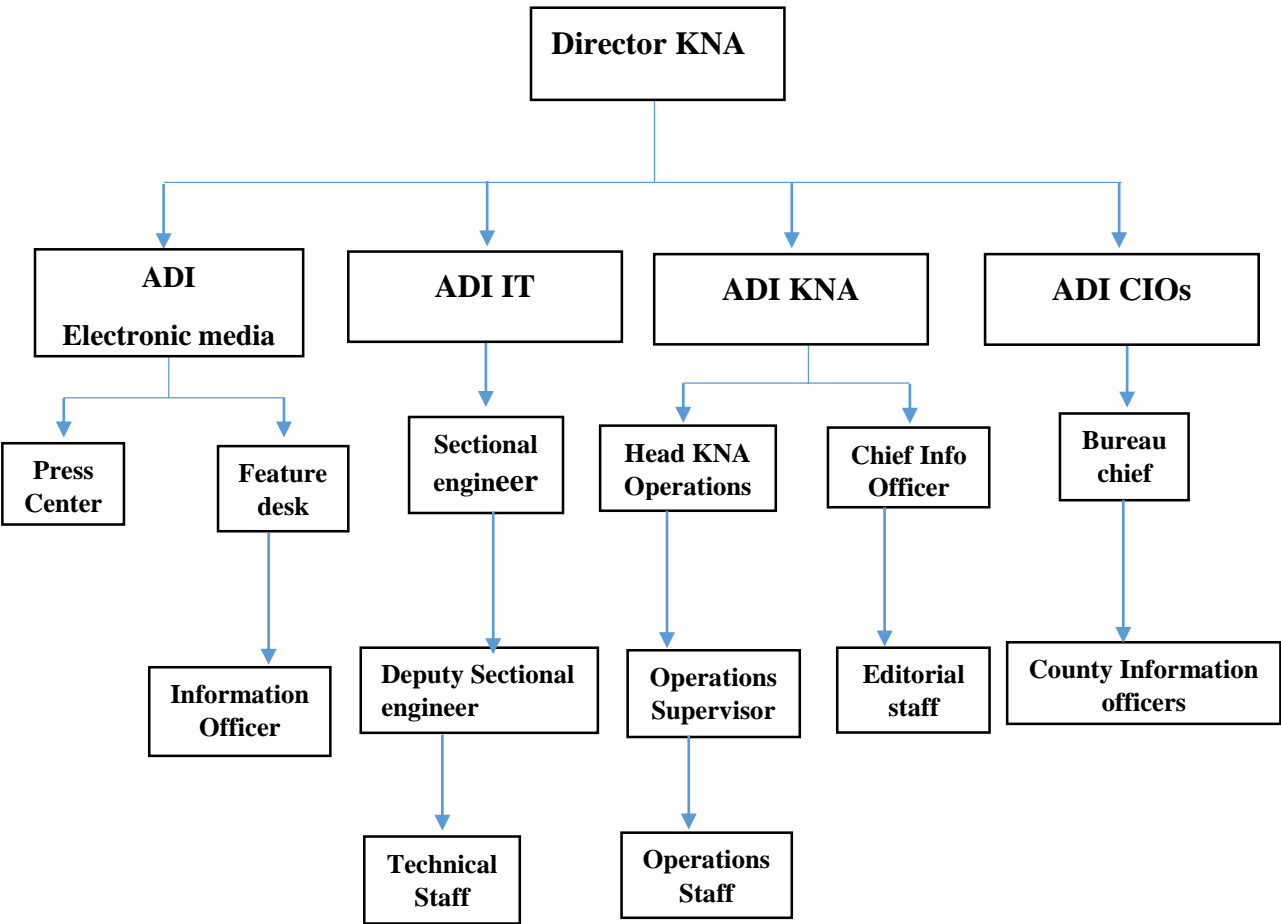
At the county level, the County editor who is also the County Information officer works to check factual, grammatical, spelling errors and other mistakes in a story before submitting to Sub-editors based in Nairobi. He/she takes the administrative role and manages the county's activities in addition to facilitating the implementation of the agency's policies.

This department engages in gathering news, conducting interviews, writing news stories, editorial pieces, and opinion pieces among other roles entailing information dissemination.

Editorial department executes the core mandate of the agency of keeping its audience informed with what is happening in the country and globally.

Table 1.2

KNA National organizational structure



## CHAPTER TWO

### 2.0. PROJECT BACKGROUND

#### 2.1 Period of attachment

The field attachment which lasted for a period of twelve weeks started on 3<sup>rd</sup> May and ended on 3<sup>rd</sup> August of the year 2016. The period was characterized by executing duties both in the field for example attending press conferences and office functions. Being a busy News Agency, I could go to work even on weekend depending on the workload.

#### 2.2. Objectives

With the stiff competition in the media industry, I joined KNA with determination to cut a niche for myself in the profession. This entailed doing much on my own without waiting for directive from my internal supervisor and getting out of the way to create contact with sources of information within Homa Bay County and South Nyanza as a whole.

Some of the objectives I set included;

- To learn how to engage sources of information in soliciting for news through interviews.

This required some unique skills which make the interviewee feel at home while being questioned so as to open up and provide full information.

- To learn how to identify a story.

It is upon the journalist to identify a story and to pick on a story angle after attending press conferences, functions among other news sourcing platforms. To learn how to write an introduction famously known as an intro.

Writing an intro has always proved difficult even to seasoned writers. The intro should however be seasoned and catchy to catch the attention of the reader.

- To execute exclusive human interest stories

Many journalists in Kenya have always shown more interest in writing stories involving politicians ignoring the plight of the poor in the society. Towards this, I executed stories involving people with humble backgrounds and the unique things they do to positively impact the society.

- To create a niche in the media industry

The industry is very competitive and for one to create a mark they must engage in carrying out unique stories. I have created a niche by writing Feature stories in The Eye Magazine which is published monthly.

- To develop and maintain contacts of sources of information.

In journalism, sources of information are very crucial for one to survive in the media industry. They help you identify stories which turn to be main stories for the day. One also has to maintain them by agreeing to their terms i.e. concealing their identities if they are not comfortable it being disclosed.

- To always meet deadlines

Media houses are abuzz with activities and meeting deadlines is a mandatory requirement. And because of the need of every media house to be the first to break news, every journalist strives to meet the given deadlines to keep their media houses at the top of the game.

### **2.3. Key responsibilities**

Since I joined KNA I was engaged in covering different functions and submitting outcomes to my internal supervisor for subsequent submission to the head office for publishing. In addition, because of print media knowledge I gathered through continuous writing for campus' monthly



magazine ‘*The Campus Blaze*’ I fitted to the in-house style of the house and could be trusted with major stories for the newspaper and the website.

Some of the responsibilities I was assigned include;

➤ Covering court beats

The agency assigned me to cover court news ranging from civil to criminal cases. Some of the court stories I wrote and were published included a death sentence story involving a grandmother killing a grandson ‘**Grandmother sentenced to death for killing grandson**’ among other very many court stories.

➤ Covering stories from police

I was assigned by my internal supervisor to cover police stories and could go to the police station for The County Commander’s press briefing. I also managed to create contact within the police service in Homa Bay County and was capable of sourcing crime stories within the area.

➤ Covering Homa Bay County Assembly proceedings

I could also be given opportunity to cover proceedings of Homa Bay County Assembly. For instance, I covered the county’s budget reading for the fiscal year 2016/2017.

➤ Covering Sports stories

I was assigned duty by my internal supervisor to cover sports stories majorly the Lake region volley ball tournament that was held in Homa Bay High school sports ground.

➤ Community mobilization

As a young, energetic communication expert, I was assigned duties, not once to do a community mobilization accompanied by the relevant stakeholders. The mobilizations were for the community members to attend various functions within the county with the main advocacy carried out for the County Education day and the Madaraka day celebrations.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3.0 TRAINING, RESEARCH AND IMPLEMENTATION**

#### **3.1. Major activities involved**

Being an agency whose main agenda is to disseminate information, I was mainly engaged in news gathering, processing, packaging and dissemination. Some of the activities I was involved in include;

##### **➤ Conducting interviews**

As a source of news gathering, I was involved in conducting interviews both one-on-one and phone interviews. This was in view of generating factual information and packaging the information to be disseminated as news items for publications.

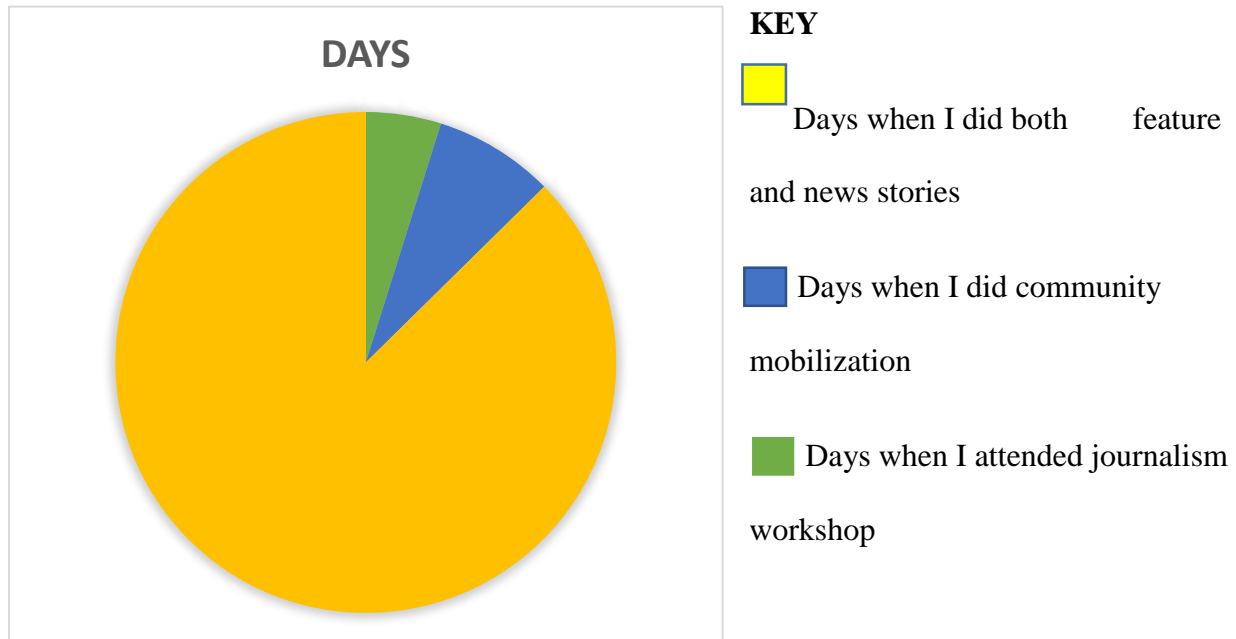
##### **➤ Attending functions and press conferences**

Press conferences and functions being another major source of information to be used in news writing, I was being assigned to attend the same with the view of identifying stories before writing.

##### **➤ Writing news and feature stories**

For the three-month period, I was fully engaged in writing both news and feature stories for The KNA website and the Eye Magazine. Like any other journalist employee of the agency, I was given a target of eighty stories during the entire period and was also expected to submit story ideas (famously known as docketing) for the day every morning which were later sent to head office by the County information officer.

*Table 1.3.*



### 3.2. Key Achievements

Media industry being a competitive field it takes dedication and hard work for one, especially those undertaking their field attachment, to make their bylines active.

During the field attachment I managed to make my byline active through submission of quality and balanced stories as per the canons of journalism making my stories be published on the agency's website almost on a daily basis.

The profession also requires personal drive to enable one execute stories of human interest under less supervision and assistance.

Some of the achievements I pride myself of include;

➤ **Doing a headline story**

As an intern I managed to write a story which The Eye Magazine carried as its main story for the July publication. Headline stories are carefully chosen by the papers' managing editor in consultation with other senior editors and are always of the public interest.

➤ **Created a niche in sports writing**

Through consistent submission of sport stories to The Eye magazine and the agency's editorial desk, I won the editor's confidence and have since become a regular contributor.

The stories whose main objective is to inform the public on what is trending in the world of sports has earned me recognition and the editor always contact to find out what stories I am working on for submission.

The passion for sports writing has also seen me secure an opportunity to do national sports stories for the Kenyan weekly newspaper and at times the People Daily newspaper.

➤ **Learnt the In-house style of the agency.**

Mastery of the in-house style of a media house makes ones stories be accepted for publishing by the house. I pride myself of quick mastery of The KNA house style, an achievement that enabled most of my stories get published with little or no editing.

➤ **Earning my internal supervisor's confidence to assign me major news stories.**

After staying with the agency for a couple of weeks, the County Information Officer and his KBC counterpart could assign me major tasks due to the quality stories I did.

The hard-work and knowledge of what I was expected to do earned me the rare opportunities of even accompanying the officers to most of the functions they attended.

The supervisor could also at times instruct me to assist my colleague attachés in finding the best angle to develop a news/feature story after collecting facts. This to me was a motivation and it came as a reward for my continued consultation to sharpen my story writing prowess.

### **3.3. Lessons learnt/skills acquired**

During the three month period I managed to acquire several skills which are pertinent to a journalist's survival in the competitive media industry.

For one to be able to execute some of the assignment perfectly they must be able to learn some of these skills.

Skills learnt include;

#### **➤ Interviewing skills**

This is a major source of news soliciting and is very important in developing a story. During my stay at KNA I could be assigned duties which involved conducting either one-on-one interviews or phone interviews and for one to be successful in conducting such he/she must learn the interviewing skills.

#### **➤ Nose for news**

Being a journalist entails developing skills to identify and follow news and feature stories for the media house. The three-month attachment acquainted me with the skills thereby making me fit well and remain relevant in the newsroom.

➤ **Writing skills Through continuous writing**

I learnt several skills in journalistic writings. For instance, court beats have unique terminologies involved i.e. Mitigation. The field attachment also enabled me sharpen my skills in intro writing which is very important as it makes readers develop interest in the piece of writing.

➤ **In-house style**

Every media house has its own writing style known as In-house style. The period offered me the opportunity to learn The KNA writing style. I also learnt the kind of stories given priority by the agency.

➤ **Story development**

Good stories should have roots for growth. It's upon the journalist to give a story ability to grow by developing it through follow up with an aim of providing solutions or provoking authorities concerned to act in remedy of the issue/problem, the story should not have unprofessional mutilation of the official principle of accuracy and fairness (Prof. Joe Kadhi in the Media observer).

In the story development, I also pride myself for practicing objective journalism without any fear or favor which should be the key mandate for professional journalists - Stuart (2004)

**3.4. Challenges faced**

As a young aspiring journalist, full of energy and the urge to adventure, my stay at the KNA did not go short of challenges and as Pst. Tom Muombo states, troubles never come singly. One challenge may have yielded another challenge.

➤ **Inadequate computers**

KNA being a government News agency witnesses a huge absorption of interns and this was not different from my attachment station. Despite the large number of interns, the facilities are few and the few are dilapidated.

In my station, there were only two functional desktop computers that all the interns (Seven) used for typing and editing purposes.

➤ **Inadequate cameras and voice recorders**

Cameras and recorders just like pen and paper are essential tools for broadcast journalism unfortunately, KNA (Homa Bay) is facing an ingrained challenge of lack of these essential journalistic tools with only one voice recorder and a single Point and shoot camera.

➤ **Meeting deadlines**

With two computers, one recorder and camera, meeting deadlines was very hectic and one had to persevere for the future to be bright.

**3.5. How I overcame the challenges**

Challenges just like any other day are things to be overcome. Having in mind that I have to cut a niche for myself in the journalism profession, I knew what I wanted and I had to go for it. I had to fight tooth and nail to ensure that my professionalism is not compromised by doing the following;

➤ **Purchasing a laptop.**

In relation to the dilapidated facilities, the talk of the day would always be survival of the fittest, and to survive more than the fittest in this case, I had to sacrifice luxury and purchase a laptop



which helped me a lot in meeting deadlines and at times going an extra mile to even do stories for the local dailies during my leisure times and after closure of business.

➤ **Borrowing a camera and recorder from other correspondents whenever need be**

Being that most of the correspondents for the various media houses are stationed within the agency, after recurrent interaction and creating contact with them, they could at times borrow me their recorders, DSLR cameras and even the HDV cameras. Most of them proved friendly that I can't wait to join them in the field of journalism.

I could however at times use my mobile phone to record the audios before transferring them to the laptop for editing.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4.0 ATTACHMENT CONCLUSION

#### 4.1. Summary

KNA being the oldest news agency in the country and in the East Africa has continued to be relevant to its diverse mass audience through its relevant and timely content.

This has seen the group record tremendous growth in the industry both in terms of infrastructure and development of new platforms like The Twitter account among other channels to reach its ever growing audience.

The agency has also continued to nurture talents in both broadcast and print media I being a beneficiary during the three-month industrial attachment period.

During the period, I gathered numerous skills necessary for any journalist who wants to be successful in the industry. For instance, interviewing skills which is crucial in news sourcing, writing skills which is necessary for any journalist be it print or broadcast among other skills.

The agency has a well-structured management headed by The Cabinet Secretary who has seen the coordination of the multimedia agency run smoothly.

The agency has also lived to its dream of informing, educating, and entertaining among other roles of any established media house.

#### 4.2 Reflection on personal development during the field attachment.

I set up goals during my attachment, to develop and improve areas that I find needed to be improved.

The working areas I developed and improved in during my 12 weeks attachment period are the following:

➤ **Work effectively**

My main focus was how to work effectively. I have achieved this during my attachment period by working and using a to-do list and a diary. The to-do-list existed of work that needed to be done first and had more priority than other daily tasks while the diary consisted of the tasks done and those pending to be done in future.

➤ **Work precisely**

To be a complete and focused journalist, I thought of the need to work precisely. At the beginning of my internship, I noticed that my work had lots of mistakes both in spelling and grammar in addition to delivering incomplete work. By the conclusion of my attachment, I have improved in this areas by reading different dailies and journals, listening and focusing better on my work.

➤ **Improve my communication skills**

Communication, not Just communication but effective communication should be part and parcel of effective journalism. During the kickoff of my industrial attachment I had a task to improve my communication skills. At the commencement of the attachment, I realized that I didn't communicate often. This is because I at times felt unsecure about my English and the 'Mother tongue interference'. At the end of the internship I have improved this by communicating more with the colleague interns, practicing journalists, interviewees and opinion shapers as well as being encouraged by my industrial supervisor.

➤ **Be more initiative**

Creativity is what differentiates a journalist from a better journalist. When I joined KNA I had the urge to be a better journalist and I immediately knew that to achieve this I had to be more adventurous, more inventive and more original. After a continuous struggle, I overcame all the retrogressive odds and secured a bit for myself (Sports reporting). I though did not ignore other bits as what the future may hold for me might be different.

Being more initiative also gave me a challenge to conglomerate both the rational and emotional aspects to refine a more human interest story. The driving force towards such a blend is the fact that women and children audience are more attracted to emotions while the male audience are fascinated by reasons (McQuail 1992).

#### **4.3. Conclusion**

The Ministry of Information, Communications and Technology through the KNA provides a good background for future dissemination of information and news to the people.

It also provides a chance for training young, energetic journalists to practice their skills by giving them full opportunity and a better background to work as media practitioners.

#### **4.4. Recommendations**

While it should be noted that the program, BA in Media and Communication, was well executed in terms of units being covered, it is also in order for the department to review the syllabus with view of incorporating more practicals.

It is understandable that the degree program was initially offered for those who yearned to work in the print media, managerial positions and policy makers. This however has changed and the degree holders are expected to do technical jobs like production and camera work among others.

It therefore calls for the department to engage its students on practical by introducing more units

to engage them on writing skills, presenting and camera work among other productions done in the modern media houses.

The idea to have the field attachment at the end of third year of studies was good as it gives students opportunity to adjust in their field of study while on their last academic year. However, it has also presented numerous challenges to students who extremely perform well at their industrial attachment places and the companies would like to retain them.

In my opinion, it would be in order if the department will review when students go for their attachment with the view of having it at the end of the fourth year of study.

Lastly, the Communications Department should find means of assisting students in the department in securing attachment places especially those pursuing media. This is because of the competitive nature of the media industry.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5.1. References

1. Katherine B (2013). Research Project: *Free Speech Debate*. Oxford University Printing Press, Britain.
2. Jane & Annabel (2005). Ethics for Journalists.
3. Kinuthia J. MEMO dated 14<sup>th</sup> June 2016; Guidelines to improving KNA copy.
4. The *Media Observer* (April-June 2015). Ford Foundation. Nairobi, Kenya.
5. McQuail D (1992) Media performance: Mass communication and the public interest. Sage, London.
6. Stuart A (2004). News and Journalism, New York. USA.

## 5.2 Appendix

### MEMO

To; All field stations  
From; Head, KNA  
Date; 14th June 2016

#### **SUBJECT; GUIDELINES TO IMPROVING KNA COPY**

As you are all aware we are embarking on the modernization of Kenya News Agency in a bid to transform into a modern media house attuned to the needs of its subscribers and the general population. As a part of this process we held a meeting with our publics and sought their counsel on how we can achieve this target.

Among the recommendations given regarding our products included the call to make our stories more interesting; Kenyans want light, interesting material that makes compelling reading. Our subscribers said that currently part of the reason they do not use our copy is that many times it does not meet this threshold. We must transit into writing better copy.

The following are guidelines to assist you make the change;-

1. Choice of story; our subscribers informed us that they are able to get the main stories of the day from their own people. What they need from us is the 'other story'. This is the story behind the main event and calls for one to have a discerning eye. It means that you should go beyond the given assignment and write the so called 'day two story'. For example if a Cabinet Secretary visits the site of the SGR railway currently under construction, it would more prudent for you to write about what the project will mean for the locals or how it will impact on the environment. In other words don't cover the main event because our subscribers have already done that.
2. Background info;- Conduct research on stories using resources such as the internet and other contacts in your area of operations. These could be government officials with information that could enhance a story. For example ask a chief to give briefs on the fight against illegal brews and children officer to tell you about the scourge of pedophilia.
3. Use your proximity to government to your advantage. Ministries periodically publish information and data which if unpacked becomes a story not written by other media houses. Find out if such data is generated at county level and get it. These documents are credible sources due to their authenticity and can form firm basis for your stories.
4. Personal initiative; it pays to have some drive. Create a network of credible people who can tip on upcoming events and projects. This will keep you ahead of others and ensure that you gain access to places others may not know about. When you rely on diary assignments you lose out on getting published.

5. Get onto social media; current audience trends show that the bulk of media audiences are youthful ones with a feel for new technology. Traditional media like newspapers and television are losing out to modern technology. This audience is on social media and they want their news and information at the click of a button. For this reason we are encouraging you to get onto this platform in a bid to create an outlet for our stories. Kindly get in touch with Mde. Esther Wanjau who will guide you on how to access this platform and how to use it. The twitter platform is the preferred one but we laud all those on other media like FB. Continue accessing it and exploiting its versatility.
6. Strive to improve quality; it is unfortunate that we are still receiving copy that fails the test with many structural and grammatical mistakes. Make sure you edit your own work and make efforts to read other peoples work in a bid to improve your style. In future such careless errors will not be tolerated. We are urging you all to strive for high standards at personal level and before you hit 'send' just ask yourself if your story impresses you and if you would publish it if you were a newspaper editor.
7. Attitude; It is important for us all to change our mind-set. Please note that editors are not supposed to re-write your stories for you neither are there to enhance your copy; that is your work. A nonchalant attitude that we have seen in some officers is not advisable so let us see some changes. Send flawless copy which after editing becomes excellent. That is the way to go.

I am aware that change is hard but in this case there are few options for us. Currently our presence in the media is negligible and considering the investment made by government, we need to style up. My hope is that in three years' time we can account for 35% of all stories and photos in local media. I look forward to this day as should you all. Let us make this a target.

JOSEPHINE KINUTHIA