



4 Preparing for a Data Dissemination Seminar

IN THIS SECTION

- Seminar Objectives
- Planning Steps
- Seminar Agenda
- Seminar Length
- Seminar Rehearsals

Most of this guide focuses on creating useful data presentations. You may, however, be called on to help develop a seminar involving several presenters, so this section includes tips on how to put together a successful seminar.

SEMINAR OBJECTIVES

- What are the primary goals of your meeting?
- What do you hope will happen as a result of the seminar? For instance, do you want to:
 - Heighten awareness of survey findings?
 - Improve the audience's understanding of specialized topics?
 - Bring about a specific change in policy?
 - Validate an existing policy or program?
 - Direct more resources or funding to a particular cause?

1. PLANNING STEPS

- Before the seminar, communicate with other organizers to work out the logistics:
 - Select a convenient, central venue with facilities for presentations.
 - Determine the date, length, and opening time of the seminar.
 - Specify who the audience will be.
 - Estimate how many presentations will be given.
 - Provide presentation titles to organizers so that an agenda can be prepared.
 - Agree on how much time to allot for each presentation and discussion.

- Visit the rooms where the presentations will take place and the food will be served in order to assess whether the rooms will meet your needs.
 - **Lighting conditions:** Can you darken the room enough to see the projected screen? Do you need to hang curtains?
 - **Electrical outlets:** What is the voltage of the outlets? Are there sufficient outlets for your equipment? Where are they located? Will you need extra extension cords or voltage/plug adapters?
 - **Seating arrangements:** How many people are expected? Are there enough chairs? What is the best arrangement for the audience so that they can see the speaker and the screen?
 - **Microphone location:** Can a computer be placed next to the microphone so that the presenter can advance the slides himself? If not, who will advance the slides? Will the audience be able to see the presenter as well as the presentation?
 - **Screen dimension and location:** If the only screen available is the small model designed for slide projectors, try instead to project the presentations onto a white or pale-colored wall or hang a white flat sheet to maximize the size of the projected images.
 - **Food service:** Who is the food service coordinator? What dishes will be most appropriate for lunch? What snacks can you serve during breaks?
- Identify all the equipment and furniture (such as a podium with light and a small table for the projector and laptop) you will need.
- In the room where the meeting will be held, test all the equipment you plan to use at the seminar. Any issues that turn up may determine whether the presenters have to make changes in their presentations (such as changing font size and colors or the size of graphs).
- Assign a well-spoken individual who is familiar with the data to act as master of ceremonies for the entire seminar.
- Designate a media relations contact person to meet with the journalists before, during, and after the seminar to discuss key findings and their implications.

2. SEMINAR AGENDA

- Prepare an eye-catching agenda for the seminar and distribute it in advance. It should be visually appealing enough to attract key audience members (see Exhibit 1, page 21).
- Keep the agenda simple and clear.
- Include a copy of the agenda with the invitation letter; if possible, also include an information sheet that highlights key findings that will be covered in the seminar (see Exhibit 2, page 22).
- Use appropriate opportunities (such as workshops, conferences, or meetings) before the seminar to distribute invitations and copies of the agenda.

SEMINAR INVITATION LIST

- If you already have a mailing list designed for distributing reports, use it to select attendees for the seminar. Otherwise, you will need to prepare an invitation list to help you estimate the total number of invitees, as well as to balance the number of representatives from each organization. You can then use the invitation list as a basis for your report distribution list.
- Plan early: Send out a general “Save the Date” note to inform attendees of the upcoming seminar, and send out invitations well in advance—at least one week before the seminar.
- Address invitations to specific individuals within organizations.
- Keep the list as inclusive as the budget will allow. Keep in mind that normally 10 to 20 percent of invitees will not attend.

SEMINAR DESIGN

- Set up a registration process that designates separate seating areas for attendees and journalists.
- Determine what materials (such as a final report, wall charts, or fact sheets) should be given to attendees, and provide the information “kits” during registration.
- Arrange for a high-level official to make an introductory statement, but have a backup plan in case the person doesn’t show up.
- Try to address the audience’s information needs and interests (see Section 1).
- Early in the day, present an executive summary of key findings, possibly including a comparison of data from other countries, to take advantage of the participation of high officials (who tend to leave early).
- Present the results in order of their importance to the target audience.
- Present technical information simply and clearly (see Sections 1 and 3). Remember that many attendees are nonspecialists.
- Provide guidelines to presenters on how much time has been allotted for their presentations, making it clear they should not exceed it.

3. SEMINAR LENGTH

- Adopt the KISS approach: Keep It Short and Simple by focusing on the key and most meaningful findings.
- A one-day seminar should not exceed eight hours.
- Capitalize on your momentum: Try to get participants and audience members to agree to have smaller, more targeted meetings later.

4. SEMINAR REHEARSALS

- If consultants have helped prepare the seminar presentations, show the material to all presenters to obtain feedback on content, format, and overall look.
- Edit the presentations to reflect the presenters' proposed changes.
- Provide a copy of the edited presentations to the presenters a day or two prior to the first rehearsal so that they can prepare themselves. (You can use PowerPoint to print three slides per page, which allows presenters to write notes next to each slide.)
- Test the presentation equipment before the first rehearsal.
- Hold the rehearsals in the week prior to the seminar.
- During the first rehearsal, do a quick presentation of all slides (in "slide show" mode) to show presenters how the slides will look when displayed, especially if the presentations include animation or special effects.
- Encourage all presenters to attend each rehearsal, since comments made to one presenter are often relevant to all.
- In general, each presenter will need a minimum of two rehearsals.
- Time the presentations to ensure that they fit within the allotted time frame.
- Re-evaluate the presentations as you rehearse.
- At least two days before the seminar, hold a dress rehearsal for all seminar presenters. If possible, hold the rehearsal in the same venue where the seminar will be held, to best simulate real conditions.
- Encourage presenters to critique each other.
- Pose potential questions to the presenters, reminding them that questions raised during the seminar may cover more than one theme.
- Work with the other presenters to think of ways to encourage debate if no questions are raised during discussion periods.

5. SEMINAR MEDIA COVERAGE

For best results, designate a media liaison. The liaison may be responsible for assembling the media list, developing and distributing press materials, contacting key reporters, preparing spokespersons for interviews, managing the press at the seminar, and setting up and managing a press briefing.

- Compile a list of journalists to be invited to the seminar. The list should contain the names, addresses, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail addresses of media contacts. If possible, include representatives of key newspapers, magazines, and television, radio, and wire outlets.

Exhibit 1

SAMPLE AGENDA FOR A ONE-DAY SEMINAR

COUNTRY X DEMOGRAPHIC AND HEALTH SURVEY NATIONAL SEMINAR

Venue: Royal Hotel, Capital City

Date: November 27, 2002

Chairperson: The Honorable (Name), Minister of Planning

OPENING PROCEEDINGS

9:00–9:15	Official opening by (Name), Minister of Planning
9:15–9:30	Current Conditions and Future Challenges: Highlights (Name), Minister of Health
9:30–10:00	Short break

MORNING SESSION

10:00–10:15	Fertility and Its Determinants	(Name), Bureau Chief, National Statistical Office
10:15–10:30	Fertility Preferences	(Name), ORC Macro Staff
10:30–11:00	Tea break	
11:00–11:15	Family Planning	(Name), Director of Maternal/Child Health, Ministry of Health
11:15–11:30	Adolescents and Family Planning	(Name), Director of Adolescent Health, Ministry of Health
11:30–12:30	Discussion	
12:30–1:30	Lunch break	

AFTERNOON SESSION

1:30–1:45	Infant and Child Mortality	(Name), Bureau Chief, National Statistical Office
1:45–2:00	Maternal and Child Health	(Name), Director of Maternal/Child Health, Ministry of Health
2:00–2:15	Infant Feeding and Nutrition	(Name), ORC Macro Staff
2:15–2:45	Discussion	
2:45–3:00	AIDS and Sexual Practice	(Name), Director of Women and HIV/AIDS, Ministry of Women’s Affairs
3:00–3:15	Discussion	
3:15–4:00	Refreshments	

- Types of media coverage could include coverage of the seminar as it proceeds, with special emphasis on the seminar highlights (such as the opening speeches); a special press briefing (see page 23); and interviews with officials and researchers associated with the survey.
- Selected journalists should be sent informational materials or a press kit and, if appropriate, an invitation to the seminar. *It is critical that materials or invitations be directed to specific reporters, editors, or producers.*
- A press kit can contain a copy of the seminar agenda, a press release, an information sheet of research highlights (see Exhibits 1 and 2 in this section and Exhibit 1 in Section 5), any additional summary materials relevant for the press, and a copy of the opening statement, if one is available.

Exhibit 2

SAMPLE INFORMATION SHEET

Information Sheet

DESPITE SMALLER FAMILY SIZE IN COUNTRY X, INFANT AND CHILD SURVIVAL WORSENS

Results from the 2002 Country X Demographic and Health Survey (XDHS) reveal that although the fertility rate—the number of children per woman—continues to decrease and contraceptive use increases, the country continues to face serious health challenges. Wide differences in health status exist among provinces and between ethnic and socioeconomic groups. Furthermore, childhood mortality rates have increased over the last five years. Children in Country X have fewer chances of surviving to their fifth birthday than they did a decade ago, a change attributed in part to a decline in vaccination coverage.

FERTILITY AND FAMILY PLANNING

- Country X continues to experience a decline in fertility, with the number of children per woman decreasing from 8.1 in the mid-1970s to the current level of 4.7. However, significant differences by regions still exist, with the highest fertility in Region Y and the lowest in Region Z. Rural women have an average of about two children more than urban women. Even larger differences exist between women with no education, who bear an average of 5.8 children, and those with a secondary education, who have an average of 3.5 children.
- Adolescent fertility has important health and social implications. Both young mothers ages 15 to 19 and their babies are at increased risk of illness and death. In Country X, adolescent fertility rates have not dropped since the 1995 XDHS. The 2002 survey indicates that almost 20 percent of 17-year-old women, 30 percent of 18-year-old women, and 45 percent of 19-year-old women are mothers or pregnant with their first child.
- Knowledge and use of family planning have continued to rise. Almost all married women and men are aware of at least one modern form of contraception. Overall, 39 percent of married women are using some method of contraception, and all but 2 percent are using a modern method. However, contraceptive use varies widely among geographic and socioeconomic subgroups.
- The 2002 XDHS revealed that 24 percent of women have an unmet need for family planning in Country X; that is, they are currently married and not using contraception although they do not want more children or want to wait at least two years before having another child. In addition, contraceptive use is low among adolescents, who have little exposure to family planning information and services. Ironically, a high percentage of men and women indicated that they felt family planning information should be available to those under the age of 18.

CHILDHOOD MORTALITY

- Currently, one child in nine does not live to his or her fifth birthday. Childhood mortality has increased recently after a period of steady improvement in the mid- to late 1980s. Under-5 mortality is currently 112 deaths per 1,000 live births, a 24 percent increase over the last decade.

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- Childhood mortality is especially high for those children born less than 24 months after their mother's last birth and for children born to mothers with a low level of education. In addition, under-5 mortality is 23 percent higher in rural areas than in urban areas. Children's risk of dying also varies greatly across provinces, with the highest mortality in Province A and the lowest in Province B.
- A comparison between the results of the 1995 and 2002 surveys indicates that the fight against vaccine-preventable diseases is still a challenge. Full vaccination coverage includes one dose each of BCG (tuberculosis) and measles vaccines and three doses each of diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus (DPT) and polio vaccines. According to the 2002 survey, full vaccination coverage fell from 79 percent in 1995 to 65 percent in 2002. This decline is attributed to a drop in measles vaccine coverage and an increase in the dropout rate between the first and third doses of DPT and polio vaccines.

FEMALE CIRCUMCISION

- The 2002 XDHS women's questionnaire included a series of questions about the practices and attitudes related to female circumcision. In Country X, 38 percent of women ages 15 to 49 have been circumcised. The age patterns suggest that female circumcision has become significantly less prevalent over the last two decades. However, wide variation in prevalence exists among ethnic groups, with certain groups still widely practicing female circumcision.
- Nearly three-quarters of respondents stated that they would like to see female circumcision ended. Urban and more educated women are more likely to favor discontinuing the practice than rural and less educated women. Reasons cited for ending female circumcision include concern about medical complications, religious beliefs, painful personal experience, a desire to protect women's dignity, and interest in permitting sexual satisfaction.

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- In addition to, or instead of, an agenda, a one-page media advisory consisting of basic information related to the event can be sent to journalists already invited to the seminar (see Exhibit 2 in Section 5). The media advisory should be sent one or two days before the seminar.
- It may be helpful to hold a 30- to 45-minute press briefing just before or after—or even during—the seminar. Send reporters an invitation or media advisory (about one week before the seminar) and any other appropriate background materials. A panel of up to six people can make short presentations and address any questions from the media.
- If a press briefing is planned, remember the following:
 - The briefing should be scheduled in advance of reporters' deadlines, so morning hours are best. If the briefing is planned at noon or around mealtime, provide a light lunch.
 - A day before the briefing, call all the invited reporters to confirm attendance.
 - Ask reporters to sign in at the briefing.
 - A designated media liaison can be charged with introductions and keeping the discussion on track and within the time limits set.

For more information on preparing materials for the media, please see Section 5.



Writing Research Results for the Media

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IN THIS SECTION

The News Release
The Media Advisory
The Press Kit
More on Visuals
Sending Out Your Release

THE NEWS RELEASE

PURPOSE

A news release is a brief news story that can be printed or broadcast as is, rewritten by a journalist, or used by a journalist as a starting point to gather more information for a news article or program. A research organization generally distributes a news release to the media when a newsworthy event, such as the publication of new research results or a national seminar to present survey findings, takes place (“the news peg”).

CONTENT

A news release is written like a short newspaper article or radio or television news item (see Exhibit 1, page 28). Here are some tips for writing an effective release:

- Tell a story that the audience will want to read or hear. Is it about people? Does it affect people? Is it new and dramatic? Is it controversial? Does it involve or quote a well-known person?
- Start with a short, active title that contains the gist of the story.
- Follow the title with a short first paragraph that states the news and why it is significant. This format is called the “inverted pyramid,” which means that the most important information comes first. Details and less important information follow.
- Alternatively, the first paragraph can “hook” the readers in—by posing the problem or highlighting an individual, for example—and the second paragraph can state the news and its significance.
- Include all the important facts: Who, what, when, where, and why.
- Double-check facts, names, degrees, and dates to ensure that the release is accurate. Be sure to spell out all acronyms.

- Be clear and concise. A news release should be only one or two double-spaced pages long (500 words maximum).
- Stick with the facts. Don't editorialize.
- Don't use too many numbers. Using too many statistics at once can bury your main point.
- Add interest by using a direct quotation from a well-known or prestigious person.
- Note that a contact person is available for an interview and give the person's full (home and office) contact information.
- End the release with a standard short description of your program.

THE MEDIA ADVISORY

PURPOSE

A media advisory is a brief announcement alerting radio, television, and newspaper journalists of when you or one of your staff members is available to comment on a topic currently in the news. Media advisories are often issued to invite journalists to an event such as a press conference, scientific meeting, or special lecture.

CONTENT

In general, follow the same format as a press release (see Exhibit 2, page 30):

- Begin with a short first paragraph that states your news and why it is significant. Alternatively, the first paragraph can "hook" the readers in—by posing the problem or highlighting an individual speaker, for example—and the second paragraph can state the news and its significance. Media advisories often take the form of a biographical sketch of a person available for interview, establishing the person's area of expertise, or they can introduce the topic to be covered at an event.
- Give full (home and office) information on how your organization's media liaison officer and any interviewee can be contacted. For an event, give the exact date, time, and place.
- Again, keep it short and simple: one or two pages long, double-spaced (500 words maximum).
- Attach useful background material such as a fuller biographical sketch of an interviewee, a relevant publication, or the program of a meeting.
- Have the text of a lecture or a written summary of points made at a press conference available for distribution to journalists at the event.

FORMAT

When preparing a release for submission to a newspaper or radio or television station, use following the standard format:

- Use standard letter-size (8 1/2" x 11") or A4-size (21 x 30 cm) white paper.
- Use one side of the paper only.
- Identify the sender (your organization) at the top of the page. Provide the name, postal address, e-mail address, and telephone and fax numbers of the person who can be reached for further information, both during and after office hours. If one person is sending out the release and another person is quoted, give contact information for both.
- Specify a release date at the top of the page; for example, "HOLD FOR RELEASE ON 14 JUNE 2002." If the information can be released right away, mark it "FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE."

- Double-space all copy. Use wide margins. Do not hyphenate words at ends of lines. Do not carry a paragraph over from one page to the next.
- Begin the first paragraph with a dateline; for example, “EAST JAKARTA, INDONESIA, 10 JUNE 2002.” The date refers to when the news takes place, not when you issue the release.
- If your release requires more than one page, type “-more-” at the bottom of each page except the last. Mark the end of a story with “-30-” or “# # #” or “end.”
- If your release requires more than one page, put identifying information—the name of your organization, “News Release,” the date—and the page number at the top of the second page. Staple the pages together at the top left-hand corner.
- If you fold your release to put it in a letter-size envelope, use a fold that makes the top of the front page instantly visible when the envelope is opened.

Special Considerations for Radio

If you send a news release to a radio station, modify your text so that it is appropriate to be spoken, rather than read:

- Use a more informal conversational style.
- Do not abbreviate words.
- Double-check your copy for tongue-twisters. As a test, read your release out loud.
- If names or technical terms in your release are difficult to pronounce, give the phonetic spelling.

THE PRESS KIT: WHAT GOES OUT WITH YOUR NEWS RELEASE

News releases on technical subjects are more likely to be used if you provide journalists with supplementary materials, which may include the following:

- Illustrations such as photographs, computer graphics, charts, or drawings that describe and clarify the subject.
- The actual research papers or reports on which the story is based.
- Background information on the work being reported, such as other articles in the field, reference material, and a bibliography to which the writer may refer.
- Biographies and recent photographs of the principal researcher(s) in the story.
- Information on your organization, such as a brochure or folder.

MORE ON VISUALS

If your work uses photographs, charts, illustrations, or diagrams, include them with your news releases, even if they are not exactly right for media. They will make a good starting point for artists at the newspapers, magazines, or television stations. Surprisingly, radio reporters often like to receive visual material. The pictures help them understand the story better, and they may include some description of an important visual in their broadcast. Good photographs or graphics are often the real reason why a newspaper, magazine, or television station uses a story.

- Photos of people doing things are more effective than photos of objects, such as a new building, or of conference participants standing in a line. Limit the number of people in a picture to three at most. Identify the subjects when the picture is taken. It is surprisingly difficult to get the names right even a day or two later.

*Exhibit 1***SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE****PRESS RELEASE**

Contact: (Name/Title)
(Organization/Address)
(Telephone/Fax/E-mail)

For Release: November 27, 2002

FAMILY SIZE DECREASES AND CHILD SURVIVAL IMPROVES

There has been a significant drop in the average number of children a woman bears in her lifetime, according to results just released from the Country X Demographic and Health Survey (XDHS). Family size (the total fertility rate) has decreased from 5.1 to 4.1 over the last 10 years—a reduction of nearly 20 percent, or one child per family. During the same period, the infant mortality rate has declined from 107 to 64 deaths per 1,000 live births, while the under-5 mortality rate has declined from 158 to 91 deaths per 1,000 live births, reductions of 40 and 42 percent, respectively.

The survey also reveals that challenges still exist: Almost nine out of 10 deliveries take place without the care of a trained birth attendant, and only 50 percent of pregnant women receive a tetanus toxoid immunization that would protect them and their newborn infants from tetanus. Moreover, over half of children under 5 years of age are stunted (with lower-than-normal height for age), while 21 percent of these children were found to be severely malnourished.

“Improved child nutrition is necessary to safeguard the well-being of future generations,” noted Dr. XX, Director of Child Health and Nutrition at the Ministry of Health. “Some improvements could be realized by continuing to promote better infant feeding practices.” According to Dr. XX, solid foods should be introduced at six months. The XDHS shows that at six to nine months, 84 percent of infants are not given solid or mushy food. By this time many infants are already malnourished.

These and other survey findings are being presented at a seminar at the Royal Hotel on November 27 and 28, 2002. The XDHS is the second in a series of comprehensive surveys on women’s status, fertility, family planning, maternal and child health, nutritional status, infant and child mortality, and knowledge of HIV/AIDS. The Ministry of Health is committed to wide public dissemination of the findings of the survey and to the mobilization of resources necessary to address the problems identified.

The 2001 Country X DHS is based on interviews with 5,247 women and 3,185 men ages 15 to 59 from all regions of the country. It was implemented by the Statistical Research Organization under the aegis of the Planning Division, Ministry of Health, with funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). ORC Macro provided technical assistance as part of its world-wide MEASURE *Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS+)* program.

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- For each photo, type a complete and accurate caption (double-check the left-to-right identification of people) on a piece of paper and tape it to the bottom edge of the picture so that it can be read by someone looking at the picture. Position the tape so that it is attached to the back of the photo, rather than the front. Don’t place the caption on the back of the photograph.

- Don't write on the back of a photograph, because your writing can show through on the picture side. If necessary, write very lightly with a grease pencil or soft lead pencil, and write only in the margin.
- Don't forget to place the name of the photographer next to the photo.
- Submit 5" x 7" or 8" x 10" (about 13 x 18 cm or 20 x 25 cm) photographs or 35 mm color slides to newspapers and magazines. For television, slides are usually better than photographs, but a professional-quality videotape is best of all.
- For newspapers that print in black and white, it is best to supply black-and-white photographs since a great deal of clarity may be lost in converting from color. Most newspapers and magazines prefer photos with a glossy (rather than a matte) finish.

SENDING OUT YOUR RELEASE

The key to successful media coverage is having good personal relationships with individual journalists and their editors. The best news release in the world is useless unless it reaches the right journalist at the right time and gets picked up in the media.

- Don't just mail out a news release; chances are it will end up in the trash. And don't telephone a journalist and try to convey all your information on the phone, since he or she is probably working under a deadline and can't really listen to you. Rather, telephone the journalist, ask if he or she is interested in your story, and then fax, e-mail, or hand-deliver your release, after asking which is preferred.
- If you have an opinion piece, telephone the editor responsible for the op-ed page or the op-ed section of a news show. Give a very brief description of what you have to say, ask if the editor is interested, and—if you get a positive response—send your piece. If you have a good relationship with the editor and can convince him or her of the importance of your commentary, he or she may use your material in an editorial.
- Find out the best time to telephone journalists—not when they have a deadline or are getting ready to go on the air. Be prepared for them to be very rude if you telephone them at a bad time. Ask them when would be a better time and telephone later.
- Target your releases to individual journalists according to their particular interests; for example, send a story on child health to a journalist who likes to write about children. You can find out journalists' interests by chatting with them and by reading their articles or paying attention to them on the air.
- Journalists tend to change jobs more often than many other professionals. Keep your media list up-to-date by noting which releases result in coverage, keeping in personal contact with key journalists, and surveying your list periodically via return postcards. Your "little black book" of journalists' names, interests, and up-to-date contact information is worth its weight in gold.
- When you establish contact with journalists, offer to provide them with a list of your staff, including their areas of expertise and full contact information. Your goal is to get yourself and your colleagues into the journalists' little black books.

Exhibit 2

SAMPLE MEDIA ADVISORY

MEDIA ADVISORY

HAS FAMILY HEALTH STATUS IN COUNTRY Z IMPROVED SINCE 1996?

What Are the Major Challenges Ahead in Family Planning, Health, and Nutrition? National Dissemination Seminar features new findings from the 2001 Country Z Demographic and Health Survey

WHO: Opening presentation by the Honorable Minister of Health. The seminar is sponsored by the (name of Division), in the Ministry of Health

Other key speakers will include (names of all other speakers, with their respective titles)

WHAT: Presentation of new findings from the 2001 ZDHS, a nationwide survey that was conducted from January to June 2001. The survey was implemented by (name of implementing organization). Its researchers surveyed (number of) women and (number of) men ages 15 to 59 on a variety of topics, including the following:

- Women' status and living conditions;
- Educational background;
- Attitudes toward family size;
- Knowledge, attitudes, and use of family planning;
- Access to and use of health care services;
- Nutritional status and survival of children; and
- Knowledge and attitudes related to HIV/AIDS.

WHERE: (Give exact location and directions)

WHEN: (Give exact date). Registration will start at 8:45 a.m., and the inaugural session will start at 9:15 a.m.

CONTACT: For more information, please contact (name, title, address, phone)

- Tailor your distribution for each release. Journalists will be more likely to use your releases if they receive only material that really interests them. Your media list should be categorized to ensure that you reach just the right journalists and don't burden others with material they are unlikely to use.
- Occasionally offer a good story or feature to a particular journalist on an "exclusive" basis.
- A news release that is related to a specific event should reach journalists before the event takes place. Mail or fax your release well in advance or, better yet, have it delivered personally.
- If you miss the event (the "news peg"), don't send a release at all, except possibly to magazines or other less-frequent publications that may still be interested.

- If your news release or opinion piece is rejected, don't despair. You may want to make revisions and submit an opinion piece to another publication. Or try sending out another news release in a few weeks or months on a different topic. Your piece may have arrived during a very busy week with lots of competition. Often it is just a matter of your news release or opinion piece being in the right place at the right time.
- If your piece is printed, make copies and send them to colleagues, elected officials, funders, reporters, and others key individuals whom you wish to reach. This is an excellent way to get your message to your target audience.