

**MAKING THE
MOST OF THE
MEDIA**



In partnership with
CONCERN
worldwide

RATION CHALLENGE

LOCAL MEDIA TOOLKIT

Your step-by-step guide to
local media and how to share
your story to raise awareness

 **IN THIS TOGETHER**

Concern Worldwide (UK) registered charity numbers 1092236
(England and Wales) and SC038107 (Scotland). Charitable company limited
by guarantee, registered in England and Wales under company no. 4323646.

YOUR VOICE IS SO IMPORTANT!

Hey there!

It's great to have you as part of the Ration Challenge community.

You're joining thousands of passionate people across the world, living on refugee rations for a week and raising money and awareness for refugee communities who have already faced devastating conflict and are now dealing with the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic.

From 13–19 June, you'll eat the same rations as a Syrian refugee living in a camp in Jordan. That means just a small amount of rice, lentils, chickpeas, beans, fish and oil.

The Ration Challenge isn't just about raising funds to meet people's urgent needs – it's also an important conversation starter.

By sharing your experience with your friends, family and colleagues, you'll be opening people's eyes, hearts and minds to what refugees are going through in the midst of this crisis – helping to create more empathy and understanding.

Another way you can spread the word even further is by sharing your personal story and motivations for taking on the Ration Challenge with your local paper.

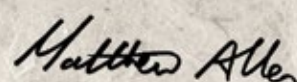
Last year, some of the most powerful and widely read coverage came from everyday citizens, like you, who sent their stories into their local papers.

The more amplified our voices are, the greater our impact will be towards creating a more compassionate society – because we're all in this together.

This toolkit contains a step-by-step guide on how to share your story with local media. We are also here to help you along the way (see contact details further along).

Thanks so much for supporting the Ration Challenge – we can't wait to read all about your own story in the paper!

Cheers,



Matt Allen
Concern Community
Fundraising Manager



Why get in touch with local media?

- It helps encourage more people to take the Ration Challenge, sponsor their friends, and sponsor you!
- It shares a positive news story about UK citizens standing in solidarity with refugees, helping to counter the negative narrative that some coverage of refugee issues creates.
- It starts a conversation about refugee issues at the local level and can help to improve community attitudes and perceptions.

In this toolkit you'll find...

1. An example of past coverage of the Ration Challenge in a local UK newspaper
2. Step-by-step guide to getting featured in your own local media.



FOOD COUPON
RICE
Product:
Weight redeemable: 1.5 KG Exp:

LOCAL MEDIA & THE RATION CHALLENGE

You can typically find your local paper online, or in newsagents, cafes and libraries in your area.

A large proportion of the stories submitted to local newspapers are from local residents who are keen to get the word out about a particular event or local issue.

We would love to see inspiring stories about the Ration Challenge appear in local newspapers – to show refugees that we really are all in this together.

Here is an example of a piece of local media coverage on one of last year's participants, to help give you an idea of what a Ration Challenge story might look like:

You can search for your local newspaper here:
localmediauk.org/A-Z-Newsbrands



BY SHAUNA CORR

A WOMAN is to survive on the basic rations of a refugee for one week in a bid to highlight their plight.

Una Lappin, from Finaghy in South Belfast, said she has seen first hand the misery suffered by millions of people through her roles with the UN and NGOs.

Unable to sit back while displaced families survive on around half the calories needed to thrive, the Concern Worldwide Ambassador said she had to do something to raise awareness.

So this September, Una will eat and drink exactly what is provided to Syrian refugees in Jordan.

That means no fruit and vegetables, roast dinners or curries – instead she has vowed to live off a small amount of rice, beans, chickpeas, lentils, sardines, oil and flour for seven days.

Una told the Mirror: "People live off these packs for years. It must be extremely tough having to leave everything and then survive on this food."

"I have had experience in a camp in Darfur, South Sudan."

"I was told there were about 60,000 people – it was very, very densely populated."

"They are not living in a house, they are not living with amenities and the food they need is not what they are getting."

"It is just a tent. The kitchen might be one gas stove if they are lucky and everything they own, that they have been able to carry, is in their tent."

"There were smells, it was very hot, people are living close together so if somebody got sick, everybody gets sick."

"You could see the vulnerability of people. Nobody chooses to live in a refugee camp."

Una, who has worked across Africa and Asia, took part in Concern's ration challenge when it was first launched last year.

But she is back a second time round as no matter how tough that was, she says it could never compare. Speaking about that the experience, Una added: "To be honest, I was quite emotional."

"It's tough because there is so limited food. I got headaches the second day and my concentration was gone."

But she said she is "able to do it" and that's why she does.

Una added: "I am healthy. I am in a position where I can compartmentalise it and go one week out of 52."

"But at the end of last year I then felt bad for being able to eat what I want."

"My week was over, but refugees don't have that."

The ration box she will survive from contains approximately between

RATIONS THAT ARE FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Belfast woman to survive on basic supplies to highlight refugee plight



SMALL PORTION
Sardines, oil, beans, lentils, rice and flour



£1m
was raised last year by people in the UK who took part in the ration challenge



HELPING HAND Una Lappin, right, child with supplies in refugee camp



IN NEED Syrian refugees

1,100 and 1,200 calories. Una said: "It's just over half what a female would be recommended on a daily basis. It's enough food to survive – not to thrive."

"There's no fruit and veg, there's no fibre, there's no dairy."

"You can see that deficiencies would come after a while."

"On top of all this, if you could imagine, you've had to flee your home to survive – all that anxiety, all that anguish and that's when you really need the recommended nutritious

food and it's not there." She is hoping that through taking on the ration challenge she can raise some much-needed awareness of what refugees are suffering in "a situation not asked for".

Una said: "Mothers, fathers, children didn't ask to have to flee their home."

More than one in every 100 people on earth has been displaced by conflict or disaster.

Many refugees live in cramped and

overcrowded conditions, with limited access to food, healthcare or basic sanitation, putting them at greater risk of infection and Covid-19 could have even more devastating consequences.

Last year, 4,000 people across the UK took part in Concern's first ration challenge, raising almost £1million to provide emergency food, hygiene kits and life-saving support to refugee communities.

From September 13 to 16 this year,

participants will endeavour to raise awareness and compassion of what refugees are experiencing and seek sponsorship from friends and family.

The money will go towards helping tackle hunger and extreme poverty for the most vulnerable people in the world's poorest places.

■ If you would like to do your bit for refugees you can sign up to the Concern Worldwide Ration Challenge at www.rationchallenge.org.uk.

news@irishmirror.ie



STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

Up for the extra challenge? Great! This step-by-step guide explains how to get in touch with your local paper, share your story and raise awareness.

1

Drop us a line

First things first, it would be great if you could let us know that you are planning on contacting your local paper.

Send us an email with your name and the town or city you live in.

The reason we ask is so we can send you the contact details of your local newspaper (email and phone).

Contact us

Hannah Myerson
e: hannah.myerson@concern.net



2

Prepare your material

It's best to prepare your story and what you want to tell the journalist before getting in touch.

This can be a bit of a daunting task, so we have put together some background information on the Ration Challenge that we recommend you send to the journalist. You can download this on our website.

In addition to the background info, the journalist will be interested in hearing your personal story and why you have decided to take on the Challenge.

Some things you may want to include:

- Your initial reaction when you first saw the ration pack
- What you expect the week to be like
- Why you have decided to get involved in the Ration Challenge
- How supportive you've found family and friends to be
- Whether you have taken the Ration Challenge before
- Whether you are taking on the Challenge as part of a team
- Any food ideas/recipes you may have planned for the week.

Last year, Connor, from Antrim said:

"When you see what you get in your Ration Box it can be quite daunting at first. However, it motivated me to raise what I could, as well as spreading awareness of the campaign and the cause."

I think I will struggle with the lack of variety of foods and flavours, so I am hoping to earn some rewards to help me through the week."



3

Send in your story

The time has come! You've got an email address and you've got your story ready to go.

The best way to make initial contact with your local newspaper is by emailing them and attaching the background info we've supplied you, as well as your own story.

You can personalise the email template on the next page.

4

Follow up with a phone call

Once you've sent the email, you may want to call your local newspaper to make them aware of the story you have just sent.

When speaking to a member of the team, introduce yourself, explain your story briefly and flag that you have sent an email that has all the details.

If they are interested in writing up the story they may want to ask you a few more questions and potentially take a photograph.

If they'd like further comment from someone from the Ration Challenge team, you can put them in contact with Hannah, our Senior Communications Officer – hannah.myerson@concern.net

If you are having trouble getting a hold of someone from your local paper, send us an email and we will see what we can do to help.

Reminder –
Call journalist to
follow up about
the story



Hi editorial team,

I have a local story I thought you would be interested in covering in your paper.

This year, from 13–19 June, I will be living on the same rations as a Syrian refugee for a week to raise money for emergency food, healthcare and life-saving support for those who have been hit the hardest by the coronavirus pandemic.

The fundraising initiative is called the Ration Challenge. My family and friends have sponsored me to take part in the Challenge and the money raised will support refugees in camps, and other vulnerable communities, who desperately need our help right now.

When I first saw the small amount of rations I would be living on, I was shocked to say the least... it is truly devastating to think that people live on these rations, day in and day out – and coronavirus means many more now face devastating hunger.

I'd been feeling really down about the situation experienced by refugees overseas for quite some time and had no idea how I could help.

When I found out about the Ration Challenge I immediately signed up to take part – finally there was a way to make a real difference! I have attached to this email some background information, which tells you more about the Ration Challenge.

I am happy to answer more questions about the story and am best contactable on [INSERT YOUR NUMBER].

I am also happy to be photographed or can supply photos of myself with the rations if you'd like.

Look forward to hearing from you soon.

You can download this template on the fundraising hub.



5

Extra, extra, read all about it!

So, you've sent your story in and your local newspaper has decided to include it.

Nice work! The last thing you have to do is find a copy of the article online so you can have it as a keepsake.

We also ask that you take a picture of it and share it on your social media.

Don't forget to tag us using @ConcernWorldwideUK and Twitter @ConcernUK and include the hashtag #RationChallenge.

You might also like to include the photo or a link to the article in the next email you send out asking family, friends and colleagues to sponsor you.

THANK YOU, YOU'VE MADE A HUGE DIFFERENCE!

Doing local media work is a valuable part of opening people's eyes, hearts and minds to what refugees are going through right now. Your support will make a real difference to the lives of refugee communities who have been hit the hardest by the coronavirus pandemic and create change in your community by raising awareness of the struggles they're facing.

Lilia* and her boys smile beside their tent in a refugee camp in just outside of Amman, Jordan. By sharing your Ration Challenge experience, you're helping to raise awareness of the situation facing families like Lilia's, who have fled the horror in Syria and are now suffering the hardships of life as refugees.



*Lilia's name has been changed to protect her identity as a refugee.

*“What a humbling experience!
Taking part in the Ration
Challenge I felt that I could
finally be part of a community
taking action against an
injustice that I often feel
helpless about.*

*It helped me to start a
conversation about an issue
I care deeply about and raise
awareness of the hardships
refugees face on a daily basis.”*

– Jess, Ration Challenge participant



WEBSITE rationchallenge.org.uk

FREECALL 0800 032 4002 **EMAIL** rationchallengeuk@concern.net

f facebook.com/ConcernWorldwideUK



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