

REPLICATING THE UN
MULTI-COUNTRY STUDY
ON MEN AND VIOLENCE:
UNDERSTANDING WHY
SOME MEN USE VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN AND HOW
WE CAN PREVENT IT

Media Guidelines to
Protect Interviewers
and Respondents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

These Media Guidelines to Protect Interviewers and Respondents were produced for Partners for Prevention by Emma Fulu, Caroline Liou and Xian Warner, all from Partners for Prevention in Thailand.

BACKGROUND

These guidelines are intended for anyone who may be working with the media and reporting on research on violence against women. As you undertake your research on violence against women, there may be instances when journalists are interested to report on this project.

Partners for Prevention (P4P) believes the media has an important role with investigating and educating the public about gender justice and all forms of violence against women. The media can help to combat violence against women by mobilizing public opinion and pressuring governments and the private sector. Thus, developing constructive working relationships with media professionals and organizations to promote these issues, and our work to the public and within the media industry, is important.

However, it is also important to respect the right to privacy and protect the physical safety of those involved (interviewers and respondents) in the research. If the focus of the survey becomes widely known, either within households or among the wider community, the topic of the interview may become known to a perpetrator of violence. This may place the respondent or the interview team at risk of violence. Preconceptions about the survey content due to prior publicity may also impact people's responses.

These media guidelines have thus been developed with the intention of helping to prevent:

- any incidents in which respondents' safety is put at direct risk as a result of the research. This could include women who have reported experiencing violence being subsequently abused due to their involvement in the study.
- any incident in which the confidentiality of respondents is jeopardized.

We ask that you ensure that media reporting on your research (and related stories involving violence against women) adhere to the following guidelines:

- Interviewers and their supervisors should not talk with journalists about the survey before or during the fieldwork.
- No part of the questionnaire should be given to or reported by the media or made public at any time.
- The survey findings must be disseminated in a scientifically rigorous manner. Care must be taken to highlight the extent to which violence against women is a cross-cutting issue, existing in all communities and socio-economic groups. Particular attention must be paid to ensure that the findings are not used as a means to describe one setting or racial group as 'worse' than another.
- Reports (based on communications with anyone related to the project, such as staff from the research institution or other partner) should not be published by the media until after the fieldwork (within the country in which the survey and media report are being conducted) is completed.

We recognize that media may undertake stories relating to your research by interviewing people related to the project other than the research interviewers (such as your organization's staff or other partners). In these cases, in addition to the above points, care must be taken as follows:

- Unless an individual gives informed consent*, always change the name (and omit other descriptions through which the person could be identified) and obscure the visual identity of any person who is identified as:
 - an interviewer or respondent in the study.
 - a family member of an respondent in the study.
 - a victim of abuse (of any form: emotional, economic, physical or sexual) or exploitation.
 - a perpetrator of abuse or exploitation.
 - a person charged or convicted of a crime.

This also applies to other vulnerable groups, such as children, people who are HIV-positive or living with AIDS, asylum seekers or refugees.

- In certain cases, using an interviewer or respondent's name and/or recognizable image is acceptable. Some examples of these special cases are:
 - when a respondent initiates contact with the reporter, wanting to exercise their right to freedom of expression and their right to have their opinion heard.
 - when an interviewer or respondent is part of a sustained programme of activism or social mobilization and wants to be so identified.

However, if their identity is used, they must still be protected against harm and supported through any stigmatization or reprisals.

Informed consent: the subject is aware they are talking with a reporter and understands the purpose of the interview and its intended use, is not coerced in any way and understands that they are part of a story that might be disseminated locally and globally.

PHOTOGRAPH CONSENT FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS

To adhere to ethical and safety media practices, ensure that photographers obtain the consent of individuals to be photographed or videotaped whenever this is possible. Consent is necessary in those circumstances described below. This is particularly important when sensitive, personal or private information is revealed in the photo or corresponding caption (such as a ‘victim of violence against women’).

Consent not needed	Obtain consent	Photography is prohibited
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • non-recognizable individuals in public (faces and all other identifying features are obscured), except as otherwise provided in this chart • public figures in public (celebrities, government officials at conferences or launches) • crowds in public (an audience at an outdoor event) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all recognizable individuals in all settings • directors/managers of clinics or other service programmes • recognizable or non-recognizable individuals* (including any children) in any setting where personal or private information is exposed in the photo or documented in the corresponding caption, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ criminal behaviour (perpetrator of violence against women, etc.) ○ health status (HIV-positive persons, persons living with AIDS or STIs, abortion history, TB, etc.) ○ health behaviour (sex work, sexual orientation, alcohol and drug use, contraceptive use, female genital cutting, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • actual in-study respondents under any circumstances, regardless of whether the interviewer or respondent are recognizable (interviews are private, thus no one other than the interviewer or respondent should be in the room) • recognizable providers and clients in such settings as women’s shelters for survivors of violence against women, psychosocial support or counselling centres, etc.

OBTAINING CONSENT

When a photographer approaches photo subjects in the field, he/she should briefly introduce him/herself, be courteous and explain the purpose of the visit or the reason for taking photos. In a clinical context, women's shelters for survivors of violence against women, psychosocial support or counselling centres, etc., the photographer should speak with the director before he/she begins photographing workers or clients (asking also their permission to be photographed). For example, he/she can ask "*I am taking photos for xx. Do I have your permission to take your photo?*" If the photographer and subjects do not speak the same language, he/she can communicate with body language. At the very least, the photographer can smile, nod and point to the camera before shooting. If there is any reluctance, confusion or disdain, the photographer should refrain from taking the photo. Respect a person's right to refuse to be photographed.

WRITTEN CONSENT

Obtaining written consent is not possible in all circumstances. As well, written documents may have little or no meaning to people who speak a different language, people of low literacy and people who live in cultures in which photography or publications are not common. Therefore, require photographers to:

- prepare consent forms ahead of time in the local language of the area they will be visiting.
- orally translate the consent form to the photo subjects, in cases where they are unable to prepare written consent forms in the local language. Use an interpreter if necessary.

GUIDELINES FOR PROTECTING PRIVACY

Require photographers to take steps beyond informed consent to protect the privacy of human photo subjects. For example, avoid using images of identifiable interviewers and respondents, or women's shelters for survivors of violence against women, psychosocial support, counselling centres, etc. When photographing, a photographer should be in a position in which they only see the back of a client's head.

Remember: Photographing and using photos of vulnerable populations requires extreme care and sensitivity. To protect the identity of individuals who may be put at risk of reprisal or rejection in their communities as a result of allowing their picture to be taken and agreeing to tell their story, it may be necessary to make sure that they cannot be identified and leave out personal information, such as names and any other description that can identify them.

SOURCES

These guidelines were adapted from:

1. UNAIDS Photograph consent forms: Notes for photographers
www.unodc.org/pdf/india/news_and_events/photographer_guidelines.pdf
2. **UNICEF Reporting guidelines to protect at-risk children**
www.unicef.org/media/media_tools_guidelines.html
3. ECPAT International Media Guidelines
www.ecpat.net/WorldCongressIII/PDF/Media/Guideline.pdf