



IOM International Organization for Migration
OIM Organizația Internațională pentru Migrație

REPORTING ON TRAFFICKING – GENERAL PRINCIPLES

IOM MOLDOVA

These guidelines are meant for anyone reporting on trafficking in Moldova and were developed by IOM Moldova with reference to the general media guidelines of IOM, guidelines of Sisters Offering Support, ECPAT International, NGO ProMedia and Norma Hotaling/SAGE Project, Inc.

Basics

- Get the basic information about Moldova
- Have background knowledge of trafficking and counter-trafficking
- Be aware of data, initiatives, progress made, changes in trends
- Appreciate the complexity of issues involved (poverty, push and pull factors, demand and supply, forms of exploitation, magnitude of migration and irregular migration in general, changes in trends)

Referring to particular cases and/or conducting interviews

- Do not make reference to any case if there is the possibility that that will make the person's situation worse in the short term or in the longer term
- Protect the identity of trafficking survivors and their children/spouses/families/relatives (name, age, town, village, face, look, or any distinguishing features of the a person, family or situation)
- Do not give detailed information on any case
- Make sure all whom you interview give their informed consent: all respondents (not only trafficking survivors, but all you interview!) should understand fully the content and purpose of the interview, the right not to answer questions, right to terminate the interview at any time, and the right to restrict how the information is used

Do not re-traumatize or stigmatize trafficked people or potential trafficking victims

- Avoid stereotypes and language that perpetuates stereotypes
- Avoid language that is biased or accusatory
- Do not sensationalize the stories you hear; trust that the stories are powerful enough on their own
- Do not produce material which would re-traumatize and/or stigmatize trafficking survivors and impede their reintegration into their communities
- Give trafficking survivors, including children, the possibility to present their story; their view on the trafficking experience

Give the big picture

- Do not leave the stories without a setting; gain an understanding of the realities behind the choices of migrants/trafficking survivors
- Look into prevention, protection and prosecution: what is being done
- Consider writing about the role and responsibilities of the country of destination vs. country of origin
- Consider writing about the rehabilitation opportunities that the Government of Moldova, international organizations and non-governmental organizations facilitate (rehabilitation programs, shelters, specialized centers, skills trainings, medical services, and other assistance)

Get it right

- Be timely, accurate and informative

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- Maintain the highest ethical and professional standards when reporting on trafficking
- Observe and report the issue from more than just one angle: migration, health, social, economic, government structures, human rights violation, labor rights, children's rights, international organized crime, domestic violence, sex industry, prosecution, victim protection, prevention, etc.
- Use accurate vocabulary specific to the issue, do not confuse terminology
- Be careful not to copy the mistakes made by other reporting agencies if using their material
- Verify the credentials of any individuals or organizations purporting to speak for or to represent the interests of trafficking survivors
- Avoid the use of sexualized images of women and children

Respect the right to privacy

- Never disclose the identity of trafficked people by word or image
- In addition to individuals, be wary of identifying through words or images places where vulnerable people might be found; a picturesque way to begin a feature can jeopardize safety
- Use fair, open and straightforward methods for obtaining pictures
- Do not suggest that people are involved in trafficking unless you are certain they are; e.g. all sex workers are not trafficking victims
- Give trafficking experts a chance to check your facts prior to publication or public dissemination of any kind

Children

- All under-18s are protected by the UN *Convention on the Rights of the Child*: inform yourself of the requirements of child protection and its implications for the exercise of independent journalism
- Pay attention to the family context
- All street children are not involved in criminal activity, organized begging or sex industry
- Violence and/or anti-social behavior of children often have their roots in adult violence and abuse; children are more likely to be victims than perpetrators of crime

Help in the fight against trafficking

- Media has an important role to play in investigating and following up on trafficking cases
- Media can raise awareness and thus prevent trafficking
- Media can mobilize public opinion, pressure governments and private sector to increase efforts to fight trafficking and increase assistance
- Media can play an important role in promoting the rights of vulnerable people, and in ending stigmatization
- Give information on how to gain more information, assistance, or where to report a possible trafficking situation
- Give information on how individuals can help in the counter-trafficking work (donations, volunteering)
- USE THE POWER AND INFORMATION YOU HAVE to the benefit of the trafficking survivors; to the advancement of policies and interventions that prevent, protect and help in prosecution of traffickers

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