



*Credit: ©UNHCR/Martim Gray Pereira*

# Media Guidelines Cabo Delgado



March 2021

## Portraying Displacement – A Protection Approach<sup>1</sup>

**Purpose:** These guidelines aim at providing indications for the use of media involving forcibly displaced communities for all organizations and individuals who play a role in facilitating or engaging in media reporting on activities in Cabo Delgado, including social media.

**The role of communication in protecting displaced populations:** **Communication is a strong protection tool that can be used to promote a favorable protection environment for displaced communities** through awareness raising, and by stimulating social cohesion and peaceful coexistence with host communities. Communication should also aim at empowering displacing communities by giving voice to their concerns and visibility to their plight.

**Communication strategies should include strong age, gender, and diversity consideration, and include individuals with specific needs and minority groups, always respecting their safety, consent and dignity.** Moreover, communication may also be used as a tool for fundraising purposes, which is essential for humanitarian organizations to implement activities and assist forcibly displaced communities.

However, there are key protection considerations that need to be taken into account when using communication, especially the principle of “**do no harm**” for those portrayed in content such as photos and videos posted online by organizations and/or individuals.

### Media Protection concerns:

**Sensitive information:** **Sensitive information refers to personal data which, if disclosed, could result in discrimination against or repercussions for the individual concerned.** The examples below provide a non-exhaustive indication of data that is considered sensitive:

- health
- race or ethnicity
- religious/political/armed group affiliation
- genetic and biometric data.

All sensitive data requires augmented protection, regardless of the level of sensitivity. Given the situations in which humanitarian organizations work, and the risk that some data elements could give rise to discrimination, categorizing sensitive is not meaningful. Sensitivity of data and appropriate safeguards (e.g. technical and organizational security measures) must be considered on a case-by-case basis.

**Consent:** it is critical to **always have the informed consent of individuals portrayed in photos,** videos and any other content that are made available to the public. Consent is:

---

<sup>1</sup> **Photo 1 (cover)** - Mamadi, 36 years old, is an IDP from Mocimboa da Praia, currently hosted at Nicuapa IDP Relocation site, District of Montepuez, in Cabo Delgado Province, Northern Mozambique. “I am currently building a new house here where I will stay until it is safe to return to Mocimboa.



©UNHCR/Martim Gray Pereira<sup>2</sup>

*“Any freely given and informed agreement by the data subject to the processing of his/her personal data. It may be given either orally or in writing or by clear affirmative action.”*

- i) **Consent is critical to respect the right to privacy** and prevent the publication of content involving individuals with special protection concerns who may face persecution or discrimination by other individuals, their own communities, host communities, government forces or any other potential threats.
- ii) **Consent may be given orally**, and those responsible for capturing the content should clearly inform the individual or individuals portrayed regarding how the content collected will be used, and who will be able to see it. However, preferably, and **whenever possible, consent should be given in writing, especially if the content will be used to reach large audiences.** The consent forms should include the name of those responsible for taking the content, the organization, the name of the individual(s) portrayed, the address, contacts, and signature agreeing that his/her content may be used for public information purposes. Those capturing the content must also sign the form in the end. The consent form should always be filled twice, one to be kept by the organization and another to be provided to the individual portrayed. This aims at increasing transparency and accountability in creating media products.
- iii) **In the case of children** (any person under 18-years-old), **consent should be asked to the parent or caregiver**, and then to the child for their consent/assent using a child friendly approach.

**Ensuring diversity and specific protection concerns:** It is important to bring visibility to all different population groups and use an age, gender, and diversity approach, and include individuals with specific protection concerns such as GBV survivors, unaccompanied and separated children, LGBTIQ+, persons and ethnic/religious minorities. Due to the potential repercussions on the safety, security and psychological well-being of the survivor, facilitating individual interviews between journalists and GBV survivors is not recommended.

<sup>2</sup> Photo 2 - Nicuapa IDP Relocation site, District of Montepuez, in Cabo Delgado Province, Northern Mozambique.

**Agencies and organizations who are providing direct support for survivors should not be responsible for “finding” survivors for journalists to interview.** Instead, actors can assess the environment and consider if and how survivors could be directly or indirectly engaged. Considering that disclosing the identity and images of some individuals may be sensitive and result in the consequences outlined above, there are alternative ways of portraying such individuals in a safe, consented and dignified way. Some examples include identifying the person with a different name, blurring the image, taking photos/filming from behind, just the hands, arms, or shoulders, or have part of the face covered (or even distort voices in case of recorded interviews).



*Credit: ©UNHCR/Martim Gray Pereira<sup>3</sup>*

**Dignity:** All video and photo materials of displaced populations should respect their dignity and portray individuals in an empowering way, focusing on their resilience and strength. Although displaced communities face harsh situations, they also have an impressive reliance to cope with challenges and overcome them. Focusing on these aspects promotes respect for the dignity of displaced populations and contributes to increased positive public perception and sympathy toward them. Displaced communities should be portrayed as active subjects, and less as passive objects who rely upon humanitarian assistance.

Depicting displaced populations with shocking and graphic content, particularly in emergency contexts, can lead to increasing stigma and negative public perception of displaced communities. Therefore, organizations should refrain from using shocking and graphic materials as a fundraising tool, as this may contribute towards negative perceptions and lack consideration for the safety, consent and dignity of the individual(s).

<sup>3</sup> **Photo 3** - A displaced family of carpenters from Mocimboa da Praia established a carpentry workshop in Nicuapa IDP Relocation Site, District of Montepuez, in Cabo Delgado Province, Northern Mozambique.



Credit: ©UNHCR/Martim Gray Pereira<sup>4</sup>

### Media good practices:

- Before taking content, always ask and request the informed consent first, and that participation is voluntary for internally displaced persons. This entails creating an environment whereby internally displaced persons feel comfortable requesting those taking content (photos, videos, interviews, etc.) to stop at any given movement, without need for reasoning, and do not need to proceed if they do not wish to do so.
- Those taking media content and conducting interviews should consider an appropriate, private and safe space to obtain the content, ideally limiting the number of persons involved, ensuring consent to use private individual(s) homes/spaces, and also considering gender appropriate staffing to take content.
- When using photos and videos of displaced communities as communication products, always do so in a contextualized way, indicating captions with accurate background information. For this purpose, conduct an interview to gather specific information to elaborate your caption, including the name, age, place of origin, and other relevant questions you are trying to cover for your media product.

<sup>4</sup> **Photo 4** - Omar Mahindra, a 46-year-old carpenter from Mocimboa da Praia, established a carpentry in Nicuapa IDP Relocation site, District of Montepuez, in Cabo Delgado Province, Northern Mozambique. There, he works with his son, Massesi, 26 years old and his grandchildren.

- When conducting interviews, always ask open questions, avoid yes or no questions, and allow people to explain and express themselves as they wish. Write your interview in captions in accordance to the information received and ensure that you are reflecting the statements and opinion of the person portrayed.
- When reporting on internally displaced persons, the use of appropriate language and terminology should be considered. Not only should language be positive, non-discriminative and non-judgmental but terminology should also be accurate and follow the standards of the relevant sector guidance (e.g. internally displaced Vs refugee, victim Vs survivor, minors Vs children, relocation Vs resettlement, etc.)
- Consult with experts in the field relevant to the media content that you are taking, this is the best approach to gain insight as to what methods are appropriate for taking content, as well as how best to represent the content.
- Know protection and other assistance services before setting out to take media content with internally displaced persons, which is essential to ensure that communications feed directly into protection responses, and that persons with specific needs identified whilst taking content can be safely referred to the relevant services with their consent.
- Before publishing materials, always cross check details such as the names of individuals portrayed, locations and background information, including orthography.



Credit: ©UNHCR/Martim Gray Pereira<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Photo 5 - Veronica, 30-years-old, was forced to flee her area of origin in Muidumbe, in Cabo Delgado, in 2020, as a result of violence, and is currently host at Mapupulo IDP site in Montepuez District.