tool 39 Security Risks when Gathering Information on Grave Violations

Self-assessment exercise

Assess your vulnerability to situations that may compromise your and your source's security and/or the confidentiality of information and select relevant mitigating steps according to the level of risk:

Risk	Level (high/medium/low)	Suggestions
Information may be overheard or relayed to persons who do not *need* to know it		☐ Choose an appropriate location if you are conducting interviews. ☐ Do not discuss case information with or in front of people who do not *need* to know it (e.g., taxi or office drivers, cleaners and other support staff, colleagues from other projects or organizations, personal friends, neighbors, relatives, etc.). ☐ Avoid communicating sensitive information by phone if there is a risk your telephone may be tapped and use extreme caution when you must do it (e.g., using code words). ☐ Do not leave case information in plain sight or in shared spaces. ☐ Do not send case information through others, unless specifically allowed to do so. ☐ Clarify with the MRM focal point who in the UN will have access to the information you will provide.
Information may be lost		☐ Always keep case information with you until you can store it. ☐ Keep copies of case information in a safe place. ☐ Use codes for victim, monitor, location, violation and perpetrator.
Information may be seized (arrest, road-block, checkpoint)		☐ Use codes for case, victim, location, focal point, perpetrator. ☐ If there is an imminent or likely risk that information may be seized, limit yourself to oral exchanges and write the report later in a safe location. ☐ Write down only partial information and complete the full report as soon as possible in a safe location. ☐ Be sure to know what to say and how to conduct yourself in a situation where sensitive information may seized (raid, arrest, roadblock, checkpoint).
It may become known that the source provided information to your organization, which exposes him/her or your staff member to harassment, retaliation or stigmatization		☐ Choose an appropriate location if you are conducting interviews and confirm if the source feels safe there. ☐ Ensure that the victim or parent/guardian gives informed consent prior to an interview. ☐ Maintain a low profile when conducting interviews. ☐ Coordinate closely with the UN to ensure that verification missions do not attract undue attention to the source and clarify who in the UN can have access to information about the case you reported. ☐ Identify partner organizations or entities able to provide physical protection to a victim/witness at risk (e.g., relocation) and discuss this option with the victim/witness.
Other:		

related tools

🔗 tool 32 – Checklist 'Documenting cases of grave violations'

🔗 tool 45 – Factsheet 'Information management'

🔗 tool 46 – Group exercise 'Confidentiality and information management'

WATCH LIST ON CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT