

Annex 6

Media focus group discussion tool



Acknowledgements

These guidelines are made possible by the generous support of the Bureau of Humanitarian Affairs (BHA) through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Internews would like to extend their appreciation to all those who contributed to the guidelines “Information and risks: a protection approach to information ecosystems”.

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These resources have been created as part of the [Community Voices for Better Protection \(CVBP\)](#) project. This project aims to understand the risks associated with information in humanitarian contexts from the perspective of humanitarian field workers, specialist protection agencies and media and other information providers. Using field work conducted in 2022-23 in three locations – Iraq, Mali and Philippines – these resources work to address a gap in the understanding of, and response to risk and information.

For feedback or suggestions for the improvement of these guidelines, please contact the Internews Humanitarian Team through info@internews.org

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Annex 6: Media focus group discussion tool

Purpose of this tool

This tool focuses specifically on media and aims to (1) identify protection risks media and journalists might face in a particular context, and (2) understand media practices towards mainstreaming safety and dignity, meaningful access, accountability, and participation and empowerment of the affected communities into their activities and reporting. Analysis of data from these FGDs will inform the protection analysis of the information ecosystem, and support media and humanitarian actors to co-develop projects to increase safe and meaningful access to accurate information. The questions provided in this tool are not context-specific but serve as a guide to local media and humanitarian actors interested in conducting FGDs to better understand information-related protection risks. The tools should always be adapted to the context ahead of community consultations. For more details on conducting a protection analysis or developing recommendations see *Module 3: Reducing information-related protection risks: an analytical framework*.

Tips for facilitation:

- For guidance on facilitating focus group discussion (FGD), see UNHCR tool for participatory assessment in operations “Facilitating discussions”.
- This FGD can be organized as a round table or a one-day workshop bringing representatives of different local, regional, and national media outlets together. Including diverse types of media (radio, newspaper, online, TV, etcetera) will provide more in-depth insights into the media landscape.
- This event is a good opportunity to present the Guidelines¹ and share them with each media outlet present in the room. It could also lead to co-organizing a one-day training using the training resources available in annex (Training on Information, Protection, and Safe-programming).

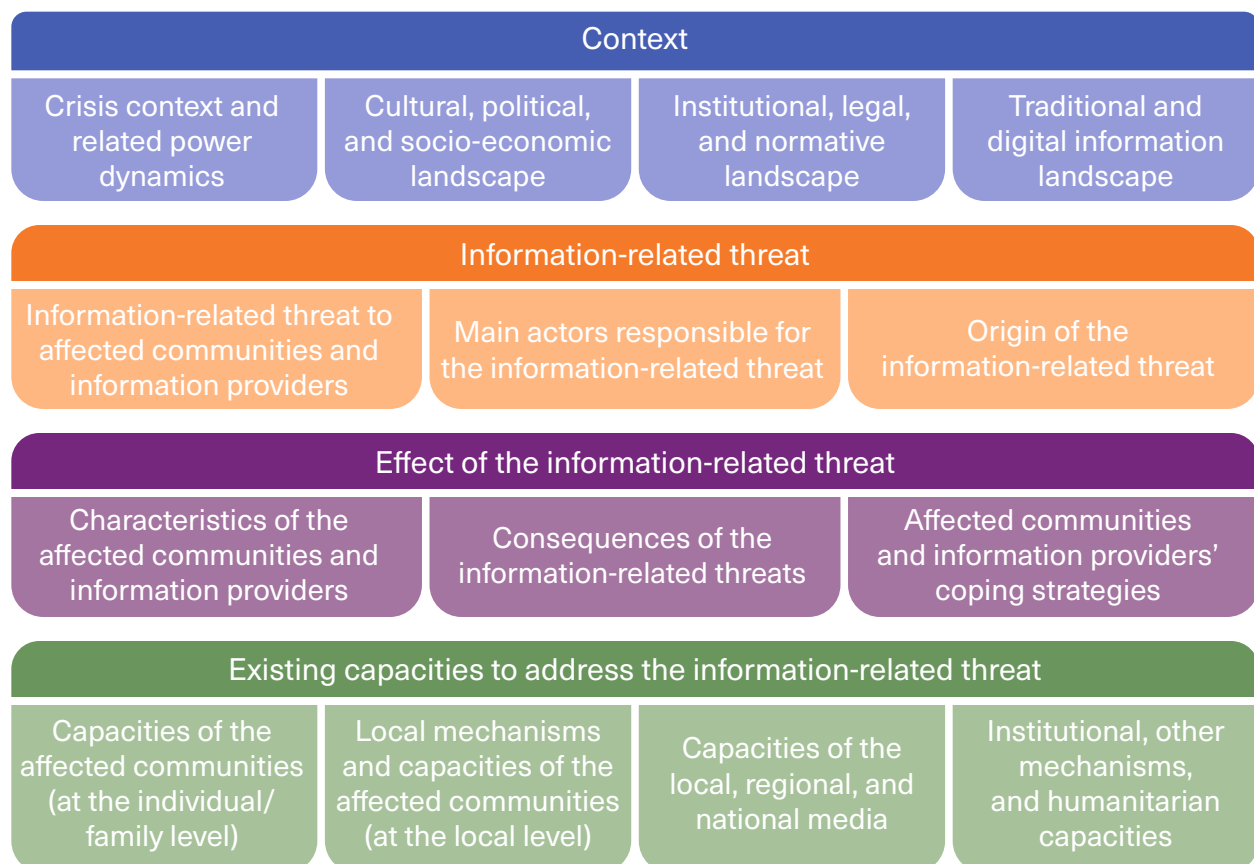
¹ Safe, Meaningful and Accurate Information: A Protection Approach to Information Ecosystems – and particularly Module 4: Reducing harm: a guide for media and journalists in emergencies

Topic I: Information-related protection risks faced by the media

This section of the FGD guides discussion on the main risks faced by media actors in creating, sharing, seeking, and obtaining information, and engaging with local communities and other stakeholders including humanitarians and the government.

The section is designed to help you obtain information on the four pillars of the information protection analytical framework and will inform the protection analysis of the information ecosystem. Do not hesitate to adapt the tools to your needs.

PAF THE INFORMATION PROTECTION ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK



1. Are there any topics you would like to work on, but for some reason cannot? (“Work on” can refer to: find information/do research on, create content on, broadcast/print/share articles/programs on, reach the people you would like to reach with this content)
 - ▶ If yes: Is it difficult to access information related to this topic? If yes, why?
 - ii. Internal reasons: (If prompts are needed, some examples are: no green light from editorial management/owners, not enough budget/time to work on it)
 - iii. External reasons: (If prompts are needed, some examples are: no information available, too much information available and not able to verify which one is accurate, no access to trusted sources, no access to channels of information where the information is available, language, format of the information).
2. Are there topics you are uncomfortable reporting on, and which could put you in danger if you talked about them publicly?
3. Do you feel that your role as a journalist creates specific risks? What are those risks? (If prompts are needed, some examples are: risk to personal safety, risks of harassment/discrimination, risks to relatives and friends). What do you do to protect yourself?
4. Have you ever felt your communications (in person, on the phone, or online) were being monitored? If yes, what did you do in response? (If prompts are needed, some examples are: Did you stop talking about a certain topic, did you keep talking about it because it was essential, did you use coded language, did you switch to a more secure communications channel?)
5. How would you describe the relationship between
 - ▶ The media and the civil society:
 - ▶ The media and the government:
 - ▶ The media and the humanitarian community:
 - ▶ The media and its audience:
 - ▶ (if context requires, add other key stakeholders such as the military, other power holders, etc.)

Tips: When describing media in Question 5, let the participants know they can speak specifically about the experience for their media outlet or for the media sector in general. Gather details both on the coordination and activities undertaken by these stakeholders, as well as the tone of the relationship; for instance, is it positive, negative, or neutral?

6. What could be done to improve **safe** and **meaningful** access to **accurate** information for journalists and the media? Who do you think would be the best place to change the situation? (If prompts are needed, some examples are: individuals, community, community leaders, local authorities, civil society organizations, media, government, humanitarian actors, etc.)

Safe and meaningful access to accurate information:

- ▶ Safe = creating, sharing, seeking and obtaining information does not create risks for the community
- ▶ Meaningful = information is accessible to all population groups based on their information needs and preferences
- ▶ Accurate = the community has the capacity to verify and analyze information

Topic 2: Media practices towards the centrality of protection

This section focuses on the ways of working of media. It covers four elements: safety and dignity, ensuring meaningful access, accountability, and participation and empowerment of the affected communities.

1. What measures does your organization have in place to protect the safety of the audience you work with? (If prompts are needed, some examples are: assessing risks of community members showcased in media content, data security and protection of personal identifying information² provided by sources or the audience, policies and training of staff for moderation of social media platform)
2. What measures does your organization have in place to protect the safety of the journalists and other employees? (If prompts are needed, some examples are: training, policies, code of conducts)
3. What measures does your organization have in place to protect the safety of your brand (otherwise known as the reputation of your media outlet)? (If prompts are needed, some examples are: capacity to work independently, buy-in of the power holders and the audience, reputation)
4. Do you produce information targeted to the affected community? How do you adapt to their specific needs? (If prompts are needed, some examples are: information needs and preferences such as preferred topics, language, platforms) What barriers do you feel you face in creating information relevant to the affected community?

² Personally identifiable information is defined as any information that indicates someone's identity, or which can be inferred by a reader. Examples would include full names, addresses, aliases or phone numbers.

5. Do you have mechanisms in place to receive feedback from your audience? Does that include offline or online mechanisms, or both? What do you do with that feedback?
6. Do you have projects that are co-developed with the affected community? (If prompts are needed, some examples are: a reporting series where members of the community help pitch report ideas)
7. Do you have projects that aim to give information to the affected community on their rights? (If prompts are needed, some examples are: reports on legal rights or services the community tends to be eligible for, a radio show bringing humanitarian or government representatives to speak about services available to the affected community)

Along with other necessary data collection, once you've completed the KII, you're ready to analyze the information you received. *Module 3: Reducing information-related protection risks: an analytical framework* provides direction on how to analyze feedback from the FGD and turn it into recommendations to increase safe and meaningful access to information. *Module 2: How can I contribute to a safer information ecosystem by adapting my ways of working?* will help local media and humanitarian actors assess how local media can strengthen their internal policies and ways of working to place protection at the center of their work. This guidance will also allow local media and humanitarian actors in co-developing projects that will increase the participation and empowerment of the local media.

Guidelines map: How do I use the *Information and risks: a protection approach to information ecosystems* modules and annexes?



Question:

I run the online page of a local newspaper and I have heard some rumors that violence broke out after an article we wrote prompted very angry comments.

Answer:

To guide work aimed at mitigation and preventing this from happening again, see Modules 2 and 4. To listen to communities and understand more about the issues this article triggered in the community, see Module 3 and associated tools.



Question:

I am a protection actor preparing to undertake analysis to monitor protection trends and inform programming.

Answer:

Module 3 and associated Annexes provides an analytical framework to help you design your tools and collect data, as well as guidance to produce analysis on information-related protection risks.

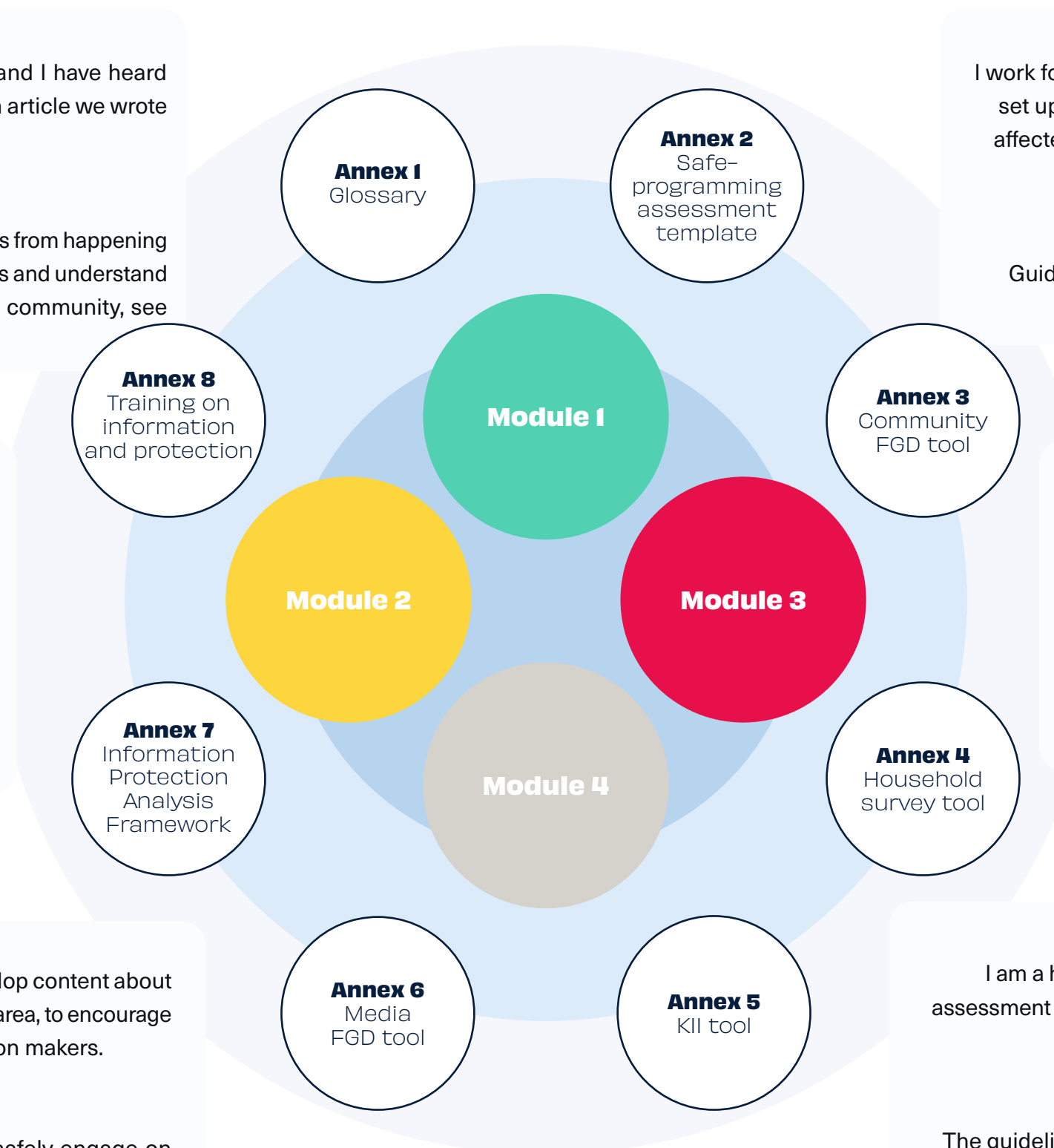


Question:

I work at a local radio station and want to develop content about the rise of gender-based violence (GBV) in the area, to encourage action amongst regional and national decision makers.

Answer:

The guidelines will provide direction on how to safely engage on sensitive information (Modules 2 and 4) and how to analyze the role of information in reducing or exacerbating GBV in the community (Module 3).



Question:

I work for a non-government organization and I want to set up a Facebook page to share information with the affected community. How can I make sure it is safe for community members to use?

Answer:

Guidance on setting up safe, meaningful and accessible information channels can be found in Module 2.

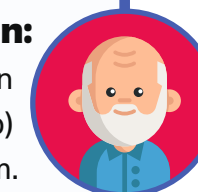


Question:

I work for a humanitarian organization and want to review (or if needed, develop) a feedback and complaint mechanism.

Answer:

Module 2 will provide information on safe and meaningfully accessible feedback and complaint mechanisms.



Question:

I am a humanitarian coordinator leading a multi-sectoral assessment in a country that was hit by a humanitarian crisis. How do we engage safely with communities?

Answer:

The guidelines provides guidance on how to safely engage with communities and coordinate with key stakeholders in Module 2. Module 3 provides guidance on how to include information elements in an assessment.

