

DECISION-MAKING MATRIX: RISK MITIGATION



The answer to the following questions should be “yes”.

Making editorial decisions before a story is gathered:

- Has our organisation written and implemented a Safeguarding Policy, and has everyone involved in this communications exercise read it and taken any necessary actions? If not, the *Girls Not Brides* [safeguarding standards for members](#) is a useful model.
- Have we mapped the services available that the contributor may need to access?⁷
- Has the GPS tracking information on our phone(s) or camera(s) been turned off so that the metadata of any image does not contain this information?
- Have we considered the potential risks – including those related to safeguarding – of gathering and sharing this story by researching and contacting in-country/in-community teams to help inform our decision-making? If so, have we considered not taking these actions, including not gathering the story?
- Have we carried out the pre-consent risk assessment (see p. 31 of our [guidelines for ethical communications around child marriage](#)) so that contributors are involved in risk conversations, aware of protection concerns and have their choices included in final decisions?
- Have we considered any culturally unacceptable activities that may harm the contributor if they are shown undertaking them, and removed them from the content plan?
- Have we left sufficient time in the planning for a properly informed consent process?
- Do we have all the consent tools needed to support the process?
- Is the person gathering consent trained in how to do this?
- Have we generated creative solutions to be able to tell a story powerfully even if we cannot show contributor identities?
- Has a police check or equivalent been carried out on any freelance or external people taking part in a content gathering exercise to ensure they do not have a criminal record and are not a risk to contributors?⁸
- If a safeguarding risk occurs, or a contributor highlights a risk, do we know who to refer this to for further action? Please be aware that this must be a specialist organisation, not the contributor's family or husband/partner, as this may incur additional risk.

Selecting or creating content after collection:

- Has consent been collected for this story? Please see the section on consent on p. 26 of our guidelines.
- Have we considered any risk mitigations outlined in the consent process and on the form (for example, hiding identity)?
- If the story does not have consent attached, have we (or whoever shared the story with us) completed the “No consent risk assessment” on [p. 21](#) of this document? This form is also available for download in our [Resource Centre](#).
- Are we protecting people by making sure that we are **not** sharing more than **one** of these three pieces of sensitive information: 1. their family name, 2. specific location or location of origin and 3. identifiable image?
- If the primary subject of an image is a child or adolescent at school, is their identity protected by not showing their full name or location, the name of the school, or any other details that could help someone locate the child or adolescent?

Guidelines for ethical communications around child marriage:

Tools for editorial decision-making

- If the primary subject of an image is shown in front of a well-known or easily identifiable landmark, has this been cropped out, or have we looked for an alternative image without that identifying feature?
 - In an image, is any visible personal data about this person – for example an identity card – hidden and unreadable?
 - Has the sign-off process included people from the country in which the contributor is currently living assessing the story from a protection perspective?
 - Has the contributor been able to review, assess and sign off the story and story use themselves? See the section on sign off on p. 55 of our guidelines.
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Full guidance and other tools are available in our [Guidelines for ethical communications around child marriage](#).