

Annex D – Informed Consent Checklist

This checklist is designed for C4JR and its members advising survivors on engaging with the media. It helps ensure that survivors provide informed consent – a clear and voluntary agreement to participate, fully understanding the framing, risks, and benefits, and other implications.

Confirming capacity to consent

___ Verify the survivor’s capacity to consent, considering their age and mental state. For minors (under 18-years old), ensure legal guardians’ consent, and the minor’s assent. For adults with mental health issues or developmental delays, provide necessary support to facilitate understanding.

Voluntary participation

___ Confirm that participation is entirely voluntary and without any coercion from journalists, media representatives, NGO workers, family, or community members.

___ Emphasize that declining participation will not result in any negative consequences from the NGO or other involved parties.

Understanding the process

___ Ensure the survivor fully understands and agrees to the scope of the interview, the topics to be discussed, and how their information will be used and shared.

___ Discuss the interview setting and who will be present, ensuring comfort and privacy.

Awareness of the story’s purpose and framing

___ Clarify the media’s intent with the story, the narrative angle, and if it will involve recounting potentially distressing experiences.

___ Ensure the survivor is comfortable with the content and purpose of their participation.

Benefits

___ Discuss potential benefits such as raising awareness, humanitarian support, or contributing to justice and reparations efforts.

___ Clearly state which of these benefits are realistic and likely achievable through their participation.

Risks

___ Outline potential risks including emotional distress, re-traumatization, stigmatization, retaliation, or regret over public exposure.

___ Discuss risks of online abuse and potential repeated media exposure.

Anonymity and personal boundaries

___ Confirm if the survivor prefers to remain anonymous and discuss measures to maintain anonymity.

___ Ensure clear boundaries are set regarding personal information and visual identifiers.

Rights during engagement

___ Affirm the survivor’s right to set boundaries on topics, take breaks, decline questions, or end the interview at any point.

___ Confirm that the survivor understands they can retract their participation at any time before publication.

Handling survivor’s information

___ Explain how the survivor’s information will be collected, used, stored, and protected, emphasizing confidentiality and security.

Post-interview process

___ Inform the survivor if they will have the opportunity to review the content before publication and request changes or withdraw consent.

Questions and clarifications

___ Provide opportunities for the survivor to ask questions and receive clear answers before giving consent.

Closing note

Prioritize the survivor's physical and emotional safety, autonomy, and well-being in all media engagements, treating their needs and concerns with utmost sensitivity and care.