



MEDIA WORKERS' GUIDE FOR
REPORTING ON MIGRATION



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Introduction

This booklet is a source of information and essential guide for media workers in Guyana for reporting on migration stories. The content was developed in collaboration with the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF), International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Guyana Press Association (GPA).

It contains information on key concepts around migration reporting and seeks to provide recommendations on industry good practices, useful terminologies and contact information for government, non-government and United Nations (UN) agencies who can be engaged for research and reporting details.

We hope that you will find this booklet to be a vital tool which will strengthen your capacity as you report on migration stories.

Profile of IOM and PADF on Migration and Humanitarian Response

In Guyana, there are notable international organizations' whose core focus and mandate are to provide emergency and humanitarian services to vulnerable migrants and refugees, as well offer technical, programmatic, and policy assistance to government and other stakeholders on migration issues through the implementation of programs and sharing of international standards and good practices. These include the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF).



The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is the United Nations (UN) migration agency that was established in 1951 with 175 member states and a presence in over 100 countries. IOM works closely with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners to promote humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all. It does so by providing services and advice to governments and migrants. It operates in the four broad areas of migration management: migration and development, facilitating migration, regulating migration, and addressing forced migration.

For more information on IOM visit: <https://www.iom.int>



The Pan American Development Foundation (PADF) is an international non-profit organization established by the Organization of American States (OAS) in 1962. PADF's mandate is to assist vulnerable and excluded people and communities in the Americas to achieve sustainable economic and social progress, to strengthen their communities and civil society, to promote democratic participation and inclusion, and prepare for and respond to natural disasters and other humanitarian crises. In response to the Venezuelan migration crisis, PADF has been working throughout the Latin America and Caribbean region to provide protection, assistance and sustainable solutions to vulnerable Venezuelan migrants.

For more information on PADF's migration response visit: <https://www.padf.org/our-migration-response/>



Media Workers at IOM PADF Workshop on Migration and Protection in June 2022.

National Policies on Migration

There are laws that are part of policies that guide migration management and governance. These laws define procedures and mechanism on how to treat migrants at the border and how government agencies provide services and uphold the human rights and dignity of migrants in Guyana.

The most relevant piece of national migration legislation is the Immigration Act, Ch. 14:02 since its entirety devoted to regulating migration and covers the broadest range of issues except for citizenship, expulsions and trafficking in persons which are covered in separate pieces of legislations.

Key migration legislation you should know

[Immigration Act, Chapter 14:02 \(1947, last amended in 2007\)](#)

The Immigration Act, Chapter 14:02 gives Guyana's law enforcement agencies the authority to impose limits on a person's ability to enter or leave Guyana.

[Guyana Citizenship Act, Chapter 14:01](#)

The Guyana Citizenship Act, Chapter 14:01, outlines the prerequisites for registration and naturalization for citizenship in Guyana.

[Aliens \(Immigration and Registration\) Act, Chapter 14:03 \(1947\)](#)

The Aliens (Immigration and Registration) Act, Chapter 14:03, contains measures for the control of foreigners' admission into and registration in Guyana.

[Expulsion of Undesirables Act, Chapter 14:05](#)

The Expulsion of Undesirables Act, Chapter 14:05, supersedes the Immigration Act and the Aliens (Immigration and Registration) Act. The Act specifies methods for expelling and compelling non-Guyanese citizens who pose a threat to the general welfare to return home.

[Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act, 2005, chapter 10:06](#)

The Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act, 2005, Chapter 10:06 establishes the legal foundation for the application of the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime. The Act outlines the grounds to prosecute human traffickers and to protect victims.

Other relevant legislation

[Constitution of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, Chapter 1:01 \(1980, last amended in 2009\)](#)

All persons in the country are given the right to basic human rights under Section 40 of the Constitution of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana.

[Registration of Births and Deaths Act, Chapter 44:01](#)

The registration of Birth and Death Act makes provision for registration of any birth and death on the soil of Guyana to be registered.

[Recruiting of Workers Act, Chapter 98:06 \(1943\)](#)

The Recruiting of Workers Act, Chapter 98:06, provides provisions for the promotion of ethical recruitment practices in Guyana.

[Prevention of Discrimination Act, Chapter 99:08 \(1997\)](#)

The Prevention of Discrimination Act, Chapter 99:08, forbids discrimination in employment and although it does not specifically specify immigration status, it does apply to ethnic background and national derivation, giving migrants some protection.

[Ministry of Health Act of 2005](#)

According to the Ministry of Health Act of 2005, the Ministry of Health (MoH) is responsible for ensuring the general public's physical, social, and mental health, without making any distinctions based on immigration status.

Role of the media and ethical reporting

The media has a responsibility to the public when it comes to keeping the population informed of current affairs and on issues that have the ability to affect attitudes in society. This also means the media has to ensure that the information it provides is accurate and balanced, and that the rights of the subjects are respected.

The media also has the ability to influence how society views or responds to issues that is dependent on how information is conveyed. When reporting on migration issues, media entities and journalists have a moral responsibility to adhere to the ethical rules and core principles of journalism.

The core principles of journalism are:

- Truth and Accuracy
- Independence
- Fairness and Impartiality
- Humanity
- Accountability

For more information visit the Guyana National Broadcasting Authority webpage at:

<https://gnba.gov.gy/principles-of-ethical-journalism/>



Good practices for reporting on migration

Media coverage on migration stories is a complex human oriented issue media workers face regularly. The challenge is often how to provide coverage on a contentious issue without violating the rights of those involved. The points below provide guidance on best practices for covering migration and, most importantly, how to ensure migrants are protected when telling their stories.

Is this an issue for press coverage?

Often, issues relating to certain crimes such as domestic violence and abuse, as well as other social issues that involved migrants, could be referred to relevant government agencies that are able to offer direct assistance to the victim. This should not be considered self-censorship but ensuring that the press coverage you are seeking to provide is in fact providing assistance to those involved without causing more harm. This does not mean you cannot continue to provide coverage on the issue, however, you should also continue to monitor the agency's response and include that information in any follow up stories.

Get all your facts!

These must include names, ages and all other relevant information to ensure that your story is factually accurate. Migrants have their own cultures and identities as well as stories to tell. It is important that the media respects those stories and understands as much as possible about the person, their family, profession or context. This may include doing pre-interviews and allowing your subject to explain and share as much as possible about their realities.

Watch your language!

It is also important to note that the media has a role to play in ensuring that hate speech as well as hate crimes are not ignited or fueled in any way. Therefore, language as well as positive coverage are important when telling migrants' stories. Consider gender-sensitive language as well as laws and guidelines that focus on reporting on women, children and sensitive issues like suicide. This booklet contains migration terminologies and reference to migration glossary to use correct terms when identifying various categories of migrants.

Find trusted sources!

Spend some time properly informing yourself about the issue before reporting. Compile and maintain a list of trusted sources and agencies which could include government representatives, state agencies, international and regional non-governmental organizations (NGOs), local civil society organizations (CSOs) and the police. This booklet contains information of entities working with migrants and on migration matters and their contact information.



Key points to note:

- The dignity and rights of every child are to be respected in every circumstance.
- Do not publish a story or an image which might put the child, siblings or peers at risk even when identities are changed, obscured or not used.
- Obtain permission from the child or children's parents or guardians for all interviews, videotaping and, when possible, for documentary photographs.



The above flowchart outlines the steps media workers should apply when doing a story to ensure accuracy and to avoid sensational reporting.

Below are useful guides you should follow on journalists' ethical standards for reporting on migration:

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) Global Charter of Ethics for Journalists is based on major texts of international law, in particular the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It contains 16 articles plus a preamble and defines journalists' duties and rights regarding ethics. A copy of the document can be downloaded at:

https://www.ifj.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Global_Charter_of_Ethics_EN.pdf

Guidelines for responsible reporting on suicides in Guyana:

<https://pressassociation.gy/2021/10/20/guidelines-for-responsible-reporting-on-suicides-in-guyana/>

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has numerous resource guides to guide media workers for reporting on migration which include:

- **Journalist Guide to Media Coverage of Migration Based on International Law and Evidence:**
https://programamesocaribe.iom.int/sites/default/files/media_coverage_handout.pdf
- **8 Key Points on Journalism, Migration and Climate Change:**
<https://programamesocaribe.iom.int/sites/default/files/migracion-periodismo/periodismo-migracion-y-cambio-climatico-en.pdf>

Our Children, Our Media: A Guide for Caribbean Practitioners, is a media manual on responsible coverage of children's issues in the Caribbean:

<https://programamesocaribe.iom.int/sites/default/files/migracion-periodismo/periodismo-migracion-y-cambio-climatico-en.pdf>

Migration Terminologies

There are a number of key terms which you will invariably use for reporting on migration stories. Here, we list the most common terminologies that you should be aware of in order to make your reporting more accurate and concise.

Asylum

The grant, by a State, of protection on its territory to persons outside their country of nationality or habitual residence, who are fleeing persecution or serious harm or for other reasons.

Displacement

The movement of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters.

Host community

A national or local community in which displaced persons temporarily reside.

Humanitarian admission

An expedited process offering a pathway for admission into a country on a temporary or permanent basis to persons or groups of persons with protection needs. Humanitarian admission can be used for persons in need of protection, including but not limited to refugees, persons with urgent protection needs, migrants in vulnerable situations, extended family members, or persons in need of medical assistance and care.

Integration

The two-way process of mutual adaptation between migrants and the societies in which they live, whereby migrants are incorporated into the social, economic, cultural and political life of the receiving community.

Irregular migration

Movement of persons that takes place outside the laws, regulations, or international agreements governing the entry into or exit from the State of origin, transit or destination.

Labour migration

Movement of persons from one State to another, or within their own country of residence, for the purpose of employment.

Migrant

An umbrella term, not defined under international law, reflecting the common lay understanding of a person who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons.

Non-refoulement (principle of)

The prohibition for States to extradite, deport, expel or otherwise return a person to a country where his or her life or freedom would be threatened, or where there are substantial grounds for believing that he or she would risk being subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, or would be in danger of being subjected to enforced disappearance, or of suffering another irreparable harm.

Refugee

A person who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.

Regularization

Any process or programme by which the authorities of a State allow non-nationals in an irregular situation to stay lawfully in the country, by granting them a regular status.

Reintegration

A process which enables individuals to re-establish the economic, social and psychosocial relationships needed to maintain life, livelihood and dignity and inclusion in civic life.

Return

In a general sense, the act or process of going back or being taken back to the point of departure. This could be within the territorial boundaries of a country, as in the case of returning internally displaced persons (IDPs) and demobilized combatants; or between a country of destination or transit and a country of origin, as in the case of migrant workers, refugees or asylum seekers.

Smuggling (of migrants)

The procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the irregular entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident. case of migrant workers, refugees or asylum seekers.

Stateless person

A person who is not considered as a national by any State under the operation of its law.

Trafficking in persons

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

Additional information on migration terminologies can be found in IOM's International Migration Law No. 34 - Glossary on Migration here: <https://publications.iom.int/books/international-migration-law-ndeg34-glossary-migration>

Sources

8 Key Points on Journalism, Migration and Climate Change:
<https://programamesocaribe.iom.int/sites/default/files/migracion-periodismo/periodismo-migracion-y-cambio-climatico-en.pdf>

Charter of Ethics for Journalists, The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) Global:
https://www.ifj.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Global_Charter_of_Ethics_EN.pdf

Guidelines for responsible reporting on suicides in Guyana:
<https://pressassociation.gy/2021/10/20/guidelines-for-responsible-reporting-on-suicides-in-guyana/>

International Migration Law No. 34 - Glossary on Migration:
<https://publications.iom.int/books/international-migration-law-ndeg34-glossary-migration>

Journalist Guide to Media Coverage of Migration Based on International Law and Evidence:
https://programamesocaribe.iom.int/sites/default/files/media_coverage_handout.pdf

Our Children, Our Media: A Guide for Caribbean Practitioners:
<http://www.acmpress.org/2016/06/30/our-children-our-media-a-guide-for-caribbean-practitioners/>

Principles of Ethical Journalism, Guyana National Broadcasting Authority <https://gnba.gov.gy/principles-of-ethical-journalism/>

Contact information for migration agencies

In Guyana, there are several agencies working on migration related issues. A non-exhaustive list is provided below of those agencies that may become relevant when producing stories around migration.

IOM, iomguyana@iom.int or +592 225-3745

PADF, guyana_office@padf.org or +592 503-0173

UNHCR, panpamedia@unhcr.org

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, minfor@minfor.gov.gy or +592 226-1606/8

Ministry of Home Affairs, info@moha.gov.gy

or +592 226-3454 and 226-1717

Ministry of Human Services and Social Security, +592 225-4186

