

Human rights monitoring principles

Do No Harm	Maintain credibility and reliability	Pay attention to sensitivity
Emphasize State responsibility	Be consistent	Be impartial & objective
Seek informed consent	Maintain integrity & professionalism	Be accurate and precise
Maintain confidentiality & privacy of interviews	Be transparent	Know the standards

1. Do no harm:

- Do not jeopardize the life, freedom, physical or psychological safety of victims, witnesses, or others contacted through monitoring.
- Be aware of potential risks of harm
- Be aware of limited capacity to ensure the safety of victims & witnesses of human rights violations.
- Do not establish contact with a person if the risk of harm is too high or there is insufficient information for an informed determination on the level of risk

2. Emphasize State responsibility:

Monitoring should aim to reinforce the State's responsibility to respect, protect and fulfil human rights – not replace it

3. Seek informed consent:

Requires action by monitor to explain to the interviewee:

- What information will be kept confidential
- The intended use of information
 - Public use?
 - Internal use?
 - Shared with others?
- How information is protected

Interviewee is fully aware of potential implications of the use of information for their safety and well-being

It is important to record the specific levels of consent for the use of different types of information!

What should the informed consent form entail?

- Explain what information will be kept confidential, such as identity & personal details of interviewee.
- Explain what information to be included in a report, whether internal or public, or shared with others.

- Ensure interviewees are fully aware of potential implications of use of information for their safety & well-being.
- Record the specific levels of consent for the use of different types of information: e.g. for internal use; public use; and/or sharing with external actors.

4. Maintain confidentiality & privacy of an interview

- As a rule: treat information confidentially
- Confidentiality is a measure to protect safety of interviewees
- Safeguard recording of information and storage of information
- Interviews are private, confidential, without benefit, and voluntary (can stop at any time).

5. Maintain credibility & reliability

- The first moment of contact sets the tone, make sure you are well prepared
- Trust is reflected in cooperation with interlocutors and reliability of information given
- Follow-up professionally on your commitments, don't make promises you cannot keep

6. Be consistent:

- Collect information in a consistent manner
- Use a variety of sources
- Aim for the long run: take your time for careful examination, comparing and verifying of information

7. Maintain integrity & professionalism

- Treat all interlocutors, counterparts and your co-workers with respect and decency
- Be honest, impartial and open
- Work in a competent, diligent, calm and committed manner

8. Be transparent:

- Make sure to inform state authorities (on all relevant levels), civil society and local population informed of your work
- Ensure that is clear to all your counterparts how you work
- Transparency requires constant attention

9. Pay attention to sensitivity:

- Pay attention to trauma and retraumatization
- Integrate a gender perspective in every stage of monitoring
- Gender analysis looks at the differences between women and men, boys and girls, and how these differences affect the structure, institutions and values of society and they ways in which human rights are enjoyed or violated
- Show some degree of empathy to the suffering an individual may have experienced.

10. Be impartial & objective:

- Be impartial in your dealings with all your counterparts, but not neutral in execution of your activities
- Objectively consider all relevant facts
- Be aware of personal biases & ensure they don't affect your monitoring work
- Approaching all sides equally increases your credibility (and effectiveness)

11. Be accurate and precise:

As the analysis produced through monitoring will serve as the basis for immediate or future action with the local authorities, United Nations bodies, OSCE, civil society, it is important that it is based on well-documented information.

- Human rights monitoring provides sound and precise information for further analysis, basis for further action
- Precise and credible analysis requires thorough & well-documented information
- Written records are essential to avoid lack of precision, hearsay and misunderstandings
- Reports should be thorough, submitted promptly, and contain specific facts, accurate analysis (including legal analysis) and useful recommendations

12. Know the standards:

- Be fully familiar with both the national & international human right standards relevant to the implementation of your work
- You don't have to know all the answers – you just have to know what questions to ask & where to find the answers
- Knowing the standards provides not only a legal basis & legitimacy for your work, but also builds the confidence of authorities and other counterparts