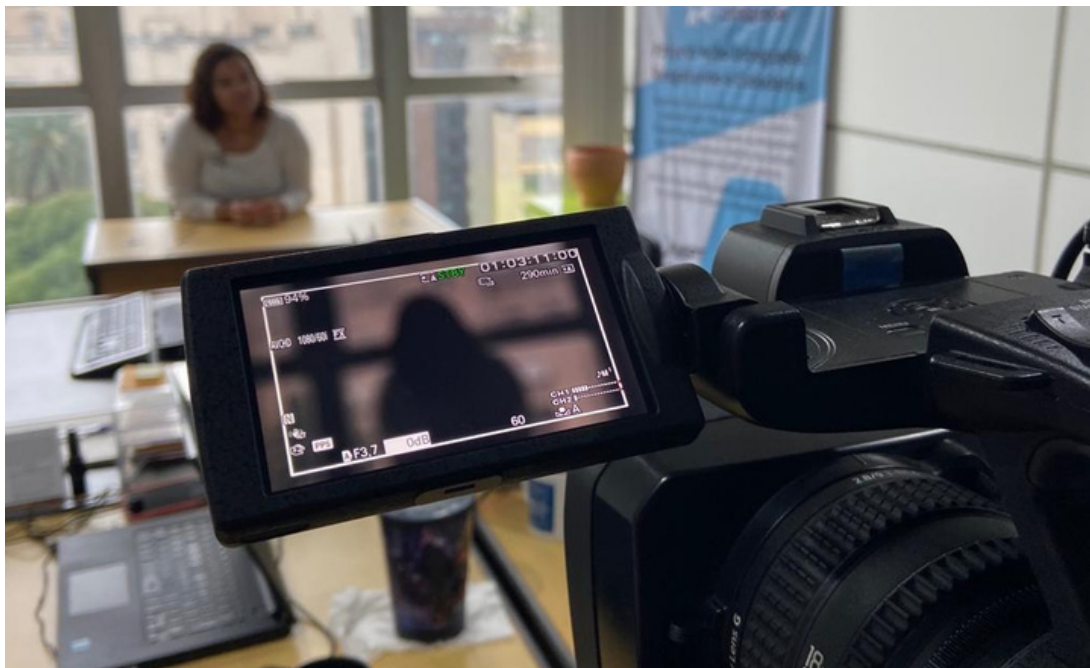




HOW TO COMMUNICATE MODERN SLAVERY



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PRESENTATION:

This manual aims to raise awareness and guide communication professionals and press vehicles on how to approach people subjected to work in conditions analogous to slavery and human trafficking.

At the same time that the media repercussion can contribute to society's reflection and the increase in the number of denunciations, care is needed to avoid excessive exposure of a delicate moment in the lives of victims.

This manual was developed based on the **demand for safety presented by rescued people** and also arose from the need for organizations and professionals to preserve the secrecy of sensitive information and not harm the safety and the physical and mental health of the victims they assist.

This discussion was guided by the Working Group of Promotion of the **State Committee for the Prevention and Combating Human Trafficking (CETP-RJ)** and the **Commission for the Eradication of Slave Labor of the State of Rio de Janeiro (COETRAE-RJ)**, and it was done with the collaboration of several actors, among them, people rescued from modern slavery, journalists, professionals responsible for assisting victims, academics and specialists of modern slavery.

We hope that this material will serve as support for organizations and the media, and contribute to raising awareness about the importance of data protection and classification of information to be published.



THANKS:

This Manual had the collaboration of academics on the subject of human trafficking and modern slavery, as well as professionals and specialists in the area of communication.

We especially thank Julia Kronemberger, state coordinator for combating human trafficking and slave labor in Rio de Janeiro; Marcela Soares, professor at the School of Social Work and the Graduate Program in Social Work and Regional Development at UFF; Murilo Peixoto da Mota, sociologist from NEPP-DH/UFRJ and collaborator of the Contemporary Slave Work Research Group (GPTEC/UFRJ); Luciana Bittencourt, from the Maricá School of Government (EMAR) and the Women's Extension Program: weaving networks of resistance and care (IPSi/UFF); Flávia de Almeida Moura, professor and researcher at the Federal University of Maranhão (UFMA); Fábio Teixeira, Thomson Reuters reporter; Gabriela Romero, specialist in communication in humanitarian contexts; and Ítala Maduell and Alexandre Caroli, journalists and Journalism professors at PUC-Rio.



THE IMPORTANCE OF JOURNALISTIC WORK

Every time a report on modern slavery is published, the number of denounces increases precisely because people are able to recognize in their surroundings traces of the story they saw in the news. Journalistic work has a social impact and serves the common good. Therefore, its role is fundamental for the construction of social representations.

“ACCORDING TO THE PUBLIC LABOR MINISTRY, THIS HEARING (4.5 MILLION UNIQUE LISTENERS) HAS LED TO AN INCREASE IN DENOUNCES OF MODERN SLAVERY. IN BRAZIL, THEY JUMPED 67% SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE PUBLICATION.”

JOURNALIST IN A REPORT ON THE TOPIC

The work of journalists is fundamental to the fight against modern slavery. However, many victims report problems with the press: invasive questions, excessive exposure of their family members and personal documents, among others.

“THE TV ARRIVED BEFORE US AT THE PLACE, FILMED THE WHOLE SITUATION, EXPOSED THE VICTIM’S FAMILY AND WHEN WE ARRIVED TO PROVIDE CARE, THEY DIDN’T WANT TO TALK TO ANYONE ANYMORE, NOR THE ASSISTANCE. THEY WERE TOTALLY TRAUMATED FOR HAVING LEFT TO BRAZIL ALL THAT WAY”.

VICTIM CARE PROFESSIONAL



THE PROTECTION WITH THE VICTIM

Faced with some overexposure suffered by victims in the press, assistance institutions claim that their protection is not only the responsibility of the State or organizations, but also of journalists and society as a whole.



“WHEN YOU ASK FOR YOUR IMAGE TO BE PRESERVED, THE RIGHT THING IS FOR THEM TO DO THAT. BUT NO, THEY EXPOSED ME. ALL THE PEOPLE WHO KNOW ME SAW ME AND ASKED ME. I SPENT A LOT OF TIME WITHOUT LEAVING HOME. I EVEN CHANGED MY PHONE NUMBER .”



RESCUED VICTIM

Interviews with rescued people take place after the rescue, but even if the victims are already being followed up by assistance, the contact with the press can be a risk to their physical and mental health.

Normally, people recently rescued from work analogous to slavery tend to show very similar behaviors and feelings, such as:

- Fear of retaliation from former bosses.
- They are threatened or coerced not to speak ill of the bosses and to not denounce.
- They relive the suffering by talking about their history.
- They find it difficult to perceive themselves as enslaved people.
- They do not want to be socially recognized for the violation they suffered.
- They have suicidal thoughts because they understand themselves without direction and perspective.



- They feel anxiety before, during and after being interviewed.
- They don't remember dates exactly or don't relate their stories chronologically.



"THIS IS A SMALL TOWN, RIGHT: EVERYONE KNOWS EACH OTHER. WHEN NEWS COMES OUT OF A RESCUED WORKER WHO CAME TO RIO DE JANEIRO FROM THAT REGION, THE LOCAL POPULATION IS SOON ABLE TO RECOGNIZE WHO IT WAS.



VICTIM CARE PROFESSIONAL

In many cases, the person does not want their own family to know the suffering they went through and they do not want to become a symbol of the violence they suffered.

Excessive exposure in the media can also impact on ongoing administrative/judicial proceedings. The exploiters can manipulate new information in their favor and harming the financial compensation that the victim could receive for the damage suffered.



"THE CASE X DE HAD A GREAT REPERCUSSION (WITH THE PRESS), WHICH STIMULATED OTHER ACCUSATIONS, BUT ON THE OTHER HAND IT ALSO HINDERED THE PROCESS, THE PARTIES WERE NEVER INTERESTED IN REACHING AN AGREEMENT".



LABOR JUDGE

Each person reacts differently: some don't want to go back to the subject, but many want to tell their stories. They understand that talking can generate social change and use their reports as a way to alert others.



“I THINK INFORMATION IS WHAT MAKES CHANGE. SHARING MY EXPERIENCE CAN HELP PEOPLE WHO ARE IN A SIMILAR SITUATION AS MINE TO BE RESCUED BY THE INFORMATION I TOLD. I TALK TO THE YOUNG MAN WHO THINKS HE KNOWS EVERYTHING, BUT IN REALITY HE NEEDS HELP”

RESCUED VICTIM



Despite the sympathy for journalists, most of the victims are afraid of being unduly exposed by the press. These people have the right to want to talk, but also to want to forget.

BEFORE BEGINNING THE INTERVIEW:

- When arranging the interview, choose a time and place that is not very busy, so that the person does not feel exposed or inhibited from speaking in the environment. It is important to verify the possibility of the victim being accompanied by a social assistance professional.
- Introduce yourself, explain the idea of the report and inform the method of recording. Make it clear that the person has the right to not answer a question, ask to end the conversation at any time and ask that certain information to not be published.
- Present the possibility of anonymity, using a fictitious name chosen by the interviewee and preserving his image and voice in the report.

“AS IT’S A FALSE NAME, I FEEL MORE SAFE TO TALK ABOUT HOW I FEEL AND WHAT I’VE BEEN THROUGH. I’VE ALWAYS LIKED JOURNALISTS, BUT I’M NOT READY TO TELL EVERYTHING WITH MY REAL NAME YET”.

RESCUED VICTIM



DURING THE INTERVIEW:

- Start by allowing the interviewee to start saying what he would like to say, without leading questions at first. Example: “What would you like to tell me about your story? How would you like to start?”
- Avoid questions that provoke strong emotional reactions. If they occur, give the person some time to recover and consider the possibility of shortening the interview.
- Avoid asking details of traumatic events, such as sexual abuse.
- Avoid questions with moralistic questions. Example: “Why didn’t you run away or fight this situation?” / “Do you blame yourself for what happened?”.
- Interrupt the interview if the person shows any sign of stress: body tremors/ crying uncontrollably/ severe headache/ nausea/ difficulty breathing/ paleness.

“**I’M AFRAID TO TOUCH YOUR WHITE HAND**”

SENTENCE OF A RESCUED VICTIM TO A JOURNALIST DURING AN INTERVIEW

BEFORE FINISHING THE INTERVIEW:

- End the interview with optimistic questions that demonstrate interest in other parts of the person’s life beyond the violence suffered. Example: “And what are your interests these days?” / “What do you like to do in your routine right now?” / “What are your plans for the future?”.
- It is important to congratulate the person for the courage to give an interview, to expose this moment in her(his) life. Thank her(him) for sharing her story.



THE USE OF INFORMATION, IMAGES AND AUDIOS:

It is very common that, during interviews, rescued people naturally reveal information that they would not necessarily want to be published, such as the names of family members or explorers.

Therefore, after the interview, it is important to confirm with the interviewee whether certain information can be published and also to be very careful before including it in the report. Such as:

- Real name / city of origin / family name / date of birth.
- Name of explorers / neighborhood where she(he) worked / exact date of rescue.
- Where does she(he) live now / name of people who cared for her(his) during and after the rescue.
- Value of the financial compensation and its equity after being redeemed.

“

“SHE HAD THE RIGHT OF TWO PENSIONS, WHICH ADD UP TO A MONTHLY INCOME OF MORE THAN R\$8,000. (...) AS A COMPENSATION, SHE RECEIVED AN APARTMENT AFTER A JUSTICE DECISION(...) SHE ALSO RECEIVED THE FAMILY CAR AND A PAYMENT OF R\$ 20.000 (...) THE PENSIONS RETURNED TO HER AND TODAY SHE MANAGES THAT MONEY.”

”

REPORT ABOUT A RESCUED PERSON



With regard to images, audiovisual reports can expose the victim, even if unintentionally.

- Avoid images of body parts that can identify the victim. Even if they are details, those who explored will be able to recognize it.
- Do not post images that appeal to misery, stigmatizing the victim.
- Avoid images of symbols that are traditionally used to represent slavery, such as chains. They end up moving away from the real condition of modern slavery, limiting the understanding of what slavery is only to restricting freedom of movement.



“WE ALREADY NEED TO REMOVE A RESCUED PERSON FROM THE SHELTER SHE WAS ALREADY ADAPTED BECAUSE IN THE TV REPORT SHE APPEARED FROM THE BACK, THE FORMER EMPLOYERS RECOGNIZED HER AND THEN MADE THREATS AGAIN”.

VICTIM CARE PROFESSIONAL



IMAGES SUGGESTIONS:

There are other image options that do not overexpose victims and complement audiovisual reports that require coverage images, such as:

- Silhouette of the interviewee, with blurred image and modified voice.
- Images of the environment in which the person was exploited: sugarcane plantations; “maid’s room”; textile industry; restaurants, civil construction, soccer teams.



- Tourist sites of the cities where they were explored, bringing the context to the public.
- Important (but generic) objects for the person: books; new work materials.
- Person's hobbies: cooking, writing, watching series, taking care of plants.
- Graphic images: illustrations, animations, floor plans, maps and simulations.

VOCABULARY: SUGGESTIONS AND EXPLANATIONS

- “Work analogous to slavery”; “work in conditions analogous to slavery” are the terms most used to talk about modern slavery due to the definition in Brazilian legislation in article 149 of the Penal Code: “Reducing someone to a condition analogous to slavery (...)”.
- The use of the term “analogous” helps to avoid possible confusion between the definition of colonial slavery (which is characterized as a violation of human dignity authorized by law, in which enslaved people were not recognized as subjects of rights) and the modern slavery (not authorized by law).
- “Modern Slavery”; “contemporary slavery”; “contemporary forms of slavery”; “enslaved” (instead of “slaves”). These are terms also used by specialists that help break down prejudices and stigmas and make it possible to understand the uniqueness of each enslavement process, according to the historical moment and territory in which it takes place.



- The term “forced labor” is adopted by most international organizations, as it is based on Conventions 29 and 105 of the International Labor Organization (ILO). Forced labor is labor for which a person has not voluntarily applied for and which is exacted under threat, coercion, violence, intimidation, withholding documents or in order to collect debts.
- Brazilian law differs by considering forced labor as one of several characteristics that can configure this crime: forced labor, exhausting workdays, degrading working conditions, restriction of movement due to debt.
- When referring to the rescued worker, try to avoid the term “slave” and use expressions such as: “worker”; “professional”, “victim”, “survivor”, “person in situation of exploitation”, “person in situation of enslavement”, “person exploited” and “person enslaved”, portraying the violation as something transitory in their life, not as marker of their identity.



“IT WAS BAD FOR ME BECAUSE IT HARMED MY CHILDREN. MY SON WAS THREATENED, WE WERE RECOGNIZED ON THE STREET, WE HAD TO CHANGE CITY AND PHONE NUMBER BECAUSE HE COULDN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE”.



RESCUED VICTIM

If the press is the first to arrive at the location of the rescue, it is extremely important that journalists contact the competent inspection and service institutions, such as the Labor Inspection, the Public Ministry of Labor and the Federal Police.



HOW TO COMMUNICATE MODERN SLAVERY

The main focus of this manual is the communication of modern slavery in the press, but it can also be a reference for all professionals who work with the subject, from repression operations to victim assistance and care.

We hope to have contributed to the debate about how to report serious human rights violations in Brazil and to have provided instruments to ensure the protection of victims of modern slavery and human trafficking.



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