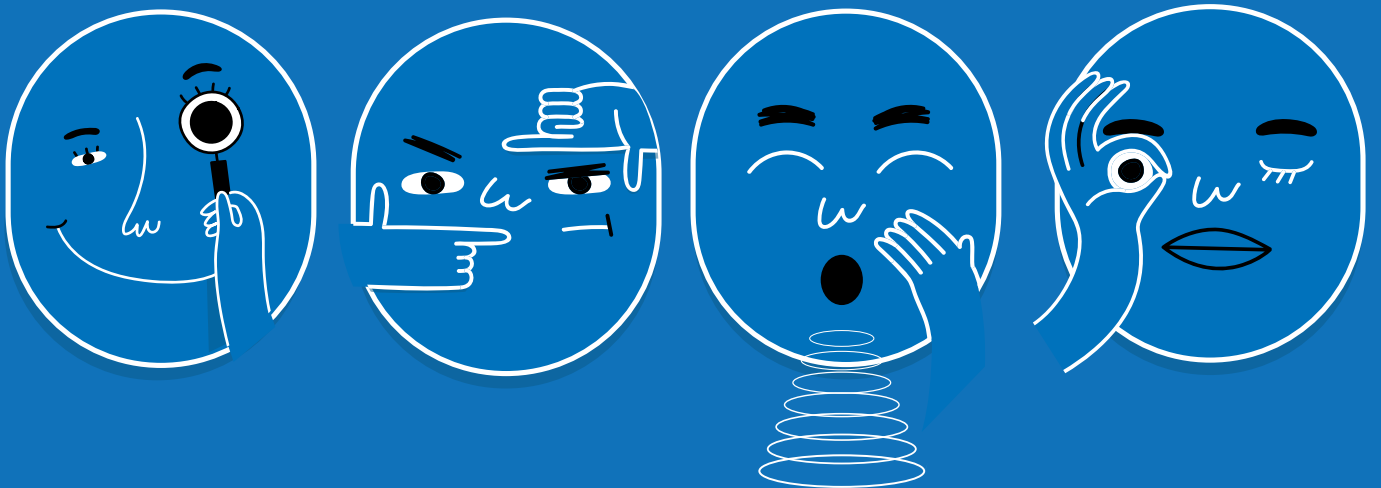


# Communications Guidance – A Handbook

A guidance to provide communication support from UNHCR Innovation



This booklet is designed to provide communications support and guidance to organizations led by displaced and stateless people endorsed through UNHCR's Refugee-led Innovation Fund.

It is not intended to be a public-facing document, nor does it seek to replace the communications strategy and approach of endorsed organizations. It should rather complement existing approaches and enable organizations to communicate more seamlessly about the partnership and the projects being implemented.

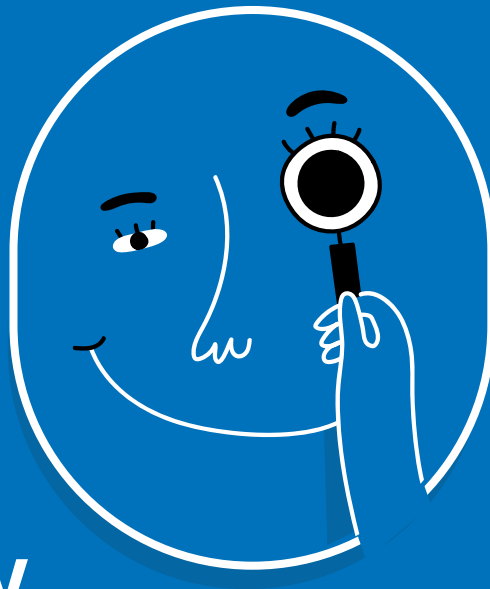
The Innovation Service communications team is headed by Nathalie Rami. Isaac Kiunga leads on visual communications, while Kirsten O'Regan leads on editorial communications.

If you have any communications-related questions, please don't hesitate to contact Kirsten ([oregan@unhcr.org](mailto:oregan@unhcr.org)) or Isaac ([kiungai@unhcr.org](mailto:kiungai@unhcr.org)).



# Contents

<b>Overview.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Communicating ethically.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Gathering communications materials.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Providing communications materials to UNHCR Innovation Service .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Drafting communications materials.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Publishing .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Visibility in physical spaces .....</b>	<b>8</b>

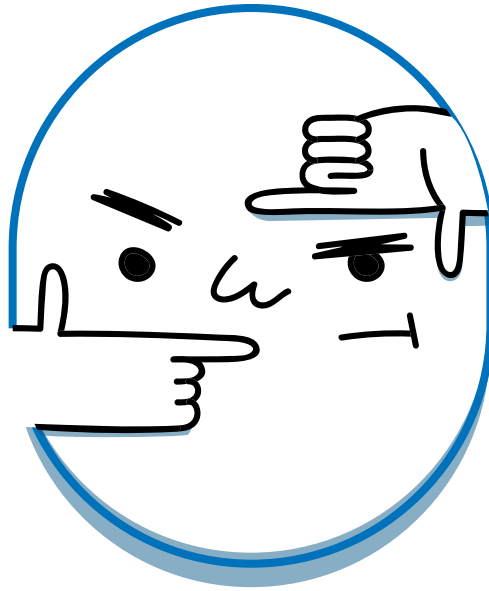


# Overview

- UNHCR's Innovation Service recognizes you – the organizations endorsed through the RLIF – as the leading partner on your innovation projects.
- We encourage you to **communicate about the things that matter to you**, when and in the way that makes the most sense for you and your stakeholders/audiences/communities.
- While we appreciate being looped in to your communications work, we are simply here to provide any necessary support. You are the owners of your projects and any communications products you produce.
- When we communicate about your work, we will always make clear that you are driving these projects.

## Communicating ethically

- Ensuring ethical communications is a central concern for the Innovation Service and UNHCR more broadly.
- What this means, in practice, is we want you – organizations endorsed through the RLIF – to feel empowered to communicate about the things that matter to you, in a way that works for you and the communities you're working with and for.
- It also means that securing informed consent from the people you interview or photograph is really important. You can find the [consent form we use here](#). It's not imperative you use this exact form, but we do ask that you ensure the people you photograph/quote from understand how UNHCR might use the materials in communication products, and provide written consent for this use. This is particularly important when the people pictured are minors.
- When you provide communications materials to the Innovation Service, we ask that you also confirm that you have sought consent (ideally through the official forms) of the relevant participants. Ideally, you will provide us with the signed consent forms, for our records.
- You can find UNHCR's full Ethical Communications guidelines here: <https://www.unhcr.org/media/ethical-communications-guidelines>



# Gathering communications materials

- As noted above, we highly recommend that you **gather written or verbal informed consent from people you photograph or speak to** for communications materials.
- We also recommend that you collect photographs, videos, and quotes/editorial content **throughout the project implementation process** – you never know when they might come in handy!
  - Documenting the whole process will enable you to tell a fuller narrative about your project.
  - This will be useful for your own communications purposes, for reporting to the Innovation Service, and for UNHCR communications about the Fund.
  - Remember that pictures with people in them are the most powerful – especially if the people pictured are looking empowered and confident. Such images will help to convey the impact of your project.
- You don't need a plan for all the materials you collect, but a **bigger picture idea of the types of stories you might tell and the purpose of your communication** (e.g., to inform host community members about issues, to inform your community about services, to attract further funding) is useful.
- From an editorial perspective, remember that **quotes are a very powerful tool**. Remember to note down or to record (with consent) conversations with the people you work with and for, so you can use those in your communications.

- When gathering **audiovisual content**, these pointers could be useful:
  - Images and videos must always be **respectful of refugees** and portray them in a dignified manner. The focus should always be on **telling the story of the people who are pictured**.
  - Images and videos should be compelling, natural, candid, and show people’s humanity – demonstrating that **refugees are ordinary people living through extraordinary circumstances**.
  - Be sure to always share information about **who/what is depicted in the photos/videos**, and who took the images. This will enable us to credit them properly
  - Here are some examples to help guide you:



Syrian refugee, Gaith (in blue), 13, stands beside his father’s fruit and vegetable cart in Beirut with his dad Samer Mohammed Ameno, 42, and brother Mohammed, 12. © UNHCR/Houssam Hariri



A student uses the handwashing facilities at Nata Senior Secondary School, near Botswana’s Dukwi camp, where some refugees study alongside local children © UNHCR/Kate Pond



Venezuelan indigenous Warao refugees smile from their hammocks after being relocated from temporary shelters to the new Tarumã-Açu shelter in Manaus. © UNHCR/Felipe Irnaldo



An asylum-seeker from Afghanistan reads her messages on her cellphone, inside the Kara Tepe emergency site, on the Greek island of Lesbos © UNHCR/Achilleas Zavallis



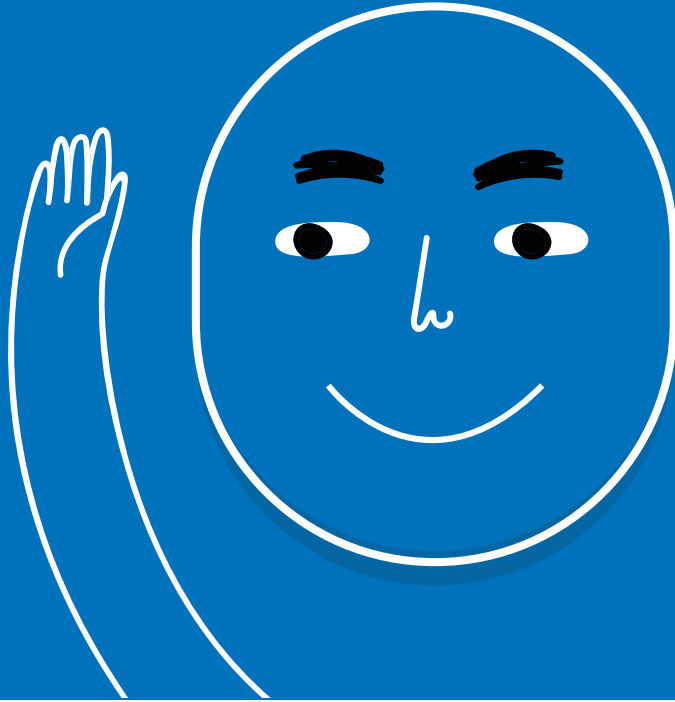
Genat Hafte Hasgedam, a refugee from Humera, Ethiopia, goes through the registration process with her son at Um Rakuba camp in Al Qadarif state, Sudan. © UNHCR/Will Swanson



UNHCR and partner staff hand over electric bikes to Venezuelan refugees and migrants in Quito, which they will use to work as delivery riders after their usual livelihoods were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic © UNHCR/Jaime Giménez



- If you plan to produce an **audio product** (radio, podcasts, voiceover for a video), these tips might come in handy:
  - Keep a **natural talking pace**.
  - Record in an **echo- and noise-free room**. Listen out for white noises as well, like a fridge, bulbs, fans... etc., as well as noises like wind, barking dogs, cars, etc.
  - **Practise and record different sections** of the script by themselves, and **then try 2–3 recordings where you do the entire script continuously** from start to finish.
  - Be sure to **play back the audio**, listening through on earphones or headphones while reading the script.
  - If you're using a recording tool other than your phone, make sure you have batteries in your voice recorder and they are fully charged. Copy any existing audio files from the SD card into your computer and format the SD card.
  - If you're using your **phone to record, be sure to silence notifications or put it on “do not disturb” mode**.



# Providing communications materials to UNHCR Innovation Service

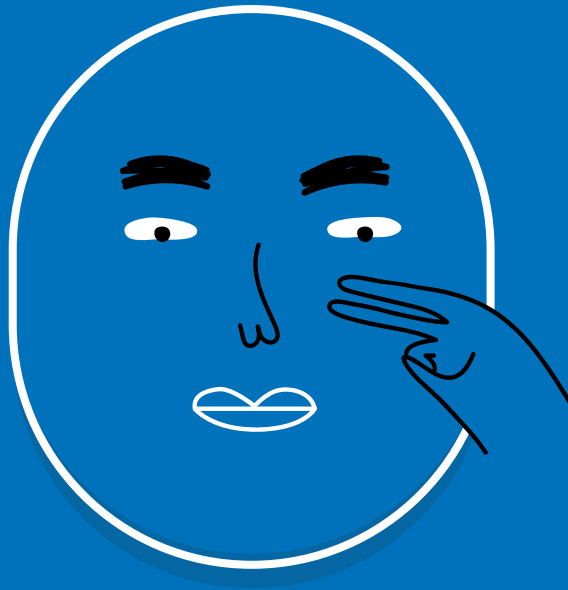
- We know you're regularly supplying potential communications materials in your reporting to us, but if you have additional materials in between times – or any particularly exciting developments – please let us know!
- When you supply quotations or images to us, please also **note whether they are able to be used in our external communications** and **confirm you have consent** forms from any people pictured or quoted from.
- Before we use materials externally, we will also aim to check in with you, to **double-check that the usage and framing material is accurate and appropriate**.
- The materials you provide to us need not be limited to reporting documents and photographs. Should you wish to use our platforms to **amplify a story about your project** (for instance, if you'd like to write a post for our [Medium blog](#)), don't hesitate to **let us know your idea**.
- There are many ways you could **transfer AV (Audio Visual) materials to us**. The main aim with any channel you use is to preserve the quality of the files you share; that way, the files

can be used across a wider range of mediums. Please do not provide images via social media platforms. Files sharing can be done through:

- A [wettransfer](#) link for large files.
- Cloud storage, such as [Google Drive](#), [Dropbox](#), [Microsoft OneDrive](#).
- [WhatsApp](#) and other social media platforms;
  - › **Note:** In order to represent your visual content in the best way possible, always share AV material in HD, when using social media platforms. Here are some steps to guide you when sharing HD AV on WhatsApp:
    1. Open a chat
    2. Tap on the + button to share
    3. Choose Photo & Video Library
    4. Select your photo and/or video
    5. Tap on the HD button (The HD button is one of the options on the menu at the top of your photo.)
    6. Select HD quality
    7. Send the photo

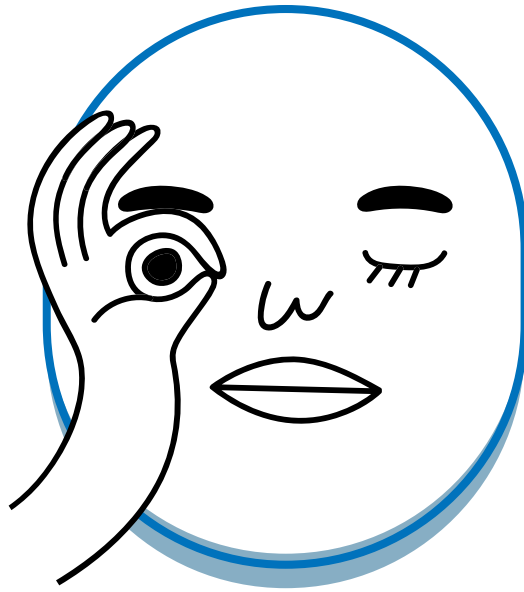
# Drafting communications materials

- Keep in mind the **audience** you're writing for and the aim of your communication.
- If you have space to **reference** that the project is implemented with the support of the UNHCR Refugee-led Innovation Fund, or through a partnership with UNHCR, that would be great!
  - This will help other organizations to discover the Fund and potentially to apply for it.
  - Phrases you could use include:
    - › This project is supported through UNHCR's Refugee-led Innovation Fund.
    - › Thanks to the support of UNHCR's Refugee-led Innovation Fund, ...
    - › This project is implemented in partnership with UNHCR, through the Refugee-led Innovation Fund.
  - Should you wish, you can link to the Fund webpage here: <https://www.unhcr.org/innovation/refugee-led-innovation-fund/>
- When it comes to innovation, we know things don't always go to plan. **Learning** from set-backs is an important part of the process. So, you can think about broadening your communications to talk about challenges and how you are overcoming them or how you plan to overcome them.
- Get in touch if we can help with any editorial queries. We're happy to help!



# Publishing

- We'd really like to know what you're communicating, and **help amplify** it if we can!
  - On Twitter, you can tag the Innovation Service (@UNHCRInnovation) and UNHCR (@Refugees).
  - On Facebook, find UNHCR here: <https://www.facebook.com/UNHCR>
  - On Instagram, you can tag UNHCR (@refugees)
  - If you want to tag a country office of UNHCR, let us know and we can supply the relevant handle.
- We welcome the application of UNHCR visibility to your materials, if that is appropriate.
  - For photos, you can use the relevant version of the [UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency](#) logo.
  - For videos, you can use this [video template](#) and the [UNHCR innovation Service intro card](#).
  - For websites and published products like reports, use the caption "Working together" and use the relevant version of the [UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency](#) logo. See page 32 of the [UNHCR Brand Book 2017](#) for application reference.
- If you wish to use any other visual assets of UNHCR or the Innovation Service, don't hesitate to contact us.
- You can always get in touch beforehand to let us know when you're publishing something, so we can prepare to amplify it or help you out with any details.



# Visibility in physical spaces

Depending on your communication budget, **we encourage you to add UNHCR visibility to project-specific merchandise, physical spaces, and printed stationery like banners and fliers.** This is particularly the case if financial support through the Refugee-led Innovation Fund has supported the construction or refurbishment of the physical space in question.

You can **access pre-developed templates** from our Brand team, by visiting the below site:

- URL: [unhcr.org/brand](https://unhcr.org/brand)
- Password: Brand@2024

Be sure to share with us the designs for our review and approval before proceeding to brand your physical spaces.

# Any questions? Anything we haven't covered?

Feel free to contact Kirsten (at [oregan@unhcr.org](mailto:oregan@unhcr.org)) on editorial matters and Isaac (at [kiungai@unhcr.org](mailto:kiungai@unhcr.org)) on design matters, or with any other queries related to this document.



**UNHCR**  
The UN Refugee Agency

Innovation Service

## Connect with us

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