

# Photography Tips

## Taking good photos

Google *Steve McCurry 9 photo composition tips* for great examples/tips by a photojournalist.

**The best times of the day to take photos are mornings and evenings.** The light is softer and you get detail throughout the photo. At midday, light and shadows are at highest contrast and harshest, and it can be hard to get detail. If you do take a midday photo, it is helpful to take it in full shade. Natural light generally yields best results (outdoors or in window-lit rooms).

## Why IGHS Communications needs photos and which photos are useful

Communications needs good photos to communicate effectively about the great work that IGHS does. We use photos to promote the Masters program and for news articles and informational purposes. Photos may be used on our websites, in our annual report, brochures/postcards, communications and reports about our work.

Photos that are most useful for IGHS Communications purposes, in order of usefulness:

1. You in the field interacting with others and/or doing health-related work (ideally outdoors where light is better)
2. Photos of health providers or community workers doing health-related work (ideally outdoors)
3. Compelling portraits
4. Others interacting
5. Local life/culture and landscapes

## Cultural sensitivity

Before traveling, talk to your local contacts or consult a guidebook to learn about the views of the culture toward photography and toward the issues you are interested in documenting.

## Requesting consent

When you approach photo subjects in the field, briefly introduce yourself and explain the purpose of your visit/why you want to take photos.

- Prepare your consent forms ahead of time in the local language of the area you will be visiting.
- If you are unable to prepare written consent forms in the local language, orally translate the

consent form to your photo subjects. Use an interpreter if necessary.

- For low literate subjects, ask the subject to make a mark on the consent form. Have the consent witnessed by a literate witness who can sign or countersign the document and confirm that the form was read to the subject.

## Consent not needed

- For non-recognizable individuals (all identifiable features obscured)
- For public figures in public (e.g., celebrities, MOHs at campaign launches)

## Verbal consent needed

- For all individuals in all settings when possible

## Written consent needed

- **For anyone recognizable**
- Non-recognizable individuals (not at a public event) where personal, private information is exposed in the photo or documented in the corresponding caption, such as: health status (e.g., HIV-positive persons, persons living with AIDS/STIs, abortion history, TB, etc.); health behavior (e.g., sex work, sexual orientation, contraceptive use, etc.); criminal behavior (e.g., perpetrator/victim of gender-based violence, etc.)

## Before you travel

- **Make a list of photos that will complement your writing and capstone presentation.**
- **Talk with in-country folks about cultural norms regarding photography.**
- **Prepare your consent forms/print extra blank copies.**

## When traveling

- **Safety: Hide your camera when you are in a vehicle/walking on street/in public.**
- Don't be afraid to ask someone if you can photograph them. Most people like being photographed.
- Ask for an email address or the contact info of person you are photographing. People love to get copies of your photos/publications.