

IMC WORLDWIDE GROUP

ETHICAL IMAGE POLICY

The mission of the IMC Worldwide Group (IMC) is to enable the most disadvantaged populations to make the right connections through our programmes so that they can advance, for the benefit of all of us.

Images play a vital role in our organisation. We are an organisation that places a high value on storytelling at all levels of our communications. However, the gathering and use of images can also cause harm or offence if they are intrusive, manipulated or used inappropriately.

Our images must be accurate in referencing our work and the effect is having on people's lives. Authenticity is the key to upholding our reputation. The advice given in this document is intended to guide consultants and programme personnel on the best practice on the gathering and use of images. Throughout it the word 'images' refers to both film and photography.

This policy document should be reviewed annually.

1 GATHERING IMAGES

1.1 THE DIFFERENT WAYS WE GATHER IMAGES

There are three different ways in which the IMC Worldwide Group gathers images:

- IMC hires a professional photographer or filmmaker to document our work. They are given a formal contract, are paid by us and are under the purview of a project team or country office.
- IMC staff or business partners take images while visiting programme work.
- On rare occasions the IMC Worldwide Group buys images where we do not have any that match our requirements. For example when we begin work in new countries.

General principles

All photographic or film assignments organised by staff should be managed through the communications team. The communications team will work with the regional teams to ensure there is awareness of the importance of generating good and consistent images from our projects. Images help tell the story of work. This allows us generate materials that allow us to recruit better candidates and win more business. It is important to ensure that we maximise opportunities, use appropriate contracts and available resources and that data gathered can be used in film and photo libraries across the organisation.

Please coordinate with the communications team before hiring professional photographers/filmmakers to allow them to conduct proper due diligence and assist in setting a scope of work.

The IMC Worldwide Group expects all our partners and suppliers to ensure similar measures are in place within their organisations.

Specific principles for the approaches outlined above

When a photographer or filmmaker is under contract to IMC (as in point 1 above) they should adhere to clear Terms of Reference. A clear contract will include a section on ethics and will get a full briefing from the staff member who assigns them or from the communications team. They will also be given a full copy of this policy.

We need to be diligent and make sure we and our clients and beneficiaries will be portrayed accurately and in a good light. We will therefore carefully consider all approaches and only work with those who will be sensitive to our issues, our cause and the people that we work with. Terms of Reference will be created and agreed upon before the assignment begins.

All IMC Worldwide Group staff should adhere to these ethical guidelines and wherever possible discuss requirements with the communications team to agree what to film/photograph and to ensure that accurate and useful data is collected to accompany all images.

We endeavour to only buy images when there is nothing suitable available in our image library. This can be where we are entering new kinds of work or engaging in a new country. Images should be placed in a proper context and not to illustrate work or a location that is not true.

1.2 TERMS OF REFERENCE AND CONTRACTS

Before any assignment begins IMC will produce and agree a contract and Terms of Reference with the filmmaker or photographer. This should be produced by the communications team in the UK or the commissioning member of staff in a regional team or project office.

Refer to our contracts policy?

For guidance on what IMC standard contract to use, please see the guidance on our Intranet: <https://imcworldwide.interactgo.com/Interact/Pages/Content/Document.aspx?id=2614>

Subjects to be covered in the contract include:

- Number of days working.
- Number of travel days.
- Fees.
- What they can expect IMC to pay for and what they should pay for themselves.
- Usage agreements: The copyright licence that will be granted to the IMC Worldwide Group.
- Any relevant insurance details.

Subjects to be covered in the Terms of Reference include:

- Context of the trip.
- Background information on the country, water and sanitation issues and our work.
- Ethical considerations

- Where they will be visiting – ideally with a detailed agenda.
- Travel and accommodation: How the photographer/filmmaker will be travelling and where they will be staying.
- The types of images required.
- Accompanying information required.
- What the images will be used for.
- Delivery of images (date needed, size and format).
- Who is on the trip and all relevant contact details.

1.3 INFORMED CONSENT

Ensuring that the people we take images of are truly giving us their consent is a problematic area and one that people involved in international development imagery are constantly grappling with. It is important that staff are aware of these issues and work to overcome them. There are two key issues:

1. Many people will agree for their images to be taken without a full understanding of what they will be used for.
2. There is not an equal power relationship between us and a community member who we are working with. People may feel unable to refuse a request to be photographed in case it jeopardises the project.

At the IMC Worldwide Group we always endeavour to treat people with dignity and respect. We must provide clear information about why we want to take their image and explain that it is their right to refuse to participate. People should be comfortable with the process and happy for their images to be taken and used. People's full understanding of what they are consenting to is more important than written consent.

The following approaches should be taken:

1. You must explain how image will be used and if possible show examples. It must be clear that images may be used internationally. In advance of the photographer or filmmakers arrival, the programme or regional team must make local communities aware that there will be someone travelling to create content in their community. It is best for the project team and those on the ground to act as intermediaries with the photographer and find good stories for content.
2. Requests for consent must be carried out in local languages – ideally through an independent, professional translator.
3. We must respect local hierarchical structures to ensure that we ask consent from the correct people. Ensure family consent is requested if required, especially of young children.

Consent is important however we acknowledge that it is not always practical and feasible to obtain consent. Especially in crowded areas or in general street photography. If you are unsure about our particular image please consult the communications team.

1.4 WRITTEN OR VERBAL CONSENT?

As outlined above a true understanding of what individuals are consenting to is our prime concern. However it is ideal to be able to show that communities have given their consent and this can be done either in writing or on film. If consent is discussed at a community meeting, then agreement can be filmed or the community leader can be asked to sign the written consent form. We should be mindful that there are also many occasions where we work with people who are illiterate and their written

consent would not necessarily mean informed consent. In these cases filmed consent is a better option.

We would also strongly recommend getting written consent from individuals if it is known in advance that their image is likely to be used in an exhibition or in the media as news agencies in particular will ask for this.

1.5 THE IMC WORLDWIDE GROUP'S STAFF'S RESPONSIBILITY

All IMC Worldwide Group staff and all business partners and suppliers should ensure that the communities we work with are treated with dignity and respect. It is their responsibility to negotiate consent and ensure that communities understand why images are being taken and what they are being used for. If they ever feel that a photographer or filmmaker is working in an inappropriate way or that inappropriate questions are being asked then they should immediately raise their concerns.

1.6 GOOD PRACTICE

While the IMC Worldwide Group requires a range of images of our work we must ensure that our needs are not placed above those of the communities that we work with. Gathering stories and images can be very personal and while you are not physically taking something from a community, it can still be perceived this way.

1.7 KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

The IMC Worldwide Group staff and business partners and suppliers must advise photographers and filmmakers on any relevant cultural issues before visiting communities. Be aware that something acceptable in one location or community may not be acceptable in another. If in doubt refer to the project staff.

FAIR USE OF IMAGES

The IMC Worldwide Group and our business partners and suppliers must represent people accurately and fairly. If a person is not effected by our programme we must not say that they are. We must at no time use images or information that has any chance of resulting in discrimination of the subject (for example by disclosing someone's medical or humanitarian status by including their image). All those involved in gathering images and related case studies must accurately document the conditions that they see. They must also be sure that the people they film/photograph/ speak to are comfortable with the information that is collected (see obtaining consent above). Images should only be taken of people's typical activities and the story that they relate in their interview. Authenticity is the key to telling a good story.

Basic information

The following basic information should be gathered with all images:

- Date
- Place
- Name of person
- Age (if known)

- Any restrictions

CHILD PROTECTION ISSUES

Images of children can be particularly emotive and can be useful in telling the story of our work. However, working with children is a sensitive issue and extra care must therefore be taken to ensure that children are not being exploited. Apply your own moral code in these circumstances. How would you feel if this was your child in this photo?

Do not take photographs of unsupervised children in a closed environment/room.

Before photographing or filming a child, assess and endeavour to comply with local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images.

Before photographing or filming a child, obtain informed consent from the child and a parent or guardian of the child. As part of this the photographer must explain how the photograph or film will be used.

Children should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive.

Vulnerability: It is vital that our images show reality and are not set up or manipulated to make a situation look worse than it is. For example a baby should not be placed on the floor and have an image taken from above to make them look more vulnerable and helpless.

Taste and decency: There are many negative stereotypes of those living in developing countries. At the IMC Worldwide Group we want to show a true and accurate account of the ways in which people live. This means showing people and communities as dignified human beings active in improving their own lives and not passive recipients of aid.

Stereotypes: Images of victimhood and despair should be avoided and we should instead gather a range of images that show the need but also include people in action building themselves a better life.

Accuracy and honesty: Images and the contexts in which they are used should avoid wrongful attributions or false identification, false information misleading captions.

Positioning of the subject: Avoid images of vulnerable people from above as this implies weakness in the eyes of the viewer. Aim to take images that empower the subject (generally eye level or from below).

Perspective: Avoid implications of colonialism where a white member of staff is addressing a whole group or community. Make sure they are captured as being at the same level.

Distance: Give the subject space, especially someone in emotional distress.

Please refer to the IMC Worldwide Group Safeguarding Policy for more information.

TRANSLATIONS

Accurate translations are essential to the storytelling process and to the dignity of the subject. Where possible we will use professional translators and fluent speakers of local languages. This will ensure we are getting the full context for a story where possible.

A professional translator should also be used to transcribe footage for films. Any final product should be cleared with other language speakers if possible before release.

PRIVACY

While interviewing and filming, do try and use best practice and make sure they are conducted in a private area. This not only aids audio production, but allows subjects to be more open than they might be in front of a large group.

PAYMENT AND GIFTS

It is unacceptable to pay communities or individuals to take their images or film them. Even if this is requested by the subject.

2 DISTRIBUTION AND USE OF IMC WORLDWIDE'S GROUP IMAGES

2.1 ADDING IMAGES TO THE IMC WORLDWIDE GROUP'S LIBRARY

Any images added to the IMC Worldwide Group's libraries will match our ethical requirements.

It is also a good courtesy to coordinate with the local project team to distribute hard copies of any images there and to the communities themselves. However do not make promises as such.

ACCURACY

Anyone uploading original images to the IMC network should ensure that all data regarding an image, including any restrictions of use, are accurate. Images from professional trips photographers will be logged and uploaded by our communications team. If you have any concerns about the accuracy of images please consult the communications team

2.2 USE OF IMAGES

Once an image is added to the IMC library it is available for staff to use. If you need a photo for a particular context please talk to the communications team to talk through options and what is best for your context. How we use an image is as important as how an image is taken. All staff, business partners and suppliers have a responsibility to ensure that images are used correctly.

MANIPULATION

Despite the prevalence of photo editing software, we always aim for authenticity in our images and storytelling. Any manipulation should be minimal and undertaken by a professional using professional software.

Changing colour: It is acceptable to modify the colours of image (black and white etc.) however avoid using Instagram style filters and sepia. This can make an image look less professional and can affect the context and accuracy of the image.

Cropping: Cropping is a standard aspect of photography manipulation. However it must not be done where it affects the context of the image or its meaning.

Enhancement: Digital imagery makes it very easy to enhance and adjust images. Again it must not be done to affect the context of the image or its meaning. Too much adjustment can affect the credibility of the image and therefore our work and the benefits of aid.

Editing: The above also apply to video and film. Do not edit the footage to give an inaccurate portrayal of someone's words or circumstances.

CHILD PROTECTION

As well as the child protection issues mentioned in the section above, care must also be taken in the way in which we publish and store images. No information will be given out that will allow an external person to contact a child in an image. **This means never including either the location of the child or the child's surname.** These pieces of information must never be printed simultaneously. Care must also be taken to ensure this information is not printed about their family members.

CREDITS

The IMC Worldwide Group will credit all photographs taken by freelance photographers in the following way:

IMC photographers name; unless otherwise stated in the image description.



Gavin English, Managing Director