

## Simple Photography Guide

## Introduction

This is a guide to help you take better photographs.

Once you have become familiar with these principles, you will be able to develop your storytelling using photographs.

Photography is one of our most powerful communication tools. It can have a huge emotional impact on the viewer, as it shapes their understanding of IPPF, the impact of our Member Associations, and our cause.

## Preparation

Make sure you prepare your equipment before you head off to the field.

### Before you start

Check your kit:

- ✓ Charged camera battery and/or phone
- ✓ Space on memory cards
- ✓ A notebook and pen
- ✓ Audio recording equipment and microphone
- ✓ Clean dust and grease from the lens carefully
- ✓ Consent forms

### In the field

Before you click the button on your camera or camera phone, check the following:

- ✓ The flash is off
- ✓ You have selected the maximum file size
- ✓ Remember we must get consent from every person you are photographing, or from their parent or guardian if they are under 18
- ✓ Take lots of different photographs for the one story
- ✓ Maintain good notetaking: write down their name, age, location, job title, and quotes

### Ask yourself

WHO is this photo for?

WHAT am I trying to communicate?

WHY is this photo interesting?

WHERE can the photo be used?

WHEN are the photos going to be used?

HOW is the Member Association or IPPF part of the story?

HAVE I explained to the subject why I am taking the photograph and how it will be used?

## Holding the camera

To avoid blurry photos, stabilise yourself and the camera. You can do this by using a tripod or pressing your elbows into your chest.

**DON'T use the flash if you are taking a photo indoors, but rather open curtains to get as much natural light in the room as possible or position your subject near a window.**

**DON'T use the camera's zoom, this can result in out of focus photographs. Instead, move your body closer to the subject.**

## Choosing your subject

Think about your subject, why have you chosen them and why are they interesting? How have their lives been impacted through the work of the MA? It is mostly unnecessary and recommended to not photograph children unless they are directly relevant to the story.



## Lighting

It is usually too dark to take photos inside. Make the most of natural light.

The flash on most cameras is very harsh and often overexposes faces, making them look washed out. It can also create strong shadows around the subject.

**DON'T photograph people against a window with the light behind them.**

If you take photos inside, DO keep any window light behind you or to one side.

**DON'T photograph into the light, or your subject will be dark. DON'T ask your subject to face the light if it is very bright as it will cause them to squint.**



## Composition

Imagine that there are lines dividing your picture into three, vertically and horizontally. Frame your subject along one of the lines. This is one of the most important rules of photography and can create an interesting composition that draws the viewer's attention to your subject.



## Portrait and landscape

Take lots of photographs of your subject from different angles, in different sizes, indoors and outdoors. Make sure you have portrait and landscape photos. For example, you can take a photo of a client waiting to receive a service, receiving the service, and then walking home.



## Telling a story

Approach taking photographs as if you are telling a story. Take several different angles so they can be combined to tell a story.



A recently married couple attending a clinic set up by the Family Planning Association of India (FPAI) to help those affected by Cyclone Fani.

## The establishing shot

The establishing shot is a picture which sets the scene and gives the viewer an idea of the situation.



## The action shot

The action shot should show what the Member Association is doing to help, whether it be in a clinic or by providing education. It should show urgency if in a humanitarian setting. It is advisable to take photos that are not staged. Avoid trite images that have the subjects looking at the camera as they receive goods from, or shake hands with, a staff member.



## The relationship shot

Relationship shots show people interacting with each other and can capture the relationship between them. This could be between service provider and client, or between family members.



## Emotions

Emotion in a photograph can prompt empathy in the viewer. For IPPF and our MAs, it should show defiance, bravery and strength as women, men, girls and boys take control of their sexual and reproductive health and choices.



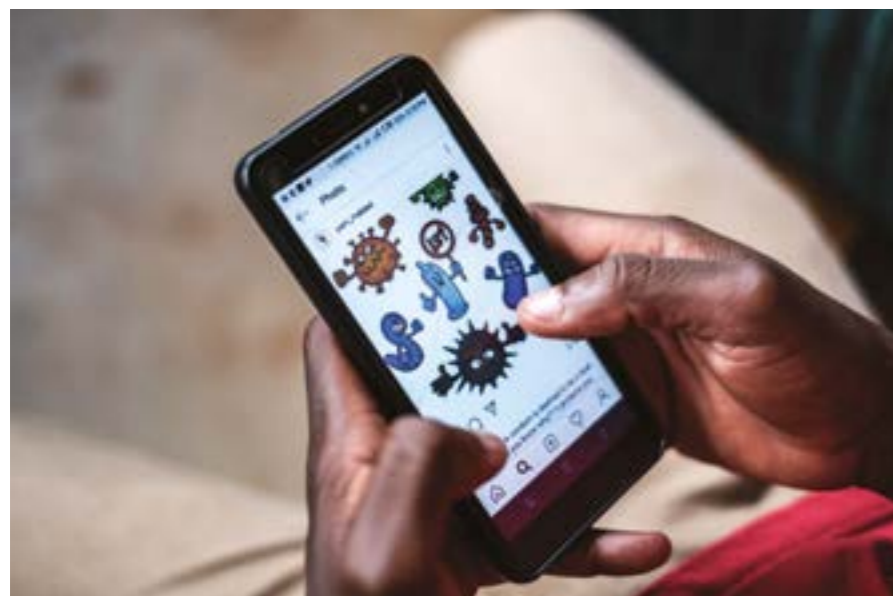
## Portraits

Portrait shots, which showcase an individual, are one of the most important shots you can get and are essential for any case study. They can be close up of just their head and shoulders, or of their whole body.



## Details

Close up shots of details of a person can make powerful photographs. For example, you can photograph women's feet waiting for clinic services, or the arm of a woman receiving long-acting contraception.



## Branding

Incorporate your own Member Association logo, or the IPPF logo, in your photograph as much as possible. This does not have to be in an obvious way, for example, it can be present in the background on a clinic wall. Branded items should only ever be worn by genuine staff and volunteers of the Member Association.



## Consent and safeguarding

Legally and morally, we need a consent form signed for every person photographed. If photographing a crowd, you do not need consent from everyone in the group, unless the group is only of three people or less. It is fine to use either the IPPF Consent Form or your own Member Association consent form. **Without signed consent forms, pictures cannot be used and therefore cannot be uploaded to our AssetBank.** It is important the subject fully understands how the image may be used, so make sure to have copies of the IPPF How Your Image May be Used document to show the subject. [This lightbox](https://ippf.assetbank-server.com/assetbank-ippf/images/assetbox/3243026b-12f7-47f7-8e33-a16ffb7519a5/assetbox.html) (password: photography) currently contains the photo policy, how your image may be used, and consent forms for film/photos in En, Fr, Ar & Sp. The full hyperlink is <https://ippf.assetbank-server.com/assetbank-ippf/images/assetbox/3243026b-12f7-47f7-8e33-a16ffb7519a5/assetbox.html>

Always remember that that our work is centred around women and girls, and we should not photograph children alone. If you do photograph a child (under 18) whose story is relevant to our work, parents or guardians must provide consent.

As the nature of our work can be quite sensitive, if someone does not want to be photographed or wishes to remain anonymous, you must respect this.



For any photography related to survivors of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV), extreme care must be taken to protect identities. This includes anonymizing the subjects face, not showing an identifiable marks or items of clothing, and refraining from showing the face of the staff member providing care to the survivor. IPPF is unable to use any SGBV content that does not comply with this.

## Ethics: taking the photograph

**DO ask people how they would like to be photographed. Do they want to change their clothes, or would they like you to protect their identity in some way?**

**DO respect your subject's modesty, do not photograph nudity.**

**AVOID capturing external logos/branding.**

**DO use photographs in their true context and avoid misrepresenting the client in a way that they have not agreed to.**

**DON'T reinforce stereotypes or prejudices about any people or countries**

## Anonymising subjects

Steps should be taken to conceal the identity and location of particularly vulnerable people such as sex workers and people living with HIV, etc.

They should always be informed of how information about them is being used and the impact it may have on them, and must give consent. It is important to reiterate that their image will be available online, and therefore accessible to a global audience.

You can conceal a person's identity by taking photographs of the person in silhouette, showing details of their body without showing their face, or photographing them from behind. The subject can also opt for a pseudonym in replacement of their real name.

## Captions

For a photograph to be usable, it must contain the following information. If you are working with a professional photographer, you can provide this information to them to include in the image metadata. The credit information should follow this format: ©IPPF/Photographers Name/Country OR © Member Association/Photographers Name/Country.

**WHO is in the photo**

**WHERE it was taken**

**WHAT is happening in the photo**

**WHEN it was taken**

**WHY this picture is relevant**

## Finally

Once you are back at the office, download the photographs to your computer. Make sure you file them logically in folders with caption and consent form in a way that you and others can retrieve them easily. Do not paste them into a word document, distort them, or alter them with filters. Send them to a CO Communications staff member who can then upload them to our AssetBank online library.



