

-NGO FORUM POLICY-

-INTERNAL-

NGO Forum Photo & Video Policy

South Sudan | Updated March 2021

1 Purpose of this policy

The South Sudan NGO Forum produces photos and videos, and curates photos and videos produced by member organizations, in order to promote the value of the work that NGOs and the NGO Forum do in South Sudan, and keep the humanitarian situation in South Sudan alive on the national and global agendas.

While images and videos play an essential role in promoting and sustaining humanitarian efforts, the NGO Forum is also cognizant that images and videos can cause harm and offence to subjects, and reputational and financial damage to NGO Forum and members.

The aim of the South Sudan NGO Forum Photography and Video Policy is to guide NGO Forum's production and handling of images and videos. It consists of four sections: 1. Basic Requirements, applicable to *all* photos and videos published on the NGO Forum communication platform regardless of source, 2. Requirements applying to the Forum's own production of photos and videos, in-house and by external service providers, 3. Guidelines with regard to photos and videos produced by members and submitted to the NGO Forum for visibility purposes, and 4: Storage of photos and videos.

2 Photo & Video Principles

The South Sudan NGO Forum is committed to protecting the dignity and safety of all those who receive assistance from or engage with NGO members or the secretariat. The following principles under-pin the NGO Forum's photo and video policy:

- **Dignity:** The NGO Forum will protect and promote the dignity of all women, men, boys and girls who engage with humanitarian and development actors. Communications products, including photos and videos should promote and protect the dignity of those that they represent
- **Protection:** In line with its commitment to humanitarian principles, the NGO Forum will ensure a do no harm approach in all communications work, proactively ensuring that photos and videos do not risk creating or exacerbating risks to affected populations.
- **Consent:** Photos and videos are personal information of those who are captured within them and fully informed consent must be proactively sought for any capture or use of images by those in them (and parents/caregivers for those under 18).
- **Data protection:** Humanitarian and development organisations often hold a position of significant power over affected populations and capture a wide range of personal data from those benefiting from assistance. The NGO Forum will work to ensure that those served have as much control over their personal information (including photos and videos) as possible, in line with international standards of data protection.
- **Accountability:** The NGO Forum and its members must be accountable to populations who benefit from assistance, and those captured in photos and videos must know how they can provide feedback or raise complaints.

3 Mandatory Requirements

The following shall be NGO Forum's policy with regards to *all* photos and videos published on the NGO Forum communication platform, whether produced by the NGO Forum, external service providers hired by the NGO Forum, or submitted to the NGO Forum by members:

3.1 Consent

- Photographed and/or filmed subjects must be provided with clear information about the purpose of the images/films, and be informed of their right not to participate. The communication must take place in a language well understood by the person(s) filmed/photographed.
- A signed consent form must be sought from all subjects who are filmed or photographed by the NGO Forum
- A photographed/filmed person who is illiterate, must be explained the full content of a consent form by a person of trust. It is important that people who cannot read or write receive the same information as those who do.
- Extra care must be given to protect children. For a child below the age of 18, written consent by a parent/guardian is required.
- Adult people not able to give consent shall not be photographed/filmed.
- Digital copies of consent forms must be archived on a central NGO Forum shared drive.

3.2 Dignity & protection

- Photos and videos shall maintain the dignity of subjects, thereby excluding photos and videos involving nudity, degrading or sensitive details with the potential to harm. The tone of photos and video must be considered – for example overly desperate images or those which do not support the dignity or agency of the subjects should generally be excluded from capture and use.
- Extra care must be given to protect the identity of victims of GBV and other types of aggression. Pictures/films portraying victims of violence must as a general precautionary rule NOT display the face, real name or any identifier of the victim.
- Beneficiaries photographed/filmed must not be led to believe that the photos/films will result in increased assistance. While photos and films are important fundraising tools used to sustain humanitarian activities, it is not likely that the situation of the photographed/filmed person(s) will change as a result of the photos/films.

3.3 Accountability & complaints

- Subjects captured in photos and videos should be provided with information on how to raise complaints or provide feedback to the NGO Forum, or the agency capturing photos/videos, as part of the consent process.

4 NGO Forum photos and videos

The NGO Forum produces images and videos in two ways: a.) Direct production by the NGO Forum Communications Unit, and b.) Production outsourced to reputable service providers.

4.1 NGO Forum direct production

The NGO Forum Communications Unit shall always obtain written consent of person(s) photographed and/or filmed in the form of a consent form (Annex 1). For a child below the age of 18, a written consent by a parent/guardian is required.

When beneficiaries are not the main motive of the photos/films, but appear in the background/periphery only and/or are not easily identifiable, their individual written consent is not strictly required, but highly recommended.

When the NGO Forum shoots films/takes photos during events with a large number of participants in attendance, seeking consent from all individuals may not be feasible. People attending events organized by the NGO Forum, most notably the National NGO Expo, should be informed, by information posted at the entrance, that they by attending the event implicitly agree to being photographed/filmed, and that photos of the event will be used in a wide range of NGO Forum communications products, print media included. This must include a contact point where subjects can raise concerns or seek further information from the NGO Forum. If close-up or individual photographs are captured, it is expected that consent would be sought for these.

4.2 NGO Forum outsourced production

In cases when the NGO Forum outsources the production of films/photos to external service providers, the service provider shall be made familiar with the South Sudan Photography and Video Policy and make sure that the products conform with the mandatory requirements listed above. The outsourcing of the film/photography production will most often portray the work of member NGOs - therefore, the member NGOs that are the subjects of the films/photographs produced, shall be responsible for obtaining the necessary consent from individuals that appear in the films/photographs.

5 Photos and videos produced by NGO Forum members

NGO Forum members must conform with the mandatory requirements listed above if their photos/videos are to enjoy visibility on the NGO Forum communication platform. Cognizant that some NGOs may lack the opportunity to use written consent forms consistently, the NGO Forum shall not exclude visual content produced by members that rely on oral consent only; but the sharing of such photos and videos shall be limited to social media, website, internal NGO Forum publications like the E-Bulletin, and forwarding to partners who do not require a written consent form. For member organizations' photos to be published in NGO Forum physical publications - posters, magazines, billboards and the like – the submission of written consent forms are mandatory.

6 Storage of photos and videos

The NGO Forum stores published photos and videos in the following locations: Videos are uploaded to the NGO Forum YouTube channel, the NGO Forum Twitter and Facebook accounts, and the NGO Forum website.

Unpublished photos and videos are grouped by organization and should be stored on a centrally managed online shared drive with controlled access for those who require it. Photos and videos should not be stored on un-encrypted laptops or storage devices unless absolutely necessary.

As a general rule, the NGO Forum Communications Unit will not store photos or videos with inappropriate content (nudity, compromising information etc.); if such photos or videos were submitted to the NGO Forum, they would be deleted, including from the email inboxes.

7 Retention and deletion of photos and videos

Photographs and videos contain personal information of those subjects captured and retention of such personal information must meet international data protection standards. All raw photos and videos collected by the NGO Forum or provided by members should be deleted after two years without a compelling and documented reason for each individual photo being documented. External publications which use photos may be retained for longer for archiving purposes.

Staff members of the NGO Forum or it's Host Agency must not retain photos owned by the NGO Forum in line with their contractual requirements.

8 Policy revision history

Version	Date	Policy revisions
v1.0	7 th March 2021	First version