



Seeking Informed Consent Scenarios

Example 1:

You are visiting a school in South Sudan and want to take some photos of children learning in the classroom. The Head Teacher says it's fine, and that you have their permission to take photos.



What to do:

You don't have informed consent from the children's parents, and **Head Teacher consent is not enough**. You seek informed consent from the classroom teacher for their own photo, and take some images of the teacher at the blackboard. You also take some photos from the back of the classroom looking towards the front, so you can only see the backs of children's heads and none can be identified. You delete any photos where children turned around and their faces can be seen.

If there are some adults present (they may have noticed there are visitors and come to see what's happening), you could ask if any of these adults has children in the school, and seek their and their parents' consent for photos and interviews.

Also consider:

Before visiting a school, find out whether it may be possible for the Head Teacher/Principal or specific classroom teachers to obtain informed consent from all or some parents before your visit. You could then photograph and do interviews with these students when you visit.



Example 2:

You arrive at a water pump in the Turkana community. A large group of people are singing and dancing to welcome your group. There are both adults and children present. Some of the children aren't fully clothed. You ask the group for permission to take photos, and no-one objects.

What to do:

You ask the group through the translator if all the children present have parents also present. If any don't, you explain that those children can't be part of the photo and ask tactfully for them to not be part of group photos. If a photo includes a child who isn't fully clothed, you delete it. Later, you have the opportunity to sit with a mother and child for an interview and close-up photos. You again seek informed consent and ensure any unclothed areas are not photographed.

Also consider:

When you ask the large group for permission to take photos, some people could feel nervous about saying no. You can make it clear that people should feel free to say 'no' and can step out of the photos, or approach you, the interpreter, field staff or anyone else to let them know, even after photos have been taken.

Example 3:

You are interviewing a woman who is part of the fashion school at Kakuma. You have sought informed consent before starting your interview. During your chat, she reveals she is HIV positive. You ask if it is OK to share that as part of her story, and she says yes. At the end of the interview, you confirm again she is happy for her story to be shared, including her HIV status, and give some examples of how her story might be used. Now she seems a bit worried as she didn't realise how far her story could be shared, and doesn't want her home community to find out about her illness.



What to do:

You can present the woman with some different options:

1. You can destroy the notes you've taken and delete the images, and not share any part of her story or images
2. You can use her story but change her name and not use her image
3. You can use her story and her image but omit her HIV status

She chooses option 2, so you ask her what she'd like her name changed to and change it in your notes. Then you delete all the images you've taken of her.



Example 4:

You are introduced to a group of children who are part of a child-headed household. There is a Field Staff member present.

What to do:

You ask the children for permission to take their photo and they grant it. You then ask the Field Staff member to check with the relevant Child Protection Officer or Case Manager for any protection issues which would

prevent the children's story or images from being used. If you receive the 'all clear', this can be taken as consent in place of these children's parents.