

How to take photos of vulnerable or at risk subjects

There is often a need to conceal the identity of subjects in still images made public by Amnesty International. This is done to avoid potential risks to their security or their individual rights should they be identified.

Where AI have control over the image(s) creation /capture process

- Use the camera position and creative skill to conceal identity (e.g.; compose the shot to conceal identity; shoot from behind, shoot hands, significant objects, etc.)
- Light the subject to conceal identity (e.g. as silhouette or low light)
- If possible, discuss different ideas with the subject or their support worker and assess what they would be comfortable with.

Please see below for examples:



Subject release and consent

Amnesty follows the general principle that whenever possible, a person who features prominently in an image (portrait or otherwise) should give consent and a **Subject Release form** (also see **How to use the Subject Release form** guidelines) completed. This is a simple form to complete and is translated into any necessary languages to make it more accessible and understandable to the reader. The subject(s) should be informed of the copyright and intended use of the images.

For photographs of minors

- If possible, please ask an adult responsible for them to complete the form, and note on the form that they are signing on behalf of the minor and with the minor's consent.

For people who are unable, for one reason or another, to fill out the form themselves

- Please explain the form to them, fill in their name, and the agreement options that they specify, and ask them to make a mark of agreement on the signature line.

Possible sensitivity measures

When dealing with vulnerable people, it is vital that certain measures be taken to insure that the feelings and requirements of the subject are upheld. Below are some suggestions that may prove useful –

- Ask for the help and advice of people that know the subject and the best approach to take.
- Medical staff, NGO support or outreach workers may be better suited to communicate with the person involved.
- Make sure that there are only essential people present so as not to intimidate (e.g. an AI staff member, guardian/support worker/family member etc, interpreter if needed). Give the person involved a choice about who is present.
- Ensure that the subject feels comfortable with the work that is being carried out – look out for signs of resistance and check with the subject if it is OK to continue.

Please contact the AVR Team for further discussion or if you have any queries.

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