

## Minutes 1st Communication Meeting 2026

24th February 2026, 14:00 – 15:30

### Theme: The use of photos

How do you handle the use of photos within your organizations? (for example: respecting consent, addressing stereotypes, ensuring security, handling copyrights, using AI, managing photo databases, and working with professional photographers). The colleagues from World Vision, MEB and Compassion will present some aspects on the use of photos within their organizations and then we shall discuss and share experiences in the group.

**Participants:** Oliver Requet and Monika Bärtschi (Compassion), Aline Knuchel (MET), Raimund Möhl (GaiN), Hélène Woldu (Mission Lèpre), Sarah Meier (SELAM), Ivan Souza (MEB), Daniel Scheidegger (PAI), René Progin (Moriya), Monika Hartmann and Lisa Zobeltitz (World Vision), Mirjam Schmitz (IBC), Harivola Rabemanantsoa (FH Suisse), Anja Eschbach (StopArmut)

Facilitation: Katia Aeby

Minutes: Jason de Lima

Time	What	Expected result	Who
14:00	Short presentation round		all
14:10	<b>3 inputs on the use of pictures, by:</b> World Vision MEB Compassion		Lisa and Monika Ivan Olivier and Monika
14:40	<b>Questions &amp; exchange</b>	Share experiences on the use of pictures	all
15:10	<b>Update on Interaction's comm activities:</b> Articles/blog website Sharing of events/jobs Linkedin winterseries Learning lunch on ethical storytelling, 30.06. Media podcast project		Katia
15:20	<b>Next comm meeting</b> August 2026? Use of inclusive language		Katia

## 14:00 – Welcome & Introduction Round

Katia opened the meeting and introduced the theme: *the use of photos*, including consent, stereotypes, security, copyright, AI, photo databases, and collaboration with photographers. It was confirmed that the session would be recorded.

## Inputs From Organizations

### 1. World Vision – Lisa & Monika

#### Photo Creation

- Photos are taken primarily by local staff and communications teams during field visits.
- They work also with child journalists.
- Strong emphasis on *locally led approach*.

#### Ensuring Dignity

- “Do no harm” principle.
- Always check for understanding when asking for consent.
- Avoid reinforcing stereotypes; aim to show real people with real stories.
- Strict consent protocols, with the possibility for participants to withdraw consent at any time.
  - Example: a refugee girl withdrew her consent; World Vision immediately complied.

#### Security

- Written informed consent is required.
- Sensitive cases (e.g., vulnerable groups) may require anonymity or adjusted usage.

#### Content Standards

- Especially for sponsored children:
  - Always portray children with dignity (e.g., no torn clothes, no distressing environments).
  - Tragedy-related images often cannot be used.
- Database is regulated, protected, and monitored.
- Only own pictures are used; for media requests pictures are sometimes bought.

#### Copyright

- No publication of copyrighted material.
- Purchased images are sourced with proper attribution.

## Use of AI

- Used selectively and transparently (e.g., Christmas campaign).
- Concerns about credibility led to the decision *not to use AI-generated images of children*.
- AI use limited to acceptable editing; usage is regulated through internal ethical guidelines.

## 2. MEB – Ivan

### Context

- Small team, images mainly supplied by partners and project staff.
- Issues: lack of variety, inconsistent quality, and limited prioritisation of visuals in the past.

### Fairpicture Collaboration

- Fairpicture promotes ethical and fair image practices.
- MEB had a good experience with their collaboration for a project in Benin.
- Process:
  - MEB provided a project brief.
  - Fairpicture assigned a local photographer.
  - MEB could communicate with photographer to give instructions.
- Consent is collected via a digital “consent website/app” (tablet/phone), with verbal or signed consent.
- Consent files and image metadata are delivered with the photos.
- Parents must consent for minors.
- Costs example: CHF 2,500 for a 2-day assignment delivering ~50 photos.

### Ethical Considerations

- Process is ethical, but organisations must still apply their own judgement and contextual understanding.
- Ethics also depend on *how* an image is used.

## 3. Compassion – Olivier & Monika

### Structure

- Switzerland is a fundraising office; no direct field operations.
- Uses a centralised image database managed from the US., which covers all countries.

## Photojournalists

- Compassion employs trained photojournalists in partner countries.
- Training includes:
  - Dignity of children and families
  - Journalistic standards
  - Consent procedures

## Consent

- Families sign consent on behalf of children.
- Additional consent required for special use cases (portraits, stories).

## Cultural Sensitivities

- Swiss team does not use all images provided, due to cultural differences with US material.
- Avoid portraying “White saviours”.
- Avoid images showing children in poor or undignified conditions.
- Focus on *outcomes* rather than problems.

## Image Content Rules

- No detailed personal information about the child; only the preferred name.
- Emphasis on context, not the child as an isolated subject.
- Photojournalists are credited to highlight their work.
- Local photographers have established relationships with communities.

## AI Use

- No AI-generated images of children.
- AI only used for minor background adjustments.
- Never used to change subjects or alter meaning.
- Purchased images are used occasionally, but never of children.

## Image Lifecycle

- Updated regularly to reflect children’s growth.

## Discussion and Questions

### AI & Editing Ethics

- René: “How far should AI be used to modify images?”
  - Response: Only minor background extensions; not to change subjects or meaning.

### Resource Constraints

- Katia asked how organisations handle the issues of pictures with limited resources.
- Raimund: finding and maintaining good images remains challenging.
- René: many available tools to modify pictures today use AI by default.
- Olivier: intention matters; technology must be used with care for dignity.

### Photo Credits

- Sarah (SELAM): Photos taken by local photographers are credited accordingly.

### Access to Databases

- World Vision: employees have access.
- Morija: only a few have access.
- Lepra-Mission: access to all country photos, with consent checks in place.

## Interaction Communication Updates

- **Website articles on projects/blog articles on Justice & Peace:** if you haven't filled out yet the file, you can still write to [katia.aeby@interaction-schweiz.ch](mailto:katia.aeby@interaction-schweiz.ch) if you would like to contribute with a text/video this year.
- **Sharing of events and job postings:** we can publish your events on our agenda on the website in [German](#) and [French](#) and share your job offers via our monthly newsletter.
- The **LinkedIn member winter series** run from December 25 to February 26, with portraits from 11 member organisations and with an average of 276 impressions/post and a 15.8% average of Engagement Rate (Calculated as: (Reactions + Comments + Reposts + Clicks) / Impressions). Thanks to all organizations and people who participated to increase the visibility of our umbrella on social media!
- **Learning Lunch on *Ethical Storytelling* with Integral Alliance: confirmed now for the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2026.**
- **Radio / media podcast project**
  - ERF Medien: partnership to present the projects of the members want be possible in 2026
  - Radio R: partnership planned for late-summer production and autumn launch. Katia will contact members in the French speaking part to participate and start with a pilot.

- **The next comms meeting will take place in August.** Katia will send a nuudel on due time.