



Telling the Story

Telling the Story

- Why we share our stories
- What are our stories about?
- Our platforms
- Opportunities to share
- How to start writing
[short break](#)
- Photography tips
- A picture is worth 1000 words



Why we share
our stories

Stories of Africa

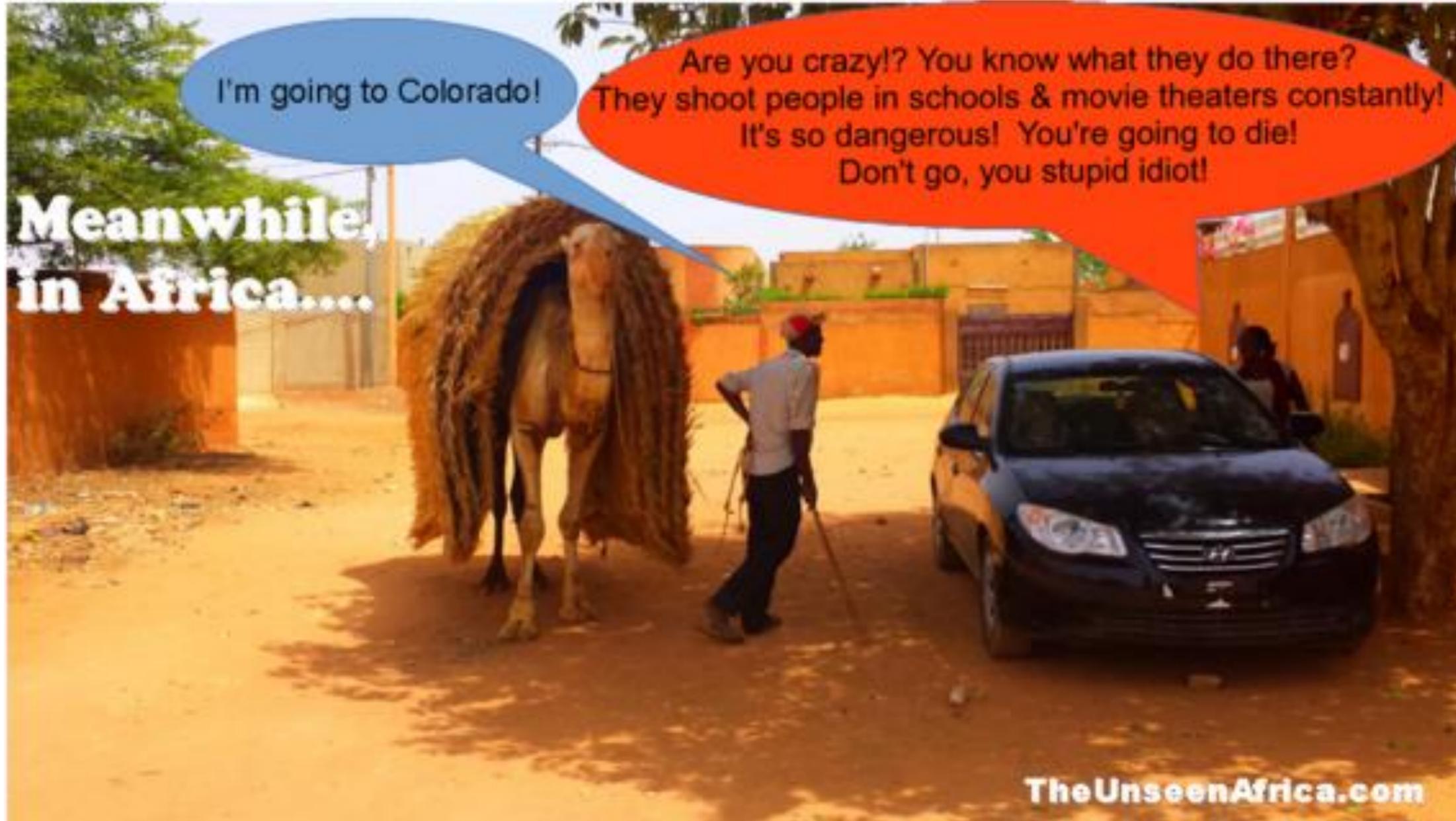


Photo credit clockwise from bottom right: Olivier Darmon, Andy Schepis, Gerry Van der Walt, and Tommaso Nervegna.



UN Photos by John Isaac.

Source: https://www.huffpost.com/entry/why-are-image-of-africa-i_b_5345209



Source: https://www.huffpost.com/entry/why-are-image-of-africa-i_b_5345209

Who are our stories for?

We have four primary audiences for our stories, including:

- Australians considering working in development,
- our supporters,
- the Australian public, and
- other organisations working in the development sector.

In sharing our stories with these readers, we aim to:

- showcase the work of our partner organisations and give a voice to those who are working in and for their community,

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- show those considering mentoring abroad what we do and how we do it, encouraging these individuals to choose a sustainable model of development assistance and avoid voluntourism agencies, and

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- demonstrate accountability to our supporters and in particular those who donate to a specific project,
- show those considering mentoring abroad what we do and how we do it, encouraging these individuals to choose a sustainable model of development assistance and avoid voluntourism agencies, and
- advocate for the value of community-led aid and development projects in Australia.



What are our
stories about?

Every story we share is ultimately about people. This is most apparent when we speak of our host organisations and when we ask our host organisations to share stories about us. It is important to remember that when you share stories about places, events, resources, issues or organisations, you are also talking about people.

Our stories are about

People

**Members of the
local culture**

**Other Australians and
international volunteers**

**Host organisation: colleagues
and beneficiaries**



Our platforms

- palms.org.au:

Features a blog that hosts all our news, as well as articles on development practice.



"I tried a stint of film directing when I saw the need for more child health education for mothers."

Posted on August 2, 2019.

By Laura Saldanha I can't believe my 12 months at Ruben Centre has come to an end. I came here...

[READ MORE](#)



In 2016, maternal deaths in Mukuru kwa Njenga were 14 in 1,000. Now, that's closer to zero.

Posted on August 2, 2019.

When Beverly Watkinson relocated from Kangaroo Point to Mukuru, Nairobi, maternal deaths in the neighbourhood were estimated to be 14...

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Have I only done half my job?

Posted on July 30, 2019.

By Roger O'Halloran Another financial year has been completed and we are busily preparing material for our auditor. Our Annual...

[READ MORE](#)



The Privatization of Australian Aid and Development

Posted on July 30, 2019.

By Tim Scrase, Adjunct Professor, School of Global, Urban and Social Studies, RMIT. Many Palms supporters are no doubt aware...

[READ MORE](#)



Disability inclusive vocational training in Samoa

Posted on July 29, 2019.

By Helen Colla On Wednesday 24th July, I had the privilege of representing Don Bosco Vocational and Technical Centre (DBCVTC)...

[READ MORE](#)

Solidarity Awards 2019
 Posted on July 22, 2019.
 Every year, Palms Australia's Solidarity Awards are held each year to recognise the individuals and organisations that share Palms' mission...

[READ MORE](#)



Two Year Placements are Important

2. Facebook

Allows supporters to easily share content with friends and family.

Palms Australia
Published by Rachel Donovan [?] · August 1 at 10:40 AM · 🌐

Always thought of volunteering abroad but keep putting it off? Just think, if you had started a one-year assignment this time last year, you'd be done by now! You'd be back to work or a new role having completed an incredible experience, knowing a new language, and with a profound bond to new friends abroad.

Apply now and this could be you next year! It sounds like a long time but it flies and this time next year you'll be excitedly preparing the stories you'll share at Chri... [See More](#)



Overseas Volunteer Opportunities - Palms Australia

Overseas Volunteer Opportun Australia

Palms Australia
Published by Rachel Donovan [?] · August 1 at 7:03 AM · 🌐

A very happy birthday to Laura and we share the thanks offered by [Ruben Centre](#) for her year assisting the team as a physio. Her position is now filled by a Kenyan physio who will continue to deliver exceptional healthcare service to the Mukuru community.



+13

Palms Australia
Published by Rachel Donovan [?] · July 26 at 4:20 PM · 🌐

Help support community based mental health services in Timor Leste by becoming a regular donor to our program mentor project. Over two years, this project will provide training for staff engaged in mental health and rehabilitation services so they can better serve patients and the community.

Every month, a contribution of \$50 provides a full day of training for several staff members.



PALMS.ORG.AU

Program Mentor in Timor Leste - Palms Australia

The Challenge Klibur Domin is a low-care health and disability facility in...

3. Instagram

Showcases images of our projects.



4. LinkedIn enables us to connect with other development organisations and future participants.



The image shows a LinkedIn profile card for Palms Australia. The background of the card is a photograph of a colorful umbrella (red, yellow, green, blue) in a lush green field. The text 'Mentor abroad with Palms' is overlaid in large white font. The profile information includes the Palms Australia logo, the name 'Palms Australia', and the description 'Nonprofit Organization Management · Petersham North, NSW · 90 followers'. A 'Following' button is visible. Below the description is a 'Visit website' button. On the right side, there is a notification that 'Kevin & 4 other connections work here' and a link to 'See all 11 employees on LinkedIn'.

Mentor abroad with Palms



Palms Australia
Nonprofit Organization Management · Petersham North, NSW · 90 followers

✓ Following ...

Commit to better aid: sustainable solutions to poverty through locally owned, long-term professional skill development.

[Visit website](#)

 Kevin & 4 other connections work here

[See all 11 employees on LinkedIn](#)

5. Palms Post

Our eNewsletter that provides supporters with news from the field.



News From the Field

In May, our volunteer teachers have been working hard on assessments in the lead up to school holidays. Others are working with counterparts on providing quality healthcare to the local community.

Ruben FM 'best community radio station in Kenya'

Ruben FM station manager Thomas Ochieng talks about how his team has worked with Palms volunteers to strengthen the voice of the community in Nairobi... [Read more...](#)

'My students are complete superstars'

When she first arrived, she had to manage students moving about the classroom, talking back when she queried why. As Rhoe learned the local language, she discovered the students couldn't see the board and she now shares how she adjusted her teaching to compensate. [Read more...](#)



Opportunities to
share stories

Topics include first impressions, project updates and event reviews



“The Papua New Guineans are generous and welcoming” – First Impressions of Mount Hagen, PNG

Posted on March 29, 2019.

With Charles Dufour In February 2019, Charles Dufour travelled from South Australia to Mount Hagen in Papua New Guinea to...

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Merry Christmas from the Field

Posted on November 22, 2018.

Christine Davids with teachers and students from Paroquia St Teresinha do Menino Jesus in Bedois, Timor Leste. Rhoe Price with...

[READ MORE](#)



Child Protection Education and the Catholic Church, PNG

Posted on June 12, 2019.

By Dr Charles Dufour. Last month I had the pleasure of attending a Conference on Child Protection organised in association...

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Stories about how a project has made a difference are particularly important.



In 2016, maternal deaths in Mukuru kwa Njenga were 14 in 1,000. Now, that's closer to zero.

Posted on August 2, 2019.

When Beverly Watkinson relocated from Kangaroo Point to Mukuru, Nairobi, maternal deaths in the neighbourhood were estimated to be 14...

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United Nations observance days can be a great tool for setting a writing deadline.



“Patients rely on traditional treatment options until their TB infection becomes so severe that death is imminent.” – World Health Day in Timor Leste

Posted on April 7, 2019.

By Martin Moignard Klibur Domin is an NGO that provides healthcare services for tuberculosis patients in Timor Leste. For World...

[READ MORE](#)



World Tuberculosis Day 2019

Posted on March 25, 2019.

We all recognise that scene from films set in the 1800's and early 20th century: a character, usually a young...

[READ MORE](#)



“The water is now close to graves and pig pens” – World Water Day in Kiribati

Posted on March 22, 2019.

With Marlene Rasmussen The central Pacific nation of Kiribati is under serious threat from climate change, as rising sea levels...

[READ MORE](#)



World Teacher's Day: Six Months in Timor Leste

Posted on October 5, 2018.

Christine Davids moved to Timor Leste in March to support the newly opened pre-school of St Therese of the Child Jesus...

[READ MORE](#)

Include the voices of your colleagues and community members in your stories.



“Ruben FM will never forget about every effort you have put in”: Supporting Community Radio in Nairobi

Posted on May 21, 2019.

By Thomas Ochieng, Ruben FM Station Manager They say if you want to go nowhere go alone but if you...

[READ MORE](#)



“We are able to detect more TB using the GeneXpert machine” – New Tech in Timor Leste

Posted on April 5, 2019.

By Pedro Freitas with Ricardina da Costa Fernandes Ricardina da Costa Fernandes is a laboratory technician with Klibur Domin in...

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Technology, English and the Threat to Local Languages.

Posted on April 23, 2019.

By Thae Thae Khoo The young generation of the 21st century is influenced by advanced technology. This technology makes everything...

[READ MORE](#)



Palms' Impact on Kenyan OT: Physio services now more accessible.

Posted on April 30, 2019.

By Fredrick Mitieng. Learning is a continuous process. This has been well demonstrated with Laura Saldanha being a part of...

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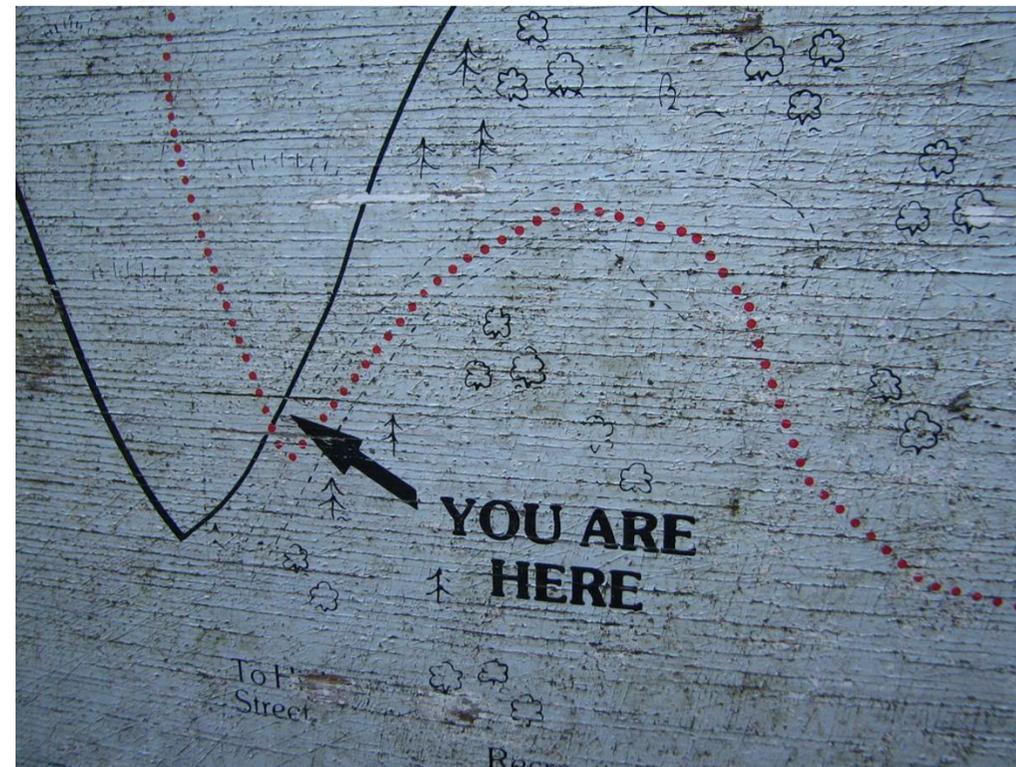
How to start

Anything can be a fascinating story.



Here are some tips for getting started...

Start where you are



Start writing from where you are now, or where you want your readers to be.

Ask and answer a question

What do I want to tell those people thinking of paying to volunteer to work at an orphanage for two weeks?.

Volunteering for two weeks simply doesn't work.

or

Where can I find the best coffee in Dili?.

Aru Bakery is the go-to coffee spot in Dili, Timor Leste.

In one sentence, explain why.

Volunteering for two weeks simply doesn't work. I've been in Kenya six months and am only now making an impact.

Aru Bakery is the best coffee spot in Dili, Timor Leste. The quiet hideaway has friendly staff and a delicious menu.

Now, you can think of the beginning...

Volunteering for two weeks simply doesn't work. I've been in Kenya six months and am only now making an impact. **In September, I was given the task of improving the physiotherapy program at the Ruben Centre in Nairobi's Mukuru neighbourhood.**

Aru Bakery is the best coffee spot in Dili, Timor Leste. The quiet hideaway has friendly staff and a delicious menu. **After hearing many opinions about where to find the best coffee in Dili, I set myself the task of trying out each of the city's cafes for myself.**

...introduce a challenge...

Volunteering for two weeks simply doesn't work. I've been in Kenya six months and am only now making an impact. In September, I was given the task of improving the physiotherapy program at the Ruben Centre in Nairobi's Mukuru neighbourhood. **I found that, despite the centre having great resources and staff, many residents who needed these services weren't able to travel to the centre to receive treatment.**

Aru Bakery is the best coffee spot in Dili, Timor Leste. The quiet hideaway has friendly staff and a delicious menu. After hearing many opinions about where to find the best coffee in Dili, I set myself the task of trying out each of the city's cafes for myself. **Turns out, there are many more coffee shops in this town than I anticipated!**

...and rearrange your thoughts to create your opening paragraph.



A volunteering holiday is anything but a holiday for those you want to help.

Back in September, when I was given the task of improving the physiotherapy program at the Ruben Centre in Nairobi's Mukuru neighbourhood, I thought I would be sourcing equipment and supervising basic therapy. It took me six months to recognise that, despite the centre having great resources and staff, many residents who needed these services weren't able to travel to the centre to receive treatment. I can now say to those who are thinking otherwise that volunteering for two weeks simply doesn't work.

Here's our other example.

Ultimate Coffee Addict's Guide to Dili

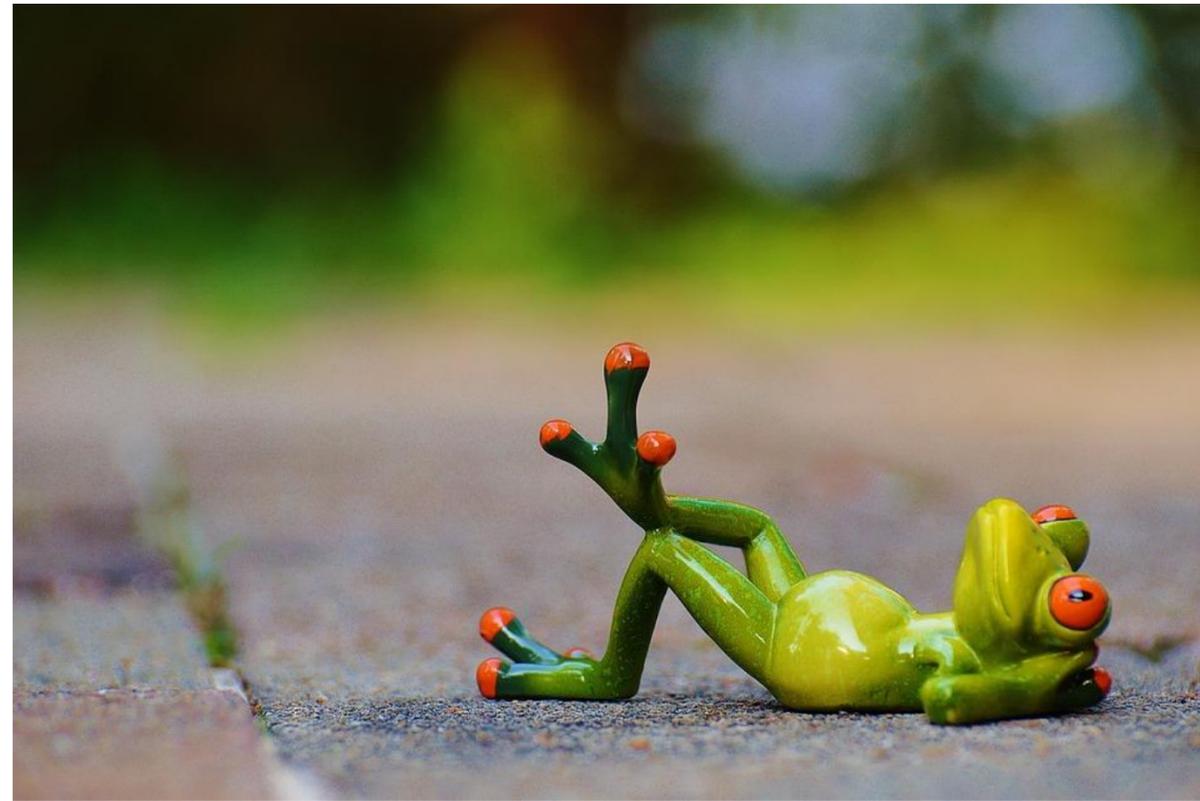


After hearing many opinions about where to find the best coffee in Dili, I set myself the task of trying out each of the city's cafes for myself. Turns out, there are many more coffee shops in this town than I anticipated! But, after a gruelling scientific study, my choice coffee shop is quiet hideaway, Aru Bakery, with its friendly staff and delicious menu. Here is a list of the coffee shops I tried and how they rated on friendliness, ambience, and (most importantly) taste.

How might you structure element of an article about your field trip experience?

- Ask and answer a question
- In one sentence explain your answer
- Think of the beginning
- Introduce a challenge

Take a short break





Palms Australia

Photography tips



1. Focus on your subject

This is a photo of a
Portuguese prison
(Timor Leste)



This is a photo of
women marching
in a cultural festival
(Papua New
Guinea)



This is a photo of a window, a tree, a motorbike mirror or a Palms participant hiding behind a tree.

The intended subject of this pic is not clear.



Space in the frame



This photo is a bit too close. We can't crop the image without cropping out some of the subject.



In this photo,
though it is clear
the photo is of the
two men, they are
quite small.



This is a photo of three women weaving palm fronds. There is a good amount of space around them.



This is also important to remember when taking photos of groups. Here, the groups occupies approximately 50% of the image.



Here, we see a desk taking up 50% of the image, distracting us from the nurse treating the child.



Here, we see a nurse training others in patient handling. The photographer is well positioned to show each of the participants and what they are doing.



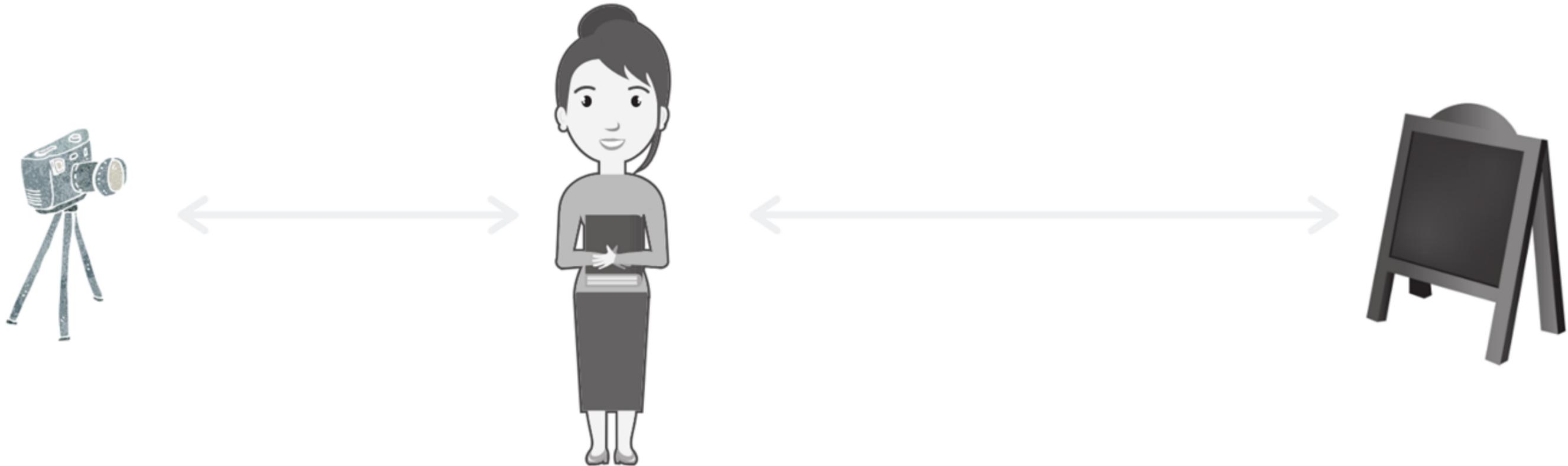
In this example, the photographer has stood above our two subjects so that we can see them working on laptops without the screens obstructing the subjects.





2. Move away from walls

Ideally, your subject should be closer to the camera than they are to the wall.



In this photo, by lining students against the wall, our frame is taken up with desks, our subjects are just 1/3 of the image and they appear to be far away.



In this photo, by adjusting the heights of the students, the photographer can get closer. Being outside, we have objects in the distance which create depth in the image.



Here is another classroom photo.

Moving the subjects just a short distance away from the whiteboard helps them take the focus of the image.



In this image, our subjects are quite close against the blackboard.

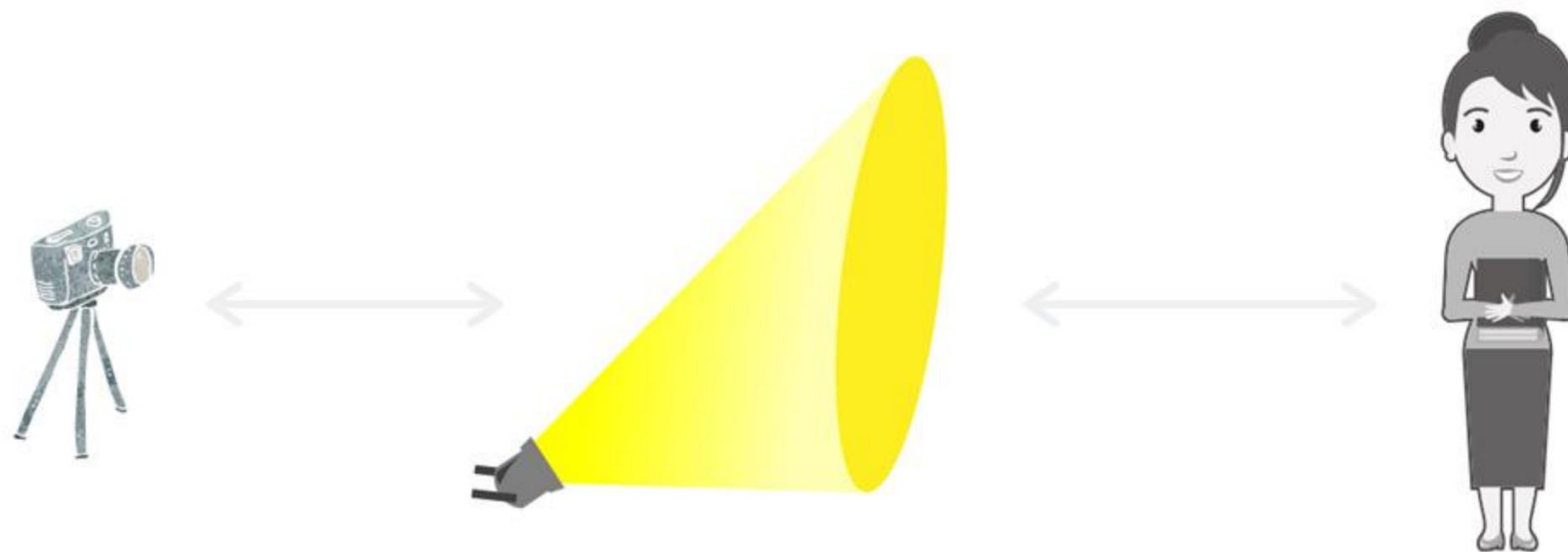
However, the two students at the front are closer to the camera which creates the same sense of depth.



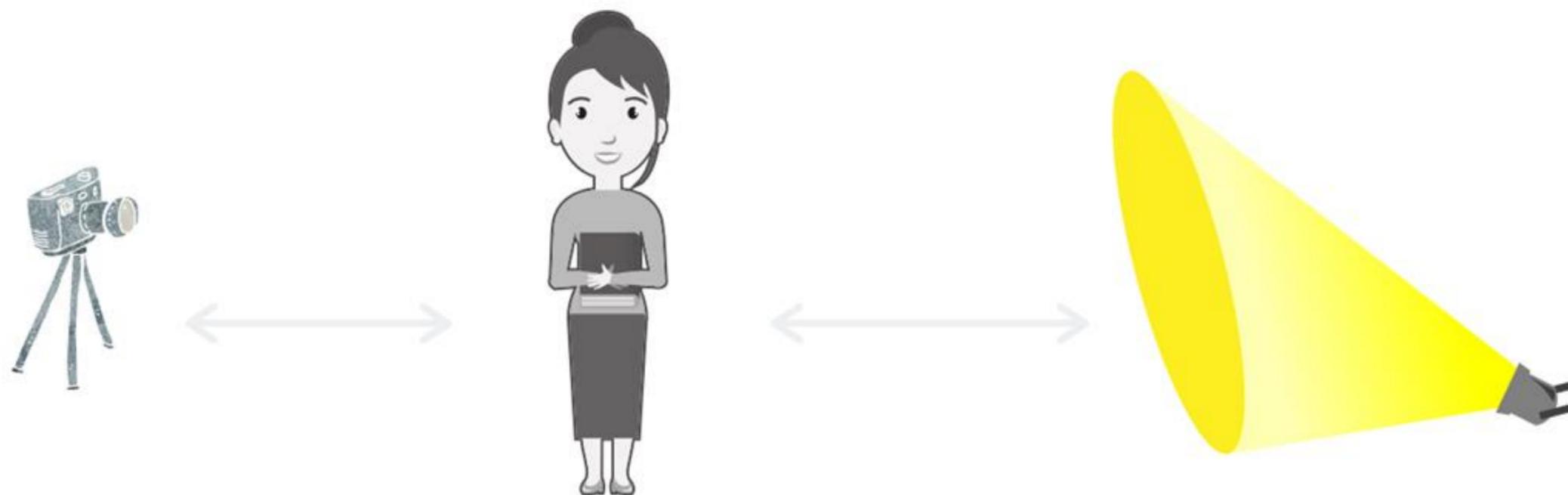


3. Know your lighting

This:



Not this:



In this image, the light source is located behind the subject. Her face is dark while the background is well lit.



In this image, the light source (a flash) is located in front of the subject. The women's faces are clear.



Here, we are relying
on natural light
coming through the
windows from behind.



This photo is also using natural light but it is coming from the side of the image. If this photo was taken from the inside looking out, our three electricians would appear very dark.





These two photos were taken in the same place, on the same day.

Moving out from the awning made for a brighter image.



4. Expressions

Taking a few photos would have left at least one with all students looking at the camera.



This is a photo from Bev's farewell event in Nairobi, Kenya.

By taking plenty of pictures and being aware of breaks in speeches, this photographer captured a great photo.





Of course, rules are made to be broken.

You could take a photo of someone against a wall that looks amazing or a stunning image using light and shadow on a subject's face.

These tips are simply a guide to help you take photos that you can be confident tell a great story.





A picture is worth a
thousand words



Let's look at examples of mishaps involving photos.



BEST LAID PLANS...

Consider this example from the Ballito Pro Surfing Championship 2018.



 **The Ballito Pro** ...
Like This Page · June 25 · 🌐

Meet your 2018 Billabong Junior Series Ballito Pro Junior winners, Rio Waida (Indonesia) and Zoe Steyn (East London, SA) who claimed their victory today in medium sized onshore conditions at Willard Beach, Ballito.

#BillabongJNR #TheBallitoPro — with Elsabe Du Plessis, Johan Du Plessis, Elaine Du Plessis and Jac du Plessis at 📍 The Ballito Pro.

A horizontal brushstroke graphic with a purple-to-cyan gradient, featuring the text "OUT OF CONTEXT" in white. The brushstroke has a textured, hand-painted appearance with visible bristles and a slight curve. The text is centered within the brushstroke in a clean, white, sans-serif font.

OUT OF CONTEXT

What comes to mind when you see this picture?





PALMS & PIX



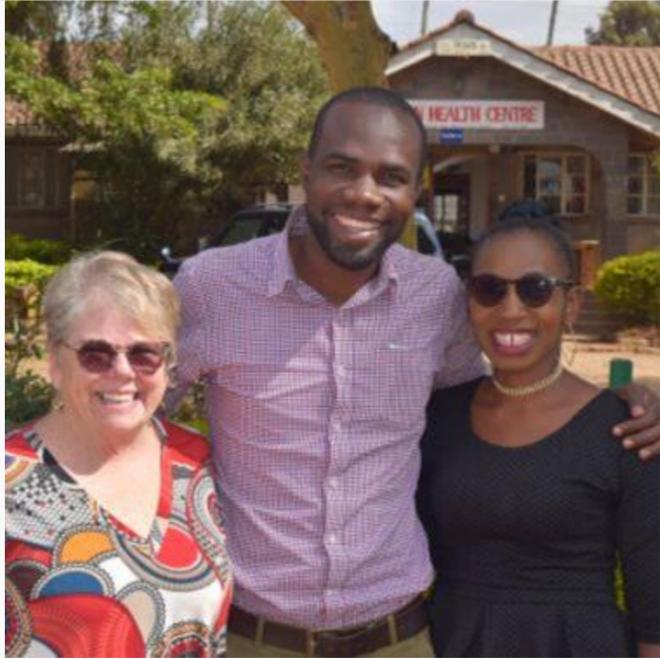
Search



What messages are conveyed by these images?



Search



What is going on in these images?



How would you describe the child in yellow in this photo?

What impression does this image give of children in Timor Leste?



How would you describe the child in this photo?

What impression does this image give of children in Timor Leste?



MEDIA POLICY

We have established six principles that underpin Palms Australia's Media Policy. This policy applies to all public materials produced by Palms Australia staff and program participants.

Palms Australia's Media Policy covers **public content**.

This includes any video, photo, and text content shared through blog posts, social media, personal newsletters or emails, and to media outlets. This does not cover personal reflection tools including private journals and photo albums.

MEDIA PRINCIPLES AND HOW TO USE THEM

RESPECT

Awareness of local customs and beliefs concerning photography and sharing images of certain people/places. Accurately representing the people, places, and activities you are photographing.

DIGNITY

Portraying people as people, not as props or characters to tell a particular narrative. This is especially important for children and persons with an illness / disability.

AUTONOMY

We believe "All people contribute to their own development". Therefore, we portray people as decision makers and as people who have control and initiative.

MEDIA PRINCIPLES AND HOW TO USE THEM

NEVER

CONDESCENDING

We work alongside, not above, our colleagues so we avoid patronising imagery and language. We never present colleagues, the partner organisation, or the people in the community in a condescending manner.

NEVER

EXPLOITATIVE

Photos must not manipulate or take advantage of a situation in order to tell a story. We do not share photos that can potentially be used by a viewer to exploit the person, organisation, or community featured in the picture

NEVER

HARMFUL

Names and locations of children or vulnerable persons featured in photographs must be redacted. Children must not be pictured alone, to avoid connotations of isolation and vulnerability.



CONSENT

Informed consent must be obtained before taking and sharing photos of individuals who can be identified in an image.

Informed consent means the individual understands where, when, and to whom the image will be shared. Consent may be verbal (for those with low literacy skills, restricted movement or vision impairment) but you should be able to demonstrate that the purpose of the image has been understood and consent given.

Palms will keep a record that consent has been given for any photos that have been sent to us.

CONSENT

When taking photos of children, defined as anyone under the age of 18, you must obtain consent from the child themselves or a parent or legal guardian.

Remember, informed consent is predicated on an understanding of where, when, and to whom the image will be shared. When obtaining consent from a child, you must make a judgement as to whether it is reasonable to believe that the child has understood this. A teacher is not a suitable authority for consent.

Participants should not be shown touching children in any images (and really, unless you are a medical professional or are taking a photo with your own child, there is no reason for you to be touching a child in a photo!).



CONSENT

You do not need to obtain consent if an individual is not identifiable in an image (that is, in photos of large crowds) or when the individual has reasonably waived anonymity (for example, a speaker at a public event). You can exercise your own discretion of what is appropriate when taking casual photos of colleagues or friends, but remember to be respectful and know that being given consent to take a photo once, does not constitute consent to take photos in the future.

Be aware that you should also gain consent before sharing an individual's story if that individual may be identifiable from that story, even when not accompanied an image.



ACTIVITY

Would sharing the following content online violate Palms Australia's Media Policy?

(Assume the volunteer has asked for consent)



Can't believe the conditions in which some people have to live. So sad! 😞





People here are so rude! The guy at the store just stared at me when I tried to buy oil yesterday. It's like he didn't even understand what I was saying!!!





People here are so patient. I went to buy oil at the store yesterday and the guy tried his best to understand my terrible attempts at the local language. Still learning!











Jess, Tom, Mary and other patients from Holy Family Care Centre in South Africa.



Finished!