Guidelines for
ETHICAL USE OF IMAGES

equitas

The purpose of these guidelines is to establish best practices for capturing and disseminating images (photos or videos) with the most informed consent of those featured in the images with conscious thought given to all ethical considerations.

≫ WHAT IS INFORMED CONSENT?

Informed consent is the permission that a person gives to use their image with **full knowledge of where, how, when, and for what purposes** the image will be used, and with the **understanding that they can say "no" without consequence**. Informed consent gives **full control** to the individuals featured to decide on the use of their image or not and in what contexts.

Complete informed consent is impossible, as power dynamics and context influence people's choices and understanding, but it is important that we aim to reach the most informed consent possible

≫ HOW TO ENSURE INFORMED CONSENT?

✓ Did the person taking or using the images **read these guidelines**?

✓ Did you explain the **use of the images**? Be explicit and specific about **where** the images will be displayed (website, social media, report, etc.) and **what will accompany** the images, including any text and the larger context within which the images will be used.

✓ Was all the information shared in the subject's **first language** and clearly understood?

✓ Did you **make clear the scope** of the use of the images? For example, if shared on social media or in a newsletter, the images will be shared to our followers all over the world.

✓ Did you explain that once an image is online, **Equitas cannot fully control the usage** of it?

✓ Consent can be revoked at any time. Did you **validate consent at every stage**? Just because someone consented to have their image used once, does not mean that it can be used again in a different context.

✓ Did you make clear that if the person prefers that their image not be used, that there is **absolutely no consequence** for this choice?

⟩⟩ WHAT TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN YOU CAPTURE OR USE AN IMAGE?

Beyond informed consent, it is your **responsibility to reflect** on the images you are capturing and using.

- ✓ How is the person or group featured **represented** in the image? Would you like to be portrayed in the same way?

- ✓ Are you reinforcing or **breaking down stereotypes** with the image?

- ✓ Is the image **representative of the diversity of people who were involved** in the activity and not only focused on showing diversity (tokenism)?

- ✓ Are you reinforcing a **white savior complex**? Does the image position Equitas as a hero or does it celebrate local knowledge and skills?

- ✓ Did you make sure there were no **security risks** in capturing or using an image?

- ✓ Did you ensure that subjects are **accurately represented** and the image is being used in **an appropriate way**? For example, if an image was captured in a project in Kenya, it can't be used alongside a story about Senegal.

⟩⟩ WHAT ABOUT IMAGES OF CHILDREN?

Obtaining informed consent from children is even more difficult and so the capture and use of images of images of children should be **avoided if possible**.

- ✓ Do you have the informed consent of the child **and their parent or guardian**?

- ✓ Try to capture and use images where children **cannot be identified** or where we cannot see their faces.

⟩⟩ QUICK CHECKLIST FOR INFORMED CONSENT

- ✓ Has each person who is identifiable in the image, **even in the background,** given their informed consent?

- ✓ Did you explain the **use and context of use of the images**?

- ✓ Is the information being shared in the subject's **first language** and clearly understood ? If not, plan for translation.

- ✓ Did you make clear the option **to opt out** with no consequences?