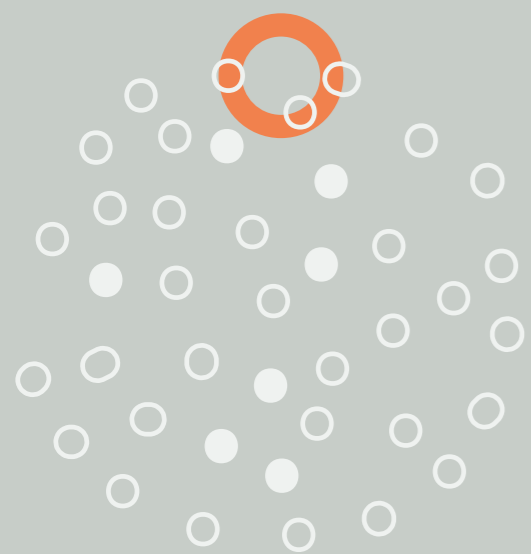


GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

USE OF VISUAL CONTENT ON POVERTY



**DEEP
POVERTY
NETWORK**



GUIDING PRINCIPLES:
**USE OF VISUAL
CONTENT ON
POVERTY**



THIS GUIDE HAS BEEN PREPARED ALONG WITH “GUIDING PRINCIPLES: HOW SHOULD POVERTY BE REPORTED?” AS A FOLLOW UP TO THE “MONITORING REPORT: POVERTY AGENDA IN THE MEDIA (JANUARY-AUGUST 2022)”

PROJECT TEAM

Can Çelik, Esin Türken,
Güliz Kalender, Roysi
Florentin, Selen Yüksel,
Şevval Şener

EDITED BY

Diego Cupolo

GUIDE DESIGNED BY

Myra Ajans

RELEASE DATE

Ocak 2023

SEE

[Monitoring Report:
Poverty Agenda in the Media
\(January-August 2022\)](#)

[Guiding Principles:
How Should Poverty
Be Reported?](#)

ISBN:

978-605-74036-7-4



“This guideline was published by the Deep Poverty Network (DPN), which is an Initiative of the Open Space Association (OSA), with the financial support of the Heinrich Böll Stiftung Derneği Türkiye Temsilciliği. Only the Open Space Association & Deep Poverty Network is responsible for the content.”

**OPEN SPACE ASSOCIATION &
DEEP POVERTY NETWORK / 06**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / 06

BACKGROUND / 07

PROBLEM / 07

**PURPOSE OF THE
GUIDING PRINCIPLES / 08**

**BASIS OF THE
GUIDING PRINCIPLES / 08**

PHOTO SHOOTING / 09

**SELECTION AND USE OF
VISUAL CONTENTS FROM
ARCHIVES OR OTHER SOURCES / 10**





The OPEN SPACE ASSOCIATION/DEEP POVERTY NETWORK is a non-governmental organization that aims at

- creating awareness about social, economic and urban problems;
- acting in solidarity with groups that face social exclusion and have difficulties in accessing their rights and needs;
- empowering these groups through diverse activities; supporting their access to public rights and services;
- reducing the obstacles that prevent these groups' access to basic human rights, including the rights to education, health, employment, and social security

Definition of deep poverty: OSA&DPN perceive poverty in a multi-dimensional frame, as a phenomenon that not only restricts people's access to basic rights and needs, but also prevents them from attaining their economic, social, political and cultural rights.

HEINRICH BÖLL STIFTUNG DERNEĞİ TÜRKİYE TEMSİLCİLİĞİ (2001)

endeavors to support and motivate initiatives and activities which strive to empower democratic actors, protect human and minority rights, work on ecology and sustainable development, and develop global and regional security policies. With its central office in Istanbul, the Türkiye Representative of the Heinrich Böll Stiftung Association has, for 20 years, supported civil society initiatives that adopt the above listed principles and strive for the protection of a democratic social order that is based on the principle of rule of law, regardless of people's gender, ethnicity, religion or color.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: We would like to express our thanks to Diego Cupolo who editorially read the guide. We are also thankful to the Heinrich Böll Stiftung Association Derneği Türkiye Temsilciliği that enabled the realization of the project.

BACKGROUND

When news, research and project reports, donation campaigns, awareness-raising activities or political party activities on poverty are analyzed, it comes to the fore that there is a belief that one of the most effective methods of describing poverty is the use of visual contents. Some dramatic images of working children, dirty faces and hands, old and torn clothes and shoes, hands reaching out to each other, black and white photographs, people looking for things in the garbage and empty pockets are frequently used and disseminated by many sources.

PROBLEM

The use of such images portrays poverty as a problem of individuals 'who have failed to improve themselves' rather than a policy problem that concerns large groups. Images that primarily evoke pity and empathy reinforce the perception that people struggling with poverty are passive individuals in need of help rather than subjects with rights. Such images can illustrate people struggling with poverty to 'unlucky people, people who are destined to be like that, people who should ask for help and be grateful for what they have'. Just as the extent of poverty and anti-poverty work in Africa is not a picture of a weak and starving child surrounded by flies, it is not realistic to describe the extent of poverty in Türkiye by photographing the pain on the face of a person picking food from the garbage. In both cases, the multidimensionality of poverty and those responsible for it can become invisible.

As a non-governmental organization that considers poverty as a human rights issue and bases its activities on this basis, we wanted to bring together a set of basic principles that can guide journalists, researchers, social workers and anyone who creates content in this field in the processes of preparing, selecting and disseminating visuals used about poverty.

PURPOSE OF THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES: USE OF IMAGES ON POVERTY

These guiding principles aim to ensure that any visual content (images, drawings and photographs etc.) that directly or indirectly affects people living in conditions of poverty are disseminated in accordance with human rights standards. It aims to create a shared awareness of respect for the dignity, rights and best interests of persons.

BASIS OF THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES: USE OF IMAGES ON POVERTY

The guideline are based on the Constitution of the Republic of Türkiye¹, *the Law on the Protection of Personal Data, the European Convention on Human Rights, the Revised European Social Charter, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Principles and Guidelines for a Human Rights Approach to Poverty Reduction Strategies, Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights.*

Why does it matter ‘how’ the image is chosen to portray poverty?

Almost all news we analyzed for the Monitoring Report: Poverty Agenda In the Media (January–August 2022) had visual content. These news may be prepared to publish the results of a research, to convey the struggles of individuals, to run a donation campaign, to make the causes of poverty visible or to announce a policy regulation. However, the visuals used in such news should be carefully selected. It is important to make sure that the images used in the news are compatible with the message of the news, do not violate the rights of individuals and do not feed prejudices about poverty. Matt Collin’s term “poverty porn”² refers to the pornologization of poverty in a way that exploits readers’ emotions and the subject of the photograph.

A set of basic principles that can guide journalists, researchers, social workers and all those who create content in this field in the preparation, selection and dissemination of images about poverty can be listed as follows.

1. Personal inviolability, corporeal and spiritual existence of the individual (article 17), personal liberty and security (article 19) and privacy and protection of private life (article 20)

2. Matt Collin (July 1, 2009). “What is ‘poverty porn’ and why does it matter for development?”. *Aid Thoughts*

PHOTO SHOOTING

Guiding Principles

- To act with the awareness that poverty is a violation of human rights;
- Not to objectify people’s struggle against poverty for any personal gain;
- To be aware that the priority in every photograph taken to portray the dimensions of poverty is the best interest of the people in question;
- To show the methods of struggle against poverty, solidarity and strengths of individuals; to avoid creating a uniform perception of the poor/poverty;
- Not to include more than what the individuals want to share about their own lives in the photographs;
- When taking photographs, not to make any assumptions about who people are, what they have been through or what they have coped with, other than what they have shared, and not to manipulate reality;
- Not to take photographs without permission, even if the photograph is to be taken in a public place, and to observe that the permission of children is not legally sufficient;
- Explaining to the person photographed where and for what purposes the photograph can be used, who can see it and for how long, and respecting the right to be forgotten;
- Destroying the photograph/image when requested by the subject of the photograph;
- Protect the identity of the person in cases where the person may be subject to labeling or hate crime.

Questions One Can Ask Himself/Herself During a Photo Shooting;

- What is my motivation for taking this photo?
- Does this photo feed any stereotypes? Does it ignore the multidimensional nature of poverty?
- What emotions does the photograph evoke?
- If I were in the person’s shoes, would I want this photo of me to be taken/disseminated?
- Could the taking/dissemination of this photograph lead to a violation of rights, have I discussed these possibilities with the person?
- Could there have been an alternative to this photograph that would have been more respectful of the person’s right to privacy, right to be forgotten and dignity?

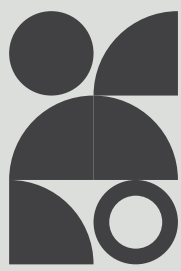
SELECTION AND USE OF VISUAL CONTENTS (*Photographs, Illustrations, Paintings, etc.*) FROM ARCHIVES OR OTHER SOURCES

Guiding Principles

- Ensure that the image accurately reflects the content of the text; do not select images only to make the text (news, report, fundraising campaign, etc.) stand out and arouse interest; convey the message to the reader in the right way;
- Avoid sensational presentation of the image;
- Use the visual materials with the permission of the individuals and in forms befitting human dignity;
- Provide references to the source of the visual contents used;
- Avoid discourse and visuals that feed prejudices about poverty, stigmatize, accuse and discriminate against people;
- Avoid images that are edited to dramatize people's struggle with poverty and that emphasize emotions such as pity and inequality;
- Try to also create a demand for justice and a desire to take action instead of despair in the person who sees the visual;

Questions One Can Ask Himself/Herself When Choosing a Visual Content from Archives or Other Sources

- What is the motivation behind choosing this image for this text?
- Is the image open for sharing? Is it possible to use this image in my own content, even with reference?
- Does the image convey why people live in poverty?



**DEEP
POVERTY
NETWORK**