



WORKING WITH POSITIVE NEGATIVES



PhotoVoice 
www.photovoice.org





CONTEXT

Today, more than at any other time in history, images bombard and envelop us. Television, print, and the internet unceasingly present images of people to emulate or help. . . historical icons to remember. . . products we need. It's within this new world of constant visual imagery, and the need for shock or aesthetic beauty, that photojournalism today must compete: to make a single image stand out, and to get us to take the image – and what it represents – seriously.

With visual saturation comes indifference. Many of the images we witness of war or famine, disease, or extreme difficulty no longer touch us. The people depicted are elsewhere, their plight irrelevant to our lives. Rarely do we have the opportunity to get close to these 'static' people, to really glimpse their lives, to see them as active individuals with views and opinions rather than as helpless victims.

This is what PhotoVoice can achieve.

THE ROSE CLASS - Nepal



▶ Playing with a Doll

© Photograph and words by Bishnu Maya/The Rose Class/PhotoVoice

"These children were born in the camps. They play happily with a doll because they do not know about Bhutan – they do not have sad feelings in their hearts because they do not understand the situation in the refugee camps."

"PhotoVoice is bringing new voices to photojournalism. A new generation, raised on the margins of society, speaks out with powerful new photography."

– STEVE McCURRY, AWARD-WINNING PHOTOGRAPHER



“PhotoVoice offers marginalised groups, including many children, the skills of ‘participatory photography,’ visual literacy and a powerful universal language to express their ideas and present their realities to the rest of us.”

– CAROL BELLAMY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, UNICEF



PhotoVoice is an international non-profit organisation, based in London, UK. Our mission is empowerment – to support people in need around the world in using photography as a medium to speak out about their challenges, hopes, and fears. Working alongside both international organisations and local partners, we provide in-field photojournalism workshops for those living on the fringes of society. We have set up long-term projects working with refugee groups, the homeless, street and working children, and women living with HIV. We also provide short-term consultancy in participatory photography to other development organisations.

Internationally, we provide the platform for all these groups to exhibit and market their work. Our website www.photovoice.org provides the global forum for the practitioners and beneficiaries of participatory photography projects around the world.

The new voices of photojournalism: hear the world through their eyes.

Photo this page: Flying to Reach the Sun ©Vo Cong Thang/Street Vision/PhotoVoice. Cover photo: ©Tiffany Fairey/PhotoVoice

www.photovoice.org

programs. projects. exhibits. **London. Nepal. Vietnam. Congo. Afghanistan. And beyond.** member special events. quarterly newsletter. print gallery. global forum.



On the Bus

© Photograph and words by Sakina/Bibin/PhotoVoice

"I do not want to wear a burqa. I will wear hajab (a head scarf) because that is what it says in Islam. It is important for women not to be seen by other men apart from their husbands – this is what is said by Islam. Women have to do exactly the same as men, the same amount of work, but they are not treated the same."

EMPOWERMENT

No picture, of course, depicts truth. A photo simply reflects reality – a moment of time bordered and framed, shot by one individual and singled out by another. PhotoVoice projects let people in need document their lives as only they can really know them. These projects thereby channel the unique subjectivity of the participants into a direct and powerful form of human communication.

By giving photographic training to the politically and economically voiceless, PhotoVoice allows its constituents to advocate for change.

- Locally, their exhibits challenge the stigma and stereotyping of their daily lives.
- Internationally, their photos raise consciousness about the millions who live on the fringes of society.



IMPACT

Through the training, participants:

- gain a new skill;
- gain confidence in their views and opinions and their right to be heard;
- can inform local and government policy; and, where possible,
- gain a means through which they can generate income for their lives.

In truth, PhotoVoice projects enlarge the lives of their participants – and ours, too. Through witnessing their daily challenges through their eyes, we get closer to truly understanding their lives and needs. . . and are perhaps moved ourselves to bring about change.



▶ Helping Mother

© Photograph by Vo Cong Thang/Street Vision/PhotoVoice.
Words by Le Huu Hieu.

"It is said that rice is more valuable than gold."

"... A poignant portrait of the lives of Ho Chi Minh City's street children."

– THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

"The photographers know their turf well. They are all children living on the streets or in the shelters of the city. Thanks to 'Street Vision,' they have received cameras and lessons so that they can capture their world."

– THE BOSTON HERALD

