

Calling young photographers!

You could be awarded the chance to join world renowned photographers on a trip to Ethiopia



© Reza Webistan
Afghanistan

© Mary Ellen Mark
California, USA

Ewan McGregor, Malawi © Carol Allen Storey
© UNICEF UK/wendy zych Uganda

To mark the 20th anniversary of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) on 20 November 2009, the World Photography Organisation, Sony and the United Nations Children's Fund, are giving six young photographers a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to travel to Ethiopia for a photographic workshop complete with mentoring from acclaimed photographer and humanitarian Reza.

For the chance to join the field trip, young photographers between 12 and 18 are being invited to log on to www.worldphotographyawards.org/unicef and show their support for children's rights by pledging a single photograph, accompanied by a written pledge, highlighting one of the five fundamental children's rights:

- The right to survival;
- to education;
- to health;
- to protection from harm, abuse and exploitation;
- and to be heard

Six selected young photographers will attend the Sony World Photography Awards and World Photography Festival in Cannes, France in April 2010 where they will collect their award. They will then attend a workshop in Ethiopia for young photographers in Summer 2010.

The field trip to Ethiopia will be run by UNICEF in conjunction with EYE SEE, a photo-project that gives children all over the world, training so they may learn photographic skills. EYE SEE is supported by Sony Corporation and UNICEF and the goal of its workshop in Ethiopia is to teach children photography techniques and provide them with a fun and compelling tool with which to capture images of their lives. All the young people will receive mentoring from acclaimed photographer and humanitarian Reza.

Reza and other world renowned photographers including Jonathan Torgovnik, Mary Ellen Mark, Carol Allen Storey and Bruce Davidson have already made photo-pledges to support children's rights along with celebrity UNICEF Ambassadors including David Beckham and Ewan McGregor who have pledged images personally chosen from field-trips they have been on with UNICEF.

Astrid Merget, Creative Director, World Photography Organisation said: *"The World Photography Organisation and its Academy Members are privileged to work with UNICEF and EYE SEE on this initiative which not only enables young photographers to use photography to become advocates for children's rights but also equips them with the skills to practice photography in the future. We wish young photographers everywhere the best of luck"*.

Ellen Tolmie, Senior Photography Editor, UNICEF said: *"UNICEF is thrilled that the Convention of the Rights of the Child has been chosen by the World Photography Awards this year as the focus of its annual campaign. Inviting young people from around the world to participate offers an opportunity for children's visual expressions to be seen internationally. Additionally there is a possibility of winning participation in a photography workshop with their peers in a developing country."*

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 20th November 1989 and established a set of fundamental rights for all children and young people that protect them against violence, discrimination and harm. Today, the CRC has been signed by almost every single country, making it the most widely ratified human rights agreement in the world.

Great progress has been made in the past 20 years, including improvements to under-five child mortality and falling numbers of children working in hazardous labour. However, major challenges remain. Between 500 million and 1.5 billion children experience violence annually; 150 million children aged between five and 14 are engaged in child labour and more than 1 million children are detained through justice systems around the world at any one time.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

Everyone has a shared responsibility to uphold the values and promises made to children in the CRC and photographers of all ages can become advocates of the cause by making a photo-pledge for the 20th anniversary of the UNCRC via www.worldphotographyawards.org. All photo-pledges will form a special online exhibition showcased on the World Photography Awards website. Selected images may also be exhibited alongside the UNICEF Ambassadors' images and those taken by World Photography Academy Members at the annual Sony World Photography Awards event in Cannes, April 2010. These images will then go on a global tour with the event's touring exhibition. Everyone who submits a photo will receive emails suggesting actions they can take to change the policies and practices that deny children their rights.

About EYE SEE

EYE SEE is a digital photography project that encourages young people in developing countries to take photographs of social issues in their day-to-day lives. The aim of the project is to provide an exciting opportunity for the youth to tell their stories and express their world through images captured with photography; to inspire the youth to learn about the social issues that they will be the key to solving them in the future; and help people around the world better understand the issues faced by these youth and their communities. EYE SEE is supported by Sony Corporation and the Japan Committee for UNICEF.

Press access to photo and written pledges

Written pledges and accompanying photographs from World Photography Academy Members Carol Allen Storey, Bruce Davidson, Mary Ellen Mark, Reza and Jonathan Torgovnik plus UNICEF Ambassadors David Beckham, Jamie Cullum, Cat Deeley, Jemima Khan, Ewan McGregor and James Nesbitt are available for press use.

All images and written pledges are **embargoed until 00.01 (GMT), Friday 20 November 2009**. To download images, written pledges and the press release please go to: <http://www.worldphotographyawards.org/press.aspx> Scroll to the bottom of the page to SWPA image downloads and enter password: wpapress

Written and photographic pledges include:

David Beckham



Credit: David Turnley© UNICEF UK

David Beckham pledged: *"I have chosen this image to pledge my support for children's rights. It shows a woman in a feeding centre I visited in Sierra Leone with UNICEF. She was holding her toddler close to her and you can see she just looks so worried. The child was malnourished and the woman had a cup of special, fortified milk to help the child regain its strength. The UNICEF-supported centre is the only one in the*

northern part of Sierra Leone, which means thousands of children still can't get the health care they need. Every child has the right to be healthy. We can't turn a blind eye to the tens of thousands of young children who die every day in the developing world, mostly from causes that are preventable .I pledge my make support to fulfil children's rights. Please do the same if you can. Thank you."

Mary Ellen Mark



©Mary Ellen Mark, Jesse Damm, Llano, California, 1994

Mary Ellen Mark pledged: **"Every child has the right to a home"** and said: *"I first met Jesse Damm in 1987 when he was a little boy—only 4-years-old. He was homeless. He lived in shelters and sometimes he lived with his entire family (and their pit bull) in a car. He was extremely stressed and he cried a lot.*

"This photograph of Jesse was taken in 1994 on the roadside in Llano, California three hours outside of Los Angeles. At that time, Jesse, his sisters Chrissy, Summer & Ashley, his mother Linda, and his step-father Dean were again homeless. They were

squatting in a deserted ranch in a canyon. Eventually, his abusive step-father left and his mother remarried and the family found a home. But, Jesse never recovered from the horrible insecurity and stress of his childhood.

"As he grew, he spent many years drifting around and although he stayed out of trouble with the police, he was just surviving and always on the edge. One night, while defending his sister from her ex-boyfriend, Jesse somehow got a hold of a gun and shot and killed the ex-boyfriend. He plead guilty and is now serving a 9-year-sentence. When I contacted him last Christmas to see if I could send him anything, he said all he wanted was a photograph".

Ewan McGregor



Ewan McGregor pledged: "This is my pledge photo to support children's rights. It tells a story. These children are orphaned and vulnerable children in a community based childcare centre in Malawi. They are flat out asleep having an afternoon nap in a centre that's been set up to provide them with a meal, toys and childcare and a time and place to be children. It looks basic. It is. But the centre is helping give these children their rights - care, support, education and more. I pledge my absolute support for children's rights. I hope you'll do the same".

Credit: Wendy Zych © UNICEF UK

Reza



Credit: © Reza / Webistan, Afghan girl in Torabora village in Waziristan, Afghanistan 2004

Reza pledged: "**Every child has the right to a childhood**" and quoted the following poem:

*I said what about my eyes?
Keep them on the road.
I said what about my passion?
Keep it burning.
I said what about my heart?
Tell me what you hold inside it.
I said pain and sorrow.*

He said. Stay with it.

Rumi (1207-1273)

Media enquiries

Rachel Duffield / Jill Cotton

Colman Getty on behalf of the World Photography Organisation

Tel: +44 (0)20 7631 2666

Email: rachel@colmangetty.co.uk / jill@colmangetty.co.uk

Gina Dafalia

Unicef

Tel: + 44 (0)20 7375 6069

Email: ginad@unicef.org.uk