NABZ-IRAN

Working to Raise Awareness around Human Rights Violations in Iran

E-Learning Course
Documenting Human Rights Violations in Challenging Environments

Are you looking to report on human rights violations in an accurate, unbiased way? Do you operate in an environment in which collecting this information could prove challenging or dangerous? If so, this is the course for you. Divided into five lessons, the course outlines a methodology for documenting human rights abuses, focusing on how to collect data and stories and how to report on these with accuracy, impartiality and objectivity.

The course is divided into the following lessons: understanding the basics; collecting information through public sources; collecting information from specific sources; using text, video and audio; and navigating the collection process in challenging and dangerous environments. At the end of each lesson, you will take a short quiz to reinforce what you have learned. Click "take this course" and let the learning begin!

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LESSON 1: UNDERSTANDING THE BASICS

By the time you finish this lesson, you will be able to:

1. Distinguish between monitoring, fact-finding and documenting;
2. Understand the importance of accuracy, impartiality and objectivity when collecting information about human rights violations; and,
3. Identify and use the basic questions: what, where, who, when, how, and so what?

Having a methodology for collecting information will allow you to provide an **impartial, accurate assessment** which can provide a basis for further action.

Back   **Next**

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Monitoring, Fact-Finding, and Documenting – What's the Difference?

There are a number of methodologies you can use when collecting information about human rights abuses. The three most common methods are **monitoring**, **fact-finding** and **documenting**. Study the three frameworks and decide which one(s) are most relevant to you. Feel free to use more than one method at a time.

Monitoring refers to collecting, verifying, and using information about a situation over a period of time. Use this methodology if you want to:
- Collect large quantities of data;
- Investigate a situation over a period of time; and,
- Assess whether an action or set of actions violates legal standards.

Fact-Finding/Investigating is used to gather information about a specific event or series of events. Use this method if you are able to:

- Interview victims and witnesses;
- Visually inspect the sight of an incident;
- Observe specific events (i.e. trials);
- Review and collect documents relevant to an incident;
- Record or review photo, audio, and video evidence; and/or,
- Use forensic evidence (Click here to read more about using forensic evidence in fact-finding investigations).

Documenting abuses refers to the process of recording information found during a fact-finding investigation. Documenting allows you to organize and preserve information so that you or others can use it as a basis for further action.

How can documentation be used as a basis for further action?

In December 2010, the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran used sound methodologies to collect information on violations of student rights in Iran. As a result of these efforts, they released a report entitled "Punishing Stars: Systematic Discrimination and Exclusion in Iranian Higher Education." The report draws attention to the cause of human rights in Iran by presenting unbiased data on student rights violations and making constructive recommendations to key players in Iran.

Back   **Next**

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What are Some Best Practices for Collecting Information?

As a human rights reporter, you will have a greater impact on your audience if you use sound methodologies for collecting information. To ensure that your investigation is taken seriously, follow these simple guidelines:

Be Objective:

Report on what you see, hear and/or read. You want to avoid letting your opinions, emotions and personal prejudices affect your reporting. To ensure objectivity, present all perspectives and angles of the given situation. For example, report the claims of both the accuser and the accused. *Before confirming an incident, corroborate the story with three different sources.*

Be Impartial:

When collecting information, do not omit someone's statement simply because you disagree with it. Follow all leads even if you are skeptical about the veracity of the information. Seek out sources that represent all parties involved in an incident. *If you produce a statement, make sure the evidence you have collected supports your statement.*

Most importantly, when collecting statements from individuals involved in an incident, try not to judge the information you collect based on your personal opinions. Instead, provide an assessment of each party's personal or political motives. *While it is not your job to judge whether someone is right, wrong, telling the truth, or lying, it is important that you provide contextual information on each source's background, affiliations, and potential biases.*

Be Accurate:

Use a clear, organized methodology to collect information. To avoid inaccuracies or the appearance of bias, collect and document evidence about each incident using the same methodology. When interviewing victims or witnesses, document exactly what they say, rather than interpreting their words or statements. If you interpret their words, you may inadvertently change their meaning.

Finally, make sure you are giving an accurate depiction of the situation or incident using *credible evidence*.

Back   **Next**

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The 5WS+H

Sifting through large quantities of information can seem like a daunting task. The "5WS+H" concept is a helpful tool for remembering what questions to ask when collecting information. Journalists, researchers and investigators all use this concept to ensure they're asking all the relevant questions.

Here are the questions you should ask yourself when collecting information:

- The 5Ws:
  - **Who** is involved in the situation/incident?
  - **What** happened?
  - **When** did the event occur? (and did it happen on a particular day, or has it been occurring over a period of days, weeks or years?)
  - **Where** did the situation/incident occur? (be as specific as possible)
  - **Why** did the situation/incident occur? (based on the evidence you have collected, such as documents, interviews or news articles)

- The H:
  - **How** did it happen? What are the details of the situation/incident?

By the time you complete this lesson, you will have learned and practiced how to ask and answer each question in the 5WS+H.

Back   **Next**

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Who: Not Just Names, but Personalities

The first question in the 5WS+H is **WHO**. When you are collecting information about a situation or event, always make a list of all the parties involved. This list can include the alleged victim(s), perpetrator(s), authorities (such as a government, government officials or members of an organization) and witnesses. When describing the "who", make sure to provide an **unbiased description** of the individual or entity, their background, affiliations, and potential biases.

Test Your Knowledge!

To practice identifying the "who" when assessing a piece of evidence, read the following passage from a Human Rights Watch report and create a "who" list. Include each party's background, affiliations, and potential biases in your list. Click "next" to see how you did:

"On the night of June 14, two days after the election, police and Basij forces attacked Tehran University dormitories, injuring students and damaging buildings. Some students were asleep when the attack occurred. Police arrested a number of students at the dormitory that night and transferred them to different police stations. They took a few dozen students to a basement room four levels below ground at the Ministry of Interior. There, the students said, Basij and police physically and verbally abused them.

One student who spent 48 hours in the ministry basement told Human Rights Watch:

"During the attack the plainclothes forces grabbed me and some other students randomly, although we were not chanting or anything. I was blindfolded and could not recognize where we were headed. On the way, they cursed and beat me. In the 48 hours in that place, which I learned from the conversations of the guards was the basement of the Ministry of Interior, they put food in our hands and forced us to eat, and if any food fell on the ground they would beat us with batons. They made harsh noises to terrify us. We had to beg to go to the toilet. Some of the detainees had open wounds and needed medical attention, but they were treated the same way."
(Source: http://www.hrw.org/node/88463/section/3)

Back   **Next**

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Who Were the Parties Involved?

1. Police who arrested the students
2. Basij forces who assisted in the arrest of the students
3. Tehran University students who were taken to different police stations
4. Tehran University students who were taken to a Ministry of Interior basement located four levels below ground
5. The guards at the Interior Ministry
6. Human Rights Watch

What are their background, affiliations, and potential biases?

1. The police who arrested the students are employed by the Iranian government and affiliated with the Interior Ministry.
2. The Basij is a volunteer paramilitary force established by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khomeini in 1979 following the Islamic Revolution. Their loyalty is to the Supreme Leader and the Iranian Revolutionary Guard.
3. Tehran University students who were taken to different police stations. Assessing the motivations of the students is a bit more difficult. As someone collecting information, you would want to investigate the motivations of the students volunteering information. For example, some questions you would need answered are whether the student(s) are politically involved or had participated in the 2009 post-election protests disputing President Ahmadinejad's victory. From this article, all we know about these individuals is that they were students at Tehran University. Can you find information about them from other sources? University students in Iran are known for being politically active and vocal; however, do not assume they were all politically inclined or all disputed the electoral outcome.
4. Tehran University students who were taken to a Ministry of Interior basement– what else can you find out about these students and why were they separated from the students reportedly taken to police stations?
5. The guards at the Interior Ministry work for the Iranian government, and in particular, the Ministry of Interior, which is responsible for internal security in Iran.
6. Human Rights Watch is a self-proclaimed "watchdog" organization. While it is independent, its motivations are to report on human rights violations and hold governments (such as the Iranian government) accountable to international human rights standards.

Back   **Next**

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What: Facts versus Claims

The second question in the 5WS+H is **WHAT**. When collecting information on human rights violations, ask "what happened?" What do you know about the situation beyond all reasonable doubt? Can you confirm certain facts with multiple sources? Are there other pieces of information that you cannot confirm? In your reporting, include any corroborating information, which is the evidence and background information you have collected that supports your "what happened" statement.

When answering the "what", remember to be **objective**, **impartial**, and **unbiased**. To ensure that your personal prejudices do not affect your reporting, present all sides of the story, *even if you believe one side more than the other.*

Try not to judge the information you collect based on your personal opinions. Instead, report just the **facts** (those that explain what happened and can be confirmed with multiple, credible sources) and **claims** (what people say happened). Always attribute facts and claims to their sources.

Test Your Knowledge!

Practice identifying the "what" by reading the following passage and creating two short lists: one of **facts** and the other of **claims**. If you have three credible sources to support a claim, you may assume it is a fact. While it is impossible to be 100 percent sure that an event occurred (unless you saw it with your own eyes), the 3-source rule acts allows you to be as accurate as humanly possible while ensuring you are separating the facts from claims.

Write your lists of facts and claims and click "next" to check your answers:

"Iran has been accused of torturing to death a blogger who was arrested last week for criticising the Islamic republic on Facebook […] Kaleme, a news website close to the opposition leader Mir Hossein Mousavi, was the first to report the blogger's death. Iran's state media have largely refrained from reporting on Beheshti's case but the site Baztab, affiliated to Mohsen Rezaei, a former senior commander of the Revolutionary Guard, confirmed his death. "Sattar Beheshti, who was arrested by Fata [cyber] police, has died while being interrogated," Baztab reported. Before his arrest, Beheshti had complained on his blog of being threatened by the authorities. "They threatened me yesterday that my mother would wear black because I don't shut my mouth," he wrote. Beheshti had been arrested previously for his activism."
(Source: http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/nov/08/iran-accused-torturing-blogger-death)

Back   **Next**

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What Happened?

"Iran has been accused of torturing to death a blogger who was arrested last week for criticising the Islamic republic on Facebook [...] Kaleme, a news website close to the opposition leader Mir Hossein Mousavi, was the first to report the blogger's death. Iran's state media have largely refrained from reporting on Beheshti's case but the site Baztab, affiliated to Mohsen Rezaei, a former senior commander of the Revolutionary Guard, confirmed his death. "Sattar Beheshti, who was arrested by Fata [cyber] police, has died while being interrogated," Baztab reported. Before his arrest, Beheshti had complained on his blog of being threatened by the authorities. "They threatened me yesterday that my mother would wear black because I don't shut my mouth," he wrote. Beheshti had been arrested previously for his activism."
(Source: http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/nov/08/iran-accused-torturing-blogger-death)

Facts:
- At least three credible domestic/international news sources, including *The Guardian*, have reported that:
  - Sattar Beheshti, an Iranian blogger, was arrested by cyber security police in November 2012.
  - Beheshti died while in police custody.
  - He had been arrested previously on charges related to his activism.

Claims:
- Beheshti was arrested for his Facebook activities and was accused of criticizing the Islamic Republic.
- He died while being interrogated (a claim made by a site affiliated to a former senior commander of the Revolutionary Guard.)
- Prior to his arrest, the authorities threatened Beheshti's life, warning him to stop speaking out on the Internet (a claim made by Sattar Beheshti on his blog).
- Beheshti was tortured (a claim made by the opposition website Kaleme).

Back   **Next**

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Where: Not Just an Address but a Setting

The third question in the 5WS+H is **WHERE**. Information about where an even took place can include:
- A city, province, or country;
- A part of town or a neighborhood;
- A particular building; or,
- A part of a building.

If you are able to obtain pictures or videos of an event, these can help you identify the "where"; however, you can also use written, oral, or even second-hand accounts to answer the "where". Let's go back to our Human Rights Watch story:

"On the night of June 14, two days after the election, police and Basij forces attacked Tehran University dormitories, injuring students and damaging buildings. Some students were asleep when the attack occurred. Police arrested a number of students at the dormitory that night and transferred them to different police stations. They took a few dozen students to a basement room four levels below ground at the Ministry of Interior." (Source: http://www.hrw.org/node/88463/section/3)

In this passage, we can identify several "where" answers:
1. Tehran University dormitories (in Tehran, Iran at a university campus. From this passage, we are not able to identify more specific information about which dorms were raided, but the Basij forces allegedly damaged multiple buildings).
2. Different police stations (we are not sure which police stations and where, but we could seek out more information about where these locations are.)
3. The Ministry of Interior. More specifically, a basement room four levels down.

When collecting information, you might not always be able to identify the exact location of an incident. In this case, explain what you know about the setting and what this tells you about its possible location. For example, we can infer that the person narrating this next passage is in a state-run interrogation location in Tehran:

"There was a fluorescent lamp that didn't really help us to distinguish day from night. There was no soap. They confiscated all our personal belongings. […] In Tehran's hot weather, we were deprived of a fan or water. They interrogated us. If anyone had a green scarf, shawl, or bracelet indicating that they were Mousavi supporters, their situation was worse. On the last day, I was feeling sick and a female guard came and kicked me a few times to stop me from crying." (Source:http://www.hrw.org/node/88463/section/3)

Back   **Next**

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When: Not Just Date and Time

The fourth question in the 5WS+H is **WHEN**. The "when" can include the date and/or time an event took place, whether the event happened once or continued over a period of time, and how long the event lasted.

To identify the "when", look for clues in the information you have collected. Is the date/time clearly stated in eyewitness or second-hand accounts? If not, are there other clues you can use to determine the "when", such as timestamps on video/audio evidence? Or, are there clues about when it took place in relation to other political or social events?

Test Your Knowledge!

Read the following passage. To the best of your ability, use clues from the passage to identify the "when". Also, use your knowledge of political events to help identify when an event might have occurred. If you just read the passage below, you might miss key identifiers about "when" in the source article, so be sure to skim the content found at that link as well. Click "next" to check your answer.

"I was in solitary confinement for 18 days with no access to my lawyer or to my family, no shower, and harsh physical conditions. I had no access to books, television, radio, or a pen... After 27 hours in solitary confinement, I was charged with things that weren't even crimes." (Source: http://www.hrw.org/node/88463/section/3)

Back   **Next**

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When did this event take place?

"I was in solitary confinement for 18 days with no access to my lawyer or to my family, no shower, and harsh physical conditions. I had no access to books, television, radio, or a pen... After 27 hours in solitary confinement, I was charged with things that weren't even crimes."
Abdolfatah Soltani
(Source: http://www.hrw.org/node/88463/section/3)

From the passage only, the witness states that the event occurred over an 18-dayperiod. However, if we look at the source article–the Human Rights Watch report–we get a broader view of the "when". For example, although the prisoner was in solitary confinement for 18 days, he was in prison for a total of 72 days, from June 16 to August 28. Moreover, another aspect of the "when" could be "following the 2009 disputed presidential elections in Iran" – although this isn't a specific date or time, this aspect of the "when" is important to understanding the full context of the incident.

Key Takeaway

To accurately report on the "when", gather as much information as possible with the information at your disposal – don't stop looking until you have a full understanding of the "when", or until you have run out of places to look.

Back   **Next**

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Why

The fifth question in the 5WS+H is **WHY** did this event take place? Answering the "why" requires you to analyze the reasons behind an incident, such as what caused the event to take place? To identify the why, look for *causes* and *motivations*.

Read the following passage and identify possible reasons why Ghadiyani has been transferred to a different prison. If your "why" answer is speculative rather than factual, state that clearly. See possible answers below the passage:

"Today's letter urges the head of the judiciary, Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani, to intervene in the transfer order issued by Judge Salavati, whom the prisoners accused of malicious intent against Ghadiyani. The letter adds that, in addition to Ghadiyani's rights being violated, seven other prisoners, the jailed Nematollah dervishes, have also been taken to solitary and are now being held incommunicado. Ghadiyani has been very vocal in his criticism of the government's treatment of political prisoners and the opposition movement, and his recent public letters addressed to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei appear to have won him serious repercussions in jail."
(Source: http://www.payvand.com/news/13/jan/1188.html)

Why was Ghadiyani moved?

Based on this passage, we do not have a clear understanding of why Ghadiyani was moved. This forces us to infer the "why" based upon what we do know. For example, we know that other prisoners claim he was moved because he criticized the government's treatment of political prisoners and the opposition movement. We also know that he wrote a series of letters to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei that criticized the treatment of political prisoners. This *may* have been all or part of the reason why he was moved. The passage notes that other prisoners have also been moved. This *could* indicate that political prisoners are moved as a form of punishment for behavior; however, we do not have enough evidence to support this claim outright.

Back   **Next**

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How?

The final question in the 5WS+H is **HOW**. To answer the "how", provide details of the situation or incident. These details should address: how an event/incident happened; how it started and ended; how it affected the people involved; and, how people responded to the incident.

Read the following passage and identify how the government has restricted Christians from practicing their faith:

"By the 1990s, the growth of the Christian convert community in Iran led to a series of increasingly repressive measures, such as placing more limitations on recognized church attendance, shutting down Iran's main Persian-language bible publisher, arresting evangelical church leaders and, most significantly, executing a pastor on the charge of apostasy. The growth of the house church movement, especially among Protestant converts, must be seen in light of this growing repression. By about 2001, house churches had become popular, organized Christian spaces. Borji notes that most are theologically evangelical. These underground churches became a place not only for converts, restricted from attending registered churches, to practice their new faith, but also a place where Iranians interested in Christianity could go to learn about the religion."
(Source: http://www.iranhumanrights.org/)

How were Christians being persecuted and how did Christians respond to the said persecution?

The passage explains how various repressive limitations were placed by the Iranian government on churches. Some of the restrictions identified in the passage were: limiting church attendance; shutting down a bible publisher; and, arresting evangelical church leaders and accusing them of apostasy. It also explains how Christians responded to the persecution by creating underground "house churches."

> *Remember: The more detailed in the information you provide, the more your readers will trust the information you publish.*

Back   **Quiz**

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Quiz

1. Following the trial of a journalist from the moment he or she is detained until the sentencing is considered monitoring.
   A. True
   B. False

2. You receive information from a source who has heard rumors of a law whereby all residents in "dangerous neighborhoods" in Tehran need to register with the police. You decide to go to parliament, look for a copy of the law, and talk to parliamentarians to see if it is true. This would constitute documenting.
   A. True
   B. False

3. Having recorded the testimonies of 20 young people detained during a rock concert in Tehran, you decide to make a 10-minute podcast about your interviews to publish on your Facebook page. The podcast would be a form of documenting the events.
   A. True
   B. False

4. Which of the following statements based on the Sattar Beheshti story would be classified as claims?
   A. Beheshti was arrested by cyber security police in November 2012.
   B. He died while being interrogated.
   C. The authorities threatened Beheshti's life when they warned him to stop speaking out on the Internet.

5. Having read the testimony by Abdolfatah Soltani and the source report, choose from the following list the answer that helps you to determine WHEN Soltani's human rights were abused by the Iranian government:
   A. During the 2009 elections
   B. During solitary confinement
   C. On July 15
   D. Answers a and b
   E. Answers a and c

6. When identifying WHY an event happens look for causes and effects.
   A. True
   B. False

7. Recalling the passage on restrictions for Christian in Iran, HOW did the government clamp down on their practice of the religion?
   A. Banning the sale of bibles
   B. Prohibiting Church attendance
   C. Exiling Christian leaders
   D. All of the above
   E. None of the above

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LESSON 2: HOW TO COLLECT INFORMATION USING PUBLIC SOURCES

One way to collect information on human rights violations is to use public sources, such as documents, videos, and images, to name a few. As you probably know, you can collect information from different types of public sources. Some examples are:

- **Direct Observation**: Did you see or hear something with your own eyes? If so, you have information about that incident.
- **Second-Hand Sources**: Are you interviewing eye-witnesses or investigating photographic or video evidence of an incident?
- **Media Sources:** Are you collecting information from media sources such as newspapers, magazines, online news services, television or radio stations?
- **Social Media Sources**: In the digital age, many violations are reported through news outlets, blogs or social media sites. Are you scouring Twitter, Facebook or Balatarin for reports of rights violations?
- **Public Data**: Do you have access to government reports, court documents, transcripts of hearings, international agreements or conventions or other official documents available to the public?
- **Academic Resources**: Are you reading academic papers or reports written by human rights groups?

In this lesson, you will learn how to collect information using these sources by following a three-step process:

- First, **define** your goals for gathering information.

- Second, **outline** a methodology for collecting information.

- Third, **obtain and record** information using your methodology.

Back   **Next**

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What are you Goals for Collecting Information?

When gathering information from public sources, the first thing to ask is why am I doing this? Do you want to you to report this information to an international human rights body? Is your intention to publish a story in the local press? Do you want to send a letter to the government about the event/incident? Are you going to use this information to lobby on a matter of public policy? While these are only a few examples, as you can see there are many reasons you may have for collecting information on human rights violations. To help keep your research focused, take a minute to write down your own goals for collecting information.

For example, the Iran Human Rights Documentation Center lists the following as its primary goals. When listing your goals, make sure they are **clear**, **concise** and **give an accurate depiction of how you plan to use the information you collect**:

Back   **Next**

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Outline and Use a Methodology

To ensure that people take your collection efforts seriously, you will need to outline a sound methodology for how you are going to gather your quantitative or qualitative data. If you produce a report based on your data, make sure to state your methodology clearly at the beginning of the document. **How you collect information will depend on what type of information you are collecting and your access to relevant public sources.**

To develop a methodology for your project, ask yourself the following questions:

```
        Have I collected
         information
         about this
          before?

What is the                          How much time
safest way to          Ask            do I need or have
gather this          Yourself         to collect the
information?                          information?

Have similar                          How many
things happened                       people do I
in the past that                      need to collect
would give                            it, or can I do it
context?                              on my own?

              What public
              sources do I
              have access to?
```

Don't Forget!
Public sources include: direct observation, second-hand sources, media sources, social media sources, public data, and academic resources.

Note: Take all possible precautions to ensure your personal safety and that of your sources.

Back   **Next**

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Outline and Use a Methodology (Continued)

Once you have a sense of your source(s), your resources (including time, people, and safety measures), and the appropriate background information needed, here are some specific steps you can use to carry out your collection efforts:

1. Conduct Background Research

If you are collecting information about an incident or type of incident that occurred previously, reading background material can provide you with context. Are there academic papers, news outlets or social media that discuss the topic? Have human rights groups reported about similar incidents in the past? Are there other credible sources that have written or document this type of incident, the political context in your country/province/city, or any other topics relevant to your investigation? Take some time to **read or view these background materials**.

Once you have done your background research, **talk to the experts**. Have academics, journalists, or other individuals done research into the type of incident you are investigating or the political context in which these incidents have taken place? Talking to these individuals, reading or watching their reports can provide more clarity on the situation you're investigating.

Test your Knowledge!

Take a minute to practice identifying background materials and potential experts. Imagine you're researching student rights violations in Iran. Compose a list of three **specific resources** that you could read or watch and three **experts** you could talk to about this issue. Examples could include news articles on the 2012 gender-based changes to university education in Iran, documentaries on women's access to education in Iran, human rights reports on Iran from credible domestic or international organizations, and professors who have studied changes to the educational system in Iran.

Back   **Next**

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Outline and Use a Methodology (Continued)

2. Observe, Listen, Read and Record

Whether you're observing an event with your own eyes, listening to a witness recount a story or gathering information from written documents and social media sources, how you **record** the information you receive will make the difference between a fair, unbiased collection effort and one that lacks credibility.

Answering the 5Ws+H consistently will help you avoid inaccuracies or the appearance of bias.

In Lesson One, you learned how to answer the **5Ws+H** (who, what, where, when, why and how) to ensure your reporting is considered credible. Approach each source with the intention of answering the 5Ws+H. While you probably will not ask your source these questions directly, think about gathering evidence by asking sources questions in a way that reflects the answers to the 5Ws+H.

> **Remember!**
> Including direct observation, first-hand accounts, and second-hand sources—such as witnesses—will strengthen your documentation and increase your credibility.

Back   **Next**

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Outline and Use a Methodology (Continued)

3. Check the Facts

Once you have collected information from a source and thanked them for their contribution, it is time to check the facts. Regardless of your confidence in the accuracy truthfulness of your source, **confirming each source's story is an important step in collecting information**. Here are a few simple steps to check a source's story:

 or

First, look through your notes of your interview with the source and mark with a symbol all of the statements that need confirmation. Statements that have been confirmed by at least three credible sources or *are generally accepted as fact* do not need to be checked further. (**For example**, if a witness is discussing the 2009 post-election protests, there are plenty of photos and video evidence that these protests took place; therefore, it is generally accepted that the protests were related to the electoral process, so this statement would not need to be fact-checked.)

Second, for each item you mark, confirm that it is possible this event occurred. Using your knowledge of the political and social environment in this country/region/city, is it possible or likely that the recent event or new report is true?

Back   **Next**

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Third, find two additional independent sources who can verify each statement. These sources can include credible media sources who reported on the event, witnesses and human rights reports, among other public and private sources. **The two sources should have obtained the information independentl**y (i.e. not from the same source).

> ### Be Careful with Internet-based Sources
>
> You may find an event mentioned on several websites, but this does not mean that each website is an independent source. The information might have been reposted from another site or may restate something found on another website. This does not constitute confirmation of a source. Find out where the information originated and assess its reliability.

In some cases, a fact cannot be verified by two additional sources. For example, if you're interviewing a witness who was the only person to observe a particular human rights abuse, there is no way to confirm that this incident took place. However, that does not mean the information should be discarded. Rather, record the information as "unverified."

Back   **Next**

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4. Watch out for Hoaxes!

If you are collecting information on the Internet and you have questions about credibility, a good first step is to check information on sites dedicated to revealing whether a certain piece of information is real or a scam. Two tools you can use are Hoax-Slayer (www.hoax-slayer.com/) and Truth or Fiction (www.truthorfiction.com).
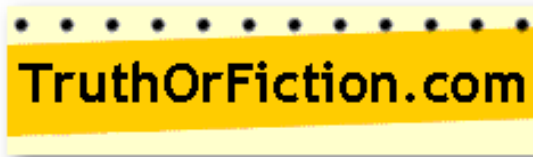
TruthOrFiction.com its this

Let's try it!

Go to the website www.truthorfiction.com and search for the execution of a Christian Pastor, Youcef Nadarkhani, in Iran in 2012.

What did you find?

The website shows an article that disproves the statement and clarifies that no execution took place.

Click in the following link to find the website's answer:

http://www.truthorfiction.com/google-result.htm?q=Execution%20of%20Christian%20Pastor%20Youcef%20Nadarkhani%20in%20Iran

Back   **Quiz**

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Quiz

1. Which of the following is a "public source"?
   a. An official court transcript
   b. A United Nations report on human rights in Iran
   c. A statement included in your report from a witness you have interviewed
   d. All of the above

2. When compiling background information on electoral rights in Iran, which of the following would be least useful?
   a. A human rights watch report on women's rights in Iran
   b. An individual who protested the 2009 Iran election outcome
   c. A government official from the elections committee
   d. An official election timeline

3. When recording information, which of the following questions should you answer?
   a. We, What, Whether, Will, Word, and How
   b. Who, What, Why, When, Where and How
   c. Do I agree with what my source is saying?
   d. All of the above

4. To check if information on the Internet is a hoax, which websites can you check?
   a. http://www.truthorfiction.com
   b. http://www.gmail.com
   c. http://www.ohchr.org
   d. http://www.pepsi.com

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LESSON 3: HOW TO COLLECT INFORMATION FROM EYEWITNESSES AND ONLINE MEDIA

The last lesson provided a broad overview of how to collect information from public sources. In this lesson, we will outline tips for collecting information from two specific public sources–eyewitnesses and media sources–that can prove difficult to identify and trust. By the end of this lesson, you will know how to:

- Identify and conduct an interview with an eyewitness;
- Select media sources that could be useful to your project; and,
- Assess the credibility of these media sources.

What is an eyewitness?

An eyewitness is someone who observes an incident or event in person and can testify to what happened. Eyewitnesses may describe the occurrence in their own words and/or provide direct evidence such as videos, audio clips or photos of the incident.

What is a media source?

Media sources can include newspapers, magazines, television, radio, online news services, social media sites and blogs. While these sources can be crucial in your collection efforts, it is important to assess their credibility.

Back   **Next**

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Interviewing Eyewitnesses

As someone collecting information, perhaps **the most valuable source is the eyewitness**. Because eyewitnesses saw an event/incident with their own eyes, rather than hearing it from a secondary source, their testimony can: substantiate claims that an incident did or did not happen, provide crucial details that may not have been reported yet, and offer a description which confirms or refutes alternate accounts, if any exist.

Bias?

Representativity?

Identifying Potential Witnesses

Diversity?

Recency?
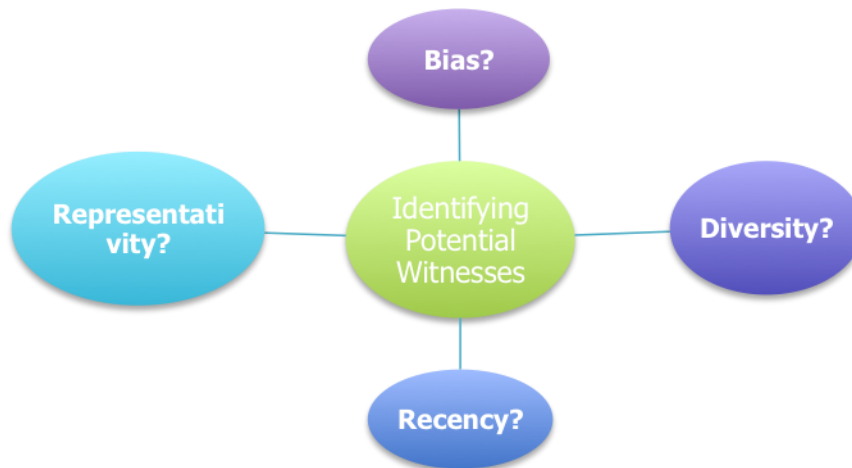
The first step in working with eyewitnesses is to **identify the type of eyewitness you would like to interview**. Click "Next" to go to the following page for some questions to keep in mind when identifying potential eyewitnesses:

Back   **Next**

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Interviewing Eyewitnesses (Continued)

Are my potential eyewitness(es) biased?
Avoid choosing people that will produce testimony motivated by their biases. (For example, interviewing a member of the security forces about whether his organization used unnecessary force on protesters.) This does not mean that biased witnesses cannot sometimes provide useful information about an event. If you think this is the case during an interview, always be conscious of the eyewitness's potential biases and state these in any reports you write based on this evidence.

Do the eyewitness(es) I'm considering have a diversity of opinion about the event/issue in question?
As people interpret events and issues differently, interviewing several eyewitnesses allows you to hear a wider range of opinions. The more people you speak with, the more diverse the viewpoints you can expect. When documenting a demonstration, for example, participants will view the event differently than those who watched it from the sidelines. Similarly, the testimony from the police stopping the demonstrators will most likely differ from that of the demonstrators.

How recently did the eyewitness(es) observe the event?
Although it is not always necessary—or possible—to interview witnesses immediately following an event, it does make documentation more credible as the events are fresher in their mind. However, you might be documenting events that happened several months or years ago. In these cases, you will still want to talk to witnesses and find other means for corroborating their testimonies.

Back   **Next**

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Interviewing Eyewitnesses (Continued)

Do I have representative testimonies?
More does not necessarily mean better. You might want to have a reasonable sample of testimonies to determine patterns. At the same time, there is some value to interviewing just one or a few eyewitnesses. For example, if dozens of protesters witnessed a human rights violation during a strike, you might not need to interview every striker because their version of the events are similar; however, you would want to interview any police or security forces present to record their version of the event.

Read the article linked below. How do you think the abovementioned questions would be answered?

(Source: http://www.greenleft.org.au/node/52259)

The writer interviewed protesters and people involved in the rally. These witnesses would be biased against the police who are trying to stop the demonstration. Since the author interviewed only demonstrators, the article lacks a diversity of opinions. In this case, the author would have gotten other points of views if she had interviewed bystanders and/or the police. In this case, the author is interviewing people as the demonstration happens, this means the testimonies are "fresh" and add to the article's credibility. The number of testimonies is enough to get a sense of what happened. However, as previously mentioned, the article would benefit from more representative testimonies of other people involved in the rally (police, bystanders, etc.).

Back   **Next**

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Dos and Don'ts when Interviewing an Eyewitness

Once you have selected one or more eyewitnesses, the next step is to set up a meeting – whether in person, via Skype or another call/instant messaging service, or via email. If you will be discussing sensitive topics, take all necessary precautions to ensure the safety of your source. See the Nabz-Iran Digital Security course for tips on developing safe communication channels. Once you have established a secure communications plan with your source, set up a meeting.

Here are a few dos and don'ts for the interview(s):

Dos	Don'ts
DO build trust with the interviewee. This can be done directly or through third parties who know them. Allow trusted third-parties to be present if your eyewitness wishes. It generates trust.	**DO NOT** meet in a place where your eyewitness does not feel comfortable or where you could be under surveillance.
DO identify yourself, explain the objective of the interview and explain that the interview is being done in confidence. Also, **explain** how the information of the interview will be used.	**DO NOT** allow security forces or police to attend interviews with eyewitnesses, as this may lead to self-censorship and/or present a danger to your source.
DO interview people in a way that allows you to **guarantee their privacy**, including interviewing them separate from other witnesses to the same event.	**DO NOT** make the people the center of attention during an interview. For instance, avoid group interviews where you are focusing on only one person.
DO avoid interviewing women and children in the presence of husbands or family members to avoid self-censorship.	**DO NOT** forget to corroborate direct testimony.

If it is possible, **without endangering yourself or your source**, visiting the scene of an incident with an eyewitness can provide context to a testimony by allowing you to visualize the event and corroborate facts or find inconsistencies. In addition, site visits can sometimes help eyewitnesses remember details of an event. However, **be careful** not to pressure the eyewitness to remember new details or change their story.

Listen: Click here to listen to a TED talk about the need to corroborate direct testimony and review witness testimony.

Back   **Next**

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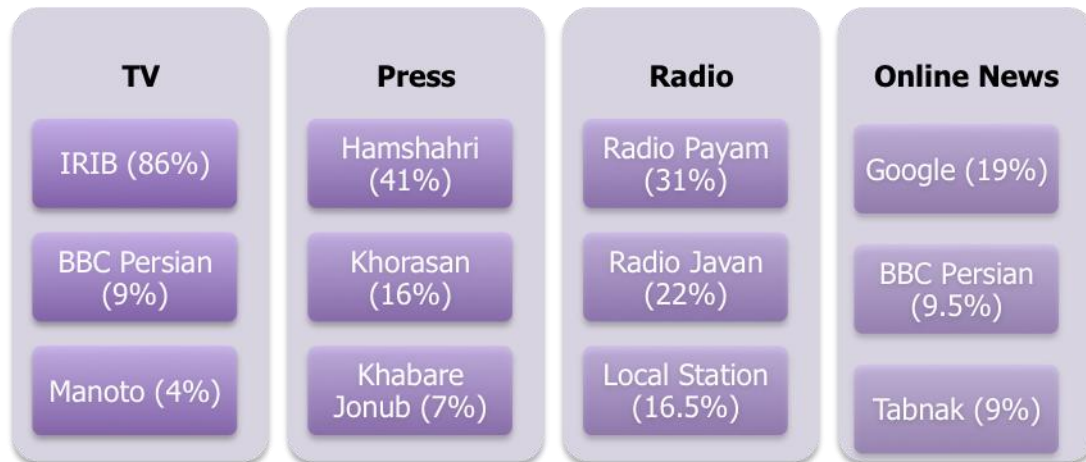Follows us on Twitter @nabziran

Collecting Information Using the Media

When collecting information from media or online sources, you can use traditional sources – including TV, radio, newspapers, magazines or online news sources – or nontraditional sources, such as social media and blogs. First, we will learn how to find and use traditional sources to collect information.

How do I identify traditional media sources?

Traditional media includes **radio, press, television and online news sources**. These can be local, regional, or international. The first thing you should do when deciding what media to use as a source is to look into the type of news the sources usually report on, whether they cover the issues you are interested in, and in what ways this is done.

Look at the following traditional sources where more than 80 percent of Iranians get their news. *Ask yourself*, would you access any of these to get information about human rights violations committed by state forces? Would you read them to know what the government's stance is on a particular issue? What comes to your mind when you think about these media outlets as sources for human rights information? What other type of information do you think this media can give you?

TV	Press	Radio	Online News
IRIB (86%)	Hamshahri (41%)	Radio Payam (31%)	Google (19%)
BBC Persian (9%)	Khorasan (16%)	Radio Javan (22%)	BBC Persian (9.5%)
Manoto (4%)	Khabare Jonub (7%)	Local Station (16.5%)	Tabnak (9%)

(Source: http://iranmediaresearch.org/en/research)

Back   **Next**

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Collecting Information Using the Media (continued)

Just because a source is popular does not mean it is credible. However, just because it is not 100 percent credible does not mean you should discard it from use. **You need to strike a balance.** Do not immediately dismiss a news story. Even if it is not a credible source, it is important to know what they are saying as part of the context for your documentation process. You need to find ways to determine what you can or cannot trust or use.

Click "next" to learn more on how to assess the credibility of a traditional media source.

Back   **Next**

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How Do I Assess the Credibility of Traditional Media?

To determine the credibility of the information you find in a traditional news source you need to look at three aspects:

- **Whether you can trust the message being given;**
- **Whether you can trust the individual that is delivering the message; and,**
- **Whether you can trust the overall credibility of the media outlet that published the story.**

Let's use an example: Imagine that an expert writes an article on the detention of a Baha'i citizen in Tehran. The expert talks generally about the arrest and the charges brought against the detainee, but does not go into detail discussing the legality of or reasons behind the arrest. The expert briefly describes the impact that the arrests had on others in the Baha'i community. You want to assess if you can use all or some of this information for your own documentation on the same topic.

Can you trust the news?	✓ You know from your background research that Baha'i are being arrested and the expert confirms this fact. ✓ You can trust this specific fact because you have confirmed it with other sources. ✓ **You decide** you can trust the content of the news, but cannot trust the reasons the expert is giving for the arrests, since you have talked to people that say it is motivated by their religious affiliation.

Back   **Next**

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How Do I Assess the Credibility of Traditional Media? (continued)

Can you trust expert?	✓ The expert is a renowned analyst in Tehran. You have read her/his writings that show she/he has an independent view on various political issues. ✓ You know from the writings that the expert is cautious and will avoid any direct mention of things that will go against the government's stance. ✓ **You trust the expert and decide** that you can trust some of the things the expert is saying in the interview, but know that there might be other things the expert is not saying for her/his own security.
Can you trust the publication?	✓ You know that this publication is a conservative news site. ✓ You know it is not state owned, but is associated with members of the Sepah (Army of the Guardians of the Islamic Revolution). ✓ **You decide** that you cannot entirely trust this source to publish unbiased information about the arrests, but take the information you trust as unverified and look into ways to corroborate it with other more reliable sources.

Back   **Next**

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How Do I Assess the Credibility of an Online Source?

Anyone can put any information on the Internet. **Sometimes information looks more credible at first glance than it does on closer inspection.** Whenever using information from the Internet in your investigations, ask, "Is this source credible?" There are a number of ways to assess a source's credibility, including asking the following questions:

Who runs the site?
Take a look at the site's homepage. Is there an "About" section for the site? If not, are there tabs pointing to information on the site's "Mission", "Background" or "Staff Biographies"? If these pages exist, they can sometimes reveal the author, owner or funder of the website, as well as provide insight into potential biases the source might have. **Answer the following questions**:

- Who owns and/or funds the media outlet? Is it a reputable group or organization? Is it a special interest group, such as a government or commercial entity? Is this information clearly stated on the website?
- Does it seem as if the personal or political views of the owner/funder may have influenced the site content?
- What type of news does this outlet usually report on?
- What is this news source known for? Google the website, and see what comes up. While you should not take Internet discussions as fact, any comments about the news source could inform your credibility assessment.
- Is it a wiki? A wiki is a website where any user can modify the information, and there is no way to verify authorship. Examples: Wikipedia, Wiktionary, and Wikiquotes.

Sometimes it can be helpful to look at the last three letters of a URL – its domain – to identify what type of website you are on. For example, .gov (government), .edu (educational), .com (commercial), .org (organization) or .net (network).

Note: If you cannot tell what group or individual developed the site, think twice before using the source.

Back   **Next**

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Who are the site authors?

If you are reading an article on the site, see if the **author's name** is listed on the webpage. What can you find out about this person from the Internet or experts with whom you are in contact? Does the author have other publications? Is the author known to have a particular bias? Does the author present relevant background and context? Does the article's content seem credible, given what you know about the political and social context discussed on the site? Does the author tell readers where she/he obtained the facts for the article? Be wary of details or statistics without sources.

Quality of the information

To determine the quality of the information on the website, first check how current the information is. Look for a "last updated" date, which is usually found at the bottom of each web page. Then, examine any links listed on the website or in news articles. What kind of sites and documentation do they link you to? Do these sources also seem credible? Here are some questions to ask about the links:

- Are the links well chosen, well organized, and/or evaluated/annotated?
- Do the links work?
- Do the links represent other viewpoints?
- Do the links (or absence of other viewpoints) indicate a bias?

Finally, once you have answered all of these questions, ask yourself: **Does it all add up?** Is this site truly the best place to find information about your topic?

Back   **Next**

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Other Tools to Assess Credibility of Online Sources

There are several other tools you can use to find out more information about a website. Two of these are **Alexa.com** and the **Way Back Machine**.

If you need help finding information such as how much traffic a site gets (its popularity), where its visitors live, contact/ownership information, or which other sites refer users to the source, consider using Alexa.com, a web information company that provides generally accepted analytical information about websites.

To use this tool, go to http://www.alexa.com/ and type the URL of the website you are trying to assess. Then, click "get details". Using this tool will show you information about the site's users, including what other sites they tend to visit. For example, if you notice that a site's users are looking at government websites, or alternatively, activist websites, this information can be used in your assessment of the website's credibility.

Another useful tool is the Way Back Machine. Type in any URL and the site will show you what the page looked like in the past.

Back   **Next**

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Test Your Knowledge!

Using the Way Back Machine, type in http://www.bbc.co.uk/persian/ and see if you can figure out what BBC Persian looked like on June 4, 2001. You will have to use the calendar to choose the year and date.
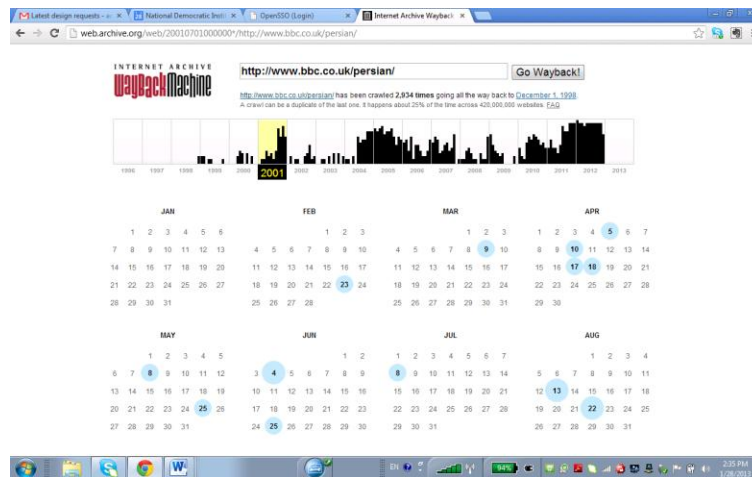
Click "next" to see if you got it right.

Back   **Next**

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Using the Way Back Machine, this is what BBC Persian looked like in 2001:

Back   Next

Social Media: Online "Word of Mouth"

On social media sites, users discuss all sorts of topics including what they have read, heard from friends, and observed with their own eyes. Social media sites can be a great tool for collecting information on human rights violations and other occurrences. They also provide a more democratic platform than traditional media to discuss issues. The former allows for a number of simultaneous voices, while the latter usually focuses on one story at a time. In this lesson, we will look at two of the biggest social media sites – Facebook and Twitter.

Facebook: A Useful Tool or a Potential Risk?
While you can use Facebook to stay in touch with friends and discuss the latest movies and music online, it can also be a useful tool for collecting first and second-hand information on social and political topics. In this capacity, Facebook's strengths are that it allows you to:
- Use comments posted by friends and other users to do background research on a topic;
- Develop contacts that allow you to monitor specific issues or places, even if you cannot be there yourself; and,
- Join Facebook groups related to the issues that you want to monitor.

For example, check out the Facebook page of Nabz-Iran. This page gives you information about human rights abuses in Iran. Users can also share news, events, eyewitness accounts, opinions, and other information about civil and political rights, women right, and personal rights.

Click "next" to see the some of the downsides of using Facebook and its role during the 2009 elections.

Back   **Next**

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Facebook: A Useful Tool or a Potential Risk? (continued)

While Facebook can be useful for collecting information, there are some **downsides** to using the social media site.

Downsides

Some governments block Facebook at times of political significance or all the time to stem the flow of information and prevent citizens from organizing online.

Witnesses using Facebook to spread information about an event may be at risk if the government sees what they are posting.

The content, information and applications are hosted and maintained by Facebook and thus not under the control of providers or users.

There is a risk of receiving viruses and other malicious data through Facebook

If Facebook is your only source of information, most of your information will come from individuals in urban areas with high Internet penetration . You may lack representation from people who don't use it or don't have Internet access.

Back   **Next**

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Facebook and the 2009 Elections

Iran unblocked Facebook for the first time in January 2009, but reinstituted the ban during three key campaign days in May after Iranian authorities realized opposition candidates were using the site to rally support. The page of candidate Mir Hossein Mousavi, as of February 2013, had 8,288 supporters.

How were people able to look at Facebook despite the ban? People used VPNs, and IP blocking programs such as TOR. You will learn about these circumventing tools in Lesson 5.

Back   **Next**

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Twitter as a tool for collecting information

Twitter has a myriad of uses limited only by the 140 characters you can write at a time. You can use it to share your mood or thoughts, or to have conversations about news, current events, work or personal topics. Twitter can also be used to collect or disseminate information about events in real-time. Twitter can be a powerful tool for collecting information to document or report on human rights abuses; some people call this "*twittermining.*" Nonetheless, be mindful that Twitter can also be used to misinform or create rumors. **You still need to verify tweets by using other sources!**

The first step in using Twitter as a tool for collecting and/or disseminating information is to understand the basics of Twitter syntax:

@username – Reply.	• A "tweet" that starts with an @ sign and then lists a username is a reply to that user.
#tag – Hashtag	• Hash immediately followed by a word or expression (known as a tag, hence the term "hashtag") is a convention to add context to the tweets. This means that you can search #iranelection, and you will see all of the Tweets that that have mentioned this topic.

Back   **Next**

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Twitter as a tool for collecting information (continued)

If you have a Twitter account, here are some guidelines for collecting information through tweets:

ASK: Occasionally ask questions to your Twitter followers. It encourages participation from followers and can often get you information you need. Keep these questions relevant to your followers, allow them to discuss their responses, and acknowledge people if they respond. If possible, explain why you're asking the questions and what you're going to do based on their answers – if users know their actions will have an **impact**, they will be more likely to answer.

Whether you have a twitter account or not, you can also use Twitter to **SEARCH** topics, organizations/companies, data, people, and opinions. For example, you can use publicly accessible data – including other users' tweets – to find out about users' interests, affiliations, and opinions. Searching Twitter can also help you find people who might be interested in the issues you are documenting while alerting you to users who might have biases that would inform their responses.

Back   **Next**

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Twitter as a tool for collecting information (continued)

The following are a list of tools that you can use to search different issues in Twitter:

General search.	Twitter Search and TweetScan allows you to search for Twitter data, tags and old conversations.
Twitter Venn.	This tool allows you to illustrate the relationship between various topics using Venn diagrams
Tag search.	#hashtags gives you a graphical representation of trends for a specific tag.
Keyword search.	Monitter.com allows you to monitor up to three keywords simultaneously and see trends about specific topics.
Popular URL search.	Twitt(url)y organizes URLs by the frequency they're mentioned in tweets. The more people talk about a URL, the higher it ranks in Twitt(url)y.

Be Careful, there are downsides to using Twitter:

- People may try to manipulate you into arriving at their conclusions by feeding you misinformation;
- Tweets can be modified as they are retweeted affecting the information's reliability;
- Twitter automatically sets your location. If you want to hide your location you need to change your settings; and,
- Twitter can remove tweets and block tweets on a country-by-country basis.

But do not panic, there are tweets that you can trust! Check out Nabz-Iran's twitter feed.

Back   **Next**

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Twitter Use During the 2009 Iranian Elections

Between June 7 and June 25, 2009, the Web Ecology Project recorded 2,204,166 tweets about the presidential election in Iran. These were its main findings:

- At least 479,780 users contributed to the conversation about the election;
- Twitter was also used to spread information about the protests. Using hashtags such as #iranelection, #iran, and #neda, Twitter users supplied a steady stream of information about events occurring in Iran;
- The loudest users were not always the most influential on Twitter; and,
- Most tweets originated from outside Iran.

Click here for more analysis of Twitter usage during the 2009 Elections.

Back   **Next**

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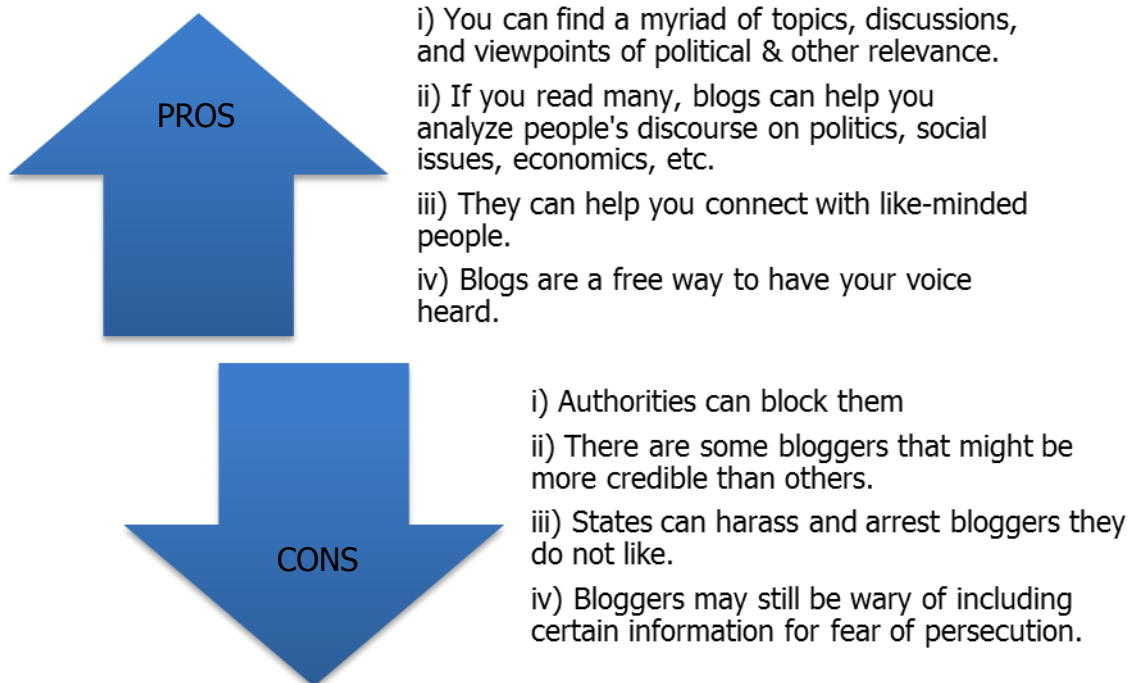www.nabz-iran.com
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Blogs

What Are They?

Similar to social media sites, blogs allow users to post text, video, audio, still images, and other types of digital content. Blog content is usually ordered chronologically. Users can create blogs on a number of different content management systems such as: WordPress, blogger, blog.com, TyPad Micro, Tumblr, among others.

Like social media sites, blogs can provide valuable information about events on the ground, but they can also be means to misinform. Here are some pros and cons of using blogs to collect information.

PROS

i) You can find a myriad of topics, discussions, and viewpoints of political & other relevance.

ii) If you read many, blogs can help you analyze people's discourse on politics, social issues, economics, etc.

iii) They can help you connect with like-minded people.

iv) Blogs are a free way to have your voice heard.

CONS

i) Authorities can block them

ii) There are some bloggers that might be more credible than others.

iii) States can harass and arrest bloggers they do not like.

iv) Bloggers may still be wary of including certain information for fear of persecution.

Back   **Next**

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Blogs (continued)

Technorati allows you to track conversations happening in blogs. It also shows you the top blogs, content, and tags. Go to the Technorati.com page and search for blogs on Iran.

On the top of the website you can search blogs and posts. What did you get when you searched for Iran? In our last search on February 2013 we found **1682 blogs related to Iran**. How many did you find in your search?

Back   **Next**

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Using Search Engines to Collect Information

Information Management Tools

These days, most websites allow users to sign up for periodic emails or RSS feeds. These services can speed up your collection efforts. Instead of actively searching for information, you can automate the process by receiving regular updates on topics of interest to you. You can also monitor the blogosphere to see what people are writing about.

How can I use these tools?

1. First, choose a tool (such as Google Alerts: www.googleguide.com/alerts.html)
2. Next, think about what information you want to monitor. Is there a particular news site or blog that you find you are always searching? Do you want to see everything written about a certain topic, such as "human rights in Iran"?
3. Enter a search term to create an alert for that topic or site.
4. Type the e-mail where you want information sent.
5. You can also sign up for online newsletters published by institutions, organizations or companies to share information about a topic.
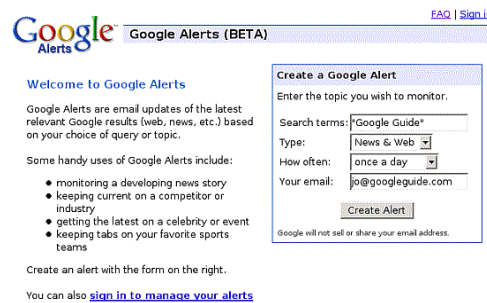
What about RSS feeds?

RSS stands for Really Simple Syndication which is a system for standardizing and automating news updates from sites or particular sections of sites based on a user's preferences. Instead of having to search the web for information, this allows you to subscribe to receive the information directly on your page avoiding mailbox overload and making diffusion easier. To manage your RSS feeds, use a service like Google Reader.

Back   **Quiz**

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QUIZ

1. Which of the following is the best way to act if you are interviewing witnesses?
   A. Tell them to meet in the place where the facts occurred
   B. Interview them publicly in a group with the other witnesses
   C. Talk to them in private.
   D. None of the above

2. Which of the following should you pay attention to in order to determine the credibility of a website?
   A. The author of the website
   B. Who is acting as a sponsor for the website
   C. The date on the website
   D. A & B
   E. All of the above

3. The information posted on Facebook belongs to you and no one else.
   A. True
   B. False

4. Web alerts allow you to collect information without having to visit individual pages.
   A. True
   B. False

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Lesson 4: Collecting Audio, Video, and Picture Evidence

When collecting information, always keep in mind your audience. Is the information you are collecting relevant to them? Will it stimulate them? How do they like to receive information? By considering these questions ahead of time, you can strategize about how you will conduct your collection efforts. In particular, this lesson will outline two methods – audio and video collection – that can enhance the presentation of your information.

While you can collect information in one way (for instance, through written documents or testimonies), you can often repackage that same information in a more stimulating presentation (for example, by developing a documentary). **Using audio and visual tools during the collection process allows you to repackage information with greater ease and in a more engaging fashion.** By the end of this lesson, you will know:

1. How to collect information using audio/video recordings and images; and,
2. How to share and utilize audio/video recordings and images in your work.

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Using Audio, Video and Picture-Based Evidence: Planning Ahead

If you are going to collect evidence using audio or visual tools, plan ahead by taking a few simple steps. Completing these steps in advance will greatly improve the quality of your finished product. Here are a few preliminary questions to get started:

What problem are you addressing?
- Do you want to collect information about the detention of activists? The harassment of journalists? Pick an issue and stick with it – this will give your audio or video project a clear focus

What is your objective?
- Define the central goal of your video or audio recording. What do you want to achieve with this video (for advocacy, as an academic study?) Do you want it to be on the news or on websites or blogs?

Who is your target audience?
- Think about who you are trying to reach. What are their interests? Ask yourself how do they receive information (radio, TV, social media sites)? How can you leverage them to fulfill your objective?

What is your angle?
- Every issue can be seen from multiple angles – pick one to stay focused. Think about which angle would resonate most with your target audience.

Back   **Next**

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Using Audio, Video and Picture-Based Evidence: Planning Ahead (continued)

Let's try answering these questions with an example:

Imagine you decide to address the problem of detained activists in Iran. Your objective is to show to the audience that these activists have been arbitrarily detained. You want to target people in Tehran, since they are in the city jail. One angle could be to interview the families and friends of these activists about their detentions. Another angle could be to look through court documents, reporting on the types of criminal charges doled out to the political activists.

Don't forget: *Once you have selected a problem to focus on and begun developing your video or audio project, remember to do the necessary background research, such as reading articles about your topic, listening to past recording, and talking to experts.*

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Recording Video Clips

While you probably know how to use a video camera, you might not know some of the best practices journalists use to produce quality video recordings. Following these simple guidelines can mean the difference between an amateur video and a professional-quality recording.

Guideline	Strategy
Record the date & time	- Include the date and time on the video itself (written in text over the video). - State the date and time while you're discussing your topic. - Film a newspaper, watch or mobile phone that explains the "when" to your audience. - Keep track of your shots with specific time and location to help you to easily save and edit your media.
Record the location	- Film a landmark or street sign. - Explain where you are filming through narration.
Establish Context	- Narrate essential information, including the 5Ws+H (see earlier lessons for explanation of this crucial concept). - Explain your issue and angle.
Record the Details	- Capture relevant details from a scene that explains what is happening, who is present, etc. - Narrate your video to explain context and add noteworthy facts. - Capturing people's faces can be a positive addition to a video, but can place subjects in danger—make sure your video recording will not undermine the safety of these individuals.
Film with Intention	- Try to keep the video steady – use slow camera movement to allow your audience time to understand a given scene, and to make sure you don't make your audience dizzy. - Get as close as possible to the scene while maintaining your safety. - Record each scene for at least ten seconds for editing purposes.

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Recording Video Clips Using Mobile Phones

While video cameras provide the most high quality footage, sometimes it is safer or more feasible to film with your mobile phone. If that's the case for you, then here are a few tips to make the most of your mobile filming experience:

Basic Techniques
- Know your device: Try filming ahead of time to practice.
- Keep your hands steady and pan slowly – focus on filming.

Settings
- Choose the highest quality setting your phone can handle. Each phone is different, so practice with it to determine how you can maximize your quality and ensure the phone has the needed memory capacity to capture an event.
- Set your settings to save your media clip to a memory card, not your phone (Buy a large memory card!).

Content
- Film short videos.
- Focus on key actors and events.
- As best you can, capture the who, what, where, when and why.
- If it is safe, get in close. Your image and audio will be better.
- Conduct interviews with witnesses to get context of what is happening.
- Record yourself in the moment describing what happened and as many details as possible from where you are at. Include the date and time, as well as what you are feeling.

Back   **Next**

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Recording Audio Clips

If your target audience listens to the radio, consider developing audio recordings or clips instead of or in addition to video recordings. In deciding whether to record using video or audio, consider the type of information you are collecting. Is it fit for an audio project? Are there sounds that evoke the situation you are trying to convey? For example, people chanting at a protest or a parent giving a heartfelt description of her son's court case may work well as audio (as opposed to video) recordings.

Here are a few tips for recording quality audio clips:

- Use an external microphone if possible and move closer to the source when needed.

- Choose a quiet place to record interviews. Ideal places include small interior spaces with curtains and few windows. Avoid places where traffic and other urban sounds might disrupt your recording. To avoid sound waves, do not stand near walls or glass when recording audio clips.

- When interviewing someone, place the microphone at a diagonal angle near the person's mouth. To avoid popping noises, do not place the recorder directly in front of their mouths.

- Always check the recording device several times to make sure your settings have not changed.

- Record ambient sound to use later when editing. You want to make sure people hear what you hear. Close your eyes…what do you think about when you hear what you have recorded?

Note: Spend most of your time preparing (checking your recording devices, batteries, the temperature in the room, etc.) Once you are recording, it might be too late to make changes!

Back   **Next**

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Recording Audio Clips (continued)

Listen to the following audio recording (podcast) about the 2009 demonstrations:
http://www.hrw.org/audio/2009/06/19/eyes-iran-rights-watch-11

Notice how the recording starts with the ambient sound of protests in the background while the presenter explains the problem. The recording continues with an interview with a rights activist. If you listen closely you can hear that the interview was done in a quiet place. Notice how the presenter then compares the demonstrations in Iran to Tiananmen. This is a way to place the demonstrations in a similar context that the audience will recognize.

Back   **Next**

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Using Photographs to Tell a Story

Photographs can engage and stimulate people in a way that words cannot. Pictures allow us to visualize what it would be like to witness an event. In essence, they bring us closer to the story. They can serve to humanize issues. When we see images of people suffering, experiencing joy or being annoyed, we often place ourselves in their shoes. This allows us to emphasize with the subject.

When collecting photographic evidence about an event, imagine that you are gathering pieces of a story. Look back at the questions you answered in the "planning ahead" section. What story do you want to tell? What do you want to draw attention to with these photographs? What is your angle on the story?

The type of photographs will depend on the topic you have chosen. Will you tell your story through photographs of an event, a location, crowds of people, individual portraits highlighting emotional expressions, or pictures of actions or movement?

Each story can be told multiple ways with different types of photographs – decide which works best for your topic and angle, and remember your goals.

> Photojournalists use photos to tell stories about the news. Their goal is to capture images that communicate a narrative and evoke feelings about a story. Watch this video about the power of photojournalism:
>
> http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XONXeUndHl8&feature=related
>
> Can you use the techniques discussed in the video to tell your story?

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Using Photographs to Tell a Story (continued)

You can tell a story through photographs about a specific event, such as a demonstration or a trial. You can also tell a story about a broader topic. Look at the photo essay "The Unfinished Revolution." The essay shows how women around the world have fought for women's rights by demonstrating, writing, providing legal assistance, using the social media for activism, and telling their stories, among others. By the end of the essay you have an idea of the different issues that women have had to fight for and an image of those who have fought for them.

Remember: By the time you have organized your photos, they should tell the story from start to finish. Use short captions to help you achieve your goal.

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The **Three Elements that make a great photograph**: Light, Composition, Moment.

Lighting matters: Pay attention to your light source, whether it is artificial light, the sun or the moon. Watch the angle that you are using and think about what time of day would serve as the best lighting for your pictures.

Composition: Photographers use the rule of thirds to make they are positioning their subject matter effectively. To this rule, overlay a grid of equal sections on your camera frame – split the vertical space into three parts the horizontal space into parts. The intersection points where the eye tends to go so it is useful to place your subject on one of those points. often sure use nine and three are first,
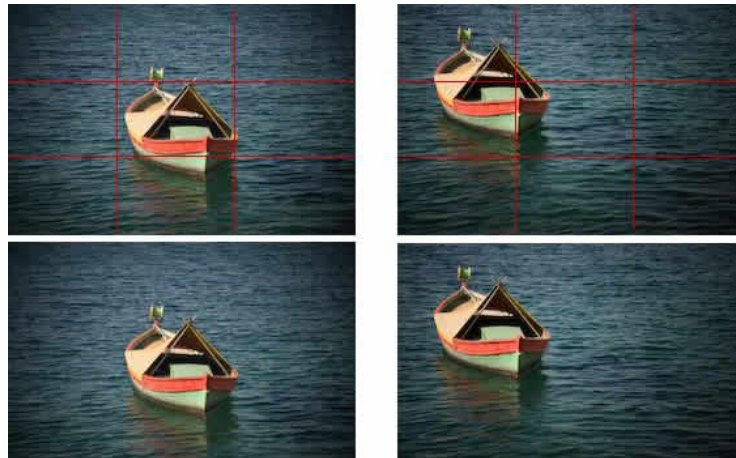

Figure 1 http://www.vesnakozelj.com/photography/composition-rule-of-thirds

Back

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Elements that make a great photograph (continued)

Perspective: Create visual impact by moving the camera left, right, above, and below. When you are beneath the subject it often makes it appear more powerful to the viewer. When you are above the subject it makes it appear smaller.

Figure 2 http://madhatterart.co.uk/photography/perspective-photography-playing-vision/

Back   **Next**

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Safety Tips

Now that you have learned the basics of how to use video, audio and photographs to capture information about your chosen topic, let us go over some safety tips. It is very important to think ahead to ensure the safety of those you are filming, recording, or photographing. Each time you decide to collect information using these methods, it is essential to develop **a safety and security plan**. This plan should outline a step-by-step process for how you will collect this information, an assessment of possible risks to you and to your subjects, and a plan for how you will react to each of these risks.

Protecting the identity of your subjects during interviews: Often people you interview may not want their names or faces publicized. The information they are revealing may be sensitive and publicizing their identity may put them in danger. If this is the case with an individual you are interviewing, there are many ways you can conceal your subject's identity, including:

- Filming the subject's hands instead of his/her face when they speak (but make sure not to film any identifiable marks such as tattoos or scars);
- Having the subject wrap his/her face in a scarf;
- Adjusting the focus of your lens to obscure and blur the image;
- Showing an outline of the person, blacking out their features; and,
- Having the subject answer interview questions off camera/recorder – someone else can read the transcript of their interview so that the subject's voice is not identifiable

> **For more on how to blur faces on video clips, see the following two clips:**
>
> Using the blur tool on Macintosh computers:
> http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nO-kDGiMmZU&feature=youtu.be
>
> Using the YouTube blur tool:
> http://blog.witness.org/2012/08/tips-for-activists-using-the-youtube-face-blur-tool/

If you are interviewing someone at their own home or if they do not want their location disclosed, make sure you do not capture any landmarks or other identifiable buildings that are traceable.

Back   **Next**

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Safety Tips (continued)

Make a Copy: After you record an audio or video clip or use a digital camera, remove the media card and give it to friend for safe keeping or hide it in a safe place. Replace with an empty card – this way, if your device is confiscated, you will still have access to some of your information.

Informed Consent: Always explain how you plan to use the information you are collecting from your subjects. The interviewee should know if the footage will be shared, and with whom. Make sure you get written or verbal consent BEFORE recording, filming or photographing people.

Back   **Next**

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Sharing: How to Distribute

Once you have done your background research and collected your information through interviews, video, and/or audio recording, it is time to decide how you will share it!

Your information can be disseminated through a number of distribution channels. You can use social media sites, blogs, YouTube or Vimeo, and websites, such as Nabz-Iran. In this section we will focus on how you can use some of these existing Internet tools to send out your message to the world.

Nabz-Iran

Nabz Iran is based on crowd sourcing similar to Ushahidi. Reports of human rights violations are displayed on a map of Iran, indicating the location where the violations took place.

Nabz-Iran provides you with the option to report and share your collected information anonymously through the website. Just go to the website and click on **"submit a report."** The report form will guide you through the process of submitting your information. If you have video or audio, you can add that as well.

> Launched in January 2008 in response to the post-election violence in Kenya, Ushahidi allows users with mobile phones to send SMS text message reports to a local Ushahidi number. The message is then passed through an SMS gateway (in this case, the open source FrontlineSMS) to the Ushahidi software installed on an Internet server. The Ushahidi web interface maps the reported incidents of violence through a Google Map application.

As you choose a title and write-up the description for your report remember what you have learned. Choose a title that summarizes the issue you documented. For example, if you collected information about the arbitrary detention of a Christian cleric, you might want to include that in your title.

Answer the 5Ws in the description. This way you guarantee that you cover the basic facts and let people know what you found out.

Back   **Next**

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YouTube and Vimeo

YouTube and Vimeo are free video sharing websites that you can use to post your video recordings. You can upload videos saved on your computer or directly from your mobile phone. You can share your video with everyone or use private sharing so that you can control who watches it. As always, choose a relevant title and description. These will be shown on the YouTube or Vimeo websites and will allow for people to better search for your video!

To get you started, here is a technical comparison between the two websites:

Features	You Tube	Vimeo
Max File Size	1GB	500 MB/week
Time Limit	10 minutes	No Limit
Channel Creation	✓	✓
Private and Public Sharing	✓	✓
Embedded Codes to add to websites.	✓	✓
Comment Features to allow or disallow comments	✓	✓
Description and Rating	✓	✓
Tag Words	✓	✓
RSS Feeds	✓	✓
Supported Files	avi-mov-wmv-mpg	avi-mov-wmv-mpg-asf-Flash

Source: http://video-share-review.toptenreviews.com/

Technical differences aside, when choosing a website to upload your videos think about: the range of your audience and whether they access that website; the education tools available to you; ease of use for you and those who will watch your submissions; and the help and support offered by the platform.

On both websites, videos can be removed if there content is tagged and deemed inappropriate by other users or if a government requires it to enforce their national law.

Back   **Next**

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WikiLeaks

[WikiLeaks](#) is a not-for-profit media organization. It provides a **secure and anonymous way for sources to leak information** by receiving files through an electronic anonymous drop box. This is similar to leaving information inside an unmarked envelope in someone's mailbox. The system is designed to conceal information about the source of the posted materials.

If you want to send information to WikiLeaks, go through the following steps:

- **Assess your information:** WikiLeaks **will accept** classified, censored, or otherwise restricted material of political, diplomatic, historical or ethical significance. WikiLeaks **will NOT accept** rumor, opinion, or documentation or material that is already publicly available.
- **Get Advice from the experts:** If you are not sure about the accuracy of your information or whether you should upload it or not, have an anonymous chat with the WikiLeaks people at https://chat.wikileaks.org/
- **Prepare your documents:** Make sure you erase any identifiable information to avoid that the files is traced back to you.
- **Submit:** Go to the WikiLeaks website, click on "Submit Documents" and follow instructions. You can also use Tor to submit the document. Follow the prompts.

Flickr

If you want to share pictures taken during or after your documentation process, you can use Flickr. You can upload photos to the website through a computer or directly from your mobile camera. Immediate posting means you can share your pictures before they make it on any media outlet. Flickr allows people to comment on your photos and add descriptive tags. If you blog, Flickr enables you to post photos directly and instantly to your blog. Flickr includes a number of community guidelines to help you understand what you can and cannot do on Flickr. Read them here: http://www.flickr.com/help/guidelines/

After uploading your pictures, you can easily share them on Facebook, Twitter, e-mail, your blog and more. If you would rather restrict the viewers, you can use the privacy settings to share the photos with only those people you want.

Back   **Next**

File Sharing Platforms

If you are concerned that YouTube and Flickr are too well-known and people might be monitoring them, or you just want to try something new, you can use platforms like 4shared and Dropbox to load online and allow people to easily search and access your information. Both of these platforms have a desktop function that makes it easy to just drag and drop information into your folders.

If you want the information available to the world, both platforms can create collections of files that are searchable on Google. They create a public link that can be used by any recipient or discovered in a search engine. They include a view-only preview for many document and media types.

Storage limits on both sites prevent unlimited free usage. If you are using Dropbox for free you only get 2GB of storage. 4Share allows 15GB of free storage. Look at both of their websites to find out which one is the best fit for you.

Back   **Quiz**

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QUIZ

1. Which of the following is the best way to ensure a well-recorded audio clip?
   A. Record at least one meter away from your subject.
   B. Place the microphone straight in front of their mouth.
   C. Use an external microphone
   D. Do not record ambient sound.

2. Which of the following are safety measures that you can take when recording events:
   A. Come up with a security plan before you record
   B. Do not draw attention
   C. Do not identify the people you are recording.
   D. Make a copy of your recording.
   E. All of the above

3. Vimeo can be used to create your own channel and upload documents.
   A. True
   B. False

4. You can use a website like Nabz Iran to report incidences of human rights violations that you have documented.
   A. True
   B. False

5. If you want to share a written report you drafted online, which of the following platforms would you use:
   A. 4shared
   B. Dropbox
   C. Blog
   D. All of the above
   E. None of the above

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LESSON 5: NAVIGATING THE COLLECTION PROCESS IN CHALLENGING ENVIRONMENTS

Depending on your circumstances, you may be operating in an environment where collecting certain types of information is challenging or even dangerous. If this is the case, you will want to have a good understanding of what risks you face and how to respond to safety threats.

By the time you have finished this lesson, you will be able to:

4. Conduct a risk assessment; and,
5. Take safety precautions to protect yourself and your contacts.

Security threats differ based on context. A risk assessment will help you pinpoint the risks in your particular context. You will answer questions such as:

✓ How controversial is the issue you are researching in your country/city/town?
✓ Have others collected information about similar topics in the past and what risks did they face?
✓ Who are the key individuals and groups that might pose a threat to you or your sources during collection efforts?
✓ How could your collection efforts endanger you and/or your sources?
✓ What safety precautions can you take to protect communications with your sources?

A good analysis of your context enables informed security decisions and keeps you and your sources safe.

Back   **Next**

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How do you analyze context?

The **first** step in any risk assessment is to **analyze the context** in which you are operating. Start by asking yourself some questions about your collection project. What are the most important issues at stake in your documentation process? Who are the key figures and why are they interested in these issues? How might your work affect these actors, both negatively and positively? Is the environment you are operating in safe enough to carry out the work you have proposed? Has anyone carried out any similar activities in the past? How did local/national authorities or others respond to previous work on these issues? How will you react if targeted by any of these actors?

By asking yourself these questions, you can start to gain an understanding of the environment you are operating in, which will allow you to identify precautionary measures to take either in advance of or during your collection efforts.
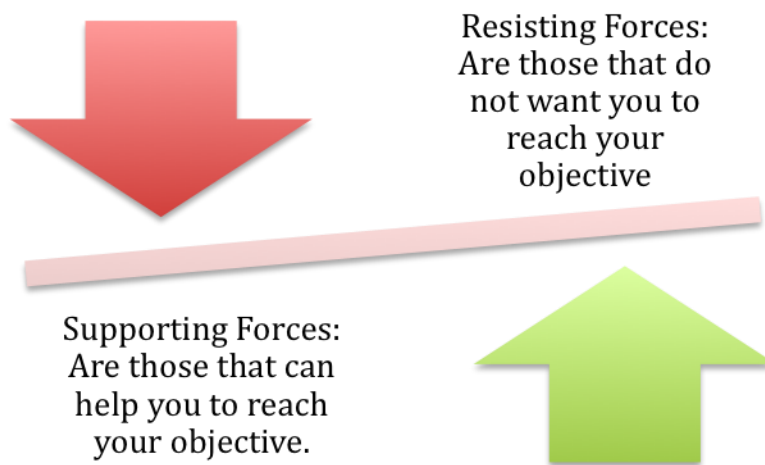
Back   **Next**

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How do you analyze context? (continued)

Force-Field Analysis

A **force-field analysis** can be a helpful tool for analyzing your operating environment and visualizing a risk assessment. Using this method, you can identify how key figures might help or hinder you in achieving your documentation objectives. To conduct a force-field analysis, first **identify your objectives**. Why do you want to collect this type of information and what do you plan to do with it? Based on the political and social sensitivities of your topic, **make a list of supporting and resisting forces**. Then write a list of security problems that might arise from the resisting forces. Finally, write down **ways you can leverage your supporting forces** to reduce or eliminate risk.

Resisting Forces:
Are those that do
not want you to
reach your
objective

Supporting Forces:
Are those that can
help you to reach
your objective.

Back   **Next**

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Force-Field Analysis (continued)

Identify your objective: Imagine your objective in this documentation process is to find information about women's access to maternal health services in Tehran. You want to collect information to prove that there has been an increase in health issues and maternal mortality.

Who are your supporting forces for this case?
- ❖ A doctor in a health clinic who is willing to support your documentation because she is concerned about women and children's deaths.
- ❖ A women's organization has been looking into similar issues and sees this as an opportunity to publish something without becoming public themselves.
- ❖ Some women who have had health concerns during childbirth support the report because they want to make other future mothers are aware of the risks and believe speaking out may push the government toward policy changes.
- ❖ An international NGO is interested in this study as a follow up to the work they are already doing on this topic.

Who do you think would be the resisting forces?
- ❖ The directors of the clinics do not want to provide any information because they fear contradicting the government's policies.
- ❖ The Ministry of Health does not want to see a report in the public sphere that states the lack of support to health facilities is causing an increase in maternal mortality.
- ❖ Some of the women do not want to speak out for fear of reprisals or because they believe speaking out will not change health policies.
- ❖ Religious leaders do not want to increase discussion of maternal mortality in the public realm.

Back   **Next**

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Force-Field Analysis (continued)

Security problems that you might face from resisting forces:

- ❖ The women you interview might be vulnerable to accusations of speaking out against the state.
- ❖ When trying to conduct interviews with women who experienced birthing complications, you may have difficulty accessing the clinics or encounter intimidation and resistance from local officials.
- ❖ After compiling the information, you might be censored by state or religious leaders who are interested in stopping publication.

How can you leverage your supporting forces?

- ❖ You can use the doctor who supports your effort to gain access to clinics without people interfering in the interviews or even knowing you are conducting research.
- ❖ You can find women through the women's organization who are willing to talk to you. They can provide a safe space for interviews to take place without raising suspicion.
- ❖ The international organization might be willing to publish the information, while you remain anonymous, to avoid placing you in additional danger.

Back   **Next**

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Threats, Vulnerability and Capacities

The level of risk you face will depend on the location and the type of information you are collecting. When conducting a risk assessment, consider three categories: threats, vulnerabilities, and capacities.

Threats: Think about how you could be affected negatively when carrying out your work. Is there a possibility you could lose your job, damage your reputation, loose contacts and access to people or places, be detained, injured or killed or have the people you work with negatively impacted as a result of your project? Might an individual or an institution try to impede your efforts?

> *Example: Due to the sensitive nature of my work, security forces have threatened to raid my office and take me to jail.*

Vulnerabilities: Based on your particular context, you may be more or less vulnerable to certain types of threats. Vulnerability is relative and can change over time. In many cases, you can take steps to render yourself less vulnerable.

> *Example: If you are documenting an event alone, at night and in a remote location, you are more vulnerable than if you are documenting an event during the day with other people around.*

Back   **Next**

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Threats, Vulnerability and Capacities (continued)

Capacities: When you have a clear understanding of your threats and vulnerabilities, consider your capacities – the resources you have and can use to achieve a reasonable level of security. The more capacities you have, the less risk. Capacities can include relationships and connections, expertise, secure communication channels and safe refuge.

Example: My capacities are that I have a network of 5-10 individuals that informs me of political events in the city, I have expertise on how to use encryption to secure my communications, and I am trained in security and legal issues.

$$\text{Risk} = \frac{\text{Threats} \quad x \quad \text{Vulnerabilities}}{\text{Capacity}}$$

Once you have a list for each category, **remain conscious** of your threats, **reduce** your vulnerabilities, and **build on** your capacities. You will always face some degree of risk, but you can always take steps to better protect yourself.

**Note: Being a woman is never a vulnerability.
It might place you in a vulnerable situation at a
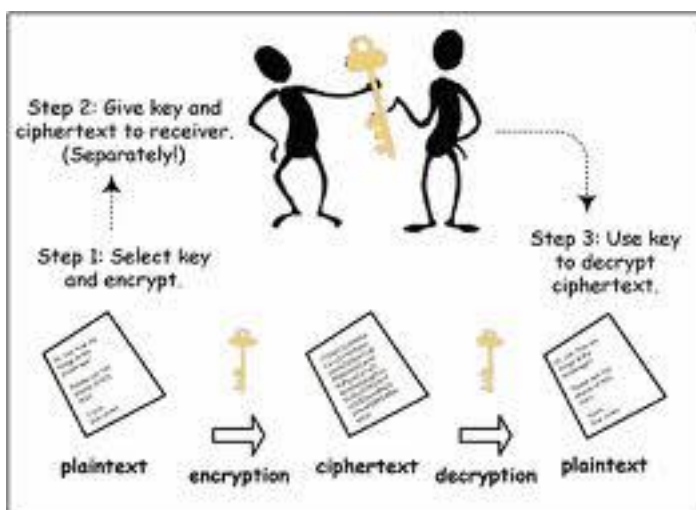given time or place, but it is not *per se* a vulnerability**

Back   **Next**

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Protecting Your Communications

How to Protect your Files: Encryption

Encrypting your files is like placing them in a safe. Only people that have the key to the can access your files. You can number of tools to create a "safe" for your communications, including [TrueCrypt](#). Use this program to encrypt part of your computer's hard drive or flash

Make sure your files are encrypted before you let anyone else handle your computer; put your computer to   sleep; walk away from your computer for a period of time; or, insert an untrusted USB memory stick or other external storage device into your computer.

safe
use a
virtual

drive.

Back   **Next**

Protecting Your Communications (continued)

Improve Phone Safety
What are the dangers of using a mobile phone?

a. Your phone may give out information about your location.
b. If someone gains access to your phone, they have unlimited access to texts, calls, and the phone numbers of your contacts. They can easily pretend to be you and pose a danger to your contacts.
c. Your phone stores all sorts of data that is difficult to hide such as call history, text messages (sent and received), address book information, photos, video clips and text files.
d. Operating systems are custom-made for networks. They can include hidden monitoring tools.
e. Mobile networks are commercial entities that can be under government's control.

How can I use my phone safely?

a. Have a password, keep it secret and change the factory settings.
b. Keep it with you at all times.
c. Don't carry sensitive information in your phone. If you do, save it to a Sim card and not to the phone itself. Take out the Sim card and hide it elsewhere if you feel unsafe or are in a vulnerable location.
d. Use trusted repair shops.
e. Turn it off and take out the battery to avoid GPS tracking.
f. Create a code system if you are texting potentially vulnerable contacts.
g. Delete your history log.

Back   **Next**

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How Do I Circumvent Censorship?
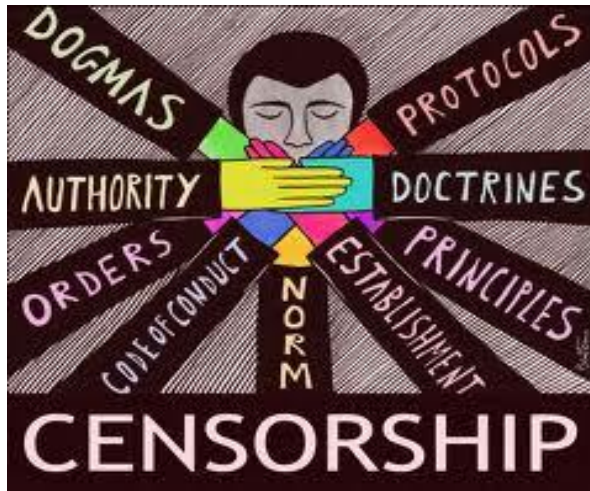
In many countries, the government censors certain websites, blogs and social media networks to stifle dissent and filter the type of information the population is able to access. Censorship can pose a challenge to people like you, who are trying to collect information about a particular topic. If you are having trouble accessing information due to censorship, there are a number of tools you can use, including proxy servers, anonymizing peer-to-peer networks, alternative DNS root name servers and private alternative network devices. Here is a list of tools you can use and links to their websites where you can find more information about how to use them:

- *The Tor Project* allows users to transmit messages and access websites anonymously by disguising their IP addresses (and thus shielding their locations and any other identifying information): www.torproject.org

  "Tor recorded its highest usage rates in Iran [2009 elections] while the Iranian government was blocking the Internet most heavily."

  - Andrew Lewman
  Executive Director, Tor Project

- *Psiphon* is a proxy server software which enables users to access censored websites by establishing connections through an intermediate, non-censored system. The project views the Internet as a "global commons": www.psiphon.ca

Back   **Next**

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How Do I Circumvent Censorship? (continued)

- *FreedomBox* is a project designed to "facilitate free communication among people, safely and securely, beyond the ambition of the strongest power to penetrate", and the project's website explicitly describes itself as a "platform that resists oppression and censorship", and "an organizing tool for democratic activities in hostile regimes.": http://freedomboxfoundation.org

- *Diaspora* tries to provide Facebook-like functionality without being dependent on a centralized company which stores information about its users: http://joindiaspora.com

- *The Serval Project* is free open-source software under development for mobile telephones, letting them communicate even in the absence of phone towers and supporting infrastructure: www.servalproject.org

Back   **Quiz**

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Quiz

1. Which of the following actions would you undertake to improve your phone's security?
   A. Keep and memorize the Factory settings.
   B. Keep your history log in order to have evidence of your work.
   C. Back up your data
   D. All of the above

2. There will be a trial next Friday in the capital city against an Iranian journalist accused of running over a pedestrian with his car. You have been following the trial and noticed inconsistencies. You also know that this journalist has been researching the sale of arms to a neighboring country as you have been looking into the same issue. You are certain the journalist is being framed. You have spoken to the journalist's lawyer who stated that his client was in fact being framed. However, when you talked to the police they said the case was clear-cut. The journalist was guilty. The factory that appears in the journalist's notes as selling weapons had no comments on the arrest.

   Which of the following actors do you think would be a resisting force if you were to do a force-field analysis?
   A. Journalist's Lawyer
   B. Police
   C. Ministry of Transport
   D. Ministry of foreign affairs
   E. International NGO working on gun issues

3. Look back at the example used in this lesson about maternal health to understand the force field analysis. Which of the following would you consider your capacities to reduce the level of risk from undertaking such research?
   A. I have contacts with a network of women working on these issues.
   B. I know the social situation of the particular place where I am doing the research.
   C. I know how to encrypt and keep my communications safe.
   D. a and c.
   E. All of the above.

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Quiz Answers

Lesson One
1) True. remember monitoring implies looking into a particular situation for a period of time. In this case you are following the journalist's case from start to finish and are able to provide information about what happened at different stages of the case.
2) False. Documentation is the process of collecting information through a fact-finding investigation. Collecting the information of a law and talking to parliamentarians would be part of your background research. Documentation would happen once you go to the neighborhoods to investigate what type of impact of the law is having on the residents. For example, have there been arbitrary detentions as a result of the law? Or, have curfews been imposed?
3) True. As explained in question 2, documenting involves going out and talking to the people to find out what happened. In this case that is exactly what you did. You also chose a creative way to broadcast your documentation process through a podcast.
4) B. He died while being interrogated. Statements a and c were confirmed by three independent sources, whereas statement b comes from a statement in Baztab, a website known to be affiliated to a former senior commander of the Revolutionary Guard, but not yet confirmed by other sources.
5) D. Answers a and b.The testimony by Soltani mentions the different abuses he faced during solitary confinement, including the lack of access to a lawyer, his family, and harsh physical conditions. You can confirm that these abuses occurred during the 2009 elections and that they did not happen on July 15, as stated in answer c, when you read the report online.
6) False. The "why" gives you the reasons behind an incident; therefore, you should look at the causes and the motivations. The effect is not a why, it is a what.
7) B. Prohibiting Church attendance. There is no evidence from the passage that leaders were exiled. The passage does mention that Iran's main Persian-language bible publisher was shut down, but that cannot be equated to banning the sale of bibles.

Lesson Two
1) D. All of the above. Notice that all of the documents above can be found and used by anyone. You may be able to find them online, such as the UN report. A court transcript is part of the public record since it is a state document. In certain situations it might be "classified" if the investigation is not finished, but it is still considered a public source. The statement from the witness becomes a public source once it has been published. Remember to ask for the interviewees' consent before publishing their testimonies.
2) A. A human rights watch report on women's rights in Iran. Options b, c, and d are directly related to elections and are therefore the most relevant ones. A human rights report on women's rights in Iran in this case may or may not touch upon the issue of elections becoming less relevant for what you are researching.
3) B. Who, What, Why, When, Where and How. These are the 5Ws +H that we talked about in the lesson. By answering these questions you get the minimum of context to have a complete picture of what happened in a particular situation.
4) A. http://www.truthorfiction.com. Truth or Fiction is the website we talked about before. It lets you check whether a story is true or not. The other websites have other uses. Gmail, as

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you might know, is a mail program. OHCHR is the webpage of the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees and Pepsi is the website for the soft drink.

Lesson Three

1) C. Talk to them in private. A and b are possibilities, but they are not the best way to act. You should never tell witnesses to meet you anywhere. You should allow them to choose the place to meet so that they feel safe. There might also be occasions when you have to interview people in a group; however, this should be avoided, if possible. The best option is to talk to them in private

2) E. All of the above. All of these allow you to establish the veracity of a website. As seen before, you can research the author of the website to determine if they have any affiliations. Knowing the sponsors of a website will also help you determine possible bias of the information presented. The date is helpful to determine whether a website was recently created or if it is regularly updated.

3) True. It is true that the content and information that you publish on Facebook belong to you. However, do not forget that Facebook does have a right to use our information unless you erase it or you delete your account. Check the "conditions" link on Facebook to learn more about this.

4) True. See the section on Using Search Engines to Collect Information for an explanation on how to do this.

Lesson Four

A. B. Place the microphone straight in front of their mouth. External microphones allow you to place them close to the person's mouth to get a better sound quality than recording directly with a device such as a camera or phone. Recording away from subject—as in answer a—is NOT recommended, since you will get too much noise. Recording ambience sound is not bad. You should do it for editing purposes, but it is not related to getting a better sound quality in your recordings.

B. E. All of the above. Look at the section on security once again. All of these tips will help ensure that you are able to protect yourself and your sources while recording.

C. False. Vimeo is a video sharing tool. You can create a channel to upload video, but not documents. For documents it is best to use other platforms.

D. True. See the section above on "Sharing: how to distribute" your information to learn how Nabz Iran can be used to report incidences of human rights violations.

E. D. All of the above. 4shared and Dropbox are platforms used to upload and share files. Blogs, similar to websites, also allow users to upload files.

Lesson Five

1) D. All of the above. All of these are important things to consider to keep your phone safe. Memorize your factory settings and check them often so that you notice if there have been changes made from someone that is not you. Keep your history log to evidence your work, but DO NOT keep it on your phone. You should save it externally but delete any sensitive logs from your phone. You should always back up the data, not only for security purposes, but to guarantee that you can access it if you loose your phone.

2) B. Police. The police will be the first of the actors that might not want the truth to come out. People who know that the journalist was framed may feel that the truth coming out could affect their reputation. Perhaps the police are involved in the weapon trade and do not want

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this information to be made public. The Ministry of Transport and Ministry of Foreign Affairs will probably not be supportive, but will not be resisting either. They are too removed from the action. However, if in your research you find that there are links in the gun trade between important politicians, you might need to reassess particular ministries' stances. The international NGO and the lawyer will most likely be supportive forces, since they are probably also supporting the journalist in his/her investigation. Remember, these roles are not static. As an investigation progresses and situations evolve, supportive and resisting forces can change.

3) E. All of the above. All of the above will allow you to reduce the threats that you might have and therefore the risk. Having contacts in the network will facilitate your access, but it also helps you to have an initial group of people you can trust. Knowing the social situation is essential. You want to make sure that you do not go into a place without first understanding the area. Knowing who the actors are and seeing what roles they have as well as their political position will help you to learn whether you can trust them or not. Finally, knowing how to encrypt and keep communications safe guarantees that if your information is lost or stolen you will not be at risk from the content.

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