



United Nations  
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Beirut Office

A large, artistic illustration of a hand holding a camera. The hand is rendered in shades of teal and green, with a textured, painterly style. The camera is a black DSLR with a prominent lens. The background is white with some light green and yellow splatters.

# Model Course on Safety of Journalists



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A Guide for Journalism  
Teachers in the Arab States

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# Foreword

**Safety of Journalists:** A Model Course for the Arab States is a significant instalment in our UNESCO Series on Journalism Education. Developed in partnership with the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), the publication responds to the difficult situation of many journalists working in the Arab States region. Reflecting the vulnerability of such journalists, the Director-General's 2016 Report on the Safety of Journalists and the Danger of Impunity records that this region registered the highest number of journalists' killings – 78 deaths in all – in 2014-2015.

The publication comes in the context of the universal call for protecting journalistic safety.

Especially relevant is how this safety links to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), agreed by governments of the world at the UN in 2015.

In particular, the intergovernmental UN body, the UN Statistics Commission, has agreed an indicator that helps us to measure progress on journalistic safety as an integral part of sustainable development. This indicator, for SDG target 16.10, covers verified cases of killing, kidnapping, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention and torture of journalists and associated media personnel.

This means that the international community will be watching the situation on safety of journalists over the next 15 years, as part of humanity's efforts to get on a sustainable development footing. The SDG's specifically include a reference to the importance of public access to information and fundamental freedoms. Without safety for journalism, we lose information and human rights are not respected.

These are points well made in the nine resolutions across the UN in the past five years about the safety of journalists.

They also underpin the UN's Plan of Action the of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, which is a framework for joint action by many stakeholders.

Governments have the primary responsibility to put in place effective measures to protect against attacks aimed at silencing those exercising their right to freedom of expression. This made clear by the UN's Human Rights Committee's General Comment No.34 on Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). But journalists, media owners, researchers, journalism teachers and students also have very important roles to play.

This publication thus encourages journalism education institutions to develop curricula relevant to the safety of journalists and impunity.

It builds upon the UNESCO Model Curricula for Journalism Education developed in 2007 as well as on subsequent updates in 2013 and 2015 that respond to particular emerging issues, including those relating to digital safety for journalists, gender, human trafficking, among others.

UNESCO believes that attacks against journalists intimidate everyone, and leave society in a condition of information-poverty. Governments, business, civil society and individuals all lose when the media cannot do its job of bringing reliable information to the public.

Being safe to express yourself is important for each individual. But those at most risk are foreign correspondents and local journalists, freelancers and contracted media employees, as well as bloggers and other social media producers who do journalism. If we are to build knowledge societies, able to deliver sustainable development, we need journalists to know their rights to protection – and what they can do themselves.

It is in this light that I encourage universities across the Arab States region to integrate this course within their journalism curricula to help ensure a safer future for the next generation of journalists.

Frank La Rue  
Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information, UNESCO

## **Safety Knowledge Matters in Reporting Troubled World**

The International Federation of Journalists, the world's largest organisation of professional journalists, welcomes this initiative to provide aspiring journalists with the basic knowledge which will stand them in good stead with regard to the most fundamental consideration throughout their career, their safety. This UNESCO-IFJ joint initiative wouldn't have succeeded without the partnership we did with UNESCO and its close collaboration with all the partners in this programme. We want to register our deep gratitude to them.

It is a truism to say that information is power and this is especially the case for journalists who need to overcome the safety challenges they face in reporting on the increasingly troubled world. According to our statistics, there have been almost 3000 journalists and other media staff killed in work-related incidents since 1990. Many of these killings resulted from risks of covering armed conflicts such as being caught up in crossfire incidents. But there were several incidents of targeted killings in so-called peace time which constituted attempts to suppress the free flow of information which exposed corruption and other criminal activity. Knowledge in safety alone would not have saved every single life lost in the last two decades. However, there is consistent and positive feedback from journalists who have had training in safety who confirm that such training provides life - saving skills which assist media professionals in conducting a robust risks assessment and adopting proper planning for dangerous assignments.

In this regard, safety is in knowledge on which informed decisions are based. The opportunity for students in journalism to acquire these skills presents two major advantages.

The first is timing. Practicing journalists increasingly lack time to plan for difficult reporting missions and often find themselves scrambling at short notice to access information on credible sources, the proper equipment and the nature of risks they might face in the most recent hotspot of the world where they are sent to cover an unfolding conflict or a humanitarian crisis. This course will give students enough time, without the job pressure and deadlines, to master skills which they will only need to use when they enter the profession later on.

The second advantage provides an even bigger incentive for undertaking this course at university, rather than wait until once in a job. The reason is that safety training is an expensive commitment and only a few media organisations can afford to enroll their staff on such programmes. For freelance journalists without any support from an employer, this is simply beyond their reach. That is why the IFJ makes sure to include these colleagues in safety training programmes we fund around the world. It stands to reason, therefore, to offer this course at university to give everyone the best start in their career in journalism.

As with everything nowadays, the learning process does not end at university but continues on the job, as well. In the same way, knowledge in safety must be regularly improved on and adapted to new challenges. The IFJ and its member unions will continue to support this learning process for all those entering our profession. But one thing is for sure; safety knowledge matters in reporting our troubled world.

Finally, we are grateful to the Norwegian UNESCO Committee and the Norwegian government for the generous support to this project.

Anthony Bellanger  
IFJ General Secretary

# Acknowledgments

The aim of this UNESCO-IFJ Model Course on the Safety of Journalists is to bridge the gap between the theoretical teaching methods at journalism schools and the field coverage of journalists in conflict areas.

The idea of the model course came after a series of safety training workshops for young journalists and journalism students at most Arab universities that showed us the importance and necessity of introducing practitioner safety to the curriculum of the journalism faculties. Hence, our work with the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) came as a normal step to combine the methodology and the practical work to reach this model course.

What distinguishes this work is that it came as a result of participatory work and collaboration with media specialists from various Arab universities, as well as international experts and practitioners, including experts from UNESCO and the International Federation of Journalists. Therefore, we had multiple meetings, in person, and remotely for a year and a half. It began in Beirut, then Amman, and via the Internet to be concluded in Beirut, where the proposed text was adopted after integrating participants' suggestions.

Here, I would like to thank the Working Group; Dr. Michael Foley (Coordinator), Ms. Clare Arthurs and Ms. Magda Abu-Fadil for their tireless efforts to prepare this course. I would also like to thank all colleagues at IFJ and UNESCO for reviewing and verifying the text content.

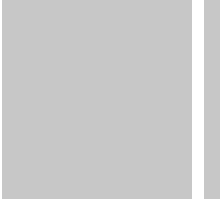
In conclusion, this course will be published in Arabic and English languages and will be distributed to institutes and faculties of journalism in the Arab region. It will also be available on both UNESCO and IFJ websites. Hoping that this course will benefit the largest number of journalism students in the Arab countries that are currently in the most difficult circumstances, especially with regard to the safety and security of journalists.

Hamed Alhammami  
Director – UNESCO Beirut Office



# Table of Contents

<b>Foreword</b> .....	3
<b>Acknowledgments</b> .....	7
<b>Introduction:</b> Journalism Safety Course for the International Federation of Journalists and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization .....	11
<b>Lesson 1:</b> Introduction to Journalism Safety and Threats to Media Workers	21
<b>Lesson 2:</b> Planning for Personal Safety .....	37
<b>Lesson 3:</b> Personal Health Care and Trauma in Hostile Environments	55
<b>Lesson 4:</b> Risk Assessment .....	56
<b>Lesson 5:</b> Travel Security .....	83
<b>Lesson 6:</b> Digital Security .....	95
<b>Lesson 7:</b> Gender and Safe Reporting .....	107
<b>Lesson 8:</b> Covering Demonstrations and Civil Unrest .....	121
<b>Lesson 9:</b> Human Rights and Humanitarian Law .....	131
<b>Lesson 10:</b> Ethics .....	153
<b>Lesson 11:</b> Safety and Investigative Journalism .....	165



## **Introduction: Journalism Safety Course for the International Federation of Journalists & the UNESCO**

Journalism can be dangerous. In 2015, 115 journalists were killed doing their jobs according to UNESCO. Unsurprisingly, Syria was the most dangerous place to be a journalist, with 13 deaths. However, there were also journalists killed in countries not at war. Three died in the Philippines, one in India and four in Pakistan. In 2015, the figure for France was eight, due to the killings at the satirical weekly *Charlie Hebdo*, introducing a new danger aspect for killing journalists who are exercising free speech or because someone feels offended.

To fully realise how dangerous journalism has become, it is worth recalling that only two journalists died covering the First World War in all four years of bloody carnage. Back in 1979, two journalists were killed, both in Lebanon. For the 20 or so years of the Vietnam War there were 63 deaths.

Today's figures can be parsed. The majority of the journalists are local, not foreign correspondents, though it is the deaths of foreign correspondents that tend to be reported globally. A growing number are freelancers. The increased dangers are having an impact on women, and not only because the number of women journalists has increased, but due to the specific issue of gender-based violence directed at female journalists. Another disturbing trend is the lack of people brought to justice for killing journalists, which means there appears to be little risk in killing journalists. Journalists, it seems, can be killed with impunity. In addition to killings, there is an even greater number of journalists who are harassed, imprisoned or beaten.

It is worth considering why there has been such a surge in the mortality of media workers. This is an issue also for those who work with journalists, such as camera operators and fixers, for instance. Bloggers are also being attacked



in some places. There is an increase in what is called 'derring-do' journalism, where journalists get closer to danger, whether to criminals, frontlines or corruption. One reason is clearly because of increased competition and the need for journalists to find new ways of telling stories. Another reason is that journalists are not standing back to view the action - the technology is light and allows journalists to be embedded with soldiers or even in front of the soldiers, or in the middle of demonstrations or even riots, in order to get sound and vision that brings viewers right to the action. Even the mobile phone in one's pocket can take videos that can be uploaded to the Web. Journalists are not necessarily returning to their newsrooms or to their homes or hotels to write up a considered piece, but beating competition on Facebook, Twitter or YouTube, sending breaking news back before a main piece to camera or a written story is even planned.

Journalists are now too often viewed as targets and their deaths are more likely to be deliberately caused than the result of an accident. Reporting an atrocity might lead a warlord to be indicted as a war criminal. A report on rigged sports games can land a mafia member in trouble. Such situations can trigger the targeting of journalists.

In the global mediated world that we inhabit, an investigative journalist looking into corruption in one country can have an impact in another, making journalists vulnerable across borders.

Journalists rightly view the protection of anonymous sources as a principle of the profession, but today, authorities and criminals can hack into a journalist's hard drive, mobile phones and other devices and see who they have talked to, where they have been and what information they have.

With more information transmitted online every day, the world of journalism faces fresh dangers. We have become even more acutely aware of such dangers with the revelation of state surveillance overreach in many countries. The journalist must worry not only about his or her security but also about the security of his/her sources and the information on his/her computers and electronic devices. And a lack of care on the part of sources can jeopardise the journalist as well.

The simple fact of being a journalist can be dangerous in some places. In Syria the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has made the torture and execution of journalists part of its public relations campaign, calculating that these atrocities will garner media coverage and in any case be made available directly via YouTube. Journalists are increasingly vulnerable due to their changing employment status. A growing number of journalists reporting on war, crime and corruption are freelancers or on short contracts, lacking the protection of major media organisations.

What journalists see, such as attacks on innocent civilians, including children, or the effect of bombings in crowded markets, and the need to report on these events, to take pictures of the dead and to talk to survivors, can lead to depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other mental health issues.

Reporting violence brings new ethical issues to which journalists need to respond, and sometimes decisions on such issues need to be taken on the spot. For example, should journalists take and publish pictures of dead children? Probably not, but then look at the impact of the picture of three-year-old Aylan Kurdi washed away on a Turkish beach (September 2015). Journalistic decisions – sometimes made by editors who are somewhat sheltered – can cause controversy for a journalist in the field, exposing him or her to attack. It is thus important to have an enduring framework for ethical journalistic decision-making that helps an individual journalist rationalise his/her actions within the context of the larger questions of human rights, justice, safety, etc.

Journalists do a hugely important job. Bearing witness to war, investigating crime and corruption, giving a voice to opposition groups and to people seeking change, are all necessary if people are to take control of their own lives and make decisions that affect them and their communities. It is also crucial for encouraging and strengthening democracy.

This is why society has a strong interest in securing the safety of journalists. The state, in particular, has primary responsibility to protect its citizens – including their right to life and to freedom of expression. It is the duty of the state to take judicial action against any elements who violate such rights, including in the case of journalists.



At the same time, journalists also have a responsibility to look after themselves, to keep themselves safe and healthy, so they can continue to tell the story. That responsibility rests with individual journalists, but also with news organisations that send them into harm's way. There is, moreover, a degree of responsibility that rests with journalism schools, especially in equipping students with the necessary theoretical worldview and technical know-how to effectively function in the increasingly dangerous world of journalistic practice.

## **Course Description**

This course is designed to help young journalists do just that, to do their bit in looking after themselves. To make them aware both of the dangers and of the actions they can take to make themselves safer and so serve the public on whose behalf they work. It also help young journalists to know what protections and resources exist for them: whether those set up by the state, by news organizations or by professional associations. Hence, the skills and knowledge that students will emerge with can be transferred to a range of situations and places, including covering natural disasters, outbreaks of epidemics and other humanitarian crises, as well as local investigative reporting, coverage of religious affairs, environmental journalism through to sports coverage.

## **Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this course, students will have a detailed understanding of both theoretical and practical aspects relating to safety.

Students will be able to:

- Describe the dangers that exist today and analyse why they have increased.
- Describe how they will ensure their own safety while working in a hostile environment.
- Analyse why safety has become a major concern, and understand how the issue is broadly implicated within national, regional and international mechanisms for upholding human rights and humanitarian law.
- Describe how they can minimise dangers to themselves and others.

- Transfer skills between different types of hostile environments.
- Know how to conduct advocacy for the cause of securing safety for journalists and an end to impunity for the perpetrators of attacks.

## **Note for Professors/Lecturers/Teachers**

### **► Teaching Methodology**

This syllabus builds on the recognition that journalism can be a dangerous profession and those entering it need to be aware of the dangers involved and how to minimize those dangers.

The course is designed to be taught over a 12-week period in two-hour blocks. However, the material and the syllabus are flexible and can be used in different ways depending on the timetable as well as such factors as the overall curriculum, the credit system used, and the particular needs of the university or media school.

Universities within the Arab world are diverse and use a number of credit systems. Some universities use a similar system to that used in the United Kingdom, others use the French system and a few the U.S. system. Increasingly, countries that come within the EU Neighbourhood Policy area are using the so-called Bologna system and the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).

A syllabus like this one should not be too prescriptive. It should act as a resource for university teachers who will use it within the context of their own country, culture and university.

The teaching material allows for self-learning as directed by a lecturer. Given the technical nature of some of the material, it might be necessary to invite experts to talk to students and demonstrate particular skills or techniques. It is also advisable to conduct hands-on exercises such as first aid demonstrations, simulated medical or emergency evacuations, and physical fitness tests with the help of experts.

The syllabus covers a range of material, and individual lecturers might wish to use it in different ways. The ethics class, for instance, could be taught during an ethics module and so allow more time for other areas. Particular articles, documents and other resources are included under a number of lessons. The reason for this repetition is that teachers might use the material in different ways or in a different order, or even ignore particular lessons.

The pedagogical method that is recommended is Student-Centred Learning (SCL). This method promotes the autonomy of students and their responsibility for their own learning, with the lecturer acting as a facilitator rather than instructor.

The course also conforms to Human Rights Education (HRE), based on the recognition that journalism safety is a human rights issue, given Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which proclaims the protection of freedom of opinion and expression, of which press freedom and journalists' safety are corollaries.

► **HRE Encompasses:**

- Knowledge and skills — learning about human rights and mechanisms for their protection, as well as acquiring skills to apply them in daily life;
- Values, attitudes and behaviour — developing values and reinforcing attitudes and behaviour which uphold human rights (see, for example, UNESCO's publication titled "Civic Education for Media Professionals: A Training Manual" (2009), available at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001804/180402e.pdf>;
- Action — taking action to defend and promote human rights.

*UNESCO (2005) Revised draft plan of action for the first phase (2005-2007) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education. UNESCO, (2005).*

*The International Declaration on the Protection of Journalists*

<http://www.freemedia.at/newssview/article/international-declaration-and-best-practices-to-promote-journalists-safety-launched.html> launched in

Geneva (2015) by the International Press Institute, Al Jazeera Media Network, General Global Media and the Geneva Press Club.

The syllabus will be available on a web site that will be a dynamic one. What we have offered is an outline and structure that will be recognizable to many teachers, with a brief description of each lesson, the outcomes expected, the approach to be taken by the teacher, a class plan and in many cases some reading. That is followed by teaching material, which consists of resources that might be of use to teachers.

The course may, where necessary, also make cross-references to other syllabi in the field, including such UNESCO publications as:

- Model Curricula for Journalism Education: A Compendium of New Syllabi (2013) <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002211/221199E.pdf>
- Teaching Journalism for Sustainable Development: New Syllabi (2015) <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002338/233878e.pdf>

We want university professors to add to this syllabus and recommend material they have found useful so it can become a resource for journalism professors in the region.

### ► **Assessment**

Assessment should link to the learning outcomes and test that they have been achieved. Given the range of theoretical and practice-based subjects included in this course, the assessment should be creative and devised so as to reflect the diversity of material covered.

Assessment that includes writing articles or making short programmes for radio or TV is to be encouraged as it blends theory and practice. Students making presentations in front of their class on a given issue also tests their understanding of the material and discussions as well as their own research. Additionally, it builds their confidence, which is necessary for journalism.

Journalism education, since its beginnings in the early years of the last century, has been known for its use of 'learning by doing' with students encouraged to replicate the world of work in 'newsrooms' on campus, as





pioneered at the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism and developed in many countries and universities since.

In more recent times, this apprentice-like system has been merged with theoretical considerations aimed at developing so-called 'reflective practitioners', i.e. graduates who know 'how' but can also ask 'why?' and 'so what?', and thus contribute to improving journalism.

Assessment is vitally important in that it indicates to the teacher that the students have internalized the knowledge and skills involved. It is important that the assessment test all aspects of the syllabus and assess the seven identified learning outcomes for the full course.

Lecturers can choose how to assess, depending on the students and how advanced they are, or based on what they are used to. We would discourage relying only on traditional examinations, as these do not test the full range of what the syllabus is endeavoring to address. The difficulties arising from traditional assessment practices are, for example, that the giving of marks and grades are over-emphasized, while the giving of advice and the learning function are under-emphasized; students are compared with one another, which highlights competition rather than personal improvement or peer collaboration.

Assessment suggestions include students interviewing local journalists about their experience of safety issues; turning some of the material the teacher introduces into articles; or quizzes. Students might also interview lawyers about human rights or a journalism trade union official about journalists' rights. The following is an example of an assessment that has been used to evaluate a similar syllabus:

Students are asked to 'adopt' a country or region or a major issue. They must produce a proposal for a story or series of stories and how they will be presented – through radio, TV, print or online or through a mix of platforms. The proposal will include how they would research and verify the story, and indicate the possible sources – whether politicians, activists, academics or ordinary people. Students will also indicate where they would like the story to appear and why it would suit that outlet.

Students will produce a risk assessment and a cost estimate, including the cost of flights, car hire, hotels or whatever is relevant. They will also analyze relevant human rights issues and any issues relating to humanitarian law. Students might write one or even a number of articles.

Each aspect of the exercise can be assessed so the teacher can identify any weaknesses or strengths.

It is envisaged the web site will in time include examples of student work and thus act as a platform for the sharing of good practices.

To this end we encourage all users of this course to communicate with the IFJ and UNESCO, so that good practices can be shared more widely, and so that adaptations and updates can be incorporated as appropriate.

This course on the safety of journalists can make a difference between life or death. With this course, the possibility exists to turn potential victims into frontline actors able to avoid and help ensure an end to impunity of crimes committed against journalists and media workers.

# 1

## Lesson 1

### Introduction to Journalism Safety and Threats to Media Workers

#### Lesson Description

This class introduces students to the issues surrounding journalism safety when covering war and civil disturbances of various levels as well investigative journalism. There is a gender dimension in all this. Complementing this introductory class are other specialized classes that give dedicated attention to the issues raised here. The understanding and the skills acquired will be useful to journalists covering a range of stories, including natural disasters and humanitarian crises.

Teaching materials for this class focus on three key topics: Raising awareness, campaigning and safety; freelance journalists; and UNESCO's Journalism Safety Indicators in addition to practical activities related to the subjects at hand. It should be noted that teaching takes place in a computer-equipped classroom.

#### Lesson Aims

This lesson aims to:

1. Highlight the relationship between freedom of expression and safety of journalists.
2. Prepare students to exercise safety principles.
3. Deepen knowledge about the types of dangers threatening media workers as well as issues related to safety of journalists and attacks to which they may be subjected.
4. Prepare students to pursue their professional tasks in dangerous situations.

## Learning Outcomes

At the end of this class, students will be able to:

1. Understand the relationship between safety and press freedom, but also their distinctiveness.
2. Describe and analyse the threats to the safety of journalists (conceived broadly).
3. Be able to explain the idea of the journalist as witness and investigator.
4. Analyse the issues surrounding the threats to journalists, such as impunity, who is most at risk, and so on.
5. Know their right to safety as journalists.
6. Analyse the causes of the increase or decrease in the number of journalists' deaths.

## Methodology

The methodology relies on discussions, hosting journalists working for media outlets or freelancers who have covered wars or demonstrations, to relate their professional field experiences, and, benefiting from the knowledge of security consultants. The materials for this class can be accessed from the Internet. The sites to use are those of UNESCO (dedicated webpages on the safety of journalists) as well as of journalism safety organizations such as the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) and Reporters Without Borders (RSF) that include among other resources a list of journalists who have died doing their job.

Other key organizations are the International News Safety Institute (INSI), the Rory Peck Trust, the Press Emblem Campaign (PEC), the International Press Institute (IPI), the International Crisis Group (ICG), the UN Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN), ReliefWeb, UN Humanitarian Information Centres (HICs), AlertNet, the Red Cross and Red Crescent organizations in different countries, the World Health Organization (WHO), the Samir Kassir Foundation/SKeyes, Center for Media and Cultural Freedom, IJNet, and the Doha Centre for Media Freedom(DCMF), to name a few.

Teacher-led discussions based on the material accessed. It is important to teach in a hall equipped with computers, or at least with Internet access, to allow the instructor to show the websites of some of the above-mentioned organizations. Students must also be able to access these sites to examine them.

## ■ Linking the Lesson Plan to the Learning Outcomes

### Track 1 – Theoretical

The lecturer will present information on the safety of journalists and potential dangers to media workers.

Lesson Plan	Number of Hours	Learning Outcomes
Explain and discuss learning materials	3	3+1
1. Raising awareness, campaigning and safety		
2. Freelance journalists		
3. UNESCO's Journalism Safety Indicators		

### Track 2 – Practical

Activities related to the learning materials.

Lesson Plan	Number of Hours	Learning Outcomes
Practical activities	3	6+5+2
Activity 1: Analyse types of dangers		
Activity 2: Discussion of number of deaths		
Activity 3: Discussion and questions		

As previously indicated, the focus will be on a number of concepts related to safety while covering dangerous events, namely:

- Introduce reasons for this course, why journalists' safety has become an issue.
- Raise any local issues where journalists might have been killed, harassed or imprisoned.
- Examine global figures for deaths among working journalists and media workers.
- Discuss the different levels of safety, from covering a demonstration to reporting on an armed conflict, through natural disasters and outbreaks of epidemics.
- Discuss the role of the journalist as witness and the necessity of working and reporting from hostile or dangerous areas.
- Discuss concepts such as the killing of a journalist being the ultimate form of censorship, but also the risk of self-censorship when journalists are reticent to cover demonstrations, political rallies or other events for fear of reprisals from corrupt officials, security forces or criminals.
- Discuss the right of a journalist to expect safety from state actors, newsroom employers, non-state actors, and the general public.



## Track 1: Learning Materials

Learning materials tackle three topics related to the safety of journalists and dangers they face:

1. Raising awareness, campaigning and safety.
2. Freelance journalists.
3. UNESCO's Journalism Safety Indicators.

### Introduction

In the past 10 years, 825 journalists and media workers have been killed, according to UNESCO statistics. The majority of these were not war correspondents. Attacks on media professionals are often perpetrated in non-conflict situations by organized criminal groups, militia, security personnel, and even local police, making local journalists among the most vulnerable. Violations faced by journalists include murder, abduction, harassment, intimidation, and illegal arrest and detention.

Most abuses against media professionals remain uninvestigated and unpunished. This impunity perpetuates the cycle of violence against journalists, media workers and citizen journalists. The resulting self-censorship deprives society of information and has a further impact on press freedom. The UN has declared 2 November as International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists, in recognition of the fact that the problem of safety is bound up with the lack of justice for journalists after becoming victims of perpetrators.

The killing of journalists and impunity have a direct impact on the United Nations' human rights-based efforts to promote peace, security, and sustainable development. In particular, SDG 16 calls for peaceful and just societies, including respect for rule of law and a reduction in violent crime. A specific target is 16.10, which urges UN Member States to ensure "public access to information" and protect "fundamental freedoms in accordance with national legislation and international agreements."

Journalists and media staff are also killed in crossfire incidents as well as in accidents. In 2015, the IFJ recorded 115 killings in targeted killings and cross fire incidents as well as 3 accidental deaths.

The push for greater safety comes at one of the most dangerous times on record for media professionals. The past four years have been the most deadly period the Committee to Protect Journalists has recorded. Although women journalists are a fraction of the total, they are often subjected to non-fatal attacks simply because their gender is seen as either an aggravating factor, or an invitation, by those seeking to take control of a story being worked on.

The contexts, actors and immediate causes of the murder of journalists vary around the world, but the common thread is that someone seeks to stop them from bringing certain information to light, and is prepared to resort to the use of force to achieve this objective.

<http://ifj-safety.org/en/2015/killings>

<http://ifj-safety.org/en/contents/ifj-annual-reports-on-journalists-and-media-staff-killed>

<http://www.ifj-arabic.org/>

### **1. Raising Awareness, Campaigning and Safety**

Since 1997, UNESCO's Director-General has condemned the killings of journalists as per Resolution 29 of the 29<sup>th</sup> UNESCO General Conference. Starting in 2008, The UNESCO Director-General has presented a biennial report on 'The Safety of Journalists and the Danger of Impunity' to the Intergovernmental Council of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC). The numbers are alarming. In 2015 alone there were 115 journalists killed – almost twice as many as in previous years.

To address this, UNESCO has championed the "UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity", an initiative of the IPDC Intergovernmental Council. The UN Plan of Action is a worldwide framework that aims to coordinate the actions of international, regional and national stakeholders to create a free and safe environment for journalists and media workers, both in conflict and non-conflict situations.



The Plan seeks to assist countries to develop legislation and mechanisms favourable to freedom of expression and information, and supports their efforts to implement existing international rules and principles. The plan provides a framework for the UN to work on this issue with all stakeholders, including national authorities, local and international NGOs, media houses and academia.

A key recognition underlying the plan is that ensuring safety is not something that any single actor working alone can secure – not an individual journalist, not the media as a whole, not even governments. A joint effort is needed to raise the political will across all sectors of society to deter attacks and end impunity, and to raise the capacity of all to translate the will into practical impact.

The safety of journalists is understood to be an important requirement for the unhindered practice of journalism and freedom of expression. Despite this, unlike the issues of journalism and freedom of expression, journalists' safety has not been a very popular topic of academic research. Academic research on the safety of journalists can significantly increase the understanding of this complex issue and thus contribute to the creation of safer working conditions for all who practice journalism. Such academic research could potentially highlight the question of journalistic safety in a way that makes it become an issue for greater public debate and policy, in the process becoming not only a key concern of governments but also of media organizations themselves (as employers).

<http://monash.edu/news/show/the-al-jazeera-english-case-and-the-safety-of-journalists>

There is a strong interdependence and overlap between press freedom and the safety of journalists. However, not all violations of press freedom work to jeopardize the practical safety of journalists, and not all safety issues are tied up with press freedom. In this course, the emphasis is on the safety of journalists – especially on whether journalists can carry out their work without fear of attack on themselves, their colleagues or their families.

It must be noted that it is not just news journalists but also media workers more broadly who can be attacked for their involvement in producing journalism. Examples are (local) fixers, technical support and drivers. Even the safety of newsagents or newspaper sellers can sometimes be at stake. Bloggers are

also potential targets: a recent example was the killing of Ananta Bijoy Das, a Bangladeshi blogger in May 2015, the third case in a year of a blogger being attacked in Bangladesh for commenting on religious issues. In this course, a broad conceptualization is used when talking about “journalists”, extending well beyond just those who are field reporters. All journalists, that is people using press freedom to publish information and editorial comment, have a right to protection from attacks, and a right to justice in the event that an attack takes place.

<http://edition.cnn.com/2015/05/12/asia/bangladesh-blogger-killed/index.html>

A useful resource for many of the classes, but especially this one, is the magazine Index On Censorship, published by the international free speech organization of the same name. Many of the stories and cases covered on the website or in the magazine concern journalists. It has a very lively website at:

<https://www.indexoncensorship.org>

It has good resources from the MENA region at

<https://www.indexoncensorship.org/category/middle-east-north-africa/>

Other useful resources for monitoring censorship are the Samir Kassir Foundation (Skeyes) <http://www.skeyesmedia.org/ar/Home> in Lebanon, the Arabic Network for Human Rights Information <http://anhri.net/> in Egypt, and the Center for Defending Freedom of Journalists <http://cdfj.org/> in Jordan, to name a few.

## 2. Freelance Journalists

The beheadings in recent years of freelance journalists James Foley, Steven Sotloff and Kenji Goto by ISIS extremists have underscored the risks for freelance journalists. All three were operating independently in Syria when captured. Their deaths have highlighted the need for safety standards for freelance journalists covering conflict and the responsibility of media organizations that use the stories, photos and videos they produce. In order to address these issues, a global coalition of media watchdogs, freelance journalists and major news outlets has released a set of safety principles and practices [http://dartcenter.org/content/global-safety-principles-and-practices#.VOzvs7PF\\_PH](http://dartcenter.org/content/global-safety-principles-and-practices#.VOzvs7PF_PH). So far 30 organizations have signed on. The International Center for Journalists, CPJ, Reporters Without Borders (RSF), also known as Reporters Without Borders (RWB), and the International Press Institute are among the signatories.

There has been an ongoing debate about freelance journalists going into high-risk regions without the support afforded to full-time staffers. Many lack the basics, such as insurance, proper protective gear, security advisors and support from the media outlets they serve. Yet, with cash-strapped newsrooms cutting back on overseas staff, the demand for independent operators remains high.

To address this, the above-mentioned coalition has created protocols both for freelancers and news organizations that commission their work. The guidelines urge freelancers to learn first aid, take hostile environment training and stay up-to-date on standards of care and safety - both physical and psychological - to help themselves, or injured colleagues in the field.

They are encouraged to make careful risk assessments before traveling to hazardous zones and measure the journalistic value of an assignment against risks.

The guidelines for media organizations emphasize that freelancers should be treated with the same high regard as full-time staffers. News managers should “be aware of, and factor in, the additional costs of training, insurance and safety equipment in war zones.” The guidelines addressed a common complaint among freelancers: “When setting assignments, news organizations should endeavour to provide agreed upon expenses in advance, or as soon as possible on completion of work, and pay for work done in as timely a manner as possible.”

<https://ijnnet-journalism-safety.silk.co/page/Global-coalition-sets-safety-standards-for-freelance-journalists>

<http://dartcenter.org/content/global-safety-principles-and-practices#VknoLCutzZ>

### **3. UNESCO’s Journalism Safety Indicators**

UNESCO has drawn up a set of Journalism Safety Indicators (JSIs) to pinpoint significant matters that show, or have an impact upon, the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity. The JSIs allow for a mapping of key features that can help assess the extent to which journalists are able to carry out their work under safe conditions, and determine whether adequate follow-up is given to crimes committed against them.

The JSIs serve to identify the actions taken by the various relevant stakeholders in promoting journalists' safety and fighting impunity at the national level. These actors include the UN, state and political actors, civil society organizations and academics, and media and intermediaries.

The JSIs especially serve as a basis against which changes can be systematically registered over time, these changes – hopefully – representing progress, and having a positive impact on the safety of journalists. As regards the United Nations, they can help UNESCO and other relevant UN agencies assess on a periodic basis the extent to which the implementation of the “UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity” has contributed to improving the security of media professionals in the countries participating in the roll-out of the Action Plan.

It should be noted that the indicators are not intended as a universal model, but rather as signaling a range of relevant items that can serve the purpose of mapping and understanding. They are therefore descriptive and are for the purpose of analysis, not prescription. There are two sets of indicators – one targeted for national assessment, and the other applies to the global level.

There is also a handbook for applying the indicators:

The indicators have already been applied in a number of countries, with very interesting insights emerging. The reports can be found on the UNESCO website.

Safety Indicators National Level:

[http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/images/Themes/Freedom\\_of\\_expression/safety\\_of\\_journalists/JSI\\_national\\_eng\\_20150820.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/images/Themes/Freedom_of_expression/safety_of_journalists/JSI_national_eng_20150820.pdf)

Safety Indicators International Level:

[http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/images/Themes/Freedom\\_of\\_expression/safety\\_of\\_journalists/JSI\\_international\\_eng\\_2.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/images/Themes/Freedom_of_expression/safety_of_journalists/JSI_international_eng_2.pdf)

Safety Indicators Handbook:

[http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/images/Themes/Freedom\\_of\\_expression/safety\\_of\\_journalists/JSI\\_guidelines\\_eng\\_20150820\\_2.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/images/Themes/Freedom_of_expression/safety_of_journalists/JSI_guidelines_eng_20150820_2.pdf)



## Track 2: Practical

**These activities aim to help students discuss and analyze a number of questions related to types of safety.**

➔ **Activity 1: Analyze types of dangers**

Students review statistics on the number of journalists killed, kidnapped, beaten published by organizations concerned with the safety of journalists. Lecturers ask students if they can differentiate among the different patterns such as the difference between dangers local journalists face and those that international journalists and foreign correspondents encounter.

➔ **Activity 2: Discussion on number of deaths**

Discussion of the reasons behind the increase, or decrease, in the numbers of deaths.

➔ **Activity 3: Discussion on dangerous assignments**

Why should journalists persist in producing reports under dangerous circumstances?

Lecturers are free to select additional activities related to the learning outcomes.



## Additional Reading

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### **1. Journalist in Africa: A high-risk profession under threat**

**Frère, Marie-Soleil**

*Journal of African Media Studies*. 2014, Vol. 6, Issue 2, p181-198. 18 p.

DOI: 10.1386/jams.6.2.181\_1.

This article aims at presenting a reflection on professional risks that journalists face in Sub-Saharan Africa, mainly focusing on the Francophone countries. The purpose is not to observe foreign journalists who are reporting from the African continent, an issue that has been often debated (especially in the context of 'war coverage'), but to concentrate on the situation of local journalists, about whom there has been much less research.

<http://www.intellectbooks.co.uk/journals/view-Article,id=18050/>

### **2. Journalists are dying every day**

**Richard Sambrook**

*Index on Censorship March 2015 vol. 44 no. 1 101-102.*

The murder of the Charlie Hebdo cartoonists in Paris in January produced a spontaneous reaction in defense of free expression from many around the world. The fact that staff of a satirical magazine could be slaughtered for publishing commentary and jokes caught worldwide attention and hundreds of thousands of people gathered in protest behind the "Je suis Charlie" slogan to defend the right to freedom of expression. However, the brutal murder of journalists for nothing more than publishing their views is commonplace in many other parts of the world. Figures compiled by UNESCO show 115 journalists and media workers lost their lives in 2015, in countries including Syria, Iraq, Pakistan, Ukraine and Mexico, with shooting being the most common cause of death.

<http://ioc.sagepub.com/content/44/1/101.full>

### **3. Journalism in Afghanistan: Current and post-2014 threats and journalist safety mechanisms**

The emergence of free media is arguably one of the most significant achievements in the post-Taliban Afghanistan era. Afghanistan has endured

three decades of invasions, uprisings and civil war, and yet, in the last ten years, a vibrant and increasingly professional media sector has grown from almost nothing. Today the country has hundreds of publications, dozens of TV and radio stations and several news agencies. However, Afghan journalists have paid a high price for such progress. According to this IMS report, they are routinely beaten, intimidated, threatened and denied information by all sides in the war.

Against this backdrop, and with uncertain times ahead following the pullout of international troops in 2014, there is a need to address how the work to support free and independent media and create a safer working environment for media workers, so crucial to any democratic process, can be sustained post-2014.

#### **4. No Justice for Journalists in Ukraine, Belarus and Russia**

<http://www.mediasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/ims-no-justice-ukraine-belarus-russia-2011.pdf>

#### **5. International Federation of Journalists Newsroom Middle East and Arab World**

[http://ifj-safety.org/en/contents/middle-east-arab-world/contents/press\\_room/index\\_by\\_set](http://ifj-safety.org/en/contents/middle-east-arab-world/contents/press_room/index_by_set)

#### **6. International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists (IDEI) celebrated:**

This day marks the anniversary of the killing of two French journalists in Mali in 2012, whose killers had by the beginning of 2016 not been brought to justice. The IDEI was established at the UN General Assembly in 2013 and UNESCO is charged with facilitating global commemorations – in conferences, symposia, and newsrooms. The gravity of the issue is highlighted by the fact that nine out of ten cases are being unresolved.

The IDEI is an opportunity to raise awareness that the failure of applying the rule of law to attacks on journalists is something of great concern to society. When there is no justice for those who are attacked for their expressions in the media, the signal it sends to everyone else is clear – you had best

remain quiet about issues that can bring danger upon you. Conversely, if the public sees that killers of journalists are held to account, their own confidence in the state to do what it should be doing can be strengthened. The IDEI therefore provides an opportunity to link the safety of journalists to groups that are otherwise not very active on this issue – for example, judges, lawyers, community policing associations, etc.

[http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/international\\_day\\_to\\_end\\_impunity\\_for\\_crimes\\_against\\_journalists\\_celebrated\\_in\\_london/#.VkolvCutzZ5](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/international_day_to_end_impunity_for_crimes_against_journalists_celebrated_in_london/#.VkolvCutzZ5)

7. Since these lessons are meant initially for educational institutions in the Arab region, it is advisable to provide resources in Arabic as well as in English and French. Several of the resources are available in at least two or three languages. International organizations such as UNESCO, RSF, the Red Cross and Red Crescent, ICG, WHO, Skeyes, IJNet and DCMF provide their data in more than one language.

## Resources

### 1. For information on monitoring censorship, see:

- Skeyes <http://www.skeyesmedia.org/ar/Home>
- The Arabic Network for Human Rights Information <http://anhri.net>
- Centre for Defending Freedom of Journalists <http://cdfj.org/>

### 2. For information on safety indicators, see:

- Journalists' Safety Indicators: National Level  
[http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/images/Themes/Freedom\\_of\\_expression/safety\\_of\\_journalists/JSI\\_national\\_eng\\_20150820.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/images/Themes/Freedom_of_expression/safety_of_journalists/JSI_national_eng_20150820.pdf).
- Journalists' Safety Indicators: International Level  
[http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/images/Themes/Freedom\\_of\\_expression/safety\\_of\\_journalists/JSI\\_international\\_eng\\_2.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/images/Themes/Freedom_of_expression/safety_of_journalists/JSI_international_eng_2.pdf).



- Applying UNESCO's Journalists' Safety Indicators (JSIs)  
[http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/images/Themes/Freedom\\_of\\_expression/safety\\_of\\_journalists/JSI\\_guidelines\\_eng\\_20150820\\_2.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/images/Themes/Freedom_of_expression/safety_of_journalists/JSI_guidelines_eng_20150820_2.pdf).

**See the following sites for up-to-date case studies:**

<http://www.unesco.org>

<http://www.syriamediasafety.org>

<http://www.rsf.org>

<http://www.redcross.org.lb>

<https://www.icrc.org/ar>

<http://www.ifrc.org/ar>

<http://www.crisisgroup.org/ar.aspx>

<http://www.who.int/ar/>

<http://www.skeyesmedia.org/ar/Home>

<https://ijnet.org/ar/news>

<http://www.dc4mf.org/ar>

# 2

## Lesson 2

### Planning for Personal Safety

#### Lesson Description

This lesson will examine how journalists plan to cover events that are or might be violent. It looks at the need to prepare both for local events and for events further from a reporter's base. Other lessons in this course examine more closely the dangers facing investigative journalists specifically, as well as those facing journalists covering situations of covering civil unrest.

The teaching material focuses on three key topics: journalists subjected to kidnapping or attack; how to deal with threats; and the role of journalism in times of conflict. The instructor can decide to address all of these or not, depending on local conditions. A teacher might wish to use the section on kidnapping in a different lesson or even dedicate a whole class to it. These topics will be clarified through practical activities by students in class.

#### Lesson Aims

This lesson aims to:

1. Familiarize students with the ability to plan for personal safety during coverage in conflict zones.
2. Deepen understanding of how to deal with painful news that may cause shock and its impact on psychological and physical health.
3. Engage students in discussions on the learning material and commenting on it as well as expressing their views on issues related to personal safety.
4. Create an interactive environment between instructor and students and among the students themselves (activate discussion).
5. Prepare students to face various threats in their professional work.

## Learning Outcomes

At the end of this class students will have learned:

1. The importance of personal security and personal safety while doing their job.
2. Maintaining personal safety while covering protests, demonstrations, violence and events in conflict zones. Students must be aware of the impact a traumatic news story might have on them and prepare for this.
3. Discuss threats journalists face and how to deal with them.
4. How to cover events building up to hostility with deadly weapons including bombing and artillery.
5. How to deal with kidnapping during coverage and its impact on their psychological health.
6. How to cover events with the potential for sudden change. (The instructor may choose appropriate examples)
7. Take the necessary precautions while covering natural disasters, including events such as earthquakes and epidemics.
8. Students will also be able to describe how they will prepare for different scenarios.

## Methodology

Seminars, discussions, lectures and possibly guest talks by journalists and correspondents with field experience, as well as experts in security and psychology and discussion of examples of threats against journalists and how to deal with them. (The main focus should be on the underlined points in the lesson plan).

## ■ Linking the Lesson Plan to the Learning Outcomes

### Track 1 – Theoretical

The lecturer will present information on the personal safety of journalists.

Lesson Plan	Number of Hours	Learning Outcomes
Explain and discuss learning materials	3	2+1
1. Kidnapping and attack		
2. Responding to threats		
3. Conflict-sensitive journalism		

### Track 2 – Practical

Activities related to the learning materials.

Lesson Plan	Number of Hours	Learning Outcomes
Practical activities	3	8+6+4
Activity 1: Answering questions		
Activity 2: Drawing scenarios of media coverage		
Activity 3: Discussion of examples of various types of dangers		

The lecturer must emphasize the need for research so journalism students are aware of the story, its context and details, as well as relevant local customs and the necessity of physical preparations such as the fitness to do the job. Students must also know what rights journalists might have but also the political and security situation. Emphasize good communications with the news desk or others in a position to get them out of the planned location or notify the relevant authority. Explore electronic safety applications such as 'Reporta', Guardly, bSafe, Red Panic Button, Salama App, Umbrella.

Reporters should strive to be impartial but not let that get in the way of safety. Depending on the event, it might be safer to be behind security forces or on other occasions to be closer to the demonstrators/protesters, even though these choices might identify them with one side or the other.

The teacher should describe to the class the issues concerning trauma that journalists might suffer in certain conditions and why this has not been a major subject of research and discussion until recent years. Journalists have been assumed to be able to “tough it out” alone, even though research is now showing a major toll on the emotional and physical health of journalists experiencing trauma. Even when an attack is not direct, it can still be traumatic for the colleagues of the journalist who was abused.



## Track 1: Learning Materials

Learning materials tackle three topics related to personal safety:

1. Kidnapping and attack
2. Responding to threats
3. Conflict-sensitive journalism

### Introduction

The world is an increasingly dangerous place for journalists. On average, around 100 journalists are murdered every year, and the murderers go unpunished in nearly nine out of 10 cases. Hundreds of journalists each year are attacked, threatened, or harassed. Many are followed or have their phone calls and Internet communications intercepted. More than 150 are behind bars at any given time, some without being charged with a crime.

Throughout the profession, journalists face emotional stress when covering stories involving pain or loss of life, from the sexual abuse of children to terrorist attacks against civilians.

Digital technology enables nearly everyone to follow events in real time and reporting by specific journalists and media outlets. Violent and corrupt actors worldwide understand not only how information shapes perceptions, but also how the work of individual journalists can threaten their activities. In some countries, partisanship [or bias] on cable, broadcast, and Internet news outlets has blurred the lines between reporters and advocates, putting even more stress on the notion that journalists are neutral or professional observers. The result is a more hostile environment for the press worldwide, from sleepy small towns to international war zones.

The business of news is also different. Newsroom cutbacks have resulted in more freelancers reporting on the frontlines of stories, from overseas tsunamis to local highway accidents, ocean oil spills to political demonstrations, armed conflicts to organized crime. Although many of these stringers carry press credentials from major media organizations, they are still contract employees who often are responsible for their own preparation, equipment, insurance,

and care. Citizen journalists of all kinds are likely to face the same challenges. Unpaid contributors are reporting stories for evolving new media networks with little or no support or training. Today, more journalists than ever are deciding what stories to cover and how to approach them. In other words, they are working largely on their own.

A word is needed about media workers, who operate in support of a journalist, but who are often the forgotten cases, when it comes to considerations of safety. As with freelancers, sometimes equipment is insured, but not the people involved. Training is availed to reporters, but not to their support. Bloggers are even less on the radar.

### **1. Kidnapping and Attack**

The kidnapping of journalists for ransom or political gain has occurred frequently over the past decades. Numerous cases have been reported in countries such as Colombia, the Philippines, Russia, Iraq, Syria, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Mexico, and Somalia, according to CPJ research. In Afghanistan alone, at least 20 journalists and media workers were kidnapped by insurgent or criminal groups from 2007 through 2011, CPJ research shows. At least two of them died.

The best antidote is precaution. Travel in teams in dangerous areas, making sure that editors and perhaps a trusted local individual know your plans. Prepare a contingency plan with contact information for people and groups to call in the event you go missing. In advance discussions with editors and trusted contacts, decide the length of time at which they should interpret your being out of touch as an emergency.

If you are taken captive, one of the first things a kidnapper may do is research your name on the Internet. Everything about you online will be seen by your abductors: where you have worked, the stories you have reported, your education, your personal and professional associations. You may want to limit the personal details or political leanings you reveal in your online profile. Be prepared to answer tough questions about your family, finances, reporting, and political associations.

Hostile environment training includes coping mechanisms and survival techniques. Among them is developing a relationship with your captors, a step that could reduce the chance guards will do you harm. Cooperate with guards but do not attempt to appease them. As best as you can, explain your role as a non-combatant observer and that your job includes telling all sides of a story. Pace yourself throughout the ordeal and, as much as possible, maintain emotional equanimity. Promises of release may not be forthcoming; threats of execution could be made.

Journalists captured as a group should act in a way that leads guards to keep them together rather than separate them. This could involve cooperating with guards' orders and persuading captors that it would be less work to keep the group together. Journalists should offer each other moral and emotional support during captivity. Maintaining cohesion could help each captive's chances of successful release.

Opportunities for escape may arise during captivity, but many veteran journalists and security experts warn that the chance of success is exceedingly slim and must be balanced against the potentially fatal consequences of failure. In 2009, in Pakistan, New York Times reporter David Rohde and local reporter Tahir Ludin did escape from Taliban captors who had held them for seven months. After weighing the risks, the two men concluded their captors were not seriously negotiating for their release and chose "to try to make a run for it," Rohde later wrote. Some captors, however, may have a cohesive chain of command in which you may eventually be allowed to make the case that you are a reporter who deserves to be released.

During a kidnap, editors and family members are encouraged to work together. As soon as the captive situation is confirmed, they should get in touch with government representatives in the hostage country, along with authorities in the news organization's home country and that of each of the journalists. They should seek out advice from diplomats experienced in the area, private security experts, and press groups such as CPJ. The International News Safety Institute has a Global Hostage Crisis Help Centre that can recommend hostage experts. The Dart Center for Journalism & Trauma can advise affected parties on how to obtain counselling for family members and others. Whether to meet captors'



demands or not is a difficult question. Patience and emotions will be tested as the ordeal goes on.

Editors and relatives should make every effort to present a cohesive front, designating a person as a conduit to authorities and as a public spokesperson. Authorities may well make decisions independent of (and contrary to) the wishes of family and colleagues, but establishing a clear and consistent message to authorities and the press improves the chance of effectively influencing decision-making.

Most governments have stated policies of not paying ransom demands, although in practice a number of governments, including those of France and Japan, have reportedly helped pay ransom in exchange for the release of captive journalists. Editors and family members may or may not be able to influence decisions on the deployment of a government rescue operation. The British government spoke to editors, but then made its own decision to order a rescue operation for a British-Irish national working for *The New York Times* in Afghanistan in 2009. The London *Times* reporter, Stephen Farrell, was rescued, but an Afghan journalist who was working as Farrell's fixer, Sultan Mohammed Munadi, was killed. That is why it is important for journalists to be part of larger and often international networks of journalists, which may put pressure on governments to take a more proactive interest in their plight during captivity. However, caution needs to be sounded here. While in some cases such pressure may result in governmental actions that lead to your release, in other cases, such (international) attention and pressure may send a message to your captors that you are a high-value captive who might bring them into the international limelight. They might harm you in order to score an ideological point, as was the case in the beheadings of several Western journalists at the hands of ISIS terrorists.

Kidnappers may try to coerce a news organization into running propaganda or one-sided coverage of their viewpoint. In the 1990s, leftist guerrillas and rightist paramilitaries in Colombia often kidnapped journalists to coerce news outlets into coverage of their political grievances. In 2006, Brazil's TV Globo aired a homemade video detailing perceived deficiencies in prison conditions after a local criminal gang kidnapped a station reporter and technician. The two journalists were later freed. Editors need to recognize that acceding to kidnappers' demands could invite future attempts at coerced coverage.

In another form of coercion, captors may demand that a journalist make propagandistic statements on video. Some journalists have agreed, calculating that it may increase their chances of safe release. Others have resisted in the belief that displaying independence may give them some leverage with their captors. The decision depends entirely on the circumstances and the individuals involved.

## **2. Responding to threats**

Threats are not only a tactic designed to intimidate critical journalists; they are often followed by actual attacks. Thirty-five per cent of journalists murdered in the last two decades were threatened beforehand, according to CPJ research. You must take threats seriously, paying particular heed to those that suggest physical violence.

How to respond depends in part on local circumstances. Reporting a threat to police is usually good practice in places with strong rule of law and trustworthy law enforcement. In countries where law enforcement is corrupt, reporting a threat may be futile or even counterproductive. Those factors should be weighed carefully.

Threats should be reported, of course. Tell colleagues and editors and any international journalism NGOs, such as the IFJ, INSI and CPJ.

Journalists under threat can also consider a temporary or permanent change in beat. Editors should change assignment if requested for safety reasons. Some threatened journalists have found that time away from a sensitive beat allowed a hostile situation to lessen in intensity.

In severe circumstances, journalists may consider relocation either within or outside their country. Threatened journalists should consult with their loved ones to assess potential relocation, and seek help from their news organization and professional groups if relocation is deemed necessary.

The Colombian investigative editor Daniel Coronell and his family, for example, relocated to the United States for two years beginning in 2005 after he faced a series of threats, including the delivery of a funeral wreath to his home. Coronell

resumed his investigative work when he returned to Colombia, and although threats continued, they came at a slower pace and with lesser intensity.

How journalists can respond to direct or indirect attacks, both as individuals and in concert with colleagues and other stakeholders, is covered in another lesson that deals with advocacy. Even journalists who are forced to flee and go into exile still very often continue and intensify the fight from where they end up. The families of killed journalists are also often extremely active in fighting for safety and against impunity.

### **3. Conflict-Sensitive Journalism**

Good journalism is difficult work at the best of times. Reporters rely on their training and standards to overcome these difficulties and deliver news, which is accurate and impartial. However, when a society is threatened by violent conflict, journalism faces greater difficulties. Opposing sides seek to control the media. Information can be unreliable or censored. There is personal risk.

To provide reliable information to the public in a time of violent conflict requires additional journalism skills. Reporters need to understand more about what causes conflict, and how conflict develops and ends. Reporters need to know where to look for these causes and solutions. By providing this information, journalism makes the public far more well informed about the conflict beneath the violence, and can assist in resolving it. Reporters need to be aware of this crucial role that journalism can play in a time of conflict.



## Track 2: Practical

**These activities aim to help students properly plan news related to violence, and how to take the necessary precautions to maintain their personal safety.**

### ➔ **Activity 1: Discussion of various professional safety procedures**

Here is a checklist of how a journalist might prepare himself or herself to cover a news story that includes violence. Students should discuss each item. Teachers might withhold this checklist and get students to make their own and compare with this:

- What is the event about?
- Have I researched it fully?
- Is it expected to be peaceful or not?
- Do I need protective clothing (Kevlar body armour, helmet)?
- Do I have a basic first aid kit, mobile phone, press card?
- Should I be identified as a journalist (tee-shirt, press card visible on a lanyard), or not?
- Is it necessary or advisable to check with security forces or protest organisers?
- Talk through possible risks, physical and emotional, with an editor.
- Ensure I know how I will keep in regular touch, particularly if difficulties arise.
- Agree that partners and families are kept informed.
- Be positive about what I am doing and that what I am doing is important and worthwhile.
- Be familiar with any equipment I am using and that I can file stories.
- When covering stories that include death, understand that any distress I suffer in the face of tragedy is normal and not weakness.
- Ensure proper eating, hydration and sleep. All of these can affect journalistic judgement. Get some exercise if I can.
- Acknowledge my feelings.
- Understand that feelings inform my journalism and help me process trauma.
- Talk to others.

Students might want to add to this checklist.

### ➔ **Activity 2: Drawing scenarios**

In groups, students should discuss and write out their preparations for different possible situations, from a protest to more violent confrontations, to an earthquake, to floods, to an Ebola or Zika outbreak.

### ➔ **Activity 3:**

Discussion of examples related to different risks aimed at analyzing types of danger and how to deal with it. Lecturers are free to select additional activities related to the learning outcomes.

## **Related Readings**

The readings will help students reinforce professional knowledge related to the need for journalists to maintain their personal safety. The instructor may suggest additional relevant readings.

1. Chapter one. **Live News - A Survival Guide for Journalists**, Peter McIntyre, International Federation of Journalists, Brussels

<http://ifj-safety.org/assets/docs/130/197/d325b82-1b5d2c5.pdf>

Students may dispense with the Geneva Convention for the time being as it will be revisited in a later unit.

2. Students should read the IFJ and the Federation of Arab Journalists' Report on Gaza, 2009. More details in the teaching material:

[http://www.ifj-arabic.org/dfiles/attach\\_files/2011-09-24-03-39-50\\_IFJ%202009%20Gaza%20Report.pdf](http://www.ifj-arabic.org/dfiles/attach_files/2011-09-24-03-39-50_IFJ%202009%20Gaza%20Report.pdf)

3. INSI safety advisories <http://newssafety.org/safety/staying-safe>.

Reporta safety app <http://www.iwmf.org/our-impact/reporta/>

<http://www.reporta.org>

Guardly app <https://www.guardly.com/technology/mobile-safety-apps>

bSafe app <http://getbsafe.com/>

Red Panic Button <http://redpanicbutton.com/features/>

Salama app <http://www.icfj.org/blogs/salama-app-aims-keep-journalists-safe>

Umbrella app <https://secfirst.org/umbrella.html>



## Additional Reading

For additional reading on media field experiences, the following resources are useful:

### **1. Survival Tips for the Aspiring Conflict Photographer**

**Lauren Margolis, Photoshelter Blog 12 Aug 2013**

<http://blog.photoshelter.com/2013/08/survival-tips-for-the-aspiring-conflict-photographer/>

### **2. What Every Freelancer at Risk Needs to Know**

**Gavin Reese, Dart Center, November 25, 2013**

<https://dartcenter.org/content/what-every-freelancer-at-risk-needs-to-know>

### **3. The importance of general safety training for war correspondents**

**(Arabic text) Lindsay Kalter, IJNet, August 2, 2012**

<http://ijnet.org/ar/blog/129620>

### **4. Reporters on Syria's war: why they do it, what they risk**

**Scott Peterson, Christian Science Monitor, May 20, 2015**

[http://m.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2015/0520/Reporters-on-Syria-s-war-why-they-do-it-what-they-risk?cmpid=addthis\\_facebook](http://m.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2015/0520/Reporters-on-Syria-s-war-why-they-do-it-what-they-risk?cmpid=addthis_facebook)

### **5. For Journalists: 11 Tips to Guarantee Your Safety (Arabic text)**

**Sarah Saeed, Dot Misr, 30 June 2015**

<http://www.dotmsr.com/details/%D8%B5%D8%AD%D9%81%D9%8A%D9%88%D9%86>

### **6. Journalism Safety**

**Maggie Moseley-Smelling, Gateway Journalism**

**Review. 2015, Vol. 45 Issue 336, p10-10. 2/3 p**

*The article focuses on the safety of journalists who go on dangerous assignments. Since 1992, 72 journalists have been reportedly killed in Syria. Journalists James Foley and Steven Sotloff were assassinated in Syria in August 2014. Reporter Max Fisher offers some tips for conflict reporting,*

*which include knowing the dangers, having a plan, and keeping trustworthy people informed about one's movements.*

### **7. Gaza media safety (2009)**

This assessment describes the challenges media workers faced in the wake of the military offensive launched on 27 December 2008 by Israeli security forces against Hamas in the Palestinian Gaza Strip. The report is based on desk studies and telephone interviews with media workers covering the conflict from both sides of the Gaza border. The Palestinian Journalists Syndicate in Gaza, the International Federation of Journalists, the International News Safety Institute, Reporters Without Borders and ARTICLE 19 provided important contributions for the assessment. The aim of the assessment, produced and published by International Media Support, is to establish an overview of the media situation and the challenges and dangers faced by the journalists and photographers who covered the conflict. <http://www.mediasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/ims-gaza-media-safety-2009.pdf>

### **8. Caught Between Five Extremes: Reporting Pakistan's War on the Media by Razeshta Sethna**

Razeshta Sethna, a journalist at the Dawn Media Group in Pakistan, gives a comprehensive picture of the state of the media in her country in this paper. Based on interviews with more than 30 key figures, the author concludes that journalists are caught between five forces – the state, its security apparatus, political parties, militant organizations and religious-right Islamist groups. “The state’s security apparatus stands accused of subverting media freedom by threatening and harassing journalists – women reporters included – who dare write (and broadcast) about certain issues, including the military operation against the Taliban in North Waziristan, drone strikes near the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, and Baluchistan and its missing persons”.

The author concludes that those responsible for the threats and attacks against journalists, and the media as an industry, are not held accountable by the state. It also implicates the state in the harassment and murder of journalists, questioning why it appears to allow a rise in the level of impunity

for perpetrators. Many ask whether Pakistan's security and military agencies will ever be investigated for their harassment of journalists. The violence directed at the media has inevitably had a negative impact on the quality of journalism in Pakistan.

<http://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Razeshta%20Sethna%20-%20Caught%20between%20Five%20Extremes.%20Reporting%20Pakistan.pdf>

### **9. Preparing for Battle**

**Ricchiardi Sherry, American Journalism Review  
July/August 2002, Vol. 24 Issue 6, p 38. 6p**

This article discusses safety guidelines proposed by journalists for war correspondents in the U.S; provides information on the experiences of war correspondents during their assignments; details the safety standards for war correspondents; and gives information on a National Press Club forum that focused on personal safety training for journalists assigned in dangerous places.

<http://ajrarchive.org/Article.asp?id=2566>

### **10. Dangers of Blogging in Bangladesh: Murders of Writers Continue**

**Authors: Baker, Vicky Source: Index on Censorship  
June 2015, Vol. 44 Issue 2, p76-77**

The article examines the series of murders of bloggers in Bangladesh as of June 2015. It details the case of science writer Ananta Bijoy Das who was killed in an open street in Sylhet in May 2015 in broad daylight. The government of Bangladesh has reportedly not issued a statement on the murders, which suggests that they are afraid of extremists.

<http://ioc.sagepub.com/content/44/2/76.short?rss=1&ssource=mfr>



## **11. The state of Uganda’s Journalists’ Safety, Security and Professionalism** **Paul Kimumwe, 2015, University of Nairobi, Kenya**

This report presents findings from a baseline survey of the situation of Ugandan journalists’ safety, security and professionalism commissioned by the Human Rights Network for Journalist (HRNJ-Uganda) with financial support from the Democratic Governance Facility (DGF). The main objective of the survey was to establish the extent to which journalists understand and adhere to the different laws, policy frameworks and other professional codes that affect journalism and how these relate to their personal safety and security.

[https://www.academia.edu/11718225/State\\_of\\_Journalists\\_Safety\\_Security\\_and\\_Professionalism\\_in\\_Uganda](https://www.academia.edu/11718225/State_of_Journalists_Safety_Security_and_Professionalism_in_Uganda)

### **List of Resources, Guides and Published Articles:**

**I. Resources related to NGOs:** To review activities of these organizations and obtain information on personal safety such as covering strikes, demonstrations, wars and natural disasters, and making risk assessments, see:

**1. The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)**

[http://www.ifj.org/fileadmin/images/Website\\_pics/IFJ\\_Brochure.pdf](http://www.ifj.org/fileadmin/images/Website_pics/IFJ_Brochure.pdf)

**2. The International Federation of Journalists’ International Safety Fund**

<http://ifj-safety.org/en/contents/ifj-international-safety-fund>

**3. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization’s (UNESCO) Safety of Journalists endeavors**

<http://en.unesco.org/themes/safety-journalists>

**4. The Rory Peck Trust Risk Assessment Notes**

<https://rorypecktrust.org/resources/safety-and-security/risk-assessment/Risk-Assessment-Notes-1>

### **5. The International News Safety Institute Safety Code**

<http://www.newssafety.org/uploads/Good%20Practice%20INSI%20Final%20Feb2014.pdf>

### **6. The Committee to Protect Journalists**

<https://twitter.com/cpjmena> and <https://cpj.org/reports/>

### **7. Reporters Instructed in Saving Colleagues (RISC)**

<http://risctraining.org/>

## **II. Guides and Reports:**

Students are provided with information on coverage of epidemics such as Ebola, psychological shocks to which they are exposed, the terrorizing of journalists in armed conflicts and how to assess threats and risks.

### **See these links for the following information:**

#### **1. Safety Guidelines for Covering Violent Demonstrations and Civil Unrest**

<http://ifj-safety.org/en/contents/international-code-of-practice-for-the-safe-conduct-of-journalism>

#### **2. Justice in the News: A Response to Targeting of media in Gaza**

[http://www.ifj-arabic.org/dfiles/attach\\_files/2011-09-24-03-39-50\\_IFJ%202009%20Gaza%20Report.pdf](http://www.ifj-arabic.org/dfiles/attach_files/2011-09-24-03-39-50_IFJ%202009%20Gaza%20Report.pdf)

#### **3. Tips on covering infectious diseases like Ebola**

<https://www.newsu.org/resources/sri/covering-infectious-disease>  
and <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2014/10/covering-ebola-the-invisible-insurgency/381316/>

#### **4. Journalist Security Guide Introduction**

<https://vimeo.com/album/2224540/video/36356772>

<https://cpj.org/reports/2012/04/journalist-security-guide.php>

- Preparedness: With International Journalist and Filmmaker Molly Bingham

<https://vimeo.com/37372542>

- **Armed Conflict: With War Correspondent, Author and Documentarian Sebastian Junger**  
<https://vimeo.com/album/2224540/video/36626583>
- **Natural Disasters**  
<https://cpj.org/reports/2012/04/natural-disasters.php>

### **5. INSI Safety Code**

<http://www.newssafety.org/about-insi/insi-safety-code/>

### **6. Conflict Sensitive Journalism**

<https://www.mediasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/ims-csj-handbook-AR-2004.pdf>

# 3

## Lesson 3

### Personal Health Care and Trauma in Hostile Environments

#### Lesson Description

This class will concentrate on making students aware of the importance of personal health care when reporting from hostile environments. The teaching material is centered on two key topics: preventive health care and trauma. It includes activities and readings to prepare students ahead of media assignments.

#### Lesson Aims

This lesson aims to:

1. Alert students to the need for personal health care while covering stories in hostile environments.
2. Familiarise students with, and discuss, measures to be taken.
3. Discuss trauma and its impact.
4. Prepare students to be able to express trauma.
5. Train students on personal prevention.

#### Learning Outcomes

At the end of this class students will learn:

1. To describe the importance of personal health care.
2. To describe how they will protect their own health while covering stories in a hostile environment.
3. Analyse the importance of maintaining a healthy working environment.
4. Describe the measures to be taken before embarking on an assignment in a hostile environment.

5. Describe how they would deal with trauma upon returning.
6. How to complete their assignments when covering events.

## Methodology

The methodology builds on classroom discussions and lectures on personal health care and trauma in hostile environments. The instructor may call on a public health physician, nutritionist, psychology expert and an experienced journalist in the field. The instructor may also rely on a visiting health care worker. Showing a video on health risks and health preventive measures would be useful. (It is important to focus on the underlined points in the learning outcomes.)

## Linking the Lesson Plan to the Learning Outcomes

### Track 1 – Theoretical:

The lecturer will present information on personal health care, trauma and its impact.

Lesson Plan	Number of Hours	Learning Outcomes
Explain and discuss learning materials	2	2+1
1. Trauma		
2. Personal health care		

**Track 2 – Practical:**

Activities related to the learning materials.

Lesson Plan	Number of Hours	Learning Outcomes
Practical activities	3	6+5+4
Activity 1: Discussion and analysis of questions on trauma		
Activity 2: Analysis of videos on trauma		
Activity 3: Prepare a paper on necessary measures for personal health care		

► **Lesson Plan**

The instructor should shed light on the following matters:

- Why is health care so important? (Students should consider the importance of staying healthy so they can complete the assignment; they are not a burden on colleagues in the field; the story gets reported).
- Personal fitness: Are you fit enough to undertake the assignment?
- Can you run if necessary; carry heavy equipment if relevant; work for long hours; stay awake and still make considered judgements; and understand the importance of good health to morale?
- Get students to outline what should be considered before undertaking an assignment. Teacher can make suggestions as to different types of assignments. (Covering a demonstration, violent skirmishes, firefight, shelling, epidemic, natural disaster, mass shooting).
- The importance of personal hygiene to remain healthy: What measures should you take (sanitised wipes, sanitised hand cleanser, keeping feet clean and dry, using foot powder, keeping teeth clean)?

- Vaccinations: What vaccinations are necessary if you are traveling to another country? Students should check the World Health Organisation (WHO) site at <http://www.who.int/ith/countrylist01.html>.
- Hydration: How much water should one take a day in different conditions? Possibly up to six litres in very hot conditions such as deserts. What are the signs of dehydration (headaches, urine a deep yellow)? How to ensure clean water (use of water filters, chemical purifier, boiling for ten minutes, the cost of buying mineral water, etc.).
- Avoiding food poisoning, such as that caused by salmonella or E.coli.
- First aid kits: What should be carried in a first aid kit?
- Why is wearing a medi-alert bracelet with blood type and other medical information important? (Ensuring you get the correct blood type if injured and you can donate the correct blood if a colleague needs a transfusion. It should also list any allergies, such as to penicillin or serious food allergies).
- Teachers should raise the issue of trauma that might be caused by what a journalist might see (bodies, women and children under attack) and the need to get help. Teachers should emphasise that suffering trauma is a natural reaction and not to be ashamed, but it must be treated. Students are encouraged to talk about any distressing experiences they might encounter when working in areas of civil disturbance. See material on trauma below.



## Track 1: Learning Materials

Learning materials tackle two topics related to tips on trauma and personal health care for journalists in hostile environments

1. Trauma
2. Personal health care

### Introduction

The BBC Academy has a number of videos dealing with trauma that are useful teaching aids and are designed for training BBC journalists.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/academy/journalism/safety>

The Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma advocates ethical and thorough reporting of trauma; compassionate, professional treatment of victims and survivors by journalists; and greater awareness by media organisations of the impact of trauma coverage on both news professionals and news consumers. Material available from the Dart Center deals both with the impact of trauma on journalists and the impact coverage might have on news sources. The Dart Center is part of Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism <http://dartcenter.org>.

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) advises journalists before going to hostile areas for longer periods to get a medical check-up, to see a dentist and update vaccinations. It advises journalists to inform themselves about sexually transmitted diseases and contracting the HIV virus; malaria; medicines; dental hygiene and food and body hygiene.

It advises on doing a first aid certificate course, knowing your blood group and remembering to take with you your international vaccination certificate booklet. It also says journalists should seek psychological help, if necessary, upon return.



## 1. Trauma

The following is a list of ways individuals may respond emotionally to a traumatic event, and which can indicate whether a person is suffering from acute stress reaction. Generally, six “yes” responses indicate the presence of acute stress.

Upsetting thoughts or memories about the event that have come into your mind against your will.

- Upsetting dreams about the event.
- Acting or feeling as though the event were happening again.
- Feeling upset by reminders of the event.
- Bodily reactions (such as fast heartbeat, stomach churning, sweatiness, dizziness) when reminded of the event.
- Difficulty falling or staying asleep.
- Irritability or outbursts of anger.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Heightened awareness of potential dangers to yourself and others.
- Being jumpy or being startled at something unexpected.

<https://en.rsf.org/IMG/pdf/handbook.pdf>

The New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists advises media workers to keep physically fit and maintain a proper diet. Journalists expecting to be abroad or on remote assignment for a significant length of time should consider pre-departure visits to medical professionals.

If you plan to work internationally, consult with a qualified physician or clinic that caters to international travellers to ensure you receive all recommended vaccinations in advance. As proof of vaccinations, make and carry photocopies of a signed and stamped yellow-coloured International Certificate of Vaccination approved by the World Health Organization; this certificate is available from almost all qualified clinics. Some insurers, the World Health Organisation says, may require proof of immunisation as a condition for emergency medical coverage or repatriation in case of emergency. Some countries may require proof of vaccination as a condition of entry; check the requirements of specific countries. Bolivia, for instance, has required visitors to have a yellow fever vaccination.

Most doctors recommend a 10-year tetanus shot for adults aged 19 to 64. For journalists travelling to areas where malaria is prevalent, doctors may also prescribe a prophylactic antimalarial medication to protect against infection. For some areas, vaccination against polio, hepatitis A and B, yellow fever, and typhoid may also be recommended. The vaccination for hepatitis B must be planned a half-year in advance because it requires three separate inoculations over a six-month period. Vaccination for yellow fever is mandatory for travel to most West African and Central African countries. Meningitis and polio vaccines are required for travel to Mecca in Saudi Arabia.

Vaccinations against cholera are no longer routinely recommended for international travel, although an oral cholera vaccine may be recommended for aid workers, journalists and others traveling to high-risk areas. An oral cholera vaccination approved for use by many nations requires two doses taken over a span of two to not more than six weeks.

Expect that some vaccinations may make you temporarily ill, but any prolonged side-effect or high fever should be reported immediately to a physician. Be aware that no vaccination is 100 percent effective. Neither are vaccinations a substitute for taking other reasonable and necessary precautions against contracting illness or disease.

### ► **Personal Precautions**

Clean drinking water is essential at all times. Bottled water in sealed containers is one option in areas where tap water is known to be, or suspected of being, contaminated. (The International Federation of Journalists recommends drinking only bottled carbonated water in many countries; bottled still water can be contaminated.) If dirty water cannot be avoided, bringing the water to a visible, rolling boil for at least one minute is the most effective way to kill pathogens, according to the World Health Organisation. Allow the water to cool at room temperature before placing it in a refrigerator. There are other ways to sanitise water, depending on the level of suspected contaminants. Use of iodine pills or chlorine will kill most parasites. But in regions such as South Asia and much of sub-Saharan Africa, filter systems made of ceramic, membrane, or carbon may be the only way to effectively filter pathogens, including microscopic elements of human waste. Journalists should research the water purification method most appropriate for their destination.

In areas with potentially contaminated water, eat only food that is thoroughly cooked. Fruit should be peeled or washed in clean water. Avoid food from street vendors, along with products made with raw milk, water, or eggs. Avoid swallowing water when showering, use clean water to brush your teeth, and wash your hands and tableware before eating. Use of hand sanitiser is recommended. Avoid exposure to open water as well. The WHO points out that coastal and inland waters and even hotel pools can be contaminated. Riverbanks and muddy terrain should not be traversed without appropriate, water-resistant footwear.

In hot climates, especially during times of physical activity, adding table salt to food or drink can prevent loss of electrolytes, dehydration, and heat stroke. The WHO recommends carrying an oral rehydration solution. If none is available, a substitute is to mix six teaspoons of sugar and one teaspoon of salt into one litre of safe drinking water. In malarial zones, be sure to have mosquito netting and wear long sleeves and trousers.

Any cuts or abrasions should be immediately treated with an antiseptic cream or ointment. Itching or flaking between the toes should also be immediately treated with an athlete's foot or other anti-fungal treatment. (Strong, over-the-counter athlete's foot creams will also stop the spread of other fungi.) Wash daily, even if it is only with a wet cloth or towel. Talcum powder can be applied on sensitive areas of the skin. If you are allergic to bee stings or other insect bites, carry a self-injection kit or other prescribed antidotes. Carry sufficient and updated medication, contact lenses, and eyeglasses, including spares.

Know your blood type and carry a blood donor card or other medical card that clearly indicates it. As mentioned, those working in hostile environments may wish to wear either a bracelet or a laminated card around their neck indicating their blood type and any allergies. Anyone allergic to drugs such as penicillin should always carry or wear a prominent card, bracelet, or other identification alerting medical personnel to the allergy. In areas with especially high rates of HIV infection, some Western embassies maintain blood banks open to embassy staff and other visiting nationals. Journalists may have the option to donate blood with the understanding that the blood bank would be made available to them if necessary.

For more on this see <https://cpj.org/reports/2012/04/basic-preparedness.php>



## Track 2: Activities

These activities aim to prepare students to take the necessary health precautions before going on assignment and to deal with trauma.

- ➔ **Activity 1:** After discussing the points on the trauma list, each student will be asked to specify his/her strengths and weaknesses based on the list.
- ➔ **Activity 2:** The teacher shows a video on dealing with trauma then asks students to visualize how they would deal with trauma while covering events (group work).
- ➔ **Activity 3:** Prepare a paper on personal health procedures to undertake before going on assignment.

### ► **Reading**

It is useful to read chapter 5 of the book *Live News: A Survival Guide for Journalists* to answer most students' questions.

[http://www.ifj.org/fileadmin/images/Live\\_News\\_versions/Live\\_News\\_EN.pdf](http://www.ifj.org/fileadmin/images/Live_News_versions/Live_News_EN.pdf)



## Additional Reading

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For additional information and important details on the topic, students can use the following resources:

**1. Covering Trauma:** A Training Guide, Jina Moore, Search for Common Ground & Radio for Peacebuilding Africa, 2011 (English and French).

[https://www.sfcg.org/programmes/rfpa/pdf/2011-Covering\\_Trauma\\_Color\\_EN.pdf](https://www.sfcg.org/programmes/rfpa/pdf/2011-Covering_Trauma_Color_EN.pdf)

[http://www.sfcg.org/programmes/rfpa/pdf/2011-Covering\\_Trauma\\_Color\\_FR.pdf](http://www.sfcg.org/programmes/rfpa/pdf/2011-Covering_Trauma_Color_FR.pdf)

**2. Why Students Should Understand How to Cover Trauma,**

Katherine Reed, Media Shift, May 4, 2015.

<http://mediashift.org/2015/05/why-students-should-understand-how-to-cover-trauma>

**3. Covering Mass Killings,**

Frank Ochberg and Bruce Shapiro, Dart Center for Journalism & Trauma, January 9, 2011.

<http://dartcenter.org/content/covering-mass-killings#.VQmgz2SUfK0>

**4. A Guide on Safe Food for Travellers in English, Arabic, and French, WHO.**

[http://www.who.int/topics/test/food\\_safety/safe\\_food\\_travel.pdf](http://www.who.int/topics/test/food_safety/safe_food_travel.pdf), [http://www.who.int/foodsafety/publications/consumer/travellers\\_ar.pdf?ua=1](http://www.who.int/foodsafety/publications/consumer/travellers_ar.pdf?ua=1)

[http://www.who.int/foodsafety/publications/consumer/travellers\\_fr.pdf?ua=1](http://www.who.int/foodsafety/publications/consumer/travellers_fr.pdf?ua=1)

**5. Food and Water Safety, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.**

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/food-water-safety>

# 4

## Lesson 4

### Risk Assessment

#### Lesson Description

This class will concentrate on students learning to assess their own risk. This exercise follows students planning their preparations for an assignment. A formal risk assessment might be necessary for insurance purposes or for an employer. Journalists applying for a grant from a trust or funder will also need to supply a risk assessment. A gender-sensitive frame is needed throughout here, notwithstanding that there is a separate lesson on gender and safety.

The lesson deals with four key issues: Assessing risks (when do I need to a risk assessment? how do I use a risk assessment? a case study of an assignment), a communications plan (choosing a key contact, who this plan involves and personal details about you and your team), sources and information, and, security and weapons. It includes activities related to the teaching material to help students produce a clear and accurate assessment of potential risks while on assignment.

#### Lesson Aims

This lesson aims to:

1. Introduce students to the importance of assessing risks.
2. Prepare students for risk management.
3. Identify different risky assignments.
4. Prepare students to draw up a communications plan.
5. Learn how to protect sources.
6. Allow students to present their ideas and express their opinions.

## Learning Outcomes

At the end of this class students will learn:

1. How to assess security risks before a given assignment.
2. To discuss a communications plan and specify the people with whom to be in contact.
3. To prepare themselves to cover risky events.
4. To focus on issues like protection, insurance and other matters.
5. To analyze the types of risks associated with an assignment.
6. To commit to, and protect, sources' secrecy.
7. Discuss and analyze case studies of risk.
8. Methodology
9. The methodology in this class depends on: lectures, seminars and guest talks. It is imperative to call on journalists, security experts and experts in psychology to discuss potential risks and how to assess them (with a focus on all issues underlined in the lesson plan).

## Linking the Lesson Plan to the Learning Outcomes

### Track 1 – Theoretical:

The lecturer will present detailed information on assessing risks.

Lesson Plan	Number of Hours	Learning Outcomes
Explain and discuss learning materials	3	2+1
1. What is assessing risks (when do I need to a risk assessment? how do I use a risk assessment? how do I update it while on assignment?)		
2. A communication plan (choosing a key contact, who this plan involves and personal details about you and your team)		

3. Sources and information		
4. Security and weapons		

### Track 2 – Practical:

Activities related to the learning materials.

Lesson Plan	Number of Hours	Learning Outcomes
Practical activities	3	7+6+3
Activity 1: Filling a risk assessment form		
Activity 2: Examples of different types of risks and analysing them		
Activity 3: Writing a summary of a risky assignment		

The lesson plan focuses on a discussion in class on risk assessment. What constitutes risk?

The lecturer emphasizes the need to research risk assessment. Journalists, NGOs and government agencies are all useful for information.

Students should be directed to human rights organizations online as well as journalist bodies such as Reporters Without Borders, the Rory Peck Trust, and others, all of which will provide information useful for a risk assessment.

For a risk assessment, students should outline the assignment in some detail; listing who they might speak to, interviews, their travel plans, where they are going and how long they will be away - whether it will be hours or weeks.

A risk assessment should give specific details of what the assignment is, what they intend to film, photograph, record, write about to make their story, including relevant meetings, interviews and locations.



Risk assessments should be undertaken before any assignment that involves risk, such as war, civil unrest, natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, or humanitarian crises such as stories relating to refugees.

Risks specific to an assignment:

1. Is this assignment a sensitive topic?
2. Are you covering a high-risk location, activity or event?
3. Who will you be meeting? Are they potentially under surveillance, and might they be at risk if they talk to you?
4. Is your security threatened by talking to specific people, visiting or working in a specific area?
5. What measures should you take? Maybe you should leave sensitive interviews until the end of your visit, and so minimise risk.

Effective risk management is about asking questions, listening to the answers, and working within the realm of the possible. The assessment should include the recent experience of other journalists.

Consider health and medical threats? Is the area a malaria risk location? Are there risks from particular medications?

Students should assess their own health for travelling. Are they healthy? Can they take a physically demanding environment? Will they have access to a hospital if necessary? Will insurance cover medical evacuation?

The British Rory Peck Trust has a risk assessment form online which could be used.

<https://rorypecktrust.org/resources/safety-and-security/risk-assessment/Get-the-Documents-and-Get-Started>

Jonathan Stray has written on how to protect yourself, your sources, and your scoop on sensitive stories, by threat modeling.

<https://source.opennews.org/en-US/learning/security-journalists-part-two-threat-modeling/>



## Track 1: Learning Materials

The learning materials focus on four topics related to risk assessment:

Assessing risk

A communications plan

Sources and information

Security and weapons

### 1. What is Risk Assessment?

A Risk Assessment is an exercise that can help you identify and assess the threats and risks to you and your colleagues whilst working in hostile or dangerous environments, and helps you minimize these risks. A Risk Assessment will help you to evaluate whether you are prepared, physically, mentally, and practically to undertake a particular assignment.

Decisions you make in the field have direct bearing on your safety and that of others. The risks inherent in covering war, political unrest, and crime can never be eliminated, although careful planning and risk assessment can mitigate the dangers.

Be realistic about your physical and emotional limitations. It might be useful to consider in advance all the individuals who would be affected if you were, say, disabled or killed. Consider as well the emotional toll of continuing to report stressful stories one after another.

News managers should regard the safety of field journalists as the primary consideration in making an assignment. They should not penalize a journalist for turning down an assignment based on the potential risk. News organizations should recognize their responsibilities to support all field journalists, whether they are staff members or stringers. Editors need to be honest about the specific support their organization is willing to provide, including health, life insurance or emotional counselling. Matters left unresolved before a journalist begins a story can lead to complications later.

### ► **Risk Assessment**

Always prepare a security risk assessment in advance of a potentially dangerous assignment. This can include war, civil unrest as well as humanitarian disasters caused by natural occurring events such as earthquakes or floods. The plan should identify contact people and the time and means of communication; describe all known hazards, including the history of problems in the reporting area; and outline contingency plans that address the perceived risks. Diverse sources should be consulted, including journalists with experience in the location or topic, diplomatic advisories, reports on press freedom and human rights, and academic research. An independent journalist working without a relationship with a news organization must be especially rigorous in compiling a security assessment, consulting with peers, researching the risks, and arranging a contact network.

Editors working with staffers or freelancers should have substantial input into the assessment, take the initiative in raising security questions, and receive a copy of the assessment.

### ► **When do I need to undertake a Risk Assessment?**

All journalists and freelancers are encouraged to undertake a risk assessment before beginning any assignment. It is not only relevant for conflict or crime zones; a risk assessment can also be essential where dangers are sometimes less obvious or apparent, including local news. The Rory Peck Trust and BBC recommend that journalists consider carefully why they are undertaking the assignment – Do you need to go? Do you want to go? The time to ask yourself ‘why am I doing this?’ is before you set off, not when you are in the middle of an unfolding crisis. Your reasons may be clear in your head, but writing them down can help you focus on the motivations behind a project and the risks involved.

### ► **How to use a risk assessment?**

- Start working on a risk assessment from the beginning of your project, and integrate it into your planning routine.
- A risk assessment should be confidential: make sure it is kept safe and do not take it with you when you leave.
- Key security contact: if you are working alone, share and discuss your

risk assessment with someone you trust, who is not on location and who can act as your emergency coordinator. This person will need to be constantly available during the period that you are on assignment, so make sure he/she understands his/her role and what's expected of him/her.

- Use a risk assessment to support your project when you are pitching it. Commissioning editors will appreciate you are taking risks seriously and in a professional way. Editors, lawyers and insurance brokers may require a risk assessment before commissioning a story or supporting a project.

Risk Assessment form in Arabic:

[https://rorypecktrust.org/getmedia/347825e5-799e-405c-b1cc-bdd1d9785d23/Risk-Assessment-RPT\\_Arabic.doc.aspx?ext=.doc](https://rorypecktrust.org/getmedia/347825e5-799e-405c-b1cc-bdd1d9785d23/Risk-Assessment-RPT_Arabic.doc.aspx?ext=.doc)

### ► Update your risk assessment while on assignment

It is hard to predict every eventuality, and so it is important to re-evaluate and adapt safety measures whilst on the ground. Take some time each day to think about your safety: what precautions should you take that you didn't foresee? Do you have to change your travel/accommodation/filming plans?

Trust your instincts, but also plan in advance how you will be able to update the safety information you have and make sure you can communicate any changes securely to your relevant contacts.

When working on your risk assessment, research and consult as many sources as possible to make sure you understand the nature of the threats facing you, and ways in which they can be minimized. Journalists, NGOs, activists and government agencies will all be able to help with this. Online reports and guides are also useful.

Effective risk management is about asking questions, listening to the answers, and "working within the realm of the possible". Importantly, this part of the assessment should include the recent experience of other journalists. This is vital for insurance cover and a very valuable tool to discover how other people have faced and resolved (or not) similar problems.

▶ **Example of an Assignment**

To be able to identify risks, you need to properly outline what your project is. So before beginning your risk assessment it is important to write an assignment outline. Try to identify and list the key building blocks of the project: all the sequences, interviews, travel plans and actions that are vital to your plans.

▶ **Locations and brief schedule**

Where are you going, when, and for how long?

▶ **Assignment details**

Give specific details of what you intend to cover to complete your assignment. What will you film, photograph, record, write about to make your piece? Include relevant meetings, sequences, interviews and locations. This will act as the basic foundation of your risk assessment, and will give you a clear idea of what you want to achieve and how you want to achieve it.

▶ **Project specific risks**

- Is this a sensitive topic?
- Are you covering a high-risk location, activity or event?
- Who will you be meeting, are they potentially under surveillance, and might they be at risk if they talk to you?
- Is your security threatened by talking to specific people, visiting or working in a specific area?
- What measures should you take? For example, could you leave sensitive interviews to the end of your visit, so they are less likely to affect your plans?

▶ **Health and Medical**

Include all potential threats, such as access to safe drinking water and extreme weather conditions. This will help you assess what you need to include in your First Aid and Trauma Kit.

Do you need any vaccinations? List all required vaccinations, immunizations and boosters and make sure you are up-to-date.

Do you have any medical conditions that you and others need to take into account and/or pose a risk? Do not travel to a hostile environment if you are not in good health. Take into account that some assignments may be physically demanding. Have regular medical and dental check-ups. If you need to take any special medication, check whether it will be locally available or if you can take this with you (some countries have severe restrictions on the import of medical items). If necessary, bring a letter from your doctor and the medication leaflet with details of the active components.

Will you have access to a hospital with international standards? How far and how difficult will it be for you to reach this hospital? Research and then list local hospitals you could go to in case of an emergency. This is especially relevant in remote areas. Include full contact information and driving directions.

Medical Evacuation: How will you be evacuated in an emergency? From where to where, by whom, and at what cost? Does your insurance provide cover for this?

### ► **Insurance**

What coverage does your insurance provide? Read carefully your policy and be aware of the limits of your coverage. Include a copy of the policy in your Emergency File. A risk assessment should help you to have a good understanding of what kind of insurance you need.

### ► **Fixers and other locally hired freelancers**

What are the risks related to your locally hired professional support? For their own security your fixer and/or driver may not need to know all the details of your assignment, but they must know the risks they are taking. Discuss with them safety measures and the consequences of getting into trouble.

What are the credentials and experiences of local fixers/drivers/translators that make them suitable for this assignment? Know the people you will be working with and relying on. Do you trust them?

### ► **Equipment**

It is advisable to have a detailed equipment list with serial numbers. Some freelancers decide to turn down assignments if there is a high risk of expensive and uninsured equipment being lost. What professional kit will you be taking with you? What are the import regulations/restrictions in your destination country? If you are travelling as a tourist or undercover, the equipment you take must be appropriate to your cover story.

### ► **Personal protection equipment**

Assess what safety equipment you need to take with you (from flak jacket, tear gas goggles and helmet to strong boots). Check customs regulations.

### ► **Rushes, recordings, notes and material**

How will you store information and/or your material? Would the loss or confiscation of your material put other people at risk? How will you get your material out of the country/location where you have been working? What data-wrangling and back-up regime will you be operating?

## **2. Communications Plan**

A Communications Plan is an essential part of any Risk Assessment. A Communications Plan will quickly alert others if something has happened to you and provide all the necessary information to put into action an appropriate emergency response plan. Fast response time is crucial in a crisis situation, and your Communications Plan will alert your commissioner or Key Contact, family and others to act as quickly as possible.

Communications Plan template in Arabic: [https://rorypecktrust.org/getmedia/ed60f1a4-060c-40b5-b9f8-0a3e0e18b9f5/comms-plan-rpt\\_Arabic.doc.aspx?ext=.doc](https://rorypecktrust.org/getmedia/ed60f1a4-060c-40b5-b9f8-0a3e0e18b9f5/comms-plan-rpt_Arabic.doc.aspx?ext=.doc)

Consider here the availability and risk associated with your means of communication –Internet, international mobile phone, local SIM card, land line, satellite. Think carefully how you will be communicating during your assignment, including with your editor and key security contact.

Will you be using a tracking or GPS device? (some media NGOs will lend such devices if you consider them necessary). Who will be monitoring your

journey, and who will respond to a distress call? The advice of other journalists and communications experts can be vital in assessing risk associated with communications.

### ► **Choosing a Key Contact**

Communications Plans are often a weakness among freelancers - especially those working on self-funded trips and assignments. Who do you keep in touch with when you work alone? However, more than anyone else freelancers need a Communications Plan, to avoid the risk of falling into a black hole if something goes wrong.

Creating one is simple: you need to carefully assess who the best person is to keep in touch with while on assignment and plan how you will communicate with him/her. You also need to agree on whom that person should contact in case of an emergency, your Key Contact.

### ► **Who Should be Included in Your Communications Plan?**

These are people whom your Key Contact should speak to if they don't hear from you. Their contact details need to be clear and easy to find. Where appropriate, contact details of any team members (including satellite numbers) should be included. Here are some suggestions of whom to include:

- A local security contact with whom your Key Contact can liaise directly and securely.
- Your commissioning editor or main contact for the media organisation/s you're working for, if applicable.
- Any relevant contacts on the ground working with you who would be able to assist in case of an emergency: fixers, drivers (it's helpful to indicate which languages these contacts can communicate in).
- A colleague travelling with you, but not necessarily working with you. Maybe other journalists you know who are also on assignment in the same location, for instance local correspondents for a major broadcaster.
- Your embassy on location: make sure you have a name and an emergency contact number.
- Any other contacts who may be in a position to help in case of an emergency (i.e. lawyers, government officials).



The people in this list should be placed in the order in which they should be contacted, each with primary contact information, time zone and dialing code information.

► **Next of Kin**

Discuss and agree in advance with your Key Contact who you want to name as your next of kin - normally your spouse/partner, or closest relative. This person will be the member of your family who will be contacted in case of emergency. The next of kin of all team members should be included in your Risk Assessment form. (Your Key Contact and next of kin may be the same person but this is not always advisable.)

Your Communications Plan needs to include the following: How often you will be in touch with your Key Contact and through what method; who your emergency contacts are on location; what should happen if you do not make contact; how you will make contact while travelling; details of travel, vehicles and departure and arrival times; communications code (if communications are monitored or compromised); details of the use of trackers and emergency beacons. Be as specific as possible.

► **Personal details of you and your team**

Who will be on location? For each person on location who is part of your team write out the following:

- Name, position, cell phone, address, email, Skype, home telephone number, date of birth, blood group, personal circumstances and dependents, name of partner (with details), next of kin (with details).
- Brief biography: what are their credentials? Why are they (and you) suitable for this assignment?

► **Proof of Life Document**

Preparing a Proof of Life document could save your life if you are kidnapped or abducted.

A Proof of Life is a document that contains confidential information that can be used to confirm whether a person is still alive in case of kidnapping, abduction or detention. It can also be used to detail how that person would

like his/her family members to be informed and/or if he/she has any special requirements, should something happen to him/her. (Get your Proof of Life template.)

Even if there is a low risk of kidnapping, you should still prepare a Proof of Life document.

The person entrusted with this document (usually your Key Contact) will be responsible for communicating information with a lot of different people in the eventuality that you're being held against your will. Giving him/her this information before you go on assignment will help him/her respond quickly and confidently, should something happen, and help those who are trying to get you to safety. Proof of Life Template (Arabic):

[https://rorypecktrust.org/getmedia/3b8150cf-d4c7-4644-ba48-5258ce8c0d24/proof-of-life-rpt\\_Arabic.doc.aspx?ext=.doc](https://rorypecktrust.org/getmedia/3b8150cf-d4c7-4644-ba48-5258ce8c0d24/proof-of-life-rpt_Arabic.doc.aspx?ext=.doc)

### ► Sources and Information

Protecting sources is a cornerstone of journalism. This is especially important when covering topics such as violent crime, national security, and armed conflict, in which sources could be put at legal or physical risk. Freelance journalists, in particular, need to know that this burden rests primarily with them. No journalist should offer a promise of confidentiality until weighing the possible consequences; if a journalist or media organization does promise confidentiality, the commitment carries an important ethical obligation.

Most news organizations have established rules for the use of confidential sources. In a number of instances, news organizations require that journalists in the field share the identity of a confidential source with their editors. Journalists in the field must know these rules before making promises to potential confidential sources. In the United States and many other countries, civil and criminal courts have the authority to issue subpoenas demanding that either media outlets or individual journalists reveal the identities of confidential sources. The choice can then be either disclosure or fines and jail. Media organizations that have received separate subpoenas will make their own decisions on how to respond.

In some countries, local journalists covering organized crime, national security, or armed conflict are especially vulnerable to imprisonment, torture, coercion, or attack related to the use of confidential information. In 2010, for example, CPJ documented numerous instances throughout Africa in which government officials jailed, threatened, or harassed journalists who made use of confidential documents; in Cameroon, authorities jailed four journalists who came into possession of a purported government memo that raised questions of fiscal impropriety. One of those journalists was tortured; a second died in prison. So it is important to understand that your ethical responsibility could be severely tested in conflict zones by coercive actors who may resort to threats or force.

Journalists should study and use source protection methods in their communications and records. Consider when and how to contact sources, whether to call them on a landline or cell phone, whether to visit them in their office or home, and whether to use open or secure email or chat message.

The identity of a source could still be vulnerable to disclosure under coercion. Thus, many journalists in conflict areas avoid writing down or even learning the full or real names of sources they do not plan to quote on the record.

### ► **Security and Arms**

Never, ever, carry firearms or other gear associated with combatants when covering armed conflict. Journalists are civilians and any legal protection is based on that status. To carry arms will undermine your status as an observer and, by extension, the status of all other journalists working in the conflict area.

Try and make sure your clothes cannot be confused with military uniforms. Do not wear khaki and definitely do not wear Disruptive Pattern Material (DPM) or camouflage. In conflict zones such as Somalia in the early 1990s, and Iraq and Afghanistan in the 2000s, media outlets hired both armed and unarmed security personnel to protect journalists in the field. While the presence of security guards hindered journalists' observer status, many media organizations found they had little choice but to rely on private personnel to protect staff in uncontrolled situations. Local journalists had to rely on their local knowledge for safety.



## Track 2: Activities

**These activities will enable students to conduct a Risk Assessment and prepare for covering risky events.**

➔ **Activity 1:**

Each student will fill out a Risk Assessment with real or fictitious information the instructor or students creates. The Rory Peck Trust provides an excellent example that can be downloaded (see the relevant link in the lesson plan).

The threat example is another relevant tool to show the students, as suggested by Jonathan Stray. (See the link in the lesson plan.)

➔ **Activity 2:**

A discussion of kinds of risks related to different types of coverage.

➔ **Activity 3:**

The instructor presents an example of an assignment after which students write a summary of an assignment (either the lecturer or the student chooses) that includes a Risk Assessment and a Communications Plan.

➔ **Grading:**

Students are graded based on their risk assessments.



## Additional Reading

For additional information on planning for assignments and safety, see the following materials:

### **1. Media watchdogs release online safety resource for journalists covering Syria**

Local reporters, citizen journalists, media activists and media support workers inside Syria have a safety toolkit catered specifically to their work. The 'Syria Media Safety resource' features 13 in-depth sections covering physical and digital safety, advice for obtaining emergency support and more. It is a one-stop-shop devoted to advice for journalists operating in or near Syria. The Syria Response Group, a network of international organizations that provides support to those covering the Syrian civil war, released the toolkit. The Committee to Protect Journalists, the Rory Peck Trust, Internews, International Media Support and Front Line Defenders are among the group's members.

The numbers of journalists affected by the upheaval in Syria continues to worsen. "This makes the safety challenges a lot more focused on keeping the journalists from being kidnapped, not just killed," said *Sherif Mansour*, CPJ's program coordinator for the Middle East and North Africa.

Available in Arabic with English translation, the online resource features 13 in-depth sections covering *physical safety* and *digital security information*, such as identity protection and encryption. There is also advice for how to obtain *emergency support* and *trauma counselling*.

All tools, including risk assessment and proof-of-life templates, can be downloaded as PDFs to accommodate those working in areas where Internet access and electricity is sketchy. The hashtag *#syriamediasafety* provides social media connection.

Special attention is focused on securing electronic equipment, for good reason.

<https://rorypecktrust.org/resources/syria-media-safety>

## 2. Journalists' Security in War Zones Lessons from Syria,

A Report by the Samir Kassir Foundation in cooperation with CPJ, Reporters Without Borders and the Rory Peck Trust, August 2013

[http://www.skeyesmedia.org/extensions/pdf/Journalists%5C'\\_Security\\_in\\_Conflict\\_Zones-SKeyes%5B3%5D.pdf](http://www.skeyesmedia.org/extensions/pdf/Journalists%5C'_Security_in_Conflict_Zones-SKeyes%5B3%5D.pdf)

## 3. Tips to Plan High Risk Journalistic Assignments (Arabic text), Sherry Ricchiardi, IJNet, March 2015.

<https://ijnet.org/ar/blog/%D8%A3%D8%AF%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%AE%D8%B7%D9%8A%D8%B7-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%87%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D8%AD%D9%81%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AE%D8%B7%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%A9>

## 4. International Federation of Journalists. **Live News: A Survival Guide for Journalists, March 2003.**

[http://www.ifj.org/fileadmin/images/Live\\_News\\_versions/Live\\_News\\_AR.pdf](http://www.ifj.org/fileadmin/images/Live_News_versions/Live_News_AR.pdf)

## 5. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). **Safety of Journalists** Guidebook, 2011.

6. UNESCO-Reporters Without Borders. Safety Guide for Journalists – a handbook for reporters in high-risk environments (2015) and Handbook for Journalists (2002).

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002439/243986a.pdf>

# 5

## Lesson 5

### Travel Security

#### Lesson Description

This class will explore issues related to travel security, accommodation, and mobility under various circumstances such as political and other events in unstable countries. The learning materials centre on travel-related tips and advisories, the choice of hotels, using a car, and accreditation prior to coverage. This will be clarified during the activities the students undertake.

#### Lesson Aims

This lesson aims to:

1. Identify matters related to travel security (tips and alerts).
2. Prepare students to design a travel security plan.
3. Create awareness on the importance and necessity for personal security (security preparations).
4. Prepare students to mitigate risks.

#### Learning Outcomes

At the end of this class students will:

1. Be able to describe their travel plans.
2. Be able to take the necessary precautions to minimize risk.
3. Be able to realize the importance of personal security.
4. Be able to prepare to cover events in unstable regions.
5. Be able to plan to travel and move about in a secure way.

## Methodology

Lecturer will instigate a discussion concerning travel and accommodation. The instructor may also invite correspondents who have covered wars or events in risky areas and security experts to address the class. (The focus should be on the points underlined in the lesson plan).

Students can research their travel and accommodation needs during the class. Class to take place in a computer lab or 'newsroom'.

## Linking the Lesson Plan to the Learning Outcomes

### Track 1 – Theoretical:

The lecturer will present information and tips on travel security.

Lesson Plan	Number of Hours	Learning Outcomes
Explain and discuss learning materials	2	3+1
1. Travel-related advisories		
2. Choice of accommodation		
3. Using a car		
4. Press credentials		



**Track 2 – Practical:**

Activities related to the learning materials.

Lesson Plan	Number of Hours	Learning Outcomes
Practical activities	3	5+4
Activity 1: Design a travel plan to cover events in an unstable country		
Activity 2: Discuss the method of choosing the right hotel for the assignment		

The lecturer will discuss travel and accommodation under various circumstances such as covering protests in a nearby town, travel to a war zone, covering political events in unstable areas. Travel is risky so students should think about how they are getting to their destinations when travelling in unfamiliar areas.

**Students are to produce a travel and accommodation plan based on the following:**

- Plan carefully.
- Make sure you understand how public transport works, how you obtain a ticket and so on, so as not to draw attention to yourself.
- Car accidents are often a high risk so make sure any car you take is working properly and adequately equipped.
- Check routes carefully and find a driver who is cautious, experienced and has the language skills you need.
- Research if there are any events not related to your assignment that could affect your travel (for instance a strike, public holiday or celebration). Always have an exit plan, as on the ground situations may change, or you may not feel comfortable with your initial plan.
- Make sure you have copies of any travel documents; include a photocopy of a passport, visa details and any details concerning letters necessary for the visa.
- Keep copies of press credentials.

- If you intend to travel undercover or as a tourist, make sure your editor at home has details of your cover story.
- Travelling undercover is normally discouraged. Discuss this. Why would it be discouraged? Is it for reasons of safety? Are there ethical reasons? If so what are they?

Travelling as a tourist is discouraged unless there is compelling reason to do so. Check that your news outlet is happy to receive material gathered under these circumstances. Broadcasters especially have guidelines and regulations concerning working undercover and filming secretly. Most codes of ethics also discourage subterfuge. The IFJ's declaration of Principles on the Conduct of Journalists states: 'The journalist shall use only fair methods to obtain news, photographs and documents' (this will be covered in more detail in later classes). If you intend to film without press credentials you must reflect this in the project's specific risks section).

Students should assess themselves. Are they more exposed to risk because of their ethnicity, gender, age, religious beliefs, sexual orientation or nationality?

### ► Accommodation

Students should search the Internet to identify accommodation that could be used. Securing accommodation on location for you and your crew is vital, though not always easy to find or to afford. Consider not only where you stay, but the travel time and potential risks of travelling from where you are staying to where you will be working. Well-known hotels, small guest houses or a friend's flat; they all pose advantages and disadvantages in terms of risk and safety. Be aware of these risks, assess what your best option is and plan ways to mitigate danger. What are the main risks related to your lodgings?

Personal protection equipment: Assess what safety equipment you need to take with you (from flak jacket, tear gas goggles and helmet to strong boots). Gender considerations come in here, because some of this equipment is assumed to fit a male physique, and women journalists may need customized versions.



## Track 1: Learning Materials

The learning materials focus on topics related to travel security:

1. Travel advisories
2. Hotels
3. Using a car
4. Press credentials

### ► Introduction

The issue of journalists' safety when travelling outside their home base is not new. In 2001, Wall Street Journal correspondent Daniel Pearl was kidnapped and killed by Islamist insurgents in Pakistan, while BBC reporter Frank Gardner was seriously injured while his Irish cameraman, Simon Cumbers, was killed after an attack in 2004 in Saudi Arabia. More recently there have been continued threats to security from ISIS. The beheadings in recent years of James Foley, Steven Sotloff and Kenji Goto by ISIS extremists underscored the risks for freelance journalists. For the IFJ, the issue of training journalists in safety and security has been a running battle. As a response to mounting concerns about media safety in Iraq, courses were organized in Basra and Bagdad aimed at "reducing the risks facing reporters in the world's most deadly country for media staff", according to the IFJ.

As seen with the Risk Assessment process, thoroughly researching a foreign destination before traveling there is essential to staying safe. In advance of the assignment, the journalist needs to closely review news reports reflecting a range of perspectives, diverse academic sources, travel and health advisories from the World Health Organization and other governmental or multilateral agencies, and reports on human rights and press freedom from both government and non-governmental sources.

### 1. Travel Advisories

Travel advisories are sometimes available from your own Foreign Affairs Department and the Departments of Foreign Affairs overseas, including the U.S. State Department. These tend to be very cautious and their advisories are aimed at casual visitors. However, they can provide extra information.

Before travelling to a location, especially for the first time, seek the advice of journalists with experience in that locale. Situation-specific advice from trusted colleagues is crucial in planning an assignment and assessing risks.

## 2. Hotels

Often choice of hotel will be decided by (a) the amount of money you have and (b) the conditions on the ground. If the story is a major international one there will possibly be one hotel used by the media. This will be a good place to meet and make contacts, but the presence of journalists from major international media organizations such as the BBC, the New York Times, CNN, or Al Jazeera will probably mean the prices will be high.

Hotels used by the United Nations or its agencies are a good option. Security will be high and there will be good contacts to strike up conversations in the foyer or bar. However, again, the prices might be inflated. Note, however, that such hotels may not be necessarily foolproof, as examples in Mali and other countries have shown that hotels frequented by Western citizens may be specific targets for terrorist attacks. The most expensive hotels might mark you out as a possible kidnap victim.

Avoid the cheapest hotels. Personal security will be a low priority and they may be in a dangerous location. They are also unlikely to have a parking, which is an issue if you are travelling by car.

Make sure there is Wi-Fi in your hotel. Wi-Fi will be part of your communications plan. When you arrive, test the locks on the door and windows. If you are worried about security, do not hesitate to move furniture in front of the door. Bring an alarm with you. If you are worried about access – for example if there is a roof outside your window – change room. Do not take a room on a very high floor in case you have to leave quickly. It is also advisable to avoid taking a room on the ground floor as it may provide ease of access to potential attackers.

There are many web sites that give information about hotels, location, degrees of comfort and obviously price. Hotels often take your passport for security or for the local police. Get it back as soon as you can. In most cases they can take a copy and hand it back immediately.

### 3. Using a Car

Where possible, have your own vehicle, essential if you have a film crew. This is not just for faster travel and to get you to safety, but because you also need a base where you can keep material that is difficult to carry. It is much better if the driver is a member of your own team, if travelling with others. If using a local driver try and ensure his or her competency.

The condition and quality of the car are critical. Make sure your vehicle is in good mechanical condition, that it has a good-quality spare tire, and carries reserves of fuel and water. Consider whether to mark your vehicle PRESS or MEDIA in large letters. In some circumstances this will protect you; in others it will make you a target for sniper fire, bricks or other forms of attack. If you do identify yourself as a journalist, place markings on top of the vehicle as well as on the sides, so that they are visible from the air. However, ensure that the signs are removable at short notice.

In isolated areas and where you may go off-road, your vehicle should also have a means of being towed, dug or winched out of trouble. Every vehicle should carry a first-aid kit, a fire extinguisher and chains/grips if driving in snow or sand. The driver should have experience, be calm and be a safe driver. Even if you don't have an accident, spending days being driven by someone you do not trust saps morale and interferes with rest. If you hire a car and driver for the long term, make the driver a full member of your team entitled to the same protection. If the driver is not of the same ethnic or national background as those being driven, be aware that the driver may face different risks at checkpoints.

Here are a few hints that experienced journalists have passed on:

- Always park so you can get out easily, the back of car to the curb, for instance.
- Favour a dirty car over a clean one; they are not noticed as much and if someone has interfered with it, it is more likely they will leave a handprint.
- Make sure car keys are easily accessible at all times.

#### ► Press Credentials

Obtain press credentials before reporting, as you may need to prove your status upon demand. Many news organizations issue credentials on request to contract employees and other freelancers. At the very least, freelancers should obtain from

an assigning news outlet a letter on the organization's stationery that states their affiliation. Journalists' trade unions and associations issue press credentials. Many are affiliated to the International Federation of Journalists, which issues a press card that is probably the most recognized in the world and is translated into a number of languages, including Arabic. Your local union can usually organize an IFJ international press card. Never, ever, use fake press credentials. Not only do you put your own safety in jeopardy, it can also endanger the lives of colleagues and undermines the very notion of journalistic identification.

You should also research and obtain press credentials from municipal, regional, or national authorities, recognizing that officials may issue credentials on a selective basis in an attempt to influence coverage. Press credentials from a local police department could prove useful when you're covering a local demonstration. Credentials may also be needed to take pictures or record events in public buildings such as national assemblies or local courts. Journalists traveling internationally should also research and inquire whether they need a journalist visa to report in a country. The answer is not always clear. In such cases, journalists should speak with other reporters and government officials to determine how best to proceed. In many instances, journalists have travelled to restrictive countries on tourist or other non-journalistic visas as a way to circumvent censorship and effectively carry out their work. Journalists should, however, weigh potential legal consequences.

Military authorities sometimes issue their own credentials to journalists. Government military forces as well as armed rebel groups may require a journalist to obtain written authorization from a superior officer to clear armed checkpoints. These authorizations can range from a letter signed with a group's official seal to the business card of a commander who writes a brief note on the back. Be mindful of which credentials and authorizations you show at any given time. One group may perceive the possession of a rival's authorization as a sign of enemy collaboration. Journalists working internationally should travel with multiple photocopies of their passport, credentials, and any accrediting letters, in addition to extra passport-size photos.

NOTE: Governments may assign drivers and fixers, or freelance fixers and on-contract assistants. These are often security or intelligence officers or informants from the host country to their governments. Be mindful of what information you share with them.



## Track 2: Activities

**These activities will enable students to plan well for safe travel and prepare for coverage in conflict zones and hostile environments.**

➔ **Activity 1:**

Students are asked to prepare a comprehensive travel plan based on the points in the lesson plan in a bid to ensure their safety.

➔ **Activity 2:**

The instructor specifies the names of cities or towns and students are asked to conduct an online search for hotels, select one, and envision a story involving a television crew, a correspondent, a photographer, a producer or a multimedia journalist. Students must stick to a specific budget and consider the matter of security. Based on a security assessment, students will select a hotel and write a brief text justifying their choice.



## Additional Reading

For additional tips and advice on travel security, see the following materials. The instructor may choose additional resources deemed relevant:

### 1. Arab journalists train colleagues on security

The 'Arab Spring' uprisings have given the world many outstanding images of public action against regimes that, until recently, looked invulnerable, but these images have, however, come at a cost to journalists on the ground and the dangers to journalists have increased. As a consequence, the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) launched a 'Safety Media Network in the Middle East and the Arab World,' a step towards training journalists in personal security techniques. The courses focused on assessing risk and techniques on how to address stress trauma after exposure to violent situations.

<http://www.newsecuritylearning.com/index.php/comment/136-arab-journalists-train-colleagues-on-security>

### 2. Tabeir Iraq aims to help journalists and bloggers stay safe

Iraqi journalists have a tool to track attacks against them, a platform to help them design risk-reduction plans and a cadre of trainers in security called Tabeir Iraq. With the support of the Iraq Foundation, the Iraqi Journalists Rights Defense Association and the U.S. Institute of Peace, they are now building a new, more robust mapping platform that includes digital security resources and the names of organizations that can help Iraqi journalists and bloggers who defend freedom of expression.

<https://www.tabeiriraq.org/>

<https://ijnet-journalism-safety.silk.co/page/Tabair-Iraq-aims-to-help-journalists-and-bloggers-stay-safe>

### 3. Tips and resources for journalists covering ISIS:

Journalists covering ISIS have a lot to consider - how to stay secure on the ground, what kind of images to feature in their reporting, which name to use for the group and more. These are tips from the International Journalists Network.

<https://ijnet-journalism-safety.silk.co/page/Tips-and-resources-for-journalists-covering-ISIS>



**4. Correspondents to Asharq Al-Awsat: Satellite Channels Use Journalists For Intelligence Gathering (Arabic text),**

Safaa Azab, Asharq Al-Awsat, 29 December 2014.

<http://archive.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=37&issueno=13180&article=799905&feature=1#.VKK758AALs>

**5. Tips to Help Journalists and Photographers Cover Armed Conflicts**

(Arabic text), Asmaa Kandil, IJNet, 20/5/14.

<https://ijnet.org/ar/blog/273745>

# 6

## Lesson 6

### Digital Security

This lesson is concerned with ensuring journalists are aware of the dangers that exist in the digital world and aware that the World Wide Web was not designed with security in mind. At the end of this lesson students will understand how the digital world can have an impact on their own safety but can also compromise the security of journalistic material, notes, videos, and contacts. The same applies to sources. Digital lapses on their side, or on the journalist's side, can create safety vulnerabilities all-round.

The following quote should give students an idea of how serious this issue is today not just to journalists but also their sources who might end up in serious trouble because of journalists' carelessness.

“Journalists have to be particularly conscious about any sort of network signaling, any sort of connection, any sort of license plate reading device that they pass on their way to a meeting point, any place they use their credit card, any place they take their phone, any email contact they have with the sources - because that very first contact, before encrypted communications are established, is enough to give it all away”.

Edward Snowden 2014 in The Guardian newspaper, London

The learning material focuses on several issues related to digital security, namely: extra copies, remotely controlled documents, choosing a strong password, and a Virtual Private Network (VPN). The lesson includes practical activities.

## Lesson Aims

This lesson aims to:

1. Acquaint students with risks and types of threats in the digital world.
2. Prepare students to implement basic digital safety on their own devices.
3. Prepare students to minimize the dangers of digital hacking.
4. Deepen knowledge on dealing with intimidation and harassment in the electronic age.
5. Define jargon within this area.
6. Provide students with skills to analyze and criticize.

## Learning Outcomes

At the end of this class students will:

1. Describe the digital threats that exist.
2. Understand that digital security starts in one's workplace.
3. Implement basic digital safety on their devices.
4. Understand tracking and location finders and how to block them.
5. Analyze the digital threats they face as journalists by conducting a threat analysis so as to find a path between, on the one hand, taking no security measures due to a sense of fatalism that nothing is secure, and on the other hand, overdoing security entirely so that every digital molehill is treated like a mountain.
6. Know the basic jargon that exists within this area.
7. Take necessary precautions to minimize the risk of hacking.
8. Understand encryption.
9. Understand surveillance (including browser records, telephone records, malware, ISP records, app records, email records).

## Methodology

The lesson centres on lectures, demonstrations, visiting experts, and class exercises. This class should take place in a room equipped with computers for students to access. Teachers need to address the urgency of the issue before they get to the security issues themselves.

## Linking the Lesson Plan to the Learning Outcomes

### Track 1 – Theoretical:

The lecturer will present information on risks in digital security.

Lesson Plan	Number of Hours	Learning Outcomes
Explain and discuss learning materials	2	4+2+1
1. Extra backups		
2. Remotely controlled documents		
3. Choosing a strong password		
4. Virtual Private Network (VPN)		

### Track 2 – Practical:

Activities related to digital security.

Lesson Plan	Number of Hours	Learning Outcomes
Practical activities	3	7+5+3
Activity 1: Exercise on protecting personal phones		
Activity 2: Analyse examples of the dangers of electronic threats		
Activity 3: Design a plan to protect your devices from electronic hacking		

This is a very complex area but understanding the issues and the emerging threats linked to digital developments is essential for journalists. Issues to be dealt with should include:

Threats to safety, death threats via email or social media. Identifying a threat:

1. Assess the general risk in your country.
2. What are your local laws?
3. Are you protected from intrusion?
4. Intrusion by the state?
5. Intrusion by private bodies?
6. What can the authorities do legally (or illegally)?
7. What legal methods can you take to avoid their intrusion?
8. What happens outside the law?

Threats to security of material, such as notes, videos and contact details.

1. Who might want to access your work?
2. Often the state is the prime suspect, but not always.
3. Media competition?
4. Individuals you are writing about?
5. Companies you are investigating?
6. If you have a source inside the company, is that person communicating electronically? Be careful, companies might keep logs of Web use and emails (laws often do not protect employees' privacy).

Think about this before you make any electronic contact.

The threat modelling by Jonathan Stray is a useful tool for digital security strategy (see below). The whistleblower Edward Snowden has warned that journalists are special targets and he has expressed surprise that news organizations rarely have any counter-measures in place.

It is not just repressive regimes that are looking at journalists. The U.S. and its allies are suspected to be actively monitoring domestic journalists, even though in some cases this technique precludes the use of the information in court. It's a fair assumption to make that the state is directly or indirectly looking at journalists' contacts, telephone logs, emails, texts and following every move – including when an accompanying cellphone is sending out the track. But it is not just the state; it is criminals, criminal organizations, extremist groups, political parties and corporations who may be actively involved in such surveillance of journalists.

Students should examine their own devices and see if they understand basic privacy settings, how to turn on and off Bluetooth, GPS, geotagging, how to remove batteries and SIM cards.

The following tips were developed by the IFJ for covering the European Games in Baku, Azerbaijan. They can be used for many situations.

<http://www.ifj.org/nc/news-single-view/backpid/80/article/ifjefj-digital-safety-tips-for-journalists-covering-the-baku-2015-european-games/>

Some conclusions: staying safe takes several steps:

1. Identify who might want access to your work.
2. Identify their level of motivation.
3. Understand their technical abilities.
4. Take action to avoid intrusion.

Being extra cautious is good, but be realistic.

Always remember it is that very first call to a potential contact that could blow the source's identity.



## Track 1: Learning Materials

The learning materials focus on procedures related to digital security:

### Introduction

This is a very complex area that is changing rapidly. Students should understand that all digital tools, laptops, phones and even cameras and recording devices are vulnerable. Digital attacks on journalists are increasing but there are ways of defeating them or at least minimizing risks.

For example, some security precautions: Taking SIM cards and batteries out of phones stops that phone revealing your whereabouts; putting information in a USB device; keeping pictures in your camera until it is safe to download.

It is important to clear out all your devices before going on assignment and replace SD cards. Store anything sensitive on a remote hard drive or USB drive.

Do not let your digital devices out of sight and do not leave them unattended in hotel rooms. Secure your phones, laptops and tablets by turning off geotagging and GPS location and switch to airplane mode.

The best advice is to be honest with yourself and assess your own capabilities. If you are worried you are not able to protect yourself against digital attacks, you may wish to consider using a paper notebook rather than a laptop when carrying out a sensitive interview, for example.

The CPJ has a detailed and useful Journalist Security Guide ([www.cpj.org](http://www.cpj.org)). For a more general overview, please review IFJ's 'Digital Safety Tips for Journalists Covering the Baku 2015 European Games' at <http://www.ifj.org/nc/news-single-view/backpid/80/article/ifjefj-digital-safety-tips-for-journalists-covering-the-baku-2015-european-games/>.

Threatening journalists over their reporting is not a new concept, but the age of electronic media has brought new methods of intimidation and harassment, such as doxxing. Doxxing – named for docs or documents, also called doxing or d0xing – starts with publishing someone's personal information in an environment that

implies or encourages intimidation. Typically done online, the information is then used by others in a campaign of harassment, threats and pranks. Journalists targeted by doxing attacks, which are usually based on something they have written, find their personal and professional lives disrupted, and are sometimes severely affected.

<http://www.poynter.org/news/mediawire/345449/the-dangers-of-journalism-include-getting-doxxed-heres-what-you-can-do-about-it/>

Technology is increasingly complex; consequently, it is best to embrace simplicity by resorting to a small number of easy-to-use tools, techniques, and habits. Complex systems are hard to understand and often involve procedures that can be forgotten when in complex situations.

Focus on the people who are most likely to wish to steal your work or otherwise disrupt you digitally. How far are they likely to go? How good and effective are they? That should give you a good idea how far you need to go to protect your work.

Once you have thought about who might wish to disrupt your work, what they might do, and how well they might do it, you can start planning the technical measures you will use to confound their plans. Here are some issues to consider:

### **1. Backups**

Remote backups, in which your local files are regularly copied to a remote server, are generally a good idea. They are another way to protect your information should you lose access to your local machine. Be sure that the data being sent are encrypted along the way, and that access to the backups is controlled.

### **2. Remote Data**

Not all the information you keep on your computer or smartphone is kept locally. You may store data “in the cloud” on sites such as Dropbox or Google Documents, on Web mail services such as Gmail or Yahoo, or on hosted social networking services such as Facebook. If you are concerned about access to private information, you should consider the security of external data, too.



Internet companies do hand over private data in response to government demands when they are required by local law or have close economic or political ties to authorities. However, access to cloud-stored data is as often obtained through deceit as through due process. Your attackers may obtain your log-in or password, or otherwise masquerade as you to obtain access. Choose your passwords and security questions carefully to prevent this. Always use an encrypted connection, provided by either the Internet service via “https” or your own software.

Don't simply protect private online data; consider what you're revealing in publicly available online venues. Social networking sites often err on the side of telling everyone everything you tell them. It's worth regularly treating yourself as the target of some investigative journalism. See how much you can dig up on your own movements by searching the Web, and how that public information might be misused by those who wish to interfere with your work.

### **3. Choosing a Strong Password**

Strong password protection is by far the best general security you can give your data. But choosing an unbeatable password is harder than it sounds. Many people are shocked to discover that their clever choice is actually among the most popular passwords. By studying large databases of passwords, attackers can compile vast lists of possible passwords sorted from the most likely to the outright improbable.

These lists include tweaks and modifications, like replacing letters with similar-looking numbers or symbols, adding numbers or punctuation to the beginning or end of words, or stringing a few words together. Software allows attackers to rapidly test them against password-protected devices or services. Traditional password choices quickly succumb to these attacks.

Attackers can obtain your password by threatening you with harm. Consider maintaining an account that contains innocuous information, whose password you can divulge under duress. Consider using a passphrase instead of a password. One way to pick a passphrase is to think of an obscure quotation or saying which others are unlikely to associate with you. You can either use the whole phrase as your password, or abbreviate it as suggested by security expert Bruce Schneier to create a truly random-looking series of symbols. For instance:

- Wlw7,mstmsritt... = When I was seven, my sister threw my stuffed rabbit in the toilet.
- Wow...doestcst = Wow, does that couch smell terrible.
- Ltime@go-inag~faaa! = Long time ago in a galaxy not far away at all.
- uTVM,TPw55:utvm,tpwstillsecure = Until this very moment, these passwords were still secure.

This approach relies on you to pick a sufficiently obscure phrase and to abbreviate it safely. Another approach is to pick a sequence of words truly at random. You can do this easily using a pair of ordinary dice and the list of words at <http://www.diceware.com>. Seven or eight words picked this way will create a strong password, but the longer the password, the more likely it is to resist an automated attack. Mentally assembling these words into a humorous story or picture can make such passwords easy to remember.

## ■ Virtual Private Network

If you wish a more sophisticated system so as to by-pass local censorship, there is the Virtual Private Network, or VPN. This encrypts and sends all Internet data to and from your computer via a dedicated computer elsewhere on the Internet, called a VPN server. When configured correctly, a VPN will secure all of your communications from local interception. If you are employed by a media organization, your employer may well use a VPN to allow remote users access to the company's internal networks. Alternatively, some commercial services allow individuals to rent access to a VPN server on a monthly basis.

From the perspective of the rest of the Internet, you appear to be accessing the Web and other Internet services from your VPN server, not your actual location. That means it can hide your current whereabouts and bypass local censorship systems. VPNs do not encrypt every stage of your data's travels online. Because your final destination may not understand encrypted data, your information and requests emerge from the VPN server in an unencrypted state. The operators of your VPN server, and intermediaries between the operator and the sites and services you visit, still have the ability to monitor your communications. If you're defending yourself against a local adversary, such as the government, the VPN server you select should be in another jurisdiction. There are of course, more sophisticated systems, such as Tor, and new ones emerging all the time.



## Track 2: Activities

These activities will enable students to take security precautions for their electronic devices and test their ability to protect their personal data.

➔ **Activity 1:**

The instructor asks students to implement security measures on the computers and phones (in a computer-equipped room).

➔ **Activity 2:**

The instructor demonstrates an example of a digital threat and asks students to discuss and analyze it.

➔ **Activity 3:**

Students design a plan explaining how to deal with electronic intimidation. The instructor may suggest other suitable activities.

➔ **Readings (also see lesson material)**

Luke Harding's book (below) about Edward Snowden will be enjoyed by students who will also learn about the man who alerted many to the threats to journalists' digital security.

Luke Harding (2014) *The Snowden Files: The Inside Story of the World's Most Wanted Man*. London, Guardian Faber.

Alan Pearce. *Deep Web for Journalists* (with an introduction by the International Federation of Journalists).



## Additional Reading

For additional tips and advice on digital security and digital threats journalists face, see the following materials:

### 1. A Digital Security Glossary: Rory Peck Trust

<https://rorypecktrust.org/resources/digital-security/the-basics/glossary>

### 2. Building Digital Safety for Journalism:

This report analyses and explains 12 key digital threats to journalism, ranging from hacking of journalistic communications, through to Denial-of-Service attacks on media websites.

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002323/232358e.pdf>

### 3. International Federation of Journalists:

8 Tips for Digital Security in 2015

<https://ijnet-journalism-safety.silk.co/page/8-tools-for-greater-digital-security-in-2015>

### 4. Militant group publishes global hit list of bloggers, activists and writers,

The Guardian, September 2015

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/sep/23/militant-group-publishes-hit-list-of-bloggers-activists-and-writers>

5. In 2015, The Turkish government made more Twitter censorship requests than all other nations combined, showing that even social media aren't immune from the media crackdown in recent years. Engin Önder, managing partner at Turkish news site 140journos, has turned to social media as a reporting method in Turkey.

<https://ijnet-journalism-safety.silk.co/page/140journos-founder%3A-%E2%80%9CSocial-media-is-like-a-zero-gravity-zone%E2%80%9D-in-Turkey%E2%80%99s-harsh-media-climate>

### 6. A step-by-step guide to encrypting your emails with Mailvelope, Christopher Guess, IJNet, 13 January 2015

<http://ijnet.org/en/blog/step-step-guide-encrypting-your-emails-mailvelope#.VLU4SWaiuVI.twitter>

**7. Avoiding Internet Surveillance: The Complete Guide,  
Dann Albright, 25 January 2015, [www.makeuseof.com](http://www.makeuseof.com).**

<http://gpctech.tumblr.com/post/111439423255/avoiding-internet-surveillance-the-complete-guide>

**8. Cyber security for journalists: The Internet is a hostile environment,  
too, Alan Pearce, BBC Academy, 17 March 2015**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/collegeofjournalism/entries/f540a5b9-f84b-45a2-a77c-dfb9bbcd98b0>

**9. Embracing Encryption in an Age of Surveillance,  
Michael Fitzgerald, Nieman Reports, 11 December 2014**

<http://niemanreports.org/articles/embracing-encryption-in-an-age-of-surveillance>

**10. Security in a box** (Arabic text), Tactical Tech Collective.  
<https://securityinabox.org/ar>

11. Jonathan Stray on how to protect yourself, your sources, and your scoop on sensitive stories.

<https://source.opennews.org/en-US/learning/security-journalists-part-two-threat-modeling/>

**12. Digital and Mobile Security for Mexican Journalists and Bloggers.**

[http://www.icfj.org/sites/default/files/Digital\\_and\\_Mobile\\_Security\\_English.pdf](http://www.icfj.org/sites/default/files/Digital_and_Mobile_Security_English.pdf)

**13. Digital Security and Journalists: A Snap Shot of Awareness and Practice in Pakistan.**

[www.internews.org/sites/default/files/resources/Internews\\_PK\\_Secure\\_Journalist\\_2012-08.pdf](http://www.internews.org/sites/default/files/resources/Internews_PK_Secure_Journalist_2012-08.pdf)

14. Front Line Defenders.

[www.frontlinedefenders.org/files/en/eseaman.en\\_.pdf](http://www.frontlinedefenders.org/files/en/eseaman.en_.pdf)

# 7

## Lesson 7

### Gender and Safe Reporting

This class will look at some of the specific problems, in particular sexual violence, faced by female journalists working in hostile environments, criteria for employing women in media and issues of gender-based censorship.

The learning material focuses on safe reporting, threats and intimidation to which women in media are subjected, in addition to tips and guidelines on safety for women journalists, notably while traveling and during coverage of political upheaval. It includes practical activities for students in class.

#### Lesson Aims

This lesson aims to:

1. Define problems women journalists face in the field.
2. Shed light on cases of attacks against women journalists.
3. Prepare women students for self-defense.
4. Deepen knowledge of safety advisories for women students/journalists.
5. Encourage discussion between the lecturer, or guest speaker, and students.

#### Learning Outcomes

At the end of this class students will:

1. Summarize the role and history of women in covering stories in hostile environments, from Martha Gellhorn to Marie Colvin, who was killed in Homs, Syria, 2012.

2. Describe some of the incidents that have made gender such an important issue for journalists.
3. Analyze the reasons attacks have taken place on women and the use of sexual assault and rape against women journalists.
4. Describe how women journalists can protect and minimize harm to themselves.
5. Describe the role of male journalists in areas where women might be singled out.
6. Prepare a plan on how to deal with different types of attacks.
7. Understand the culture of hostile environments.

## Methodology

The lesson will centre on lectures, discussion, videos, possibly first-hand accounts from field correspondents as well as experts in security and psychology to discuss cases of attacks on women journalists, methods of protection and ways to deal with hostile environments. (It is important to focus on the points underlined in the lesson plan.)

## Linking the Lesson Plan to the Learning Outcomes

### Track 1 – Theoretical:

The lecturer will explain the concept of gender and safe reporting.

Lesson Plan	Number of Hours	Learning Outcomes
Explain and discuss learning materials	3	7+5+1
1. Violence, intimidation and attack		
2. Safety tips for women journalists		

**Track 2 – Practical:**

Practical exercises related to guidelines and tips on the safety of women journalists.

Lesson Plan	Number of Hours	Learning Outcomes
Practical activities	3	6+4+3
Activity 1: Discussion and analysis of attacks examples		
Activity 2: Reading and analyzing the history of women’s journalism		
Activity 3: Designing a plan for the safety of women journalists covering unrest		

A starting point for discussion might be to approach local journalists and the local journalists’ union to see if there are cases in their own city or town for local female journalists. Class discussion might centre on whether gender-based violence is associated with religion or culture?

The emphasis in class discussions should be on how violence against women journalists is a form of censorship. Students should use this opportunity to see how women are employed in local media. Would women be treated better if there were more female news executives? Is there sexual harassment in the media industry? According to the report, *Violence and Harassment against Women and in the News Media*, most harassment occurs in media offices.

Students might discuss how cyber bullying can be gender-based. Women students could draw up their own safety guidelines and then compare them with those published by the International News Safety Institute (INSI). Students could draw up similar guidelines, outlining also their responsibility towards their female colleagues, if any. An area students might consider includes their responsibility as journalists with regard to freedom of expression and their role in ensuring female colleagues can exercise it. (A guideline might include, keeping an eye out for women reporters, keeping close, warning women of any danger, forming a cordon if a crowd seems threatening). Women students might discuss why they are forced to dress in a particular way.





## Track 1: Learning Materials

The learning materials focus on two key issues:

1. Violence, intimidation and attack.
2. Guidelines on safety for women journalists.

### 1. Violence, intimidation and attack

According to the findings of the first global survey on violence and threats against women working in the news media, almost two-thirds of women journalists polled have experienced intimidation, threats or abuse in relation to their work. The survey by the Washington, D.C.-based International Women's Media Foundation (IWMF) and the London-based International News Safety Institute (INSI) was conducted to coincide with the UN's Global Forum for Media and Gender. It tracks intimidation, threats and abuse, including sexual violence, physical violence, sexual harassment, racial harassment, ageism and digital security threats. It also measures prevention, protection and preparedness.

While documentation specific to sexual assaults against journalists is limited, organizations can identify countries where the overall risk is greater, such as conflict zones where rape is used as a weapon, countries where the rule of law is weak, and settings where sexual aggression is common.

Being aware of one's environment and understanding how one may be perceived in that setting are important in deterring sexual aggression. Organizations can set clear policies on how to respond to sexual assaults that address the journalist's needs for medical, legal, and psychological support. Such reports should be treated as a medical urgency and as an overall security threat that affects other journalists. Managers addressing sexual assault cases must be sensitive to the journalist's wishes in terms of confidentiality, and mindful of the emotional impact of such an experience. The journalist's immediate needs include empathy, respect, and security.

Journalists who have been assaulted may consider reporting the attack as a means of obtaining proper medical support and to document the security risk for others. Some journalists are reluctant to report sexual abuse because they did not want to be perceived as being vulnerable while on dangerous assignments.

Editorial managers should create a climate in which journalists can report assaults without fear of losing future assignments and with confidence they will receive support and assistance.

The Committee to Protect Journalists is committed to documenting instances of sexual assault. Journalists are encouraged to contact CPJ to report such cases; information about a case is made public or kept confidential at the discretion of the journalist.

## **2. Guidelines on protecting women journalists**

The International News Safety Institute, a consortium of news organizations and journalist groups that includes the International Federation of Journalists and the CPJ, and Judith Matloff, a veteran foreign correspondent and journalism professor, have each published checklists aimed at minimizing the risk of sexual aggression in the field.

### **Suggestions include:**

- Understand the culture and be aware of your surroundings. Travel with colleagues and support staff. Stay close to the edges of crowds and have an exit route in mind.
- Dress conservatively and in accordance with local custom; wearing headscarves in some regions, for example, may be advisable for female journalists. Female journalists should consider wearing a wedding band, or a ring that looks like one, regardless of whether they are married. They should avoid wearing necklaces, ponytails, or anything that can be grabbed.
- Numerous experts advise female journalists to avoid tight-fitting T-shirts and jeans, makeup, and jewellery in order to avoid unwanted attention. Consider wearing heavy belts and boots that are hard to remove, along with loose-fitting clothing. Carrying equipment discreetly, in nondescript bags, can also avoid unwanted attention. Consider carrying pepper spray or even spray deodorant to deter aggressors.
- Journalists should travel and work with colleagues or support staff for a wide range of security reasons. Local fixers, translators, and drivers can provide an important measure of protection for international journalists, particularly while travelling or on assignments involving crowds or chaotic conditions. Support staff can monitor the overall security of a situation and identify

potential risks while the journalist is working. It is important to be diligent in vetting local support staff and to seek recommendations from colleagues.

- Some journalists have reported instances of sexual aggression by support staff.
- Don't mingle in a predominantly male crowd; stay close to the edges and have an escape path in mind. Choose a hotel with security guards whenever possible, and avoid rooms with accessible windows or balconies. Use all locks on hotel doors, and consider using your own lock and doorknob alarm as well. The International News Safety Institute suggests journalists have a cover story prepared ("I'm waiting for my colleague to arrive," for example) if they are getting unwanted attention.
- Journalists should try to appear familiar and confident in their setting but avoid striking up conversation or making eye contact with strangers. Female journalists should be aware that gestures of familiarity, such as hugging or smiling, even with colleagues, can be misinterpreted and raise the risk of unwanted attention.
- In general, try to avoid situations that raise risk. Those include staying in remote areas without a trusted companion; getting in unofficial taxis or taxis with multiple strangers; using elevators or corridors where you would be alone with strangers; eating out alone, unless you are sure of the setting; and spending long periods alone with male sources or support staff. Keeping in regular contact with your newsroom editors and compiling and disseminating contact information for yourself and support staff is always good practice for a broad range of security reasons. Carry a mobile phone with security numbers, including your professional contacts and local emergency contacts. Be discreet in giving out any personal information.

The Humanitarian Practice Network, a forum for workers and policy-makers engaged in humanitarian work, has produced a safety guide that includes some advice pertinent to journalists. The HPN, part of the U.K.-based Overseas Development Institute, suggests that individuals have some knowledge of the local language and use phrases and sentences if threatened with assault as a way to alter the situation.

Protecting and preserving one's life in the face of sexual assault is the overarching guideline, HPN and other experts say. Some security experts recommend that

journalists learn self-defense skills to fight off attackers. There is a countervailing belief among some experts that fighting off an assailant could increase the risk of fatal violence.

Factors to consider are the number of assailants, whether weapons are involved, and whether the setting is public or private. Some experts suggest fighting back if an assailant seeks to take an individual from the scene of an initial attack to another location.

Sexual abuse can also occur when a journalist is being detained by a government or being held captive by irregular forces. Developing a relationship with one's guards or captors may reduce the risk of all forms of assault, but journalists should be aware that abuse can occur and they may have few options. Protecting one's life is the primary goal.

<http://www.mediareporttowomen.com/issues/421.htm>

The Azerbaijani reporter Arzu Geybulla reports in one of the most challenging places in the world for journalists, but the fact that she's a woman makes her work even harder. Now based in Turkey, she has dealt with online harassment, abuse and even threats to her family over the years — all largely a result of her gender and the focus of her work, which looks to expose human rights violations in her home country. In 2015, the Azerbaijani media *accused her of treason* for her work at Agos, an Istanbul-based Armenian newspaper.

<https://ijnet.org/en/blog/qa-arzu-geybulla-women-deserve-have-voice-much-men-do>



## Track 2: Activities

**These activities prepare students to protect themselves from violence and assault during coverage of political instability and other events.**

➔ **Activity 1:**

The instructor discusses specific examples of attacks with the students and asks each one to write an analysis of these cases.

➔ **Activity 2:**

Students are asked to examine matters related to violence and gender-based censorship as well as the history of women's journalism in their respective countries.

➔ **Activity 3:**

Students are divided into working groups and asked to devise a safety plan related to coverage of specific political unrest.

➔ **Required reading:**

The International News Safety Institute has issued the following safety card for women journalists in English and Arabic.

<http://www.ifj.org/nc/news-single-view/browse/6/backpid/238/article/insi-safety-advisory-or-women-journalists/>

No Woman's Land: On the Frontline with Female Reporters (2012). Hannah Storm and Helena Williams (eds.) International News Safety Institute, London. This is a fascinating compilation of accounts by women journalists of what it is like to work in areas of hostility. It includes great photographs. Female Arab journalists and journalists who have covered news from Arab countries are included. No Woman's Land includes useful general safety advice and top tips for women journalists working in the field.

<http://www.newssafety.org/safety/research-projects/no-womans-land/>

Violence and Harassment against Women in the News Media: A Global Picture. International Women's Media Foundation/International News Safety Institute. This is a valuable 40-page survey on violence and harassment against women in the media <http://newssafety.org/uploads/IWMF.FINALA.PDF>



## Additional Reading

### 1. International Women's Media Foundation

Every year, women journalists are killed, assaulted, threatened and defamed – all in pursuit of the truth. They do it in defense of their societies, bearing witness in countries where media are not free. Many of these women face not only the implicit dangers of hostile environments, but cultural and social prejudices that would keep them silent. In 2013, the IWMF launched the first-ever global survey of security risks for women journalists. The survey, created in conjunction with the International News Safety Institute (INSI), produced much-needed data on the challenges faced by women in news media around the world.

<http://www.iwmf.org/our-research/journalist-safety/>

### 2. Violence and Harassment against Women in News Media: A Global Picture, IWMF and INSI, March 2014

This report provides the first comprehensive picture of the dangers faced by many women working in news media around the world. Core findings of the report include:

- Nearly two-thirds of survey respondents said they have experienced some form of intimidation, threats, or abuse in relation to their work, ranging in severity from name-calling to death threats.
- The majority of threats, intimidation, and abuse directed toward respondents occurred in the work place, and were perpetrated most often by male bosses, supervisors, and co-workers.
- Most incidents of harassment and violence were never reported, even though a majority of women who experienced them said they were psychologically affected.

<http://www.iwmf.org/our-research/journalist-safety/violence-and-harassment-against-women-in-the-news-media-a-global-picture/>

### 3. Britain's House of Lords Finds BBC Discriminated Against Senior Women

A report released in January 2015 by Britain's House of Lords faults the British Broadcasting Corporation for an informal policy of pushing older female employees out of positions and prohibiting their discussing it with wrongly used confidentiality agreements. The report also documented bullying and

harassment, saying they were widespread throughout the BBC. The result is low numbers of women in key positions, a status the Lords report said was “simply not good enough.” The report also noted a segregation of journalistic opportunity, with women assigned to less prestigious beats and more soft features.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/lords-select/communications-committee/news/wncab-report-publication/>

#### **4. Turkey’s “treacherous” women journalists: Dangerous times for female reporters**

**By: Genç, Kaya. Index on Censorship. Dec 2014, Vol. 43, Issue 4, p 88-92. 5p. DOI: 10.1177/0306422014560506**

The treatment of Turkey’s women journalists by mainstream newspapers is a good indication of recent shifts in Turkey’s political culture. Over the course of 2014 Turkish papers adopted an increasingly macho attitude towards women journalists in general – and women journalists with even slightly dissident views in particular. A review of that year’s events shows us how a patriarchal tone towards women writers is in the process of becoming the norm here rather than the exception. Women journalists are regularly told to “know their place” by state officials, newspaper editors and opinion leaders who are calling the shots in the political establishment and the media.

<http://ioc.sagepub.com/content/43/4/88.extract>

#### **5. Women’s Institute for Freedom of the Press** <http://www.wifp.org/>

#### **6. Why Women Aren’t Welcome on the Internet**

“Ignore the barrage of violent threats and harassing messages that confront you online every day.” That’s what women are told. But these relentless messages are an assault on women’s careers, their psychological bandwidth, and their freedom to live online. This article argues that we have been thinking about Internet harassment all wrong.

<http://www.psmag.com/health-and-behavior/women-arent-welcome-internet-72170>

### **7. In Jordan, Some Threats Against a Foreign Journalist Are Realized.**

**By: Habib, Randa. Nieman Reports. Fall 2011, Vol. 65, Issue 3, p44-46. 3p.**

After the Arab Spring, media restrictions tighten in ways unprecedented in Randa Habib's 24 years as Agence France-Presse bureau chief in Amman, and her life is threatened because of what she reports.

<http://niemanreports.org/articles/in-jordan-some-threats-against-a-foreign-journalist-are-realized/>

### **8. Iraqi women journalists' challenges and predicaments**

**By, Al-Rawi, Ahmed Khalid, Source: Journal of Arab & Muslim Media Research. 2010, Vol. 3, Issue 3, p223-236. 14p**

This article aims at reviewing the condition of Iraqi female journalists specifically after the US invasion in 2003 by using different Arabic and English sources. The study argues that female Iraqi journalists enjoyed new freedoms of speech and got new opportunities to improve professionally after 2003, but many of them were harmed because of the spread of lawlessness, and thus were mostly drawn to their sect or ethnic group as a protective measure to secure them from outside threats. After the US invasion, some journalists who wanted to cover the events in a balanced manner were threatened, kidnapped or assassinated by armed groups, militias and political parties. This fact has further enhanced the polarization of these journalists. Iraq has become known as the worst place for journalists to live and work; thus, it is not surprising that the circumstances Iraqi female journalists go through are probably some of the worst in the world.

### **9. Violence and the Women Who Cover It Media Report to Women**

**Summer 2015, Vol. 43, Issue 3, p20-22. 3p. Byerly, Carolyn M**

The article focuses on the dangers faced by women journalists who report on issues such as men's violence and crime against women. It refers to the case when Carolyn Craven, a black female investigative reporter for a local television station in Berkeley, California, was raped by the serial rapist Craven had been reporting about on her show. It also discusses the harassment faced by Arab women journalists who reported the political uprisings in their nations.



**10. Female technology journalists report abuse is still the name of the game: Catherine Adams, October 2015.**

Women in tech forced to disguise their identity – and even quit the industry – after facing threats online, study finds. <http://www.theguardian.com/media/2015/oct/11/female-technology-journalists-abuse-zoe-quinn>

**11. Advice to women journalists facing harassment at work (Arabic text), Sherry Ricchiardi, IJNet, 10/7/15.**

<https://ijnet.org/ar/blog/%D9%86%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%A6%D8%AD-%D9%84%D9%84%D8%B5%D8%AD%D9%81%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%AA%D9%8A-%D9%8A%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%AC%D9%87%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%AD%D8%B1%D8%B4-%D8%A3%D8%AB%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D9%85%D9%84>

**12. Advice to women journalists from a (female) war correspondent covering events in Libya (Arabic text), Basma Al Oufi, IJNet, 5/1/15.**

<https://ijnet.org/ar/blog/%D9%86%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%A6%D8%AD-%D9%84%D9%84%D8%B5%D8%AD%D9%81%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D9%86-%D9%85%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A9-%D8%AD%D8%B1%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%BA%D8%B7%D8%AA-%D8%A3%D8%AD%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%AB-%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A7>

**13. Women in Lebanese media: Harassment, discrimination, sidelining (Arabic text), Malak Makki, Assafir 5-1-2015**

<http://assafir.com/Windows/PrintArticle.aspx?ChannelID=1&ArticleID=393888&ref=ArticleFooter>

**14. Frontline Reporting - Women Working in War Zones: Guidelines for reporters,** managers and editors, Dart Center & INSI brochure, 2005.

[http://www.ifj.org/fileadmin/images/Gender/Gender\\_documents/Safety\\_Guidelines\\_for\\_Women\\_working\\_in\\_War\\_Zones\\_EN.pdf](http://www.ifj.org/fileadmin/images/Gender/Gender_documents/Safety_Guidelines_for_Women_working_in_War_Zones_EN.pdf)

**Arabic version**

[http://www.ifj-arabic.org/dfiles/attach\\_files/2011-09-24-02-19-13\\_Frontline%20Reporting%20-%20women%20AR.pdf](http://www.ifj-arabic.org/dfiles/attach_files/2011-09-24-02-19-13_Frontline%20Reporting%20-%20women%20AR.pdf)

**15. The rise of the female TV war correspondent as global celebrity, Luisita Lopez Torregrosa, NYTLive-NYTimes, 8/21/15.**

<http://nytlive.nytimes.com/womenintheworld/2015/08/21/the-rise-of-the-female-tv-war-correspondent-as-global-celebrity>

**16. The long read: acclaimed war photographer Lynsey Addario on kidnaps, death threats and motherhood, James Kidd, The National, 17 April 2015.**

<http://www.thenational.ae/arts-lifestyle/the-review/the-long-read-acclaimed-war-photographer-lynsey-addario-on-kidnaps-death-threats-and-motherhood#full>

**17. Lebanese women journalists brave war odds**

**Magda Abu-Fadil, Arab Media & Society, Issue 1, Spring 2007**

<http://www.arabmediasociety.com/?article=22>

**18. Legal Battle Dogs Lebanese 'Fe-Male' Journalist**

**Magda Abu-Fadil, The Huffington Post, 7/29/2015.**

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/magda-abufadil/legal-battle-dogs-lebanes\\_b\\_7896516.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/magda-abufadil/legal-battle-dogs-lebanes_b_7896516.html)

**19. Abeer Saady: Egyptian Journalism Dynamo**

**Magda Abu-Fadil, The Huffington Post, 9/16/2013.**

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/magda-abufadil/abeer-saady-egyptian-jour\\_b\\_3935227.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/magda-abufadil/abeer-saady-egyptian-jour_b_3935227.html)

20. Asociación Civil Artemisa Comunicación. **Gender and Journalism** documentary series, Argentina ([www.artemisanoticias.com.ar](http://www.artemisanoticias.com.ar)).

21. Romito, Patrizia. 2008. **A deafening silence: hidden violence against women and children.** Bristol: Policy Press.

[www.feministes-radicales.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/Patrizia-Romito-A-Deafening-Silence.-Hidden-Violence-Against-Women-and-Children.pdf](http://www.feministes-radicales.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/Patrizia-Romito-A-Deafening-Silence.-Hidden-Violence-Against-Women-and-Children.pdf)

# 8

## Lesson 8

### Covering Demonstrations and Civil Unrest

#### Class description

Covering demonstrations is a routine part of many media workers' lives. They take place in all sorts of societies. Some are legal while others are not. Safety is a major issue with demonstrations as feelings tend to run high and there is always a risk of rioting and violence. Many of the issues concerning demonstrations might be raised in other classes, but it is important that demonstrations are considered in their own right. The learning material in this lesson tackles the challenges journalists face while covering social unrest and friction between journalists and the police or security forces. The topic will also be clarified through student activities in class.

#### Lesson Aims

This lesson aims to:

1. Indicate the importance of covering demonstrations and preparing media reports.
2. Shed light on the importance of safety during coverage.
3. Prepare students to face challenges.
4. Allow students to exchange views.
5. Empower students to discuss and analyze field reports.

#### Learning Outcomes

At the end of this class students will:

1. Be able to recognize matters to which they can be exposed while covering disturbances.
2. Analyze a situation and minimize danger by:

- Negotiating the various forces present in demonstrations.
  - Understanding the nature of crowds.
  - Anticipating/describing how crowd dynamics can suddenly change. (The instructor may choose appropriate examples).
3. Prepare to cover demonstrations and similar events.
  4. Take the necessary precautions during field coverage.
  5. Learn to deal cautiously with the police.
  6. Prepare a media coverage plan appropriate for various types of disturbances.

## Methodology

Lectures, discussions, talks from visiting journalists, videos of local, regional and international demonstrations, if available. (The instructor will focus on all the points in the underlined lesson plan)

## Linking the Lesson Plan to the Learning Outcomes

### Track 1 – Theoretical:

The lecturer will explain the information related to demonstrations and civil disturbances.

Lesson Plan	Number of Hours	Learning Outcomes
Explain and discuss learning materials	2	4+1
1. Professional challenges in covering demonstrations		
2. Tension between the police and journalists		

### Track 2 – Practical:

Activities related to the learning materials.

Lesson Plan	Number of Hours	Learning Outcomes
Practical activities	2	6+2

Activity 1: Answering questions		
Activity 2: Analyzing a video of a demonstration		
Activity 3: Designing a plan to cover disturbances and prepare reports		

The lesson plan focuses on possible factors that might lead to injury:

- Being crushed between people or against fixed structures, such as walls or barriers.
- Barriers or other structures collapsing.
- Surging, swaying or rushing which causes you to fall and be trampled or attacked.
- Aggressive behaviour towards you as a media worker.
- Being attacked to stop you from reporting.
- Sexual violence.
- Being caught up in violence during a riot.
- Dangerous behaviour, such as climbing a structure to get a better view.
- Being injured by objects (rocks, firebombs), fire, chemicals, bullets, and water cannon.
- Being arrested after being mistaken for a protester.
- Being arrested to stop you from reporting.
- Moving vehicles sharing the pavement with pedestrians, including security vehicles, ambulances.
- Being trapped because the crowd movement is obstructed e.g. people queuing at a gate.
- Cross-flows as people cut through the crowd to get to other areas.
- Failure of equipment causing a blockage, such as turnstiles, gates being blocked.
- Sources of fire, such as flags or pictures being burned.
- Demonstrators turn on the journalists as they fear pictures might be used later to arrest those taking part.

Despite the dangers, it is still very important that journalists cover protests and demonstrations. It is part of the job of being a witness, exercising the right to free expression, and reflecting the free expression of those protesting. Protests are an important part of democratic life.



## Track 1: Learning Materials

The learning materials focus on two key issues:

1. Professional challenges in covering demonstrations.
2. Tension between the police and journalists.

Journalists' ability to cover breaking news is under threat in many countries. Those who attempt to report on protest movements in particular risk physical harassment, detention, and even reprisal attacks designed to prevent them from documenting these important events.

It is telling that of the 23 indicators assessed in Freedom House's report Freedom of the Press 2014, the category concerning the physical ability of journalists to cover the news suffered one of the largest score declines of the year.

Other NGOs that monitor demonstrations and media coverage of events that may lead to journalists being targeted include the Vienna-based International Press Institute (IPI), the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), Amnesty International (AI), the Amman-based Center for Defending Freedom of Journalists (CDFJ), the Beirut-based Samir Kassir Eyes (Skeyes), the Cairo-based the Arabic Network for Human Rights Information (ANHRI), and Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF), to name a few.

### **1. Professional challenges in covering demonstrations**

Special protection for members of the press can be difficult to uphold when demonstrations turn violent, and it has become even more challenging as the boundaries between accredited journalists, citizen journalists, and activists increasingly blur. In many cases, however, reporters are not just caught up in the melee, but singled out for attack by police or protesters.

The following examples illustrate the challenges faced by journalists working amid social unrest and government crackdowns.

A Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF) roundtable identified a number of issues journalists face when covering demonstrations. "Media coverage of demonstrations is an essential part of the way democracies function," RSF

Secretary-General Christophe Deloire said. “It is natural that journalists do not just reflect the image that the protesters and police have of themselves. It is the media’s job to be independent observers. Physical and verbal violence against them is alarming and indicative of contempt for the principle of public debate.”

Agence France-Presse photographer Jacques Demarthon said: “Journalists are increasingly being identified with the political class, above all because of the close links between the media and political parties’.”

British media academic, Prof Richard Keeble, in his book *The Newspaper Handbook*, said that in the UK: “Demonstrators are becoming increasingly hostile to journalists. You should always assess the risk involved before covering a demo. It might be more appropriate to cover it from a vantage position high above the demonstration. If you decide to walk with the protestors it might be sensible to be accompanied by a colleague and with a mobile phone. Always be aware of the ‘get-out’ routes in case violence breaks out and the protesters are pinned into a confined space by the police.”

Journalists must familiarize themselves with the route and the terrain of any demonstration or protest march. Be aware of areas that might become bottlenecks. Know vantage points or possible flashpoints. Are there religious or ethnic communities living along the route, for instance, that might become the focus of violence?

Be aware that a demonstration can escalate from batons and shields to tear gas and even live rounds in a very short time.

British police and others have a new expression known as Kettling (also known as containment or corralling) for controlling large crowds during demonstrations or protests. It involves the formation of large cordons of police officers who then move to contain a crowd within a very limited area. Journalists should be careful they are not swept into a ‘kettle’ as they will not be let out for a long time and so might not be able to file a story or get images back.

It might be necessary to find a safe place to stand so as to observe. A careful reading of the politics should determine whether a reporter should stand behind

the security forces or the demonstrators. Do not be identified with either side so as not to risk arrest, violence or both.

Camera operators, both stills and video, are often attacked because demonstrators might fear they can be identified. Often a good idea is to take pictures from behind. It is also necessary to find good light during low light conditions.

Students should consider what to wear under different conditions, including strong shoes, and how a TV team might operate to protect a camera operator. It should be noted that in some instances photographers in particular use protective clothing, including light crash helmets like those used by skate-boarders or cyclists.

There are issues concerning 'citizen journalists' who do not necessarily act in a professional manner and could be with one of the factions involved. Sometimes activists with the demonstrators act as journalists, but claim they are covering the events. Such a spotlight can put the media in danger, as they can be seen by some as enemies, and therefore targets.

Demonstrators can also believe photographers and camera operators will hand over film to the police to facilitate identification.

The following safety tips were published by the International Federation of Journalists:

- Carry press ID, but only show it when safe.
- Set your cell phone to rapid dial to an emergency number.
- Stay upwind of tear gas.
- Take a wet towel, water, and some citrus fruit.
- Consider wearing goggles.
- Consider protective clothing if firearms may be used.
- Carry first aid kits, and learn how to use them.
- Wear loose clothing made of natural fibres.
- Cover arms, legs and neck.
- Carry a day's food and water.



### ► **Tension between the police and journalists**

Asked about the obligation to protect people during demonstrations, Olivier Pouchin, the head of the Compagnies Républicaines de Sécurité (CRS) riot police in the Paris area, said the police intervene when demonstrators attack journalists even if the police are not given specific training in this sort of action. He stressed the need for communication between reporters and the police. If journalists report their presence to the police at the start of a protest, it is easier for the police to protect them if violent clashes ensue, he said. Journalists sometimes hamper CRS operations, he said, especially when they are located between the police and demonstrators. Pouchin also insisted that, while some demonstrators may be suspicious of the media, the CRS is not opposed to being filmed by journalists, especially as media footage has sometimes enabled the CRS to demonstrate that allegations made against them were unjustified.

The police are sometimes themselves responsible for violence against journalists. Yves Monteil, a freelance photographer and co-founder of Citizen Nantes who has been covering the Notre-Dame-des-Landes protests since 2009, was struck by a flash-ball round fired by a CRS member on 22 February 2014. The flash-ball round hit him as he was using a zoom lens and mini-camera to film the police using teargas on a group of journalists.

Reporterre Journalist Emmanuel Daniel was manhandled by police during a protest against the Sivens Dam project in Albi, in southern France, but since then no serious police misconduct has been reported in the area. "Since the incident, the police have not prevented us from working," said Reporterre founder and former Le Monde journalist Hervé Kempf.

Police obstructed Montpellier Journal reporter Lucie Lecherbonnier while she was covering the eviction of squatters in the southern city of Montpellier. She told them several times she was a reporter despite not having her press card with her but a policeman nonetheless snatched the mobile phone she was using to film and photograph the eviction. The Poynter Institute's Eilyn Angelotti, writing after events in Ferguson, Missouri, following the shooting by police of an 18-year-old black man named Michael Brown, said police at protests and riots must balance the need to protect public safety with the journalists' right to report.

<http://www.poynter.org/news/mediawire/263345/during-protests-police-may-balance-journalists-rights-with-public-safety/>

The chairman of the ethics committee of the U.S.-based Society of Professional Journalists, Andrew Seaman, was quoted on the Washington Newseum site saying “journalists should take care in covering violent situations, as well as their obligations in doing such reporting. Once again, a large U.S. city is being thrust into the national spotlight as people destroy neighborhoods in the wake of a person’s death.... Journalists should understand that they must take care of themselves when covering unpredictable situations, like street protests”.

Seaman noted that “a press pass by itself is no protection against the probability of being caught in a barrage of rocks, police batons, gunfire, shrapnel or drifts of tear gas,” but also that “a rapidly evolving and unstable situation is no excuse for carelessness in reporting. While text, images and audio pour into a newsroom, it’s crucial that journalists continue to act as gatekeepers to serve the public good.”

<http://www.newseum.org/2015/04/28/how-much-violence-do-we-need-to-see-or-report/>

Freelance photographer Kevin Cooper, who has extensive experience covering riots in Belfast, Northern Ireland, warned colleagues that to argue legalities with police is likely to get you arrested. Here he talks to freelance colleagues in London about covering protests and demonstrations.

<http://www.londonfreelance.org/fl/0106demo.html>

The London-based Guardian newspaper published this advice for covering riots  
<http://www.theguardian.com/media/greenslade/2011/aug/09/london-riots-journalist-safety>



## Track 2: Activities

**These activities prepare students to take the necessary precautions to prepare for reporting from demonstrations and protests.**

➔ **Activity 1:**

Discussion and answering questions

- What is the importance of protests and of covering them and how should one
- prepare reports about them?
- Does the presence of cameras in protests contribute to outbreaks, and escalation, of disturbances?
- How and why do protests turn violent?
- Should you provide authorities with information to help them identify “ring leaders?”

➔ **Activity 2:**

After showing videos of local and regional demonstrations, students are asked to discuss how they would act under different circumstances.

➔ **Activity 3:**

Withhold the list of possible factors that might lead to injury and get students to think of their own list.

The instructor may also choose other appropriate activities.



## Additional Reading

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**For more information on coverage of demonstrations and civil disturbances, see the following:**

**1. Covering Volatile Street Protests,**

Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma, January 28, 2011.

<http://old.dartcenter.org/content/on-street-covering-protests#.Vnf3EZN96jQ>

**2. Reporting in and around Tahrir Square,** INSI security update, December 10, 2012.

<http://www.newssafety.org/safety/advisories/safety-advisory/detail/security-update-reporting-in-and-around-tahrir-square-171/>

**3. How reporters can estimate the number of people in a crowd,** Jessica Weiss, IJNet, 7/24/13.

<https://ijnet.org/en/blog/how-reporters-can-estimate-number-people-crowd>

**4. Covering demonstrations and other civil disorders,** INSI 2013.

[See

<http://www.newssafety.org/safety/staying-safe/covering-demonstrations-and-civil-disorder/>

5. Film about UNESCO training of security forces in free expression in Tunisia, where tensions between police and journalists during demonstrations had become a point of conflict.

Long version : [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_2u85rAwAzM&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_2u85rAwAzM&feature=youtu.be)

Short version :

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jex5U1QnNW4>

# 9

## Lesson 9

### Human Rights and Humanitarian Law

#### Class description

This lesson examines human rights and humanitarian law as they pertain to journalists and looks at some of their implications for journalists in terms of responsibilities.

The learning materials focus on five key issues: the history of human rights; the concept of humanitarian law; international humanitarian law or the Geneva Conventions; journalists and international law; journalists advocating for safety and an end to impunity; and a case study on ethics and journalists in Syria based on humanitarian law.

These topics will be clarified during the practical activity component of the lesson.

#### Lesson Aims

The lesson aims to:

1. Familiarize students with the importance of international humanitarian law.
2. Shed light on duties and rights stated in the Geneva Conventions.
3. Learn about international resolutions related to the safety of journalists and putting an end to impunity.
4. Preparing students to write an article about human rights.

## Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit students will be able to:

1. Describe basic human rights as they relate to freedom of expression, speech and the press.
2. Analyze the implications of human rights law as it relates to journalism.
3. Understand international humanitarian law and how it relates to journalists.
4. Describe a war crime.
5. Describe the role of the International Criminal Court.
6. Advocate for the safety of journalists and an end to impunity.
7. Write an article about human rights.
8. Uphold freedom of expression and defend it in accordance with international laws and treaties.

## Methodology

The lesson plan depends on lectures, preparation of projects, and visiting experts in humanitarian law as well as journalists experienced in war and conflict coverage. The instructor will focus on all the points underlined in the lesson plan.

## Linking the Lesson Plan to the Learning Outcomes

### Track 1 – Theoretical:

The instructor provides information on international humanitarian law and human rights.

Lesson Plan	Number of Hours	Learning Outcomes
Explain and discuss learning materials	3	5+3+1
1. History of human rights		
2. What is international humanitarian law?		

3. International humanitarian law, or the Geneva Conventions		
4. Journalists and international law		
5. Journalists advocating for safety of journalists and an end to impunity		

### Track 2 – Practical:

Activities related to the learning materials.

Lesson Plan	Number of Hours	Learning Outcomes
Practical activities	3	8+7+2
Activity 1: Answering questions		
Activity 2: Writing an article about human rights		
Activity 3: Simulation – a dialogue between a journalist and captors		

As indicated, the focus in this plan will be on:

- What are human rights?
- Where do they come from?
- How are they protected internationally, regionally and nationally/ domestically?
- What is International Humanitarian Law or the rules of war?
- What is a war crime?
- What is the International Criminal Court?
- Where does freedom of speech come from and why is it important?
- How are journalists protected during war?

Students should be supplied with the main documents relating to human rights and the rules of war. They should also be exposed to resolutions on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity passed at the UN General Assembly, the UN Security Council, the UN Human Rights Council, and UNESCO. In addition, they should have access to campaign materials by civil society and other activists.



## Track 1: Learning Materials

The learning materials focus on five key issues related to human rights and international humanitarian law:

1. History of human rights
2. What is international humanitarian law?
3. International humanitarian law or the Geneva Conventions
4. Journalists and international law
5. Journalists advocating for the safety of journalists and an end to impunity

### 1. History of human rights

#### ► 18<sup>th</sup> Century

Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen, Paris, 1789.

The Publication of Thomas Paine's Rights of Man, 1791.

The American Revolution and War of Independence. The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution has special resonance for journalists. It reads: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances".

#### ► 19<sup>th</sup> Century

Slavery outlawed; amelioration of the situation of the sick and wounded in times of war.

#### ► 20<sup>th</sup> Century

The end of the First World War meant a number of treaties were concluded for the purpose of providing special protection for minorities. It was also the first time an international court was discussed. It would take another 80 years for such a court to be established.

#### ► 1919

The International Labour Organization was founded to improve the conditions of workers, recognizing that poor conditions may lead to social unrest.



### ► **End of Second World War**

Strengthening of international cooperation to protect the human person against the arbitrary exercise of state power and improving standards of living. International bodies such as the United Nations and UNESCO, with human rights responsibilities, were established. Nuremberg Trials established for the first time international agreement for enforcement of humanitarian law.

### ► **1945 Charter of the United Nations onward**

At the end of World War 2, world leaders decided to complement the UN Charter with a road map to guarantee the rights of every individual everywhere. The document they considered later became the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that was adopted by the General Assembly on 10 December 1948.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966 and came into force in 1976. As of 2014, 74 signatories and 168 state parties signed.

Windhoek Declaration on a free, pluralistic and independent press, endorsed by UNESCO Member States in 1991, establishing World Press Freedom Day on 3 May. The Rome Statute 1998 and the International Criminal Court, 2002. This has major implications for journalists. See below.

Recognition by the UN General Assembly in 2013 of 2 November as “The International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists”.

Increased awareness of the importance of press freedom and the work of journalists has led to the adoption of eight resolutions dealing with this topic since 2012. These include resolutions at the UN General Assembly, the UN Security Council, and the UN Human Rights Council and UNESCO.

## **2. What is international humanitarian law?**

International humanitarian law, embodied in the Geneva Conventions, is a set of rules which seek, for humanitarian reasons, to limit the effects of armed conflict. It protects persons who are not or are no longer participating in hostilities and restricts the means and methods of warfare. International humanitarian law is also known as the law of war or the law of armed conflict.

Even though journalists have protection under international humanitarian law by virtue of being civilians, the United Nations passed Resolution 2222 in 2015 on the protection of journalists in armed conflicts to further emphasize the particular dangers to journalists and their role in reporting conflict. Under Resolution 2222 not only does it fall on states to fulfill their obligations with regard to journalist protection but UN peacekeeping operations are also encouraged to provide regular reports on the safety of journalists: “United Nations peacekeeping and special political missions, where appropriate, should include in their mandated reporting information on specific acts of violence against journalists, media professionals and associated personnel in situation of armed conflict,” the resolution says.

[See the IFJ statement welcoming the passing of the Resolution:

<http://www.ifj.org/nc/news-single-view/backpid/1/article/ifj-welcomes-new-resolution-of-the-united-nations-security-council-on-protecting-journalists-and-end/>].

Article 79 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions provides that journalists are entitled to all rights and protections granted to civilians in international armed conflicts. The same holds true in non-international armed conflicts by virtue of customary international law (Rule 34 of the ICRC’s Customary Law Study).

Thus, in order to perceive the full scope of protection granted to journalists under humanitarian law one simply has to substitute the word “civilian” as it is used throughout the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols with the word “journalist”.

Journalists, being civilians, are protected under international humanitarian law against direct attacks, unless they take a direct part in hostilities. Violations of this rule constitute a grave breach of the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol I. Intentionally directing an attack against a civilian – whether in an international or in a non-international armed conflict – is also a war crime under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Because of the nature of their work, journalists are inevitably exposed to the dangers inherent in military operations. However, by far the greatest danger they face is that of deliberate acts of violence against them.

Accurate, impartial reports from conflict zones serve a fundamental public interest: images and news can have a decisive impact on the outcome of armed conflicts. We have seen on many occasions that reports, whether stories or images, can have an impact on public opinion (see activities below), so it is hardly surprising that journalists face obstructions when doing their work during armed conflicts. The spectrum of interference is wide: it ranges from access denial, censorship and harassment to arbitrary detention and direct attacks against media professionals.

Journalists and other media professionals also run the risk of being subjected to arbitrary detention for alleged security reasons. This is where the distinction between “war correspondents” (Article 4 A (4) of the Third Geneva Convention) and “journalists” (Article 79 of Additional Protocol I) matters. Both are recognized as civilians, but only war correspondents are entitled to prisoner-of-war status. War correspondents are formally authorized to accompany the armed forces. By virtue of this close relationship, upon capture, they are accorded the same legal status as members of the armed forces. War correspondents thus benefit from the protections of the Third Geneva Convention as supplemented by Additional Protocol I and customary international law.

Media professionals, who are directly attacked, disappear or are taken captive in wartime or in other violence, are of concern to the International Committee of the Red Cross/Red Crescent. Since 1985 there has been a permanent hotline (+41 79 217 32 85) available to journalists who find themselves in trouble in armed conflicts. The service provided by the Red Cross/Red Crescent ranges from seeking confirmation of a reported arrest, obtaining access to persons arrested, providing information on a journalist’s whereabouts for relatives and employers, maintaining family links, actively tracing missing journalists, to carrying out medical evacuations of wounded journalists.

The Red Cross/Red Crescent is trying to bring about greater compliance with existing rules. Achieving this requires that proper training and instruction be provided for those who have to implement the rules on the ground. It also requires that those who violate the rules be held to account and, if found guilty of crimes, punished. Individuals are criminally responsible for any war crimes they commit, and each party to an armed conflict must respect and ensure respect for international humanitarian law.

[See also research by Professor Nicholas Tsagourias, “Violence Against Journalists and Crimes Against Humanity”

<http://www.cfom.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/CAH-and-journalists-February-2014.pdf>].

Other useful documents include the following resolutions that recognise that everyone’s right to freedom of expression depends upon the safety of journalists and an end to impunity for crimes against them, as reflected in UN Human Rights Council Resolution A/HRC/27/5, the United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/69/185, the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1738, UNESCO’s Executive Board Decision 196 EX/Decision 31 as well as the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, which UNESCO is coordinating.

### **3. What is Human Rights Law?**

Around the world, according to Reports Without Borders, 156 journalists and 163 netizens were imprisoned in 2015 because of their journalism activity. Moreover, almost 50% of the above are cases related to war and human rights issues. These figures demonstrate that freedom of expression, even though enshrined in all major international human rights instruments, can never be taken for granted. Freedom of expression is essential for the enjoyment of other human rights and freedoms, and constitutes a fundamental pillar for building a democratic society and strengthening democracy.

Freedom of expression and freedom of information are anchored in international sources of law, and freedom of expression is recognized as a fundamental freedom by the Charter of the United Nations. The Charter also forms the basis of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and of many other international treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). The ICCPR states that the right to freedom of expression includes the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of choice.

Freedom of expression, and by extension press freedom, can only be legitimately limited under international law under strict and exceptional conditions. Such

limits must meet the test of being in law, necessary and proportionate. They can also only be for the following defined reasons – national security, public order, public morality and the rights of others.

There is a debate about whether strong limits such as the criminalization of defamation, and the imprisonment of journalists, can ever be justified as being really “necessary” (in the sense that there are no alternatives). However, there is no dispute that journalists have a right to practice their use of free expression and press freedom in full safety. Physical attacks, threats, psychological intimidation, and interference with duties carried out within the law, can never be accepted as a legitimate limitation of rights. These are violations, and merit punishment under international law. The common aim of these international instruments is to protect freedom of expression and information across the world for everyone.

In order to ensure the protection of freedom of expression and freedom of information, some political bodies created by the United Nations, UNESCO or other regional systems, issue resolutions, sometimes on very specific matters, such as the protection of journalists in armed conflicts. Furthermore, the Charter has led to the establishment of specific bodies that ensure the treaties are implemented.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) ratified by every country in the world bar two, Somalia and the United States, acknowledges children’s specific range of human rights, which includes rights relating to the media and children’s rights to freedom of speech and expression. It also says that children have a right to be heard. **Article 13 of the Convention says:**

“The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child’s choice.”

A number of regional bodies, such as the Council of Europe and its court, the European Court of Human Rights, the African Court on Human and Peoples’ Rights, and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights have built up a considerable body of jurisprudence and rulings in the area of press freedom. The European Court

of Human Rights has ruled in cases concerning the protection of sources, of the watchdog role of the press and of the essential role of the press in a democracy. [See Freedom of Expression in Europe: Case-law concerning Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights

[http://www.echr.coe.int/LibraryDocs/DG2/HRFILES/DG2-EN-HRFILES-18\(2007\).pdf](http://www.echr.coe.int/LibraryDocs/DG2/HRFILES/DG2-EN-HRFILES-18(2007).pdf)].

Some bodies, such as the Human Rights Council, issue non-binding recommendations or reports to promote and encourage the respect of these fundamental freedoms for all, and establish cooperation and dialogue with governments.

Others, such as independent experts, the special rapporteurs of the UN or regional organizations, and working groups, operate from a thematic perspective (e.g. focusing on the rights of the child, anti torture, etc.) or a country-specific perspective. In this respect, they address specific cases or general trends they have been made aware of, directly to a state in order for it to take preventive or investigatory actions to avoid future violation or abuse. The outcomes of the Special rapporteurs and those who made representations to them are a source of important information for journalists. Coverage makes the whole international system stronger and more effective.

Many bodies also provide technical assistance to states to support the implementation of international human rights standards on the ground, by way of reports, statements or even country visits.

Even though most of the materials issued by these bodies are non-binding, they still have persuasive power or moral authority and may serve as the normative standard against which shortfalls can be measured.

In recent years there have been growing concerns with the increased number of journalists who have been killed while doing their jobs and with the impunity that appears to surround the killing of journalists. Journalists also face an increased risk of harassment, kidnapping and violence, some of it used to garner publicity that terrorists know will come from the public killing or harassment of media workers.

### ► International courts and the journalist as witness

With the establishment of the International Criminal Court and special tribunals, journalists now face an issue as to whether they should give evidence to such bodies and whether it is part of their duty as citizens or if it compromises their status as journalists. It brings into sharp focus the issues of the journalist as witness.

In the case of the International War Crimes Tribunal for former Yugoslavia, journalists were divided as to whether they should give evidence. The British human rights lawyer, Geoffrey Robertson, defending the American journalist, Jonathan Randal, who refused to give evidence, suggested that “war correspondents who take the witness stand risk being perceived by potential sources as an investigative arm of a judicial system”. Others did not agree, including a local journalist, Dejan Anastasijevic, who said: “I did not come to cover the war in Yugoslavia because of a sense of adventure or because I wanted to be a war correspondent. The war came to me and I believed it was my duty to contribute and to shed a light on the events that took place in my own country.”

War reporters might well find they are the first witnesses on the scene at a war crime. If so, they need to be informed as to what actually constitutes a war crime. After all they cannot report that a war crime has been perpetrated if they are not sure what a war crime is. For example, it might be necessary that a journalist needs to determine whether armed troops were accompanying refugees who were fleeing, or if the defenders of a town had raised a white surrender flag before they were shot, or if the radio station was broadcasting journalism or propaganda incitements to murder? Was the school building being used by the military or by civilians? Were the government forces using chemical weapons and can the journalists be sure?

Howard Tumber. “Crimes of War and the Journalist as Witness, Journalists War Crimes and International Justice” in *Media, War and Conflict*, August 2010, 3 (2).

**[CASE STUDY]**

**Humanitarian law, ethics, and journalism in Syria** by **Dan Saxon** (former legal adviser to the United Nations International Commission of Inquiry for Syria).

A small number of journalists reporting from Syria interviewed prisoners of war under highly coercive circumstances. In doing so, they ignored the protections that are due to prisoners under international humanitarian law, or IHL. These interviews raise important questions regarding the responsibilities of journalists in armed conflict:

- To what extent should journalists be expected to understand the principles and obligations of IHL?
- To what extent should reporters, editors, and publishers apply these principles to their work?
- Finally (and most complex), how should journalists balance the tensions between the public interest in the free dissemination of information and the protections accorded prisoners of war and other detainees in an armed conflict?

Under the 1949 Geneva Conventions, prisoners of war must at all times be humanely treated. In addition, “they must at all times be protected, particularly against acts of violence or intimidation and against insults and public curiosity.” Further, persons holding prisoners of war must in all circumstances treat them with respect and honour. No form of coercion may be inflicted on prisoners of war to obtain from them information “of any kind whatever”. More recently, article 45 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions, applicable to international armed conflicts, grants the protections of “prisoner of war” status to persons taking part in hostilities who fall into the power of an adversarial party. According to Additional Protocol II, similar protections are due to persons detained during non-international armed conflicts. For example, “their physical or mental health and integrity shall not be endangered by any unjustified act or omission.” Moreover, all wounded persons, “whether or not they have taken part in the armed conflict shall be respected and protected” and no one should take advantage of their weakness in order to mistreat them or harm them in any way. Stated more broadly, according to a rule of customary international humanitarian law, persons hors de combat (out of conflict) must be treated humanely.



A strong public interest exists in protecting the scope of freedom of expression and the right to impart and receive information, in particular during an armed conflict in which serious violations of human rights are being committed. Nevertheless, during wartime, tension can exist between freedom of expression and the protections accorded by humanitarian law to prisoners of war. The international media in Syria have not always properly balanced these tensions, resulting, according to some, in exploitation and abuse of prisoners of war.

On December 7, 2012, the BBC broadcast an encounter with six male prisoners held at the Mazza Air Base in a detention centre operated by Air Force Intelligence, which, the BBC reporter mentioned, was “Syria’s most feared intelligence service.” The reporter described how “human rights groups and former prisoners say torture happens here.” In fact, the United Nations Commission of Inquiry for Syria and Human Rights Watch have documented the use of horrific torture against detainees at Mazza since at least November 2011. In the broadcast, Air Force Intelligence officials “paraded” (the BBC’s term) six male prisoners for the BBC’s cameras and a Syrian State Television film crew, the Assad government’s media outlet. Several of the men were elderly and, according to the story, “all have confessed to being in jihadist, Al-Qaeda-style groups.”

The passport of one of the prisoners, an Algerian-French citizen, was filmed and broadcast, an act that documented his identity. This man declined to respond when asked whether he had been tortured; the other prisoners said they had not. The reporter noted that he could not vouch for the statements of the prisoners. The broadcast continued with a description of how the Assad government assigns blame to jihadist/terrorist groups for the violence afflicting Syria, which provided a motive for the government to give the BBC access to “alleged Jihadists.”

[joomla.cjicl.org.uk/journal/article/pdf/124](http://joomla.cjicl.org.uk/journal/article/pdf/124)

Arguably, the broadcast had news value. However, in addition to the propaganda value that these interviews provide to one side of the Syrian conflict, the BBC broadcast depicts the “confession” of detainees to involvement in terrorist organizations, a perilous acknowledgment to make by persons under the power of the Assad government, and a potential justification for continued government human rights violations. Finally, the coercive conditions of each interview with these prisoners significantly weaken the value of the information contained therein. Taken together, these factors outweigh any news value.

Circumstances may arise where the publication of information in the media about prisoners and/or detainees may be beneficial to them, and the public interest. For example, the 1992 press photographs of emaciated prisoners standing behind barbed wire in the town of Prijedor, Bosnia and Herzegovina, cast the world's attention on the operation of concentration camps by Bosnian Serb forces and the plight of non-Serbs incarcerated there. In August 2012, Free Syrian Army forces permitted the New York Times' Brian Denton to photograph a prisoner, who the news organization described as a "mentally damaged" member of a government paramilitary unit, with evident bruises and swollen limbs apparently resulting from abuse he received from his FSA captors. There is a distinct difference, however, between a still photograph or video material that identifies prisoners and/or depicts the reality of harsh detention conditions, and an interview that extracts information from a prisoner which: 1) may be false and 2) may place that prisoner and others in danger. The former can save prisoners' lives. The latter may constitute abuse. The humanity principle underlying humanitarian law may call for different judgments in different situations, but it should not permit the exploitation or endangerment of protected persons in order to get a story.

With respect to prisoners of war then, what criteria should be used to balance the public interest to impart and receive information without making detainees subject to degrading treatment? One common-sense principle may assist journalists to answer this question: When is it reasonable to believe that publication of the detainee's face, identity, or other information may assist his or her safety and well-being, and not lead to exploitation or abuse? Put more starkly, journalists and their editors and employers might ask: Will this broadcast help or damage the humanitarian interests of the prisoner of war?

By contrast, in situations of likely duress and coercion, broadcasts of interviews and "confessions" produce confusion rather than information, particularly given the difficulty of verification in Syria. For example, the journalist reporting in the media broadcast described in this article felt it necessary to distance himself from the reliability of the prisoners' statements. Thus, the prisoners' humanitarian interests may outweigh the public's interest in the production and dissemination of these interviews. Further, such broadcasts by major media outlets may encourage media-savvy belligerents holding prisoners to mount more propaganda exercises using exploited detainees.

Journalists are aware of these dangers. For example, in December 2012, Reporters Without Borders issued a news release expressing its concern for the fate of Ukrainian journalist Anhar Kochneva, allegedly held for ransom by rebels in Syria. Arrested journalists, the group noted, “should be treated humanely, or charged, or released.” Two videos of Kochneva had appeared on the Internet in which she “confessed” to serving as a military interpreter for Syrian and Russian officers. Reporters Without Borders noted that it was “deeply concerned that in both video appeals the journalist seems to be speaking under pressure”. Journalists in conflict zones should extend these same concerns to the prisoners of war with whom they have contact.

News media should take several steps to help ensure detainees are afforded their rights under international law. News organizations should be sure they have sufficient legal advice, and then provide their journalists with instruction in the principles and rules of humanitarian law. Journalists should not agree to meet with prisoners of war with their captors present, as this increases the risk that prisoners will be subject to coercion. And news outlets should incorporate IHL principles into their guidelines for conflict reporting.

These measures could reduce the risk that belligerent parties will exploit captives and use news media as propaganda tools. They might also assist journalists in striking a balance between freedom of expression and IHL’s protections of prisoners of war.

[See Humanitarian law, ethics, and journalism in Syria, Dan Saxon, CPJ guest blogger, <https://cpj.org/blog/2013/01/humanitarian-law-ethics-and-journalism-in-syria.php>].

[See here a useful guide to International Humanitarian Law from the Red Cross/Red Crescent [https://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/other/what\\_is\\_ihl.pdf](https://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/other/what_is_ihl.pdf)].

## **5. Journalists and advocacy for safety and an end to impunity**

Journalists should be proactive actors in protecting themselves and in pushing for their newsrooms to have effective safety policies. Increasingly, journalists are also taking steps – individually or jointly – to advance the issue of safety through advocacy actions. These can include prominent and ongoing coverage

of attacks, and the aftermath – including the issue of impunity. Many newsrooms commemorate key calendar days, in particular the 3 May World Press Freedom Day, and 2 November, the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists. Other anniversaries are also used as occasions for raising awareness. Often, journalist leaders will take initiatives to exchange with state authorities about the importance of providing protection when there are threats, and the importance of bringing perpetrators to book. Very often, the relatives of killed journalists generate campaigns for better safety measures generally, and for an end to impunity in the particular case.

Students should have access to campaign materials used by civil society and media groups to promote safety and end impunity. The IFEX website for example produces materials each year for Impunity Day. Also available on the UNESCO website are resource materials for advocacy, such as the statistics published by UNESCO in its World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development publications and in the Organization's Director General's biennial reports on the Safety of Journalists and the Danger of Impunity to the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC). Individual UNESCO reports based on the Journalists Safety Indicators and the Media Development Indicators (MDI) could also be useful resources.



## Track 2: Activities

**These activities prepare students to discuss and analyse professional safety in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and write articles on safety and freedom of expression.**

### ➔ Activity 1:

Discussion of the following questions:

- Are journalists more privileged than other citizens and should they have special privileges? Or do journalists exercise the same freedoms and rights as others? See if non-journalists can publish journalistic content via modern technology.
- How can one maintain a balance between the right to life and safety, and the right to freedom of expression and privacy?
- Can governments legally restrict freedom of expression during wars? Refer to international human rights organizations' laws. Two examples were the broadcasting ban operated by both the British and Irish governments during the 1980s in relation to political violence in Northern Ireland.
- Discuss a story, image, video relating to armed conflict that had a major impact on public opinion.

### ➔ Activity 2:

Students will conduct research on human rights in their respective countries and write articles for publication. The articles should include quotes from at least two sources who were deprived of their human rights or from recognized experts.

### ➔ Activity 3:

Students may conduct a campaign for safety on a given day or participate in it. They may also participate in a simulation during which they negotiate with authorities regarding the need to make progress on a particular case of impunity.

### ➔ Required Reading

The series on press freedom and safety covered by *Kaius Niemi*, at the time editor-in-chief of the Finnish newspaper *Ilta-Sanomat* is one reference.

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/freedom-of-expression/safety-of-journalists/beyond-the-statistics/>

Likewise, that compiled by Dana Priest, in partnership with the University of Maryland for the Washington Post. ([www.pressuncuffed.org](http://www.pressuncuffed.org)). *Research into editor's views of coverage of safety is available here (subscription purchase required)* <http://www.cfom.org.uk/2016/01/journalists-die-who-cares/>



## Additional Reading

### 1. **Safety of Journalists**, Reporters without Borders, September 2014

Various UN bodies have adopted resolutions in recent years – including Security Council Resolution 1738 in 2006 and General Assembly Resolution 68/163 in 2013 – with the aim of protecting journalists and combatting impunity for those responsible for violence against journalists. But this progress at the legal level has not been reflected in the reality on the ground, because the number of journalists being killed every year has not fallen. Reporters Without Borders gives recommendations for improving the mechanisms that protect journalists and for reminding governments that they have primary responsibility for their safety.

[https://en.rsf.org/IMG/pdf/safety\\_journalists\\_sept2014-2.pdf](https://en.rsf.org/IMG/pdf/safety_journalists_sept2014-2.pdf)

### 2. **Journalists in Armed Conflicts – Protection Measures in the International Humanitarian Law**, Paper presented at the SGIR 7th Pan-European International Relations Conference, Stockholm, 9-11 September 2010, Mag.

Hilde Farthofer: <http://www.eisa-net.org/be-bruga/eisa/files/events/stockholm/Journalists%20in%20armed%20conflict%20-%20protecting%20measures.pdf>

**3. The education of a foreign correspondent.** In this article well-known foreign correspondent, Janine De Giovanni, writes of the need to train good conflict correspondents who will have an understanding of human rights law. <http://niemanreports.org/articles/the-education-of-a-foreign-correspondent/>

#### ► **Declarations & Conventions related to Freedom of Expression –**

#### ► **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

*Adopted 10 December 1948*

**Article 19** - Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

## **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**

*Adopted 16 December 1966, came into force 23 March 1976*

### **Article 19 -**

1. Everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference.
2. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.
3. The exercise of the rights provided for in paragraph 2 of this article carries with it special duties and responsibilities. It may therefore be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary:
  - a. For respect of the rights or reputations of others;
  - b. For the protection of national security or of public order, or of public health or morals.

## **► European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms**

*Adopted 4 November 1950, came into force 3 September 1953.*

### **Article 10 -**

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. This article shall not prevent states from requiring the licensing of broadcasting, television or cinema enterprises.
2. The exercise of these freedoms, since it carries with it duties and responsibilities, may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions or penalties as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of national security, health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary.

► **African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights**

*Adopted 12 July 1981, came into force 21 October 1986.*

Article 9 - Every individual shall have the right to receive information. Every individual shall have the right to express and disseminate his opinions within the law.

**The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT):**

This treaty defines 'torture' in terms of those forms of ill-treatment that intentionally cause severe pain or suffering and are carried out by individuals exercising public functions. This may restrict its applicability beyond the public arena. But states parties to the Convention must exercise a duty of care to prevent cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. This covers a multitude of cases, including ill treatment of the disabled, for example.

**International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances:**

Enforceable since 2006, this Convention enjoins upon all states parties to take effective legislative, administrative, judicial or other measures to prevent, terminate and punish acts of enforced disappearances.

► **Initial documents related to Freedom of Expression**

1. Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, Frank La Rue, United Nations General Assembly, 16 May 2011  
[http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/17session/A.HRC.17.27\\_en.pdf](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/17session/A.HRC.17.27_en.pdf)
2. Exploring Humanitarian Law: The Essence of Humanitarian Law, International Committee of the Red Cross, 2012.  
English: <https://www.icrc.org/eng/what-we-do/building-respect-ihl/education-outreach/ehl/ehl-other-language-versions/ehl-english-mini-ehl.pdf>



**Arabic:** <https://www.icrc.org/eng/what-we-do/building-respect-ihl/education-outreach/ehl/ehl-other-language-versions/ehl-arabic-ihl-guide.pdf>

**French:** <https://www.icrc.org/eng/what-we-do/building-respect-ihl/education-outreach/ehl/ehl-other-language-versions/ehl-french-mini-ehl.pdf>

3. Reporting Human Rights: A Practical Guide for Journalists, Media Trust.  
<http://www.mediatrust.org/uploads/126633785241175/original.pdf>
4. The Arabic Network for Human Rights Information <http://anhri.net/>.

# 10

## Lesson 10

### Ethics

#### Class description

This lesson will assume students have already taken a course in media ethics. This class will include an examination of human rights in an ethical context. It will look at the particular ethical issues that arise in covering societal disruption caused by violence, political change, war, violence or any event that leads to increased vulnerability of ordinary citizens. It will also emphasize that being ethical will not compromise safety; it can enhance your protection if you are seen to be a fair professional with no hidden agenda or bias. Intrusive newsgathering and disregard for ethics can turn members of the public against journalists broadly, with repercussions on the safety of reporters whose hands are clean. The learning material focuses on three key topics: a study on human rights from an ethical perspective, how to deal with the International Criminal Court or the International War Crimes Tribunal, and the International Federation of Journalists' Declaration of Principles on the Conduct of Journalists. It will include activities to prepare students to deal with humanitarian issues.

#### Lesson Aims

The lesson aims to:

1. Familiarize students with the ethical dimension of human rights.
2. Identify ethical issues related to coverage of social disturbances.
3. Explain the relation between the safety of journalists and abiding by media ethics.
4. Prepare students to write reports about humanitarian issues and hate speech.
5. Shed light on the importance of the confidentiality and protection of sources.

## Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit students will be able to:

1. Describe the ethical issues involved in covering disruption up to and including war;
2. Approach vulnerable people in order to tell their story with sensitivity;
3. Describe issues relating to children;
4. Analyse issues relating to propaganda and reporting hate speech.
5. Understand the ethical issues relating to human rights and the rules of war.
6. Understand the importance in taking ethical decisions during times of hostility or difficulties.

## Methodology

Discussion using case studies, related videos, the experience of practitioners, or communications officers for NGOs (UNHCR, UNICEF, Red Crescent, etc.). The instructor can invite journalists who cover human rights issues as well as experts in the rules of war. The emphasis should be on the points underlined in the lesson plan.

## Linking the Lesson Plan to the Learning Outcomes

### Track 1 – Theoretical:

The instructor provides information on the ethical dimension to human rights and journalistic codes of conduct.

Lesson Plan	Number of Hours	Learning Outcomes
Explain and discuss learning materials	2	3+1
1. The ethical dimension to human rights		
2. Dealing with the War Crimes Tribunal		
3. IFJ Declaration of Principles on the Conduct of Journalists		

**Track 2 – Practical:**

Activities related to the learning materials.

Lesson Plan	Number of Hours	Learning Outcomes
Practical activities	3	7+4+2
Activity 1: Discussion and analysis of humanitarian issues (Q&A)		
Activity 2: Design a TV report on a natural disaster or war		

This is an extremely complex and sensitive area. Teachers should emphasize that being ethical is always the safer option. Those who might want to attack journalists will have fewer excuses for doing so. It is safer for journalists to be able to give an ethical defense of one's journalism.

Issues to be discussed:

- Reporting the vulnerable.
- The sick, injured and aged.
- Children. Starving children, child refugees, even children's dead bodies are used by the media in telling the story of humanitarian crises, from natural disasters to war. Students should discuss this. See teaching material below.
- Can journalists ever exploit the vulnerable to tell or show a more compelling story?
- Propaganda as a human rights violation, including that disseminated by journalists (see the ruling of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in the case against three journalists found guilty of genocide, incitement to genocide, and crimes against humanity).
- The importance of verification and honesty in reporting violence or war.
- Hate speech.
- Use of sources.
- Identifying refugees or displaced persons.
- Should journalists give evidence to any war crimes tribunals including the International Criminal Court, held subsequent to any conflict? (See teaching material below and on the lesson dealing with human rights and humanitarian law).

Pressures on journalists that might compromise ethical standards:

- Competition, especially the rush for the scoop.
- Shrinking budgets.
- Multiple deadlines.
- Security concerns.



## Track 1: Learning Materials

The learning materials focus on three key issues related to ethics:

1. The ethical dimension to human rights.
2. Dealing with the War Crimes Tribunal.
3. Journalistic codes of conduct.

Students are to revisit any standard text used in a previous media ethics class for revision. The codes of Conduct of the local journalism union, that of the International Federation of Journalists (included in the teaching material below) and various international codes of ethics listed by the Ethical Journalism Network <http://ethicaljournalismnetwork.org/en> are good references.

“A Hierarchy of Innocence: The Media’s Use of Children in the Telling of International News”. Susan D. Moeller, *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics* 2002, 7:36).

Robert Spellman, “Journalist or Witness? Reporters and War Crimes Tribunals”: *Gazette: The International Journal for Communication Studies* 2005, Vol 67(2) pp123-139, Sage Publications.

An ethics site from an American journalism school at the University of Wisconsin. <https://ethics.journalism.wisc.edu>.

The Ethical Journalism Network is an international media ethics initiative founded by Aidan White, formerly the General Secretary of the IFJ. It is a useful website that is updated regularly. It is not a specialist site for war or civil disruption, but those issues are covered when relevant <http://ethicaljournalismnetwork.org/en>.

The Ethical Journalism Network has a section that relates to the Middle East  
<http://ethicaljournalismnetwork.org/en/all/tags/middle-east>.

Arab Reporters For Investigative Journalism <http://en.arij.net>.

### **1. The ethical dimension to human rights**

Human rights have an ethical dimension. Some might argue that human rights are a formulation of ethical values and possibly are a formulation of a particular European ethical and philosophical tradition.

Human rights are considered inalienable, which means human beings cannot be deprived of their rights. Only the exercise of some of these rights can be limited in certain circumstances.

It is the fact that human rights originate in the unique nature of being human that means they should be subject to legal protection at the national and international level in order that they be guaranteed. Human rights are inherent to the dignity of every human person, irrespective of their race, ethnicity, gender, age, language, sexual orientation, religion, political or other opinion, national, social or geographical origin, or disability.

Journalism ethics, guided by a concept of public interest and respect for human rights, cover areas such as protection of sources, verification, truth telling as well as issues concerning privacy and the public's right to know. They are as important during civil disruption as during more peaceful times but are sometimes harder to implement. War brings new areas of concern, including propaganda and issues around hate speech. Journalists have to be careful how they relate to authority, especially when their own country is at war. Journalists have to ensure they continue to understand the primacy of the public interest over those exercising power. Photojournalists and cameramen/women have particular issues in the photographing of vulnerable people and children.

The following is an interesting article by Tej Pratap on ethics and propaganda during war and was retrieved 13 January 2015 by the Times of India.

<http://www.slideshare.net/p13tejp/war-propaganda-in-media-and-the-ethics-of-conflict-reporting>

Prisoners of war have a right to be treated with dignity under the provisions of International Humanitarian Law, so what if journalists are given access to prisoners to interview them? There is a public interest in hearing these prisoners and their experience, but there might also be propaganda value, and the prisoners themselves might be doing so in coercive circumstances.

The following 10-point check list from the Poynter Institute might be useful for students:

1. What do I know? What do I need to know?
2. What is my journalistic purpose?
3. What are my ethical concerns?
4. What organisational policies and professional guidelines should I consider?
5. How can I include other people, with different perspectives and diverse ideas, in the decision-making process?
6. Who are the stakeholders — those affected by my decision? What are their motivations? Which are legitimate?
7. What if the roles were reversed? How would I feel if I were in the shoes of one of the stakeholders?
8. What are the possible consequences of my actions? Short term? Long term?
9. What are my alternatives to maximize my truth-telling responsibility and minimize harm?
10. Can I clearly and fully justify my thinking and my decision? To my colleagues? To the stakeholders? To the public?

The following is from advice on reporting trauma but it has strong ethical resonance:

Get it right. Thoroughly check and re-check facts, names, times and places. Remember your story may be the last ever item in the scrapbook of a loved one's life. Errors are a second wound to people who have been traumatized by loss or tragedy.

## **2. International War Crimes Tribunals or the International Criminal Court**

Washington Post reporter Jonathan Randal refused to give evidence to the International Criminal Court hearings at The Hague on the war in the former Yugoslavia as it would compromise his role as a journalist. Others decided on

ethical grounds that they could, including Jacky Rowland, formerly with the BBC, later Al Jazeera. A number of Serbian and Croat journalists also gave evidence. They argued that the war was taking place in their country so they had a different responsibility.

Students should discuss these issues, relating them to matters concerning sources and the role of the journalist. Imagine you are a journalist who was given information concerning an action later deemed to be a war crime and your source is accused of being a war criminal. Do you give evidence and therefore expose your source? If you do, would that be contrary to the code of ethics of the IFJ and most other codes of journalism ethics? The IFJ code states: “The journalist shall observe professional secrecy regarding the source of information obtained in confidence.”

However, you might feel your moral responsibility is to give evidence. Discuss the ethical argument between the two points of moral principle, the absolute ban on revealing a source and the wish to see justice for a people who suffered under a person who was also your source.

Have a discussion on children and disaster coverage using the statement from American media scholar Susan Moeller about children in famines and wars:

Starving children are the famine icon. An emaciated child is not yet associated with the stereotypes attached to its colour, its culture, or its political environment. Skeletal children personify innocence abused. They bring moral clarity to the complex story of a famine. Their images cut through the social, economic, and political context to create an imperative statement. There are few other obvious innocents in this world than children. In depicting wars—or famines, for that matter—children (and their mothers) make ideal victims, while men associated with violent political factions can be murdered or can die by the thousands without creating a flutter of interest in their victim status.’

### **3. IFJ Declaration of Principles on the Conduct of Journalists**

(Adopted by the 1954 World Congress of the International Federation of Journalists. Amended by the 1986 World Congress.).

This international Declaration is proclaimed as a standard of professional



conduct for journalists engaged in gathering, transmitting, disseminating and commenting on news and information in describing events.

1. Respect for truth and for the right of the public to truth is the first duty of the journalist.
2. In pursuance of this duty, the journalist shall at all times defend the principles of freedom in the honest collection and publication of news, and of the right of fair comment and criticism.
3. The journalist shall report only in accordance with facts of which he/she knows the origin. The journalist shall not suppress essential information or falsify documents.
4. The journalist shall use only fair methods to obtain news, photographs and documents.
5. The journalist shall do the utmost to rectify any published information which is found to be harmfully inaccurate.
6. The journalist shall observe professional secrecy regarding the source of information obtained in confidence.
7. The journalist shall be aware of the danger of discrimination being furthered by the media, and shall do the utmost to avoid facilitating such discrimination based on, among other things, race, sex, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinions, and national or social origins.
8. The journalist shall regard as grave professional offences the following:
  - plagiarism;
  - malicious misrepresentation;
  - calumny, slander, libel, unfounded accusations;
  - acceptance of a bribe in any form in consideration of either publication or suppression.
9. Journalists worthy of the name shall deem it their duty to observe faithfully the principles stated above. Within the general law of each country the journalist shall recognise in professional matters the jurisdiction of colleagues only, to the exclusion of every kind of interference by governments or others.



## Track 2: Activities

**These activities focus on case studies used in teaching ethics, as well as discussions and questions, and the preparation of a report on a humanitarian issue. All these issues familiarize students with the application of ethical standards as well as dealing with humanitarian subjects with integrity.**

➔ **Activity 1:**

- Would your students use particular pictures, or interview certain people? Discuss the conflict between a public's right to know and the right to privacy for refugees or prisoners, for instance.
- As a journalist, do you publish or broadcast news which is verifiably true even when you are told such information put into the public domain might help the enemy, or lead to further violence?
- Do you use pictures and/or videos of identifiable dead bodies in order to get across the full horror of an event, a natural disaster, an explosion, the result of a riot?

➔ **Activity 2:**

The instructor selects a topic related to a humanitarian issue (natural disaster or war) and asks students to plan a TV report about it. The instructor may select additional activities.



## Additional Reading

**These readings are useful resources on the adherence to ethical principles while preparing media reports related to children and other humanitarian issues.**

### **1. ABCs of Avoiding Journalistic Errors and Prevention of Legal Accountability** (Arabic text), **Amr Qandil, IJNet, 10/9/14.**

<https://ijnet.org/ar/blog/%D8%A3%D9%84%D9%81-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D8%AA%D8%AC%D9%86%D9%91%D8%A8-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D8%AE%D8%B7%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D8%AD%D9%81%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%A7%D8%A1%D9%84%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%A7-%D9%86%D9%88%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9>

### **2. Code of Conduct in Media's Coverage of Children** (Arabic text), **Annahar daily newspaper, Lebanon, 8/23/13.**

<http://newspaper.annahar.com/article/60349-%D8%B4%D8%B1%D8%B9%D8%A9-%D8%A3%D8%AE%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%82%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B9%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%8A-%D9%85%D8%B9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%88%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D9%84%D9%84%D8%B4%D8%A4%D9%88%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B9%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%AF%D8%B9%D9%88%D8%A9-%D9%84%D8%AA%D9%88%D9%82%D9%8A%D8%B9%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%A8%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%81>

### **3. Ethical Principles in Preparing Media Reports on Children** (Arabic text), UNICEF.

[http://www.unicef.org/arabic/media/24327\\_43432.html?p=printme](http://www.unicef.org/arabic/media/24327_43432.html?p=printme)

**4. Tools of a Journalist Covering Refugee Camps: Complete Humanity Followed by Professionalism** (Arabic text), IJNet, 2/7/15.

<https://ijnet.org/ar/blog/%D8%A3%D8%AF%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%B5%D8%AD%D9%81%D9%8A-%D9%85%D8%AE%D9%8A%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%88%D8%A1-%D8%A5%D9%86%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%B7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%A9-%D8%AA%D8%AA%D8%A8%D8%B9%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%87%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9>

**5. Is Disaster Photography Art?** James Rose, Daily Review, April 23, 2015.  
<http://dailyreview.crikey.com.au/is-disaster-photography-art/22892>

**6. 10 Ethical Principles in Preparing Journalistic Reports on Children** (Arabic text), Suad Alboghazey, IJNet, 30/7/15.

<https://ijnet.org/ar/blog/10-%D9%85%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%89%D8%A1-%D8%A3%D8%AE%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%82%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A5%D8%B9%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D8%AD%D9%81%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%AD%D9%88%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B7%D9%81%D8%A7%D9%84>

**7. Arabic Online Media Ethics Guide**

**Magda Abu-Fadil and Rouba El-Helou, May 2014.**

<http://media-unlimited.info/mu-presents-arabic-online-media-ethics-guide/>

**8. Cairo Seminar Wrestles With Media Hate Speech**

**Magda Abu-Fadil, Huffington Post, 11/11/2015.**

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/magda-abufadil/cairo-seminar-wrestles-wi\\_b\\_8530930.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/magda-abufadil/cairo-seminar-wrestles-wi_b_8530930.html)

**9. Media Ethics in Lebanon Lack Proper Implementation,****Magda Abu-Fadil, Huffington Post, 9/25/2015.**

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/magda-abufadil/media-ethics-in-lebanon-l\\_b\\_8195330.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/magda-abufadil/media-ethics-in-lebanon-l_b_8195330.html)

**10. Media Ethics: Whose Standards?****Magda Abu-Fadil, Huffington Post, 5/23/2015.**

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/magda-abufadil/media-ethics-whose-standards\\_b\\_7427224.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/magda-abufadil/media-ethics-whose-standards_b_7427224.html)

**11. The Media and Elections in post-conflict Central African countries,****Marie-Soleil Frère.**

[www.cmi.no/file/?1010](http://www.cmi.no/file/?1010)

# 11

## Lesson 11

### Safety and Investigative Journalism

#### Class description

This lesson asks students to examine the specific threats to investigative journalism. It is assumed journalism students taking this lesson have been introduced to investigative journalism. The safety issues discussed in other classes are relevant for investigative journalists as well. It will be necessary to define what is meant by investigative journalism in order for students to ascertain its specific threats.

#### Lesson Aims

The lesson aims to:

1. Familiarize students with the concept of investigative journalism.
2. Shed light on safety issues for investigative journalism.
3. Prepare students to face threats.
4. Prepare students to implement safety standards related to investigative journalism.

#### Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Apply safety concerns to investigative journalism.
2. Describe specific safety issues for investigative journalism.
3. Analyse issues to do with investigative journalism.
4. Prepare a safety plan before embarking on any investigative journalism project.

## Methodology

Lectures, specific case studies, talks from visiting journalists. Showing of related videos, if available. The focus is on the underlined points in the lesson plan.

## Linking the Lesson Plan to the Learning Outcomes

### Track 1 – Theoretical:

The instructor provides information on investigative journalism.

Lesson Plan	Number of Hours	Learning Outcomes
Explain and discuss learning materials	2	2
1. Investigative journalism and how to conduct it		

### Track 2 – Practical:

Activities on how to implement safety measures related to investigative journalism.

Lesson Plan	Number of Hours	Learning Outcomes
Practical activities	2	4+3
Activity 1: Discussion and analysis of videos		
Activity 2: Prepare a plan for professional safety		

The lecturer must shed light on the following matters:

What is investigative journalism?

Possible question students might elaborate on: Does investigative journalism differ from other forms of journalism?

Does investigative journalism have specific safety issues? If so, get the class to elaborate.

Investigative journalism is to do with the following:

- In-depth, long-term research and reporting.
- Documentary research and use of public and private records, following a paper trail.
- Extensive interviewing.
- Crime-solving tools and methods (undercover reporting, hidden cameras, surveillance).
- Revealing information others want to keep secret or information not known to the public.
- Data mining.
- Public Interest.

Where do the threats to investigative journalists come from?

Students can draw up a list and describe the nature of those threats.

Here are some:

- Government
- Security forces
- Commercial entities
- Politicians
- Criminals
- Potential sources of information (with ulterior motives)
- Themselves as journalists, particularly when practising pre-publication or self-censorship.

In order to minimize threats, investigative journalists must be aware of the legal situation in their own country as well as journalistic codes of ethics.

- What is an injunction?
- How do libel and slander work?
- Are there specific codes of conduct for investigative journalists?

Possible sources for investigative journalists:

- Whistleblowers
- Ordinary people who tell the journalist something
- Publicly available documents, information and data, which might be in specialist journals, government reports, reports from UN bodies or government websites



- Data and statistics
- Freedom of Information, if such legislation exists.

Before embarking on an investigative journalism project, journalists should:

- Fill out a preparedness assessment, which evaluates the possible dangers the reporter might encounter.
- Prepare a communications plan in order to maintain contact. This should be undertaken even if the journalist is not leaving the country.
- Proof of life document in case of kidnap so those at home know it is you, that there are things only they and you know so there can be proof you are alive and/or unharmed.

It should be emphasized that general safety advice for all journalists applies to investigative journalists as well.

### **What are the threats an investigative journalist might encounter?**

**Physical.** Threats to the physical well being of the journalist, including threats to his or her life. Journalists should try not to be alone and ensure editors and family know where they are at all times. Journalists should ensure they have good alarms, exercise security checks on vehicles and home, and take precautions such as varying routes to work. Students should draw up a checklist.

Threats to research material. Make sure your computer is secure, that you are exercising basic digital security. Think of using notebooks for interview notes and other material and make sure you have a safe and secure hiding place. Students to draw up a checklist.

**Legal.** Those being investigated might use the courts to gain access to sources. Journalists must refuse to divulge sources on ethical grounds, but get assistance from editors, journalists' trade unions as well as international journalism bodies like the IFJ, the CPJ, IPI, RSF, Human Rights Watch, African Network of Centers for Investigative Reporting, Center for Investigative Reporting, etc.

If this is likely to be an issue, ensure you disable mobile phones and other devices before leaving the office to meet contacts. Do not pay for meals, car hire or other outgoings with a credit card. Those being investigated might seek to subpoena credit card details, or phone records or other information that might link you with a source.

Often those being investigated will try and undermine the journalists' credibility. Getting it right, having verified information, good sources and well-kept notes will protect the journalist from attacks on his or her credibility.

Investigative journalism often relies on confidential relations with sources. Lapses on either side can jeopardize not just the investigation concerned, but the safety of both parties as well.

### **Crime**

Investigating criminal activity is dangerous. People involved with drugs, for instance, can be violent and unpredictable. The kingpins have empires they seek to protect, often with other criminal activities beyond drugs, and ties with officials that they seek to keep hidden.

Always keep in contact with editors.

Know as much about the situation as possible.

Be calming and reassuring.

Investigative journalist Donal MacIntyre advises that you should be 'methodical, vigilant and never take too many risks'.

### **Government and the State**

Know the law and keep within it, as far as possible.

Be aware of the public interest, it might be your best defense.

Keep notes of all meetings or communications safe.

Always verify with more than one source.

Do security checks on home and vehicles, and vary your routes. Put in place digital security protocols.

Always remember the State (directly or through its intelligence sharing arrangements, or via the Internet and telecoms companies that store or transport your communications) is often well placed to gain access to your hard drive, phone and other digital material, but so too other actors may have means to intercept, hack or decrypt your digital details – including movements recorded through cellphone signals. The metadata can often be a rich source for those paying unwanted attention to investigative journalism.



## Track 1: Learning Materials

The learning materials focus on safety related to investigative journalism.

What is investigative journalism? It is important journalists have thought this through as part of their safety thinking. The following might work:

- A. Original research.
- B. The subject involves potential wrongdoing or negligence for which there is no available evidence.
- C. Someone is trying to keep the information secret.

**A. What is original research?** Original research is carried out by reporters using raw material and data, rather than piecing together research already done by others. It might be based on extensive interviews (not vox pops) or matching and comparing facts and figures, finding patterns and connections others have either overlooked or not observed.

**B. Wrongdoing:** You might have a suspicion of wrongdoing or negligence, but have no proof, and neither does anyone else. Evidence needs to be collected. In these cases, which will be of great public interest, a lot of time is needed and it may even be necessary to set up a team of dedicated journalists.

**Secrets:** One definition of news is something someone somewhere is trying to keep secret. All the rest is advertising. Rather glib, but it does hide a small truth. There is always something important someone is trying to keep secret. Day-to-day journalism demands that at some stage you have to say you are going with what you have got – as long as you have verified it and it is unassailably in the public interest. It might not be the whole story, but it is all you are going to get before deadline. Investigative journalism takes off from that point. It does not accept secrecy and a refusal to give information. The journalist finds out for him or herself.

### **Subjects worth investigating:**

Organizations that work in remote areas and away from the public gaze;  
People or institutions that suddenly get thrust into the public eye and appear to come from nowhere;  
Hidden criminal acts, such as domestic violence and sexual harassment;  
Anything that offers quick money and easy profits;  
Any public figure who has more wealth than can be accounted for.



## Track 2: Activities

**The activities enable students to discuss and analyze cases related to investigative journalism. Have them come up with an investigative journalism idea and prepare a safety plan for that specific project idea.**

➔ **Activity 1:**

The instructor shows videos of investigative journalism case studies and asks students to discuss and analyze them.

➔ **Activity 2:**

Students to come up with an investigative journalism idea and prepare a safety plan for that specific project idea.

investigative journalism in the Arab world site (in Arabic) for some ideas for students <http://arij.net>

Data Journalism Handbook in Arabic

[http://mediapusher.eu/datajournalismhandbook/arabic/sahafat\\_al-bayanat-b-lo.pdf](http://mediapusher.eu/datajournalismhandbook/arabic/sahafat_al-bayanat-b-lo.pdf)



## Required Reading

**1. Handbooks and resources on investigative journalism available online: Verification Handbook.** This handbook provides the fundamentals of online search and research techniques for investigations; details techniques for user-generated content investigations; offers best practices for evaluating and verifying open data; provides workflow advice for fact-checking investigative projects; and outlines ethical approaches to incorporating UGC in investigations <http://verificationhandbook.com/book2/>.

**The Global Investigative Journalism Casebook, UNESCO**

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002176/217636e.pdf>.

**Data Journalism Book, The Centre for Investigative Journalism**

This handbook is for all journalists who want to master the art of interrogating and questioning numbers competently. Being able to work with figures and investigate numbers is not a new form of journalism but a skill that all journalists can acquire.

<http://www.tcij.org/sites/default/files/u4/Data%20Journalism%20Book.pdf>.

International Journalism Network site has a great deal of information for investigative journalists <https://ijn-net-journalism-safety.silk.co>.

Resources for investigative journalism

<http://gijn.org/resources/safety-and-security-organizations/>.

Dart Center for Journalism & Trauma - <http://dartcenter.org>.

Manual for Arab Journalists on Freedom of Information and Investigative Journalism, Magda Abu-Fadil, Article 19 and UNDP, October 2007

English: <https://www.article19.org/data/files/pdfs/tools/iraq-foi-inves-journ-manual.pdf>

Arabic: <https://www.article19.org/data/files/pdfs/publications/1035422.pdf>.



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