



Human Rights Electronic Evidence Study:

Interim Report

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Introduction

Increasingly, a variety of human rights organizations around the world create and collect documentation in electronic form. For example, the Moscow Helsinki Group records broadcast reports of anti-ethnic violence in the Russian Federation, while the Forum of Conscience in Sierra Leone actively captures text, data, images, and other information from blogs, as well as governmental and partisan Web sites, to document human rights violations. U.S.-based organizations like WITNESS work internationally to collect digital videos and photos of incidents of governmental repression, while other groups collect and analyze statistics and mine digital news and incident reports using a variety of software packages—proprietary as well as open source.

In this context, the Center for Research Libraries' Human Rights Electronic Evidence Study aims to assess the practices and technologies used by a variety of human rights monitoring groups in the United States, Mexico, Rwanda, and Russia to create and collect documentation, particularly electronic documentation. The study focuses on:

1. how such documentation fulfills the immediate goals and needs of activist groups, as well as the downstream needs of academic research, advocacy, investigations, reporting, and legal action.
2. identifying practices and tools that can help local and regional human rights activists to be more effective in their documentation efforts.

Overview of Progress to Date

CRL has analyzed the activities of several regional and international organizations with respect to their gathering and use of documentation in electronic form. Analysis has focused on:

- the nature of the organization (mission, governance, funding);
- the organization's core activities and practices, as well as techniques and tools for collecting, storing, and disseminating information;
- the types of collected documentation, e.g., paper-based documentation, text messages, cell phone images (still and moving), digital audio, photography, video, Web sites and Web-based documents, or recordings of audio and video broadcasts; and
- the intended downstream uses of such documentation.

CRL performed preliminary assessments (with select on-site visits and/or phone interviews) of the following U.S. or international organizations:

- Amnesty International (USA and Britain)
- Human Rights Information and Documentation Systems, International (HURIDOCS)
- International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ)
- Open Society Institute (OSI)
- WITNESS

In addition, the project team has conducted interviews and discussions with several documentation and preservation projects administered at U.S. institutions of higher education and research, including:

- Human Rights Documentation Initiative (University of Texas at Austin Library)
- Human Rights Web Archive (Columbia University Library and Center for Human Rights Documentation and Research)
- Thomas J. Dodd Research Center (Archives and Special Collections at the University of Connecticut Libraries)
- Web Ecology Project (independent interdisciplinary research group)

Finally, CRL has embarked on regional assessment trips to inventory the methods, technologies, and techniques advocacy and activist organizations use in the field to gather and maintain documentation and information in electronic form. Based on preliminary investigations conducted from the U.S., CRL identified a number of grassroots organizations to visit in Mexico, Rwanda¹, and Russia for on-site assessment. To date, CRL has concluded site visits to Mexico (ten organizations visited and assessed in February 2010) and Rwanda (ten organizations visited and assessed in May and June 2010)², and is currently engaged in field work in Russia (November 2010). This piece of the project is conducted in collaboration with HURIDOCS,³ an organization based in Switzerland that specializes in storage and cataloging systems for digital human rights documentation.

This report presents a comparative analysis of two case studies developed from the project's field work in Mexico and Rwanda assessing digital documentation practices of organizations working in developing areas. It also presents two models of digital documentation—WITNESS and Ushahidi—that demonstrate the potential of digital documentation methods for human rights work.

The case studies provide insight into the current state of electronic documentation in areas that suffer from poor information technology (IT) infrastructure and varying levels of literacy, which limit the usefulness of Web- and text-based technologies for activism. WITNESS and Ushahidi present possible solutions to these limitations. WITNESS has developed a successful model for partnering IT- and technology-rich organizations with grassroots organizations in IT-poor regions to bridge the digital divide. Ushahidi—a free online platform for gathering SMS (short message service) text messages—serves as an inexpensive tool for real-time digital data collection during crises, representing a breaking edge in digital activism. This report demonstrates how each of the models for creating and collecting digital evidence has potential to address the needs and limitations that grassroots groups experience in their daily work related to documentation efforts. However, each model also has limitations that must be taken into consideration as the human rights field moves to take advantage of the wealth of technological tools now available.

¹ While CRL's initial proposal to the MacArthur Foundation proposed assessing organizations in Nigeria, team members were not able to identify a sufficient number of organizations engaging in electronic documentation to justify a site visit. Based on recommendations from interview subjects and project advisory members, CRL selected Rwanda as an alternate site for assessment.

² See Appendix A for lists of organizations visited on these trips.

³ See <http://www.huridocs.org/> for details on this organization.

Key Preliminary Findings

This section of the report highlights key findings from the site visits conducted in Mexico and Rwanda. All analyses and findings are based on field stays of nine to fourteen days, during which time CRL conducted site visits to human rights organizations of varying sizes and differing access to and experience with digital tools and resources (see Appendix A for lists of the organizations visited).

1. **Collaborative networking of documentation:** Site visits to Mexico and Rwanda demonstrate that although documentation types and practices differ widely according to the goals of individual groups, human rights organizations frequently share the documentation they generate through both formal and informal collaborative networks. This collaboration allows documentation to circulate from grassroots organizations into legal offices, national and international court systems, the media, and academic institutions. Through this process, documentation created for specific local interests also serves the broader needs of advocacy, research, and policy making. Information-sharing networks in these areas emerge organically across large geographic expanses and can be mapped to illustrate the dissemination of information and documentation for a region.
2. **Institutional and geographic centralization and standardization of documentation:** Though organizations in each region visited confront different rights issues and negotiate widely varied cultural and political contexts, results from field work illustrate that as documentation moves from smaller to larger groups, it also moves from smaller communities into increasingly larger, more urbanized, technologically sophisticated, and political geographic centers. In the process, the documentation becomes increasingly centralized, standardized, and converted to electronic format, in ways that preserve the content of original documentation. This vital process allows more informal documentation processes of many grassroots organizations (for example, traditions of oral testimony) to meet the needs of legal action or government policy work.
3. **Mid-sized professionalized organizations serve as network nodes for processing documentation:** CRL targeted a variety of organizations, including small, low-budget, largely volunteer grassroots groups, mid-sized professionally specialized groups (e.g., lawyers, filmmakers, or statisticians), and large national and international organizations or institutions. CRL found that mid-sized professionalized groups play a key role in establishing and maintaining networks for sharing and disseminating documentation generated during the course of human rights work at all levels. In addition to their own advocacy work, these groups also consolidate data and documentation from smaller grassroots groups and distribute it to a broader audience to generate the greatest amount of impact. Such groups also provide smaller organizations with training and resources in a variety of traditional and electronic documentation practices. However, these groups often lack the financial resources necessary for maintaining their collected

materials at desired levels for downstream purposes. CRL thus recommends developing initiatives to support these mediating organizations in establishing infrastructure for preserving documentation, training efforts for the smaller groups, and dissemination efforts for policy, activism, and legal work.

The case studies below illustrate these key findings by mapping collaboration networks, cataloging documentation types collected by human rights groups engaged in a collaborative network, and depicting the geographic spread of such networks. Mapping the flow of information and documentation from initial capture to end use depends on:

- the patterns of acquisition and creation of electronic (and traditional) documents;
- the cultural, legal, and technology environments under which organizations operate; and
- the special challenges that electronic documentation presents to organizations related to preservation and organization for future downstream uses in scholarship, legal practice, and policy-making.

As these cases illustrate, documentation in these regions largely starts as oral or paper reports and enters into digital formats as it is collected by professional groups that must present standardized evidence and data to the larger world of legal action and policy development.

Fieldwork Case Studies

The following in-depth case studies focus on organizations that serve key roles in consolidating regional documentation: **Canalseisdejulio**, a media collective located in Mexico City, Mexico, and **Ibuka**, a genocide memorial and survivor defense organization in Kigali, Rwanda.

Fieldwork Documentation Network Case Study 1: Canalseisdejulio, Mexico City

Background: Canalseisdejulio (Canal 6), an audio-visual collective located in Mexico City, produces alternative information outside the influence of state-sponsored media and the large private media corporations that dominate Mexican cultural production and news.⁴ Supported by individual contributions, Canal 6 receives no federal or corporate funds, which allows it to produce documentary content independent from outside interests.⁵ However, this model has its own particular challenges. As stated on the organization's Web site (translated from the original Spanish):

The road traveled by this sort of small-scale production of documentaries has been varied, however, it is no exaggeration to say that the greater part of the long journey of Canalseisdejulio has been navigated against the current, suffering frequent attacks of censorship and worse, violent attacks, or suffering the

⁴ Luis Hernández Navarro. (7 April 2009). "Canal 6 de Julio: Televisión sin televisión." *La Jornada*. <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2009/04/07/index.php?seccion=opinion&article=017a1pol>

⁵ *Ibid*

indifference that was later turned upon it by the Mexican so-called Left that has become the governing party.⁶

Working within this context of censorship and threat, Canal 6 focuses on exposing human rights and political abuses throughout Mexico. It creates documentary films that draw from primary source documentation the organization collects or that others bring to it for production. In some cases, footage is donated by individuals from TV stations⁷ that recognize the value of the material and know that it will never be aired.⁸ Other materials are generated by victims featured in documentaries, for example: individuals who donate their own photographs; communities that share denunciations of territorial politics they have written; or testimonies recorded through interviews.

Canal 6 has amassed a considerable collection of video, text, and images.⁹ The organization prides itself on its documentary rigor, investing considerable time and energy into cross-referencing information from images or footage it receives with documented cases in the press or in legal work to ensure that producers are not working with doctored materials. As activists as well as documentary filmmakers, individuals at Canal 6 draw on personal knowledge of places, events, and timing to help confirm and verify the places, people, and events depicted in donated footage. Beyond this, when creating their own documentation, Canal 6 filmmakers take copious notes during the filming and editing process, all of which are maintained along with the original film footage, either as handwritten notes or electronic documents backed up on a local server.

Canal 6 currently maintains an archive of its materials on site, but the directors are currently in the process of negotiating a move of the archive to an off-site facility. The materials currently held at Canal 6 are:

- Copies of videos produced by Canal 6
- A collection of unedited tapes, recorded and stored from past and current projects
- Documents and official communications collected for each documentary project
- Photographs
- Pre- and post-production scripts and outlines for produced material¹⁰

⁶ “El camino recorrido por esta especie de pequeña fabrica de documentales ha sido de signo variado, sin embargo, no se exagera al afirmar que la mayor parte del largo recorrido realizado por canalseisdejulio ha sido navegado a contracorriente, sufriendo los frecuentes embates de la censura y aún del acoso violento, o padeciendo la indiferencia que después le aplicó una parte de la llamada izquierda Mexicana convertido en gobierno” (Historia y Características del Trabajo de Canalseisdejulio.

http://www.canalseisdejulio.com/15_a_os.html).

⁷ Canal 6 does not name specific TV stations in order to protect the identity of the individuals who take the political risk of donating controversial material. Personal Interview, 22 February, 2010

⁸ *Ibid*

⁹ *Ibid* & Luis Hernández Navarro (7 April 2009). “Canal 6 de Julio: Televisión sin televisión.” *La Jornada*. <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2009/04/07/index.php?seccion=opinion&article=017a1pol>

¹⁰ Tomás Bocanegra Esqueda, Bibliógrafo del Centro de Estudios Internacionales. Biblioteca Daniel Cosío Villegas, el Colegio de México. Personal communication, 20 January 2011.

In the near future¹¹, these materials will be transferred to an as yet unnamed government archive and made available to the public via application to that office.¹² This facility will archive and preserve the collection of original materials (footage, images, and documents), which will be accessible for academic and legal work, contingent upon the archiving institution's access practices and the rights or restrictions applied to individual materials as Canal 6 submits them to the collection.¹³ Canal 6 and the organizations or individuals who contribute materials negotiate rights regarding use of materials and confidentiality. Canal 6 keeps records of all signed privacy and use agreements, which will apply to the materials once they move to the new archiving site.

Drawing from and creating this documentary material over the course of more than twenty years, Canal 6 has produced more than fifty documentary films largely distributed through individual sales. Though Canal 6 does not broadcast documentaries in any formal way, its model of DVD and videotape distribution from hand to hand manages to reach a wide viewing audience at very low cost. Since Canal 6 works closely with all organizations or individuals depicted in a documentary, all materials have been released for public viewing. With the advent of video streaming and sharing on the Internet, Canal 6 can reach an even broader audience (see <http://www.youtube.com/user/canalseisdejulio>).¹⁴

Figure 1 (below) depicts the documentation- and information-sharing network that has emerged around Canal 6 as a result of its documentary activities. Canal 6 serves as a hub of information gathered primarily from other mid-sized organizations (represented by the larger circles in the second and third rows from the bottom), with which it often collaborates for the creation of documentaries. It also accepts materials from individuals and smaller grassroots groups directly. Materials are catalogued as they are incorporated into the Canal 6 collection and will ultimately be forwarded to UNAM for formal long-term storage, maintenance, and access.

¹¹ *Ibid.* The time frame quoted for the transfer of materials was approximately two months from 20 January 2011.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Canal 6, Personal Interview, 22 February, 2010

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

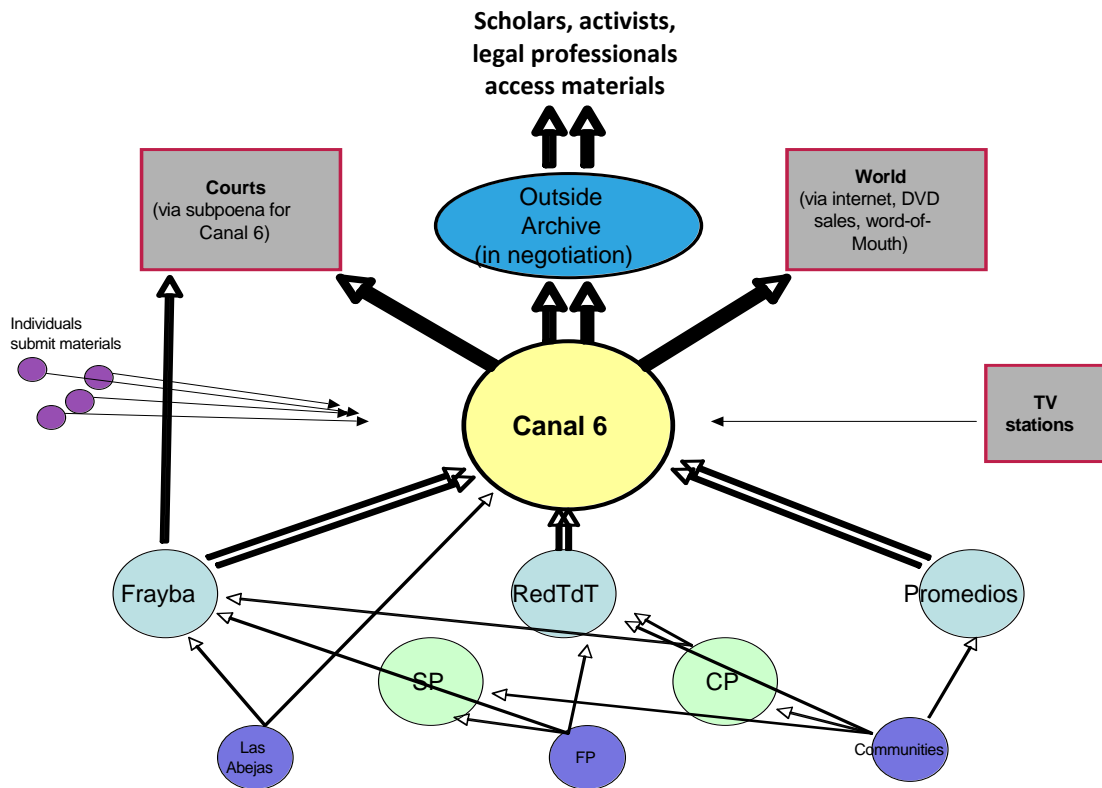


Figure 1: Documentation Network Map for Canalseisde julio¹⁵

¹⁵ **List of organizational abbreviations depicted** from top to bottom and left to right. Each organization's location is indicated in parentheses. N.B.: Only those organizations that have made public their relationship to Canal 6 are named. Others are coded to protect their identities:

- UNAM** = Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (México, D.F.)
- Canal 6** = Canalseisde julio (México, D.F.)
- Frayba** = Fray Bartolomé de las Casas (San Cristóbal de las Casas)
- RedTdT** = Red Nacional de Organismos Civiles de Derechos Humanos
Todos los Derechos para Todas y Todos (México, D.F.)
- Promedios** = Promedios de Comunicación Comunitaria (San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas)
- SP** = (Ocosingo, Chiapas)
- CP** = (San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Chiapas)
- Las Abejas** = (San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas)
= Organización de la Sociedad Civil, Las Abejas (Acteal, Chiapas)
- FP** = (Ocosingo, Chiapas)

Key to Reading the figure:

- small circles at the bottom of the figure represent small grassroots organizations
- larger circles represent mid-sized professionalized organizations
- the large central circle is the information processing hub for this map (in this case, Canal 6)
- arrows represent the primary direction of information flow between entities depicted, with arrows becoming thicker as information consolidates and moves on to larger groups or institutions.

To demonstrate an example of the flow of documentation, Frayba (left-most circle at the bottom of the figure) is a group of human rights lawyers that advocates for local rights in Chiapas and serves as legal counsel for local Chiapanesco cases. Frayba works with a number of small grassroots organizations as well as with other mid-sized groups in collecting evidence for these cases. For example, Frayba has amassed a considerable archive of evidence and legal documentation related to the Acteal Massacres¹⁶ of 12 years ago and these materials have been used in litigation at all levels of the legal system in Mexico. Most recently, Frayba has drawn on these materials to appeal a state court's decision to release paramilitary perpetrators on a technicality of law unrelated to the facts of the violence they originally committed. At least some of the information that Frayba gathers for advocacy and legal use is consolidated into reports or case studies and forwarded to Canal 6 for documentary projects that Canal 6 then disseminates to a broader audience.

Mid-sized groups tend to solicit materials from smaller groups for specific purposes such as:

- the generation of statistical regional and national reports (RedTdT),
- legal archives to support legal cases in local, national, and international courts (Frayba),
- visual documentation for media dissemination (Canal 6 and Promedios),
- or economic and political analysis of local conditions contributing to human rights abuses (CP).

In this process, information collected from small groups becomes organized through increasingly professional documentation and presentation practices.

Documentation Types for Organizations Visited in Mexico: Each of the organizations indicated in the Documentation Network Map for Canal 6 collects a variety of documentation depending on its needs and goals. Table 1 indicates the types of documents the organizations on the Canal 6 network map collect and the digital technologies they use.

¹⁶ See the following Web resources for background on the Acteal Massacres, which took place on December 22, 1997 in the Toztzil village of Acteal, Chiapas. 45 civilians—mostly women and children—were gunned down during a religious ceremony by local paramilitary groups who may have been quietly supported by the Mexican government to suppress social resistance to local policies that would negatively impact indigenous communities.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acteal_massacre;
http://www.libertadlatina.org/Crisis_Mexico_Chiapas_Acteal_Massacre.htm; <http://www.lasabejas.org/>

Table 1: Documentation inventory for organizations depicted in Canal 6 Network map

Organization	Documentation created or collected	Internet Presence
<p>Las Abejas Acteal, Chiapas</p> <p>Christian pacifist society within the Tzotzil Maya community working to defend legal, land, health, and education rights.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral testimonies recorded on VHS or mini-DV by outside volunteers or legal professionals (e.g., Frayba) 	<p>http://www.lasabejas.org/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created in Google Sites (free online platform) Stored in Google's cloud Hosts text, video links to YouTube, and still photos Videos created by outside individuals or groups Blog posts
<p>FP Ocosingo, Chiapas</p> <p>Grassroots organization defending Maya rights.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand-filled incident report forms filed in three-ring binders on shelves Periodic reports and newsletters produced in MS word and stored on a PC circa 1995 Three-ring binders containing letters from individuals they represent History of the organization prepared in MS Word and stored on PC 	<p>Does have a web page</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Text Still photos
<p>SP Ocosingo, Chiapas</p> <p>Grassroots activism coordinators working with Maya communities of Chiapas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal field journals—some handwritten, some maintained on PCs as word-processor documents Handwritten incident and training reports Printed Google maps for visualizing and marking event locations with victim groups Handwritten meeting minutes sometimes typed up as MS Word documents on PCs Organizational reports and press releases created as MS Word documents and stored on PCs VHS recordings of some community meetings 35mm photography Digital photography on consumer grade small digital cameras Photocopies of key legal cases for groups supported by SP 	<p>Does have a webpage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Still photos Links to articles, press releases, and reports published by SERAPAZ and its subsidiary groups
<p>CP San Cristobál de las Casas, Chiapas</p> <p>Grassroots political, economic, and social analysis group focusing on local issues in the Maya communities of Chiapas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper documentation kept in un-systematized file folders and stacks Reports created idiosyncratically by volunteers stored haphazardly on PCs according to each person's own method—MS Word documents, Excel spread sheets Analysis bulletins stored electronically on PCs and as hard published copy VHS and Mini-DV video Edited video productions on DVD—collaborations with other groups 	<p>Does have a webpage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Links to published materials Photo galleries Embedded videos created by CP and collaborators Embedded audio recordings from local radio and interviews conducted by CP A collection of economic, political, social and military maps of Chiapas collected from a variety of published sources
<p>Frayba San Cristobál de las Casas, Chiapas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Database in FileMaker Pro—converting to database sponsored by RedTdT (see below) 	<p>http://www.frayba.org.mx/informes.php</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Links to PDF copies of : --reports published by Frayba and

<p>A group of Catholic legal professionals that work to represent smaller communities and individuals that experience human rights abuses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical archive of legal documents from all cases handled • Electronic archive of reports, press releases, publications, and electronic case documents stored on in-house server • Scanning documents on high-end commercial grade scanners (in process) and storing on in-house server • A wide variety of evidence for cases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --paper case documentation --testimonies --discovery --court transcripts --decisions --VHS and Mini DV video footage --traditional and digital photography 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • related organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --articles from outside print media --bulletins and newsletters from Frayba and related organizations --electronic versions of published fliers and booklets --articles published by Frayba • Still photos of events Frayba attends • Embedded video created by Frayba and related groups • Embedded audio recordings of events, interviews, conferences created by Frayba, local media, or related organizations
<p>Promedios San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas</p> <p>Documentary film organization that collaborates with and trains smaller local grassroots groups to create video evidence from their own perspective.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raw footage on VHS and Mini-DV • DVD production copies of documentaries • 35 mm still photography • Professional resolution digital photography • Filming notes—hand notes in notebooks • Filming notes—electronic notes in MS Word documents on password protected PCs • Digitized photographs from commercial grade Canon scanner stored on local server 	<p>http://www.promediosmexico.org/ associated with http://chiapasmediaproject.org/cmp/ (Chiapas Media Project—mother organization)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online calendar of events • Online catalog for DVDs for sale published by Chiapas Media Project and Promedios
<p>RedTdT Mexico City</p> <p>Statistical analysis group that draws together cases from smaller groups through a standardized database program that provides categories and codes for sorting and aggregating human rights data.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Database program based on HURIDOCs' human rights documentation program (OpenEvSys) and thesaurus modified by local programmers using open source code • CD-ROM of program distributed to participating organizations • Local server storage for centralized data submitted by network of participating organizations • Reports and analysis created from data in database in word-processing software and stored in local server • Copies of professionally published hard-copy reports • Electronic publication of reports on Web site • 	<p>http://www.redtdt.org.mx/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links to PDF files: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --reports published by RedTdT --publications from the UN --reports from collaborating human rights groups • Photo galleries of images of events RedTdT participates in • Press releases • Denunciations
<p>Canalseisdejulio Mexico City</p> <p>Professional media cooperative and hub organization for Figure 1 above</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional media grade digital and analog raw video footage • Handwritten filming notes • Film notes created in MS Word and stored in local server • Edited digital copy of produced 	<p>http://www.canalseisdejulio.com/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • online catalog for DVDs for sale published by Canalseisdejulio • Embedded links to Canalseisdejulio video material released on YouTube • Space for users to create accounts and upload their own human rights video

	<p>documentaries for publication and sale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DVD copy of final published documentary material • Video footage submitted by amateurs and professionals • Still photography (analog and digital) submitted by amateurs and professionals • Paper documentation submitted by collaborators <p>--letters --newspaper reports --testimonies --denouncements --press releases</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional digital and analog still photography • Excel database cataloging collection of footage, images and notes 	
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Much of the documentation begins on traditional analog media (paper, video tape), but as it moves through to larger organizations, it will be transferred to an electronic version either through scanning or by entering original handwritten material into word-processing documents and databases. It is important to note that not all documentation created at the grassroots level is forwarded to the mid-sized groups for conversion, and that these collections face long-term challenges due to constant degradation of physical paper, photos and video in a tropical climate without a climate controlled facility.

Geographic Range of Documentation Networks: Documentation networks emerge over a broad geographic range, with hubs like Canal 6 collecting representative material regionally to distribute it to audiences at the national and international level.



Figure 2: Geographic Range of the Documentation Network for Canal 6¹⁷
Key to reading the figure:

- Black circles indicate regions of documentation production,
- Black arrows indicate the flow of documentation within Mexico
- Red arrows indicate flow of documentation to areas outside of Mexico

Figure 2 represents the geographic spread for the organizations that contribute to the Canal 6 documentation network. The map depicts the physical locations of the organizations described above and how they relate to larger urban centers at the state and national levels. Grassroots organizations in the small Mayan villages and communities of Chiapas—where people directly suffer a number of human rights violations or abuses—work to address the immediate needs and concerns of their communities. The mid-sized professional groups with which they collaborate establish themselves in larger towns and

¹⁷ Large Map: <http://www.utdallas.edu/~mrankin/mexicoweb/mexicomap.html>

Detail: <http://www.explorandomexico.com/map-gallery/0/25/>

N.B. Acteal is so small that it does not appear on general maps of Chiapas. The arrow labeled “Acteal” in the detail pop-out map points to the location of this small village in relation to San Cristóbal de las Casas and Ocosingo.

urban centers. In this case, groups from the small Mayan towns of Ocosingo and Acteal in rural mountainous regions of the state of Chiapas coordinate with more professionalized groups in the larger city of San Cristobál de Las Casas. Documentation then moves to the national level through collaborations with groups like Canal 6, which is located in Mexico City, the nation's capital. Groups like Canal 6 work to distribute information nationally and even internationally as need and resources dictate. The following outline specifies the geographic locations depicted in Figure 2: Geographic Range of the Documentation Network for Canal 6:

- Smaller grassroots groups in the villages outlying San Cristóbal de Las Casas
 - Village of Acteal
 - Las Abejas
 - Village of Ocosingo
 - FP
 - SP
- Mid-sized groups in larger towns and urban centers
 - San Cristóbal de Las Casas
 - Frayba
 - Promedios
 - CP
 - Mexico City
 - Canal 6
 - Outside archive

The arrows on the map indicate the overall flow of documentation and information from villages into towns and cities, and eventually out to other nations. Looking across documentation types from Table 1 and the flow of documentation depicted in Figures 1 and 2, documentation and supporting information becomes more centralized and standardized as it moves into urbanized, educated, and political geographic centers where more professional resources and stronger technological infrastructure exist.

Looking further at the documentation types inventoried in Table 1, it is also evident that the documentation that feeds into the larger groups and more urbanized centers is largely paper-based. This is largely because the small villages and rural communities of Chiapas, where the majority of human rights abuses for that region occur, have undeveloped infrastructural- and knowledge-bases for supporting and using digital technology. Inconsistent electrical service in these regions makes it difficult to operate electronic equipment such as cell phones, computers, or digital cameras. Also, such equipment is expensive and thus beyond the financial means of these communities. Furthermore, much of the population is illiterate or has achieved a low level of education, which limits familiarity with many digital devices and their uses, including the Internet.

An additional challenge to the use of digital documentation at the grassroots level in Chiapas arises within traditional Mayan culture itself. These communities preserve evidence of conflict orally rather than writing it down. For this sort of knowledge to move forward in the type of network described, traditional oral histories must be captured by trained individuals who are either community members who have left for education

and returned, or by trusted outsiders. Taken together, these conditions do not currently favor the widespread use of digital documentation practices at the grassroots level in Chiapas. This situation will slowly change with improved electrical infrastructure, continued emphasis on literacy, and (most importantly) the efforts that mid-sized organizations put into training individuals and small groups in the use of digital for capturing local oral testimony and evidence of human rights abuses.

Fieldwork Documentation Network Case Study 2: Ibuka, Kigali, Rwanda

Background: Ibuka is a memorial to the Rwandan Genocide of 1994 and a center for defending the political, health, and educational rights of genocide survivors. From April to June 1994, Rwanda suffered one of the largest-scale planned genocides of recent history. In the course of 100 days, over 800,000 ethnic Tutsis and moderate Hutus sympathetic to Tutsi communities were killed in systematic campaigns organized by the then-Hutu government.¹⁸ As a memorial, Ibuka maintains mass graves where remains of victims can be interred with dignity; as a center for activism, Ibuka organizes campaigns to uphold and defend the rights of survivors. In its latter capacity, Ibuka seeks to collect a variety of evidence of the pre-genocide government's wrongdoing as well as continued human rights abuses against survivors at the hands of genocide deniers and *genocidaires* who have fled to neighboring countries alongside the victims they continue to harass.

To accomplish the human rights defense work, Ibuka has created its own formal network of satellite offices within Rwanda and abroad that answer to the central office in Kigali, the nation's capital. Each office seeks out connections with relatives of former Hutu government members now living outside of Rwanda, or with employees in government offices that house the documents Ibuka seeks. In order to gain access to pre-genocide government documents that left Rwanda with fleeing officials; once identified, key documents are photocopied by members of regional offices and forwarded to Ibuka's central office in Kigali. Ibuka follows a similar process with current government employees within Rwanda, where it searches for pre- and post-genocide policy drafts, police records, or regional government reports.¹⁹ The central office then sends out press releases, reports of abuse, and policy proposals and submits documentation as evidence in the Rwandan legal system. Figure 3 illustrates the structure of this network for collecting and disseminating documentation.

¹⁸ See BBC News Online's December 18, 2008, "Rwanda: How the Genocide Happened" at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/1288230.stm> for a brief overview of the genocide.

¹⁹ Though as yet, Ibuka has not established any sort of formal archive. Field observations, Ibuka, Kigali, Rwanda. 25 & 26 May, 2010.

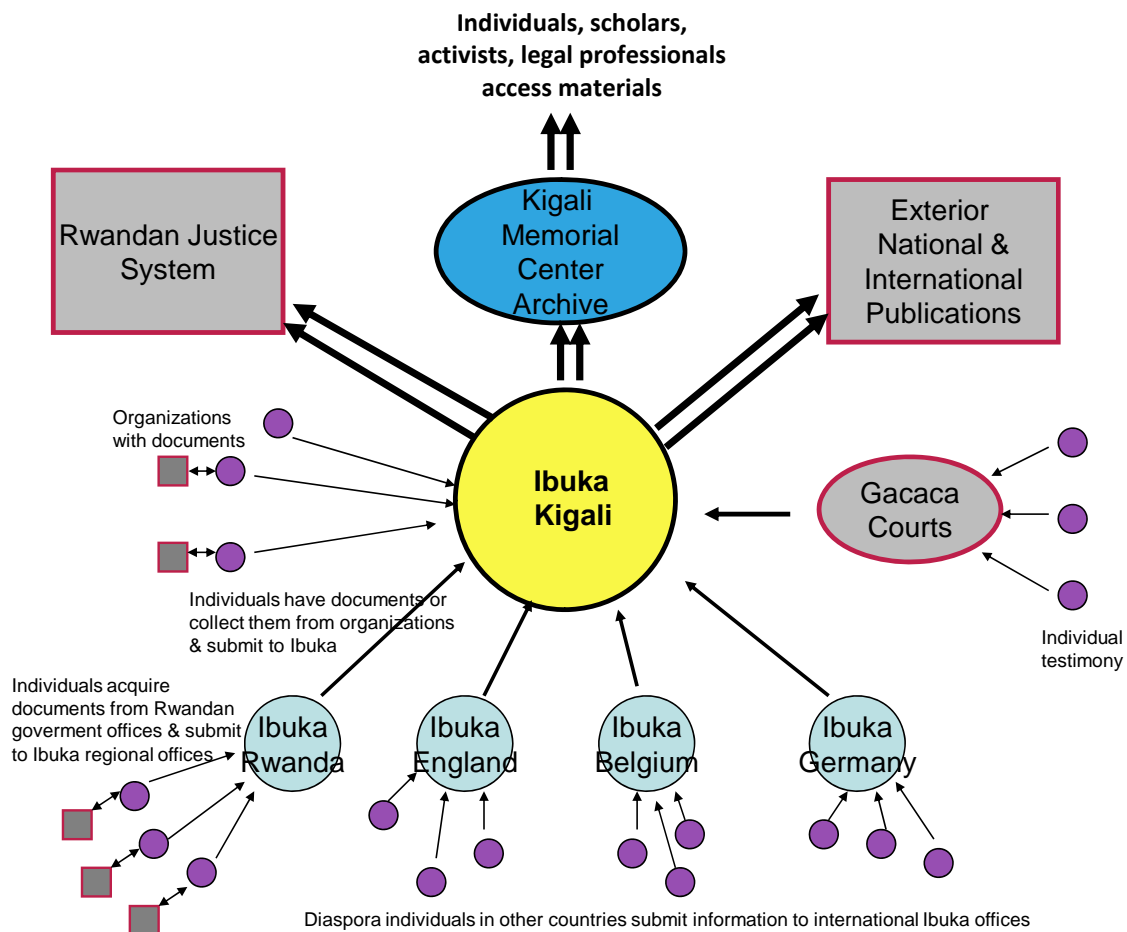


Figure 3: Documentation Network Map for Ibuka

Key to reading the figure:

- small squares represent government offices or other institutions that house targeted documentation
- small circles at the bottom of the figure represent individual informants
- larger circles represent Ibuka offices both within Rwanda and internationally
- the large central circle is the information processing hub for this map (in this case, Ibuka, Kigali)
- arrows represent the primary direction of information flow between entities depicted, with arrows becoming thicker as information consolidates and moves on to larger groups or institutions.

Though Ibuka has explicitly established this network for gathering and centralizing documentation, it nevertheless resembles the organically emergent Canal 6 network (Figure 1) in key ways. Individuals and smaller communities outside of Kigali work with Ibuka to document local issues and send evidence to the central office for processing and uses downstream such as legal action, political action, and historical memory.²⁰ Local documentation—largely paper based—moves from smaller communities into an urban center where it is used for further activism, much like the pattern for Canal 6. However, unlike the network for Canal 6, documentation does not yet get digitized as it moves to

²⁰ Personal interview with AHISHAKIYE Naphtal, Director of Documentation for Ibuka in Kigali, Rwanda on 25 May, 2010

Ibuka's center.²¹ Paper evidence remains paper evidence, though published materials drawn from these materials are created through desktop publishing suites like Microsoft Office.

Digitization of key documents is beginning to happen through collaboration with the Kigali Genocide Memorial Center (KMC), which receives considerable local, national, and international funding to support the creation of an online digital archive of genocide materials. Digitization, cataloguing, presentation, and preservation of materials occurs through KMC's partnership with the University of Texas-Austin libraries, which provides the server space, technical support, and training necessary to create and maintain the archive.²² Once the archive launches online in late 2010, it will be freely accessible from anywhere in the world. KMC is also establishing a reading room and research center that will allow Rwandans, as well as foreign visitors to the center, to take advantage of the digital archive to research family members and conduct scholarly investigations, as well as legal research.²³

Documentation types for Ibuka: Ibuka's centralized network has a specialized set of documentation that it targets and creates, so its inventory of documentation types is much more constrained than the source documents inventoried for the Canalseisdejulio network (Table 1). This documentation is used for three primary purposes:

- denunciations of continuing abuses of genocide survivors, particularly by the police;
- support of policy decisions within the current Rwandan government headed by Paul Kagame (himself a Tutsi survivor);
- press releases calling attention to the continuing needs of survivors.

Table 2 lists the types of documentation Ibuka collects and the use of digital technology, particularly a Web site to disseminate some reports and activities.

Table 2: Documentation inventory for Ibuka

Organization	Documentation created or collected	Internet Presence
Ibuka <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central office: Kigali • Rwandan regional offices • International offices in Europe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handwritten testimonies • Victim letters (originals: handwritten and typed) • Photocopies of government documents • 35 mm photography • Newspaper articles • Financial records (paper) • VHS and Mini-DV video footage of Gacaca (traditional Rwandan) court 	http://www.ibuka.net/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few photos • A list of publications, some with live links • Many dead links to outside sites

²¹ However, Ibuka is working with other organizations to establish an in-house digitizing project for scanning and preserving targeted portions of their paper collections. Personal interview with AHISHAKIYE Naphtal, 25 May, 2010. Ibuka, Kigali, Rwanda.

²² See "Libraries \$1.2 Million Grant to Preserve Record of Human Rights Violations, Genocide" at http://www.lib.utexas.edu/about/news/bridgeway_grant.html

²³ The archive will contain videotapes of Genocide survivors' testimonies, scanned copies of rare books related to the genocide, scanned copies of rare newspapers and journals documenting the progress of the genocide from the Hutu perspective, as well as scanned copies of key government documents, many supplied by Ibuka. Personal interview with KAMURONSI Yves, Technical Director for Kigali Genocide Memorial Center on 27 May, 2010.

	proceedings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronically created reports, publications, press releases, etc., using desktop word-processing programs 	
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Geographic Range of Documentation Networks: As with Canal 6, the geographic range for Ibuka’s documentation network (Figure 4) is extensive. Ibuka’s Web site (<http://www.ibuka.net/>) distributes publications and press releases to the rest of Rwanda as well as the international community. Within Rwanda, press releases also appear in local newspapers.

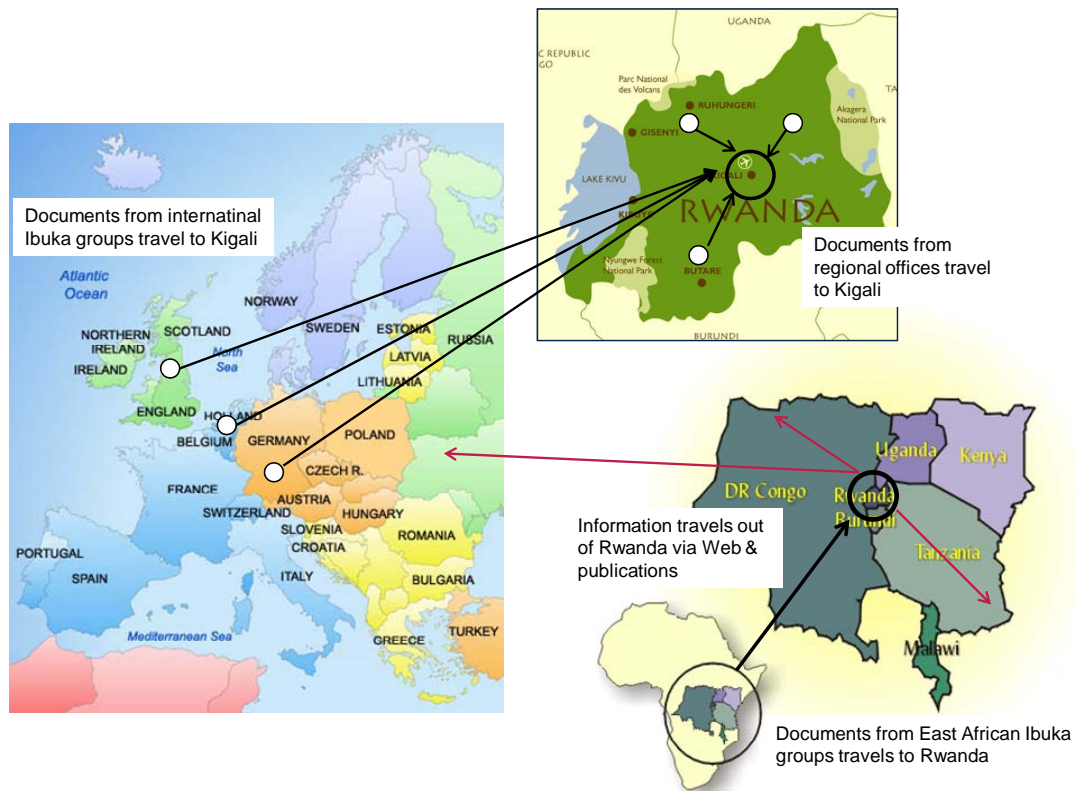


Figure 4: Geographic Range of the Documentation Network for Ibuka²⁴

Key to reading the figure:

- White dots represent Ibuka satellite groups or representatives working outside of Kigali or internationally. N.B.: dots are general representations, not accurate location points for groups or individuals.
- Heavy dark arrows represent documentation moving from Ibuka satellite centers within Rwanda and internationally moving to the central office in Kigali, Rwanda (arrows pointing in to Kigali on the inset map on the right side of the figure)
- Heavy red arrows represent consolidated documentation or reports moving from Kigali out to the rest of the world.

²⁴Map of Europe courtesy of BACKPACKINGEurope.com at <http://www.backpackingeurope.com/maps.asp>

East Africa map courtesy of African Pastors at: http://www.africanpastors.org/html/about_us.html

Map of Rwanda (insert) courtesy of Imagine Africa at: http://www.imagineafrica.co.uk/Rwanda/Rwanda_Map

As with the Canal 6 network, documentation moves into urban centers and becomes more standardized as it serves legal and activism purposes—particularly once documentation moves beyond Ibuka, where records consist mostly of paper and are quite disorganized.²⁵ Many communities, however, still rely on paper documentation over digital or electronic means. The smaller communities served by Ibuka’s satellite offices lack a basic infrastructure to support digital work, including unreliable electrical service and little access to the Internet. A lack of general technology savvy hampers the use of computers, scanners, or digital equipment. These expensive pieces of equipment can extend beyond the financial reach of these communities—a problem also found in rural Mexico.

Electronic Documentation Case Studies: WITNESS and Ushahidi

The two case studies detailed above demonstrate how digital technology is affecting documentation practices through collaborative networks that transform human rights paper documentation into digital. As evidence for legal action, policy change, or national memory requires documentation, mid-sized professional organizations receive paper documentation from various groups or regional sites, standardize it, digitize it, and use it to further human rights causes on a larger national and international scale.

Although the logical process for advancing the role of digital documentation would appear to be providing technical resources and training to the local communities, the case studies also highlight important limiting factors in this process: lack of infrastructure, lack of financial resources, and both technological and actual illiteracy. In fact, in many cases, technology can become a burden for such groups due to lack of knowledge on how to maintain it. For example, groups in Chiapas report losing whole databases or collections of reports due to computer viruses they did not know how to combat or failures of hardware as technology ages. Nevertheless, grassroots efforts in impoverished areas are beginning to partner with organizations that have access to the training, equipment, and infrastructure needed to support such endeavors. The two case studies below demonstrate existing or emerging models of electronic documentation in affected areas.

Electronic Documentation Case Study 1: WITNESS, Brooklyn, New York, U.S.A.

Background: Located in Brooklyn, New York, the human rights organization WITNESS seeks to transform “personal stories of abuse into powerful tools for justice, promoting public engagement, and policy change”²⁶ through the use of video. As reflected in its motto, “See it. Film it. Change it,”²⁷ WITNESS contends that visual images make human rights abuses real to viewers, thus inspiring greater action. The organization accomplishes this work through several efforts:

²⁵ Site visit notes 25 and 26 May, 2010. Ibuka, Kigali, Rwanda.

²⁶ WITNESS Strategic Vision 2010 and Beyond: Summary. p 1.

²⁷ <http://witness.org/>

- “Campaign Partnerships,” or long-term, campaign-focused partnerships with small human-rights groups around the world that want support and training for video advocacy;²⁸
- “Seed Video Advocacy,” or short-term training programs and workshops designed to help a broad range of groups incorporate video into advocacy programs; and
- the “Media Archive,” which serves as a public repository of human-rights material.

During the organization’s 17-year history, these efforts have allowed WITNESS to help human-rights defenders and organizations in more than seventy countries expose human-rights abuses that might otherwise never have been seen or heard by the world. For example, WITNESS’s new campaign with the Women’s Initiative for Gender Justice in the Central African Republic aims to incorporate video to document acts of violence against women as evidence to support investigations of the Lord’s Resistance Army at the International Criminal Court (ICC). Videos documenting women’s rape stories help tribal elders overcome traditional shunning behaviors that blame the women for the violence committed against them. WITNESS hopes that access to women’s stories will help reunite these women with their husbands and families, thus alleviating their outcast status.²⁹

WITNESS recognizes that video communication is rapidly shifting as more people participate in digital forms of communication and advocacy. In 2009, WITNESS went through an intensive year of strategic planning to help the organization to stay on top of changing technology. The new strategy will focus on three efforts:

1. leveraging the potential of networks and coalitions through a networked campaign model;
2. creating a training model that shifts from hands-on to online training formats and knowledge-sharing among peers;
3. building a leadership model that promotes best practices, policies, and norms for human rights, media, and technology.³⁰

In this manner, WITNESS can continue to provide training and support, and find even more effective ways to communicate human-rights abuses to the world.

Documentation Types for WITNESS: The breakdown of the WITNESS holdings and format types is as follows:³¹

²⁸ See WITNESS’s “Campaigns” Webpage for access to past and present campaign partnership descriptions.

http://www.witness.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogsection&id=6&Itemid=44

²⁹ See WITNESS’s campaign Webpage for “Gender-based violence in conflict for further details:

http://www.witness.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1090&Itemid=44#campaign

³⁰ WITNESS Strategic Vision 2010 and Beyond: Summary. pp 2-3.

³¹ http://www.witness.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=224&Itemid=175

Table 3: Documentation inventory for WITNESS

• Number of Video Titles:	4,000+
• Number of items:	9,000+
• Formats:	Hi-8, miniDV, DVcam, VHS-C, BetaSP, DigiBeta, VHS, CD, DVD, DAT, Audio, Video-8.
• Standards:	NTSC 70%, PAL 30%
• Raw footage:	80%
• WITNESS Productions:	14%
• Other:	6%

As the table above illustrates, documentation is mostly video, consisting of both analog and digital formats.

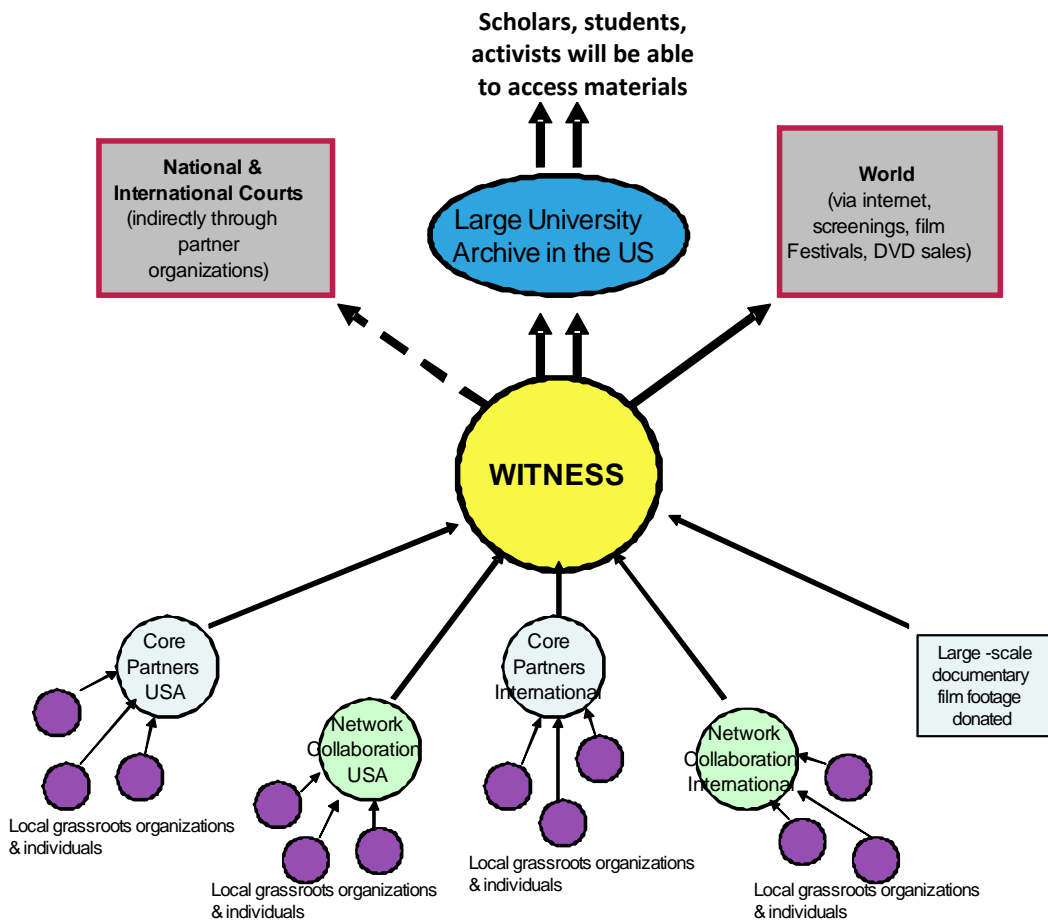


Figure 5: Documentation Network Map for WITNESS

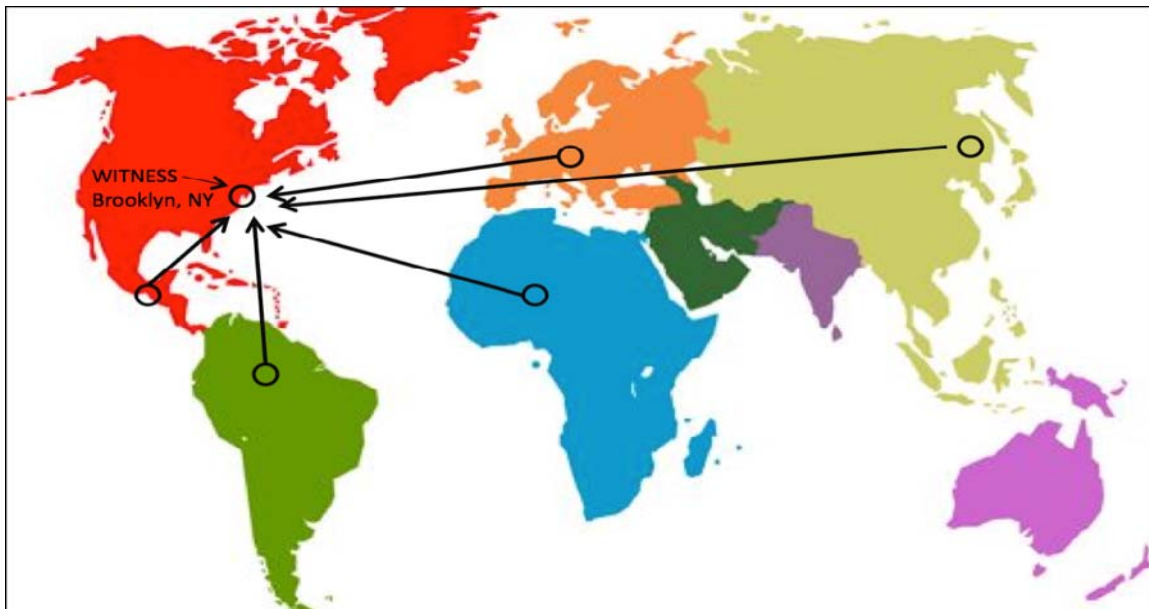
Key to Reading the figure:

- small circles at the bottom of the figure represent grassroots organizations
- larger circles organizations that WITNESS partners with through the Core Partners program and through the new Collaborative Networks program
- the large central circle is the information processing hub for this map (in this case, WITNESS) which feeds information out to larger institutions

- arrows represent the primary direction of information flow between entities depicted, with arrows becoming thicker as information consolidates and moves on to larger groups or institutions (a dotted line indicates indirect flow of documentation)

Figure 5 presents a documentation network similar to that for Canal 6 (Figure 1). Through its Campaign Partnerships and Network Campaign programs³², WITNESS, has received raw video footage from groups it has trained in the techniques of video activism, professional editing, and documentary film production. When partner organizations submit their raw footage to WITNESS for archiving, it becomes a resource for further WITNESS productions once the partner organization's activism goals have been met. Only after a partner group has achieved its goals—whether screening locally to raise awareness, providing evidence of abuses to local governments, or producing evidence for legal cases—can WITNESS make use of archived footage for further activism efforts. Through a shared ownership model, partner organizations and WITNESS share rights to the video footage that WITNESS training enables. As its local archive has grown beyond their means to maintain it, WITNESS is planning to establish a permanent archive with a large American university that has the resources to preserve footage and the institutional infrastructure to support all restrictions and conditions imposed on original footage by the partner groups that created it.³³ Once the archived materials are held at the university archive, they will be more readily available to human rights scholars and activists, thus increasing the potential impact of the materials WITNESS has collected (within the constraints of use and confidentiality agreements signed with Campaign Partners).

Geographic Range of Documentation Networks:



³² As WITNESS shifts to a Network Campaign Model that encourages local partnerships for collaborative archiving and preservation, the organization provides primary archiving services to fewer organizations. 12 October, 2010 telephone conversation with Yvonne Ng, archiving intern at WITNESS, Brooklyn, NY.

³³ WITNESS is expected to announce which university archive they will be working with in late 2010.

Figure 6: Geographic Range of the Documentation Network for WITNESS³⁴

Key to reading the map:

Small black circles locate areas of the world where WITNESS has worked with Core Partner organizations. The arrows reflect that partners send their raw footage to WITNESS for archiving.

As with Canal 6 (Figure 2) and Ibuka (Figure 4), WITNESS's documentation network emerges over a broad geographic range, as illustrated in Figure 6. However, WITNESS's geographic reach is much more international because it gathers raw video footage from partners located around the world. This collaborative relationship puts digital technology in the hands of organizations that could not otherwise afford to use it while generating materials that inform a much broader—even global—audience. This powerful use of digital technology for immediate human rights campaigns at the grassroots level also provides resources for long-term use in international awareness and activism, legal action, and scholarship.

This model is restricted to video and dependent upon expensive equipment that requires at least some training to use and further training for processing into an informative medium, making the applications limited for the majority of people witnessing or involved in crisis situations. For digital technology to serve a broader range of groups and needs, organizations need to be able to take advantage of affordable devices that increasing numbers of people use in their daily lives, such as cell phones, which allow for sending text messages, short videos, and photographs, as well as for making telephone calls. The Ushahidi platform described below presents one such model of wider accessibility and potential impact for information sharing by allowing organizations to use the Web to aggregate digitally generated material from citizens witnessing human rights events in real-time through a model called “Crisis Mapping.”³⁵

Electronic Documentation Case Study 2: Ushahidi, Nairobi, Kenya

Background: In the field of crisis mapping, the Ushahidi platform is gaining a foothold as an affordable and easy-to-use technology for capturing “distributed” information (or information from multiple and scattered sources) about crisis events and providing a visual representation of the process of the crisis. Ushahidi accomplishes this through a platform that allows incoming information posted by users to be displayed on an online interactive map in near real-time as events unfold. As stated on the Ushahidi Web site, “The Ushahidi Platform allows anyone to gather distributed data via SMS, email or web and visualize it on a map or timeline. Our goal is to create the simplest way of aggregating information from the public for use in crisis response.”³⁶ Thus, users can submit digitally created documentation of events they witness via cell phones (e.g., text messages, photos, or video recordings) or any other means that allows access to the Web and therefore to the Ushahidi platform.

³⁴ Map courtesy of <http://www.plymouth.ac.uk/pages/view.asp?page=11677>

³⁵ See Peter Meier's blog “iRevolution” at <http://irevolution.wordpress.com/> for a continuing discussion of the evolution of the field and practice of crisis mapping. Mr. Meier serves on the board for Ushahidi and studies the emergence of crisis mapping as a topic of interest in law and technology at the Fletcher School of Tufts University.

³⁶ www.ushahidi.com

This tool was originally created to help raise awareness of and mobilize intervention in the post-election violence in Kenya in January 2008. On December 27, 2007, Kenya's incumbent president, Mwai Kibaki, was declared the winner of that day's presidential election. However, supporters of the Orange Democratic Movement's candidate, Raila Odinga, contested this result, claiming election fraud; according to a *New York Times* article,³⁷ independent observers reported that the election was rigged at the last minute to ensure the incumbent's victory. In response to Kibaki's swearing-in, violence erupted across Kenya. At first the violence seemed tied to protests by Odinga supporters, but it quickly morphed into targeted ethnic violence against the Kikuyu people (Kibaki's community). In a particularly brutal moment, fifty unarmed Kikuyus were burned in a church on New Year's Day.³⁸ Overall, approximately 600 people died and around 600,000 people were displaced.

In response, Ory Okohollo (a Kenyan native and graduate of Harvard Law School), launched the Ushahidi platform to track events as they unfurled. Over the course of several months, thousands of text messages, videos, and photographs were submitted to the nascent platform—largely via cell phones. As described on the Ushahidi Web site:

Ushahidi, which means “testimony” in Swahili, is a website that was initially developed to map reports of violence in Kenya after the post-election fallout at the beginning of 2008. Ushahidi's roots are in the collaboration of Kenyan citizen journalists during a time of crisis. The website was used to map incidents of violence and peace efforts throughout the country based on reports submitted via the web and mobile phone. This initial deployment of Ushahidi had 45,000 users in Kenya, and was the catalyst for us realizing there was a need for a platform based on it, which could be use [sic] by others around the world.³⁹

Okohollo designed Ushahidi specifically to capitalize on cell phones and mobile access to the Web. In Kenya in 2008, mobile phone subscribers outpaced Internet users nearly 5:1,⁴⁰ largely due to Internet bandwidth limitations as well as poor infrastructure of land-based Internet access through telephone wires or cables. Ushahidi allows mobile phones to send text messages (via standard Short Message Service [SMS] communication technologies) or photos or videos (from smart phones with Multimedia Messaging Service [MMS] capabilities) to a local phone number. The message is then passed through FrontlineSMS, an open-source software that acts as a communications gateway between the local “tech hub” and the Ushahidi platform installed on an Internet server.

The Ushahidi platform is open source and modifiable so that any person or organization can set it up to meet their particular needs for the visualization of information. The platform consists of a simple mashup⁴¹ that pulls user-generated material into a Google

³⁷ http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/17/world/africa/17kenya.html?_r=2

³⁸ <http://www.newser.com/story/15375/fire-at-church-kills-50-as-riots-in-kenya-rage.html> Author's warning: there are some graphic images in this article

³⁹ www.ushahidi.com/about

⁴⁰ <http://ruralpovertyportal.org/web/guest/country/statistics/tags/kenya>

⁴¹ A mashup is an application that pulls data and functionality from multiple external sources via APIs, or Application Programming Interfaces, in order to create a new service.

map to create an interactive interface that allows viewers to visualize particular pieces of information as they are submitted to the system.

Documentation types for Ushahidi:

Table 4: Documentation inventory for the Ushahidi platform⁴²

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SMS --Short Message Service<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Text messages—standard protocol across brands of cell and smart phones• MMS--Multimedia Messaging Service<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Audio—sound recordings using a file format called .AMR.○ Video—Most mobile phones use a file format called 3GP• Email• Twitter• Instant Messaging clients of various sorts

According to Ushahidi’s developers (a team of largely volunteer programmers and designers from Africa, Europe, and the United States), the platform needs to be “agnostic,” or able to work with as many platforms, tools, and devices (i.e., cell phones, cameras, computers) as possible so that organizations can use the tool with whatever technology or materials they already have. The Ushahidi Lab⁴³ is constantly working to integrate new devices and platforms into the system as they emerge. For example, the team is creating a smartphone application for sending and receiving rich data from the Ushahidi platform on iPhones, G-Phones, and other multimedia wireless telephone devices.

So that the Ushahidi platform can draw seamlessly from multiple data sources, the developers work to ensure two levels of operability: 1) that software applications that already support information-aggregation get incorporated into the platform; and 2) that the outflow of information from Ushahidi to users can work with different data visualization platforms. Ushahidi currently can draw data from: Twitter, Jaiku, and Instant Messaging clients of various sorts. Platforms like Grip, Many Eyes, GeoCommons, CMS modules (such as Drupal), and blog plug-ins or widgets (e.g., WordPress, Movable Type, Blogger) can read the visual data produced by Ushahidi.⁴⁴

Although the Ushahidi organization does not collect and archive the digitally generated text that the program collects, the platform does allow for submitted text to be saved either online or locally on desktops or servers. Each organization decides what they want to keep, how they want to back the data up, and how long they want to keep it.

The map in Figure 7 shows how the Ushahidi platform has been adopted by a number of organizations (represented by the red Ushahidi icons) around the world, mostly in Africa. This map from the Ushahidi Web site only shows a sampling of current Ushahidi

⁴² See “mobiles in-a-box: using mobile phones for advocacy” for a general discussion of mobile media formats. <http://www.tacticaltechnology.org/downloads/Mobiles.pdf>

⁴³ <http://www.ushahidi.com/lab>

⁴⁴ See Ushahidi Labs at <http://ushahidi.com/lab>

projects. In general, the platform has been used in two types of scenarios: to follow *crises* (such as the Haitian and Chilean earthquakes of 2010), or to attempt to follow *political violence* on election days (as used several times in Africa).



Figure 7: Map depicting locations where the Ushahidi platform has been implemented⁴⁵

N.B. Each red Ushahidi icon on the map represents an implementation of the platform. The map on the Web site also contains live links to the organizational Web page associated with the platform implementation (<http://www.ushahidi.com/platform>).

Though the map illustrates broad use of the platform around the world, a closer investigation of the actual Web sites tied to the red Ushahidi map icons reveals that user submission rates to the platform vary widely. Specifically, more than half of the organizations indicated for Africa have collected only 0.5 to 1.5 SMS-generated text reports each day. By comparison, six out of the eight organizations in the United States and Latin America combined have collected (or continue to collect) between 6.01 and 106.10 reports each day (see Appendix B for full statistical data on all of the organizations depicted in terms of number of reports collected, duration of collection periods, and average number of reports collected per day). Some of the likely factors for this disparity include: varying infrastructure and Internet and mobile telephone use; lack of awareness about Ushahidi; lack of a robust infrastructure for civil society and human rights advocacy; low literacy rates; and rate of adoption of new technologies—particularly Web-based—in different parts of the world.

The limitations of literacy and Web development have a restraining impact on Ushahidi’s usefulness for the widespread collection of citizen-generated digital incident reports during times of crisis or conflict. Nevertheless, the patterns of use depicted on the map

⁴⁵ Map courtesy of Ushahidi at <http://www.ushahidi.com/platform>

and in the usage numbers for individual projects illustrate the clear potential for Ushahidi as a tool for digital activism. In parts of the world where access to the Web is good and the population is literate, large numbers of people participate in crisis monitoring by sending in information of events they witness. The use of Ushahidi in Africa (in particular for election monitoring) presents a particularly compelling case for the future of digital activism in human-rights campaigns around the world. As the world catches up with itself in terms of digital savvy and technology literacy, more and more people will be able to contribute to real-time digital efforts to pressure governments and regimes for improved human rights

Based on the patterns evidenced in the case studies detailed in this report, CRL proposes that a logical course of action for supporting the collection and maintenance of documentation for downstream use in legal, policy and activism work would be to develop programs that enable mid-sized professional human rights groups to:

1. more effectively maintain their documentation collections for downstream uses through development of both physical and technology infrastructure, and
2. support these organizations' documentation and training efforts at the grassroots level in order to continue generating a rich body of reliable human rights documentation for future activism.

Next Steps

In addition to the site visits to Russia now underway with the help of HURIDOCS, CRL is consolidating the information from various assessments, interviews, and reports, which will be on display on its Web site. (Preliminary reports on WITNESS and the Web Ecology Project are currently available at: <http://www.crl.edu/gm/hradp/electronic-evidence>.) These materials will transfer this winter to a more formal site that will share publicly available information from the assessment. This site will provide information and resources to activists, scholars, documentation specialists, and policy makers to support their continuing work in establishing and maintaining electronic documentation processes.

CRL plans to convene its advisory group to review the outcomes of the project to date and to advise on next steps. The goals of the second stage of the project are to:

- assess the adequacy of documentation practices to support uses of the documentation, both for the regional groups' own internal ends and for "downstream" purposes such as international monitoring and reporting, proceedings in international criminal courts and tribunals, government reparations, and scholarship.
- evaluate standards for metadata exchange, documentation of provenance, and legal requirements governing the admission of electronic documentation as evidence.
- identify a set of best practices for collecting and maintaining the full range of electronic documentation.

- create tools that “bridge the gap” for electronic evidence collection, maintenance, and long-term storage (such as manuals, guides, templates, written guidelines, and specifications and metadata requirements).

**Appendix A:
Lists of organizations visited in Mexico and Rwanda**

Organizations assessed in Mexico	Organizations assessed in Rwanda
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Las Abejas • Canalseisdejulio • Chiapas Media Project • Centro de Derechos de la Mujer de Chiapas • CP* • Fray Bartolomé de las Casas • FP* • Promedios • Red de Defensores Comunitarias de los Derechos Humanos • RED TdT—Red Nacional de Organismos Derechos Para Todas y Todos • SP* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CNLG • Ibuka • Institute for Research and Dialogue for Peace • International Criminal Tribunal Rwanda—Reading Room • Iwacu • Kigali Genocide Memorial Center • LIPRODHOR • National Archives of Rwanda • Solace Ministries • Voices of Rwanda

* = organizations that CRL is not currently naming for reasons of confidentiality.

Appendix B:
Basic Statistics on Ushahidi Implementations Indicated on
“Figure 5: Map depicting locations where the Ushahidi platform has been
implemented”

The tables below represent a summary of data collected by instances of the Ushahidi platform in Africa, the United States, and Latin America. Each table identifies:

1. Country deployed
2. Name of the organization using the Ushahidi platform
3. The purpose to which the platform was put, e.g. monitoring elections, violence, or crises
4. The number of SMS or Web reports submitted to and stored within the instance of the platform
5. The number of days the instance actively collected reports
6. The average number of reports submitted per day (# reports/#days)

Africa: African organizations depicted in Figure 5 using the Ushahidi platform

Country	organization	web address	purpose	# reports	# days	reports/day
Burundi	Amatoro Mu Mahoro Burundi***	http://burundi.ushahidi.com	election	250	158	1.58
Democratic Republic of Congo	Democratic Republic of Congo: Tracking the East Congo Conflict	http://drc.ushahidi.com	conflict	233	297	0.78
Ethiopia	Ethiopia Vote Monitor*	http://ethiopiavotmonitor.org	election	0	0	0.00
Guinea	Alliance Guinea	www.allianceguinea.org/ushahidi	election	764	116	6.59
kenya, Malawi, Uganda, Zambia	Stop Stock Outs	http://stopstockouts.org/ushahidi	medical	294	186	1.58
Mozambique	Protage Mosovoto	www.protegeemosovoto.org	election	28	31	0.90
Namibia	Namibia Elections 2009**	http://www.nambiaelections09.org/nambia	election	65	1	65.00
Sudan	Sudan Vote Monitor	http://www.sudanvotemonitor.com	election	257	13	19.77
Togo	Togo Elections	https://togoelections2010.com/main	election	21	36	0.58
Uganda	Uganda Witness**	www.ugandawitness.net	conflict	1	1	1.00
Zimbabwe	United for Africa*	http://unitedforafrica.co.za	unknown	0	0	0.00

* The Web page is no longer active and no data are available

** Reports were only collected for one day

*** No official count of reports was given, so count estimated by number of reports per displayed per page (19) by number of pages of reports (37)

United States: Organizations in the United States depicted in Figure 5 using the Ushahidi platform

State	organization	web address	purpose	# reports	# days	reports/day
California	LA Bike Map*	http://www.bikesidela.org/labikemap/	crime	1701	245	6.94
Georgia	Atlanta Crime Map	http://crime.mapatl.com	crime	29813	281	106.10
Louisiana	Louisiana Bucket Brigade*	http://labucketbrigade.org	crisis	2818	2085	1.35
Washington D.C.	Snowmageddon: The Clean Up	www.snowmageddoncleanup.com/main	crisis	321	24	13.38

* Group still actively collecting SMS reports. Figures calculated as of most recent Website visit on 5 October, 2010.

Latin America: Organizations in Latin America depicted in Figure 5 using the Ushahidi platform

State	organization	web address	purpose	# reports	# days	reports/day
Brazil	Eleitor 2010 Brazil*	http://eleitor2010.com	election	1033	172	6.01
Chile	Chile Crisis Map	http://chile.ushahidi.com	crisis	1198	137	8.74
Columbia	Elections in Columbia 2010**	http://www.eleccionestransparentes.com	election	816	30	27.20
Mexico	Cuidemos el Voto***	http://www.cuidemoselvoto.org	election	760	554	1.37

* Group still actively collecting SMS reports. Figures calculated as of most recent Website visit on 5 October, 2010.

** Page deactivated when re-visited Oct. 5, 2010

*** No official count of reports was given, so count estimated by number of reports per displayed per page (20) X number of pages of reports (38)