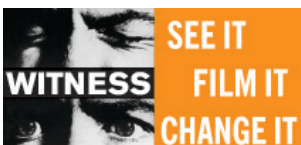


# Best Practices: Documenting Injuries and Casualties

Follow these tips to best document human rights violations, including injuries and casualties. It is very important to always document the date, time, location and persons involved in the documentation - filmmakers as well as witnesses. Always save, copy and keep the original, unedited files safe and secure. **NOTE:** Photographic evidence can be even more useful than video, and should be prioritized when possible.

1. **Always record the date, time, and specific location:** Film your phone, a newspaper or speak the date and time into the camera and capture the location through filming street signs, intersections and landmarks.
2. **Document what happened:** Film to show where you are at, what occurred, who was involved and any important details that will help document the full story. Unless there are security risks, be sure to record any landmarks, street signs or other distinctive features. In a situation where you feel like giving away your location will put you and the injured at risk, make sure to avoid filming identifiable landmarks or features.
3. **Capture who was affected:** Civilians - people who are not engaged in hostilities - have a protected status in international law. Show whether the victims and those affected were carrying weapons or wearing military uniforms, or rather, acting peacefully. Show anything that will help to document who was affected and if and how they were targeted. For example, were the victims members of a specific group that was targeted by the attackers?
4. **Demonstrate who was responsible:** Wherever possible, capture details of who conducted the attack, who was present and any information to establish additional responsibility. For example, capturing vehicles, uniforms, badges, indications of rank and methods of communication and other visual records can help establish who was involved, and potentially help secure communication records for future investigations.
5. **Conduct interviews or narrate while filming:** State the context of what you are shooting. Explain the situation and explain how the injuries were sustained. When shooting for evidence, try to get an explanation of how the wounds incurred directly from a doctor or medical professional, as their narration offers more credibility. Whenever possible, conduct interviews to let people affected and witnesses speak to the incident. Review WITNESS' Interviewing Tips to learn how to safely and effectively conduct interviews.
6. **Consider Your Audience** When filming any disturbing scenes or graphic images, always keep your audience in mind. Ask yourself in what context will this video be



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# Best Practices: Documenting Injuries and Causalities

used? Will it be used as evidence or in the media? For example, if you are targeting media, film additional footage that does not show the graphic images up close but rather from a few meters away allowing those viewing to see what's happening while keeping the footage up to broadcasting standards. Interview the victim or witnesses and have them explain the details of the incident.

7. **Film the whole body:** Make sure you get context of the entire body and the environment to establish context. Get close to the body, and film very slowly and steady – record for at least ten seconds. Film from as close as possible and avoid zooming or quick movements, which will blur the image.
8. **Record different angles:** Film from various viewpoints to best capture the context and any angles and details of the wounds. Also, capture different angles of any essential evidence, such as bloodstains.
8. **Capture details:** Bring a ruler or a standard object, such as a pencil, to best record the size and scope of any injuries.
9. **Maintain good lighting:** If possible, use a light to ensure good lighting. If filming outside, make sure to not block the sun and cast a shadow on the subject. Avoid flashes and bright light spots, as they may affect the reflection of the skin and blur the image.
10. **Keep the evidence:** Bag and safely store any materials, such as clothes, weapon canisters or bullet shells.



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