



CYBERWOMEN



Anonimity

Anonymity

**INSTITUTE FOR
WAR & PEACE REPORTING**



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Anonymity

- **Objective(s):** To introduce participants to the concept of online anonymity, along with relevant tools and practices that can help preserve this anonymity.
- **Length:** 40 minutes
- **Format:** Session
- **Skill level:** Intermediate
- **Required knowledge:**
 - Basic digital security concepts and/or previous training
- **Related sessions/exercises:**
 - Secret friend¹
 - What does your metadata say about you?²
 - Safe browsing³
 - More online identities!⁴
- **Needed materials:**
 - Slides (with key points included below)

¹<https://cyber-women.com/en/anonymity/secret-friend/>

²<https://cyber-women.com/en/safe-online-advocacy/what-does-your-metadata-say-about-you/>

³<https://cyber-women.com/en/digital-security-basics-1/safe-browsing/>

⁴<https://cyber-women.com/en/anonymity/more-online-identities/>

- Laptop/Computer and Projector setup

Leading the session

Part 1 – Introduction to Online Anonymity

1. Start the session by asking participants – What does anonymity mean to them? After you've heard a few answers from the group, present the concept of anonymity in more detail to the group, explaining the following:
 - Explain what the benefits of learning more about anonymity are, and why it can be relevant to human rights work;
 - Provide examples to participants of online data traces that could potentially identify somebody – these could include data such as a username, social media posts, devices used, locations, and other kinds of metadata;
 - Talk about how anonymity can be applied in levels or layers, explaining to participants that they can anonymize either a single activity or connection, or an entire profile or user session.

Part 2 – Identifying Data and Preserving Anonymity

2. In the previous part of the session, you discussed the different kinds of online data traces that could potentially identify somebody. Now, you will highlight one that is especially relevant to an online context – the IP address:
 - What is an IP address? Explain to participants what it is, its purpose, and how in an online context it can be an especially crucial piece of information (especially when attempting to navigate anonymously in online spaces);

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- To demonstrate some of the anonymity implications of IP addresses to the group, have them use a website like What's My IP Address⁵ to find out their individual IP addresses, and how they reveal other kinds of potentially sensitive or identifying information.
3. Now, you will present the following tools to participants and explain how each is important to preserving anonymity online – note that each one provides anonymity in a different way or to a different level:
 - Tor Browser
 - Virtual Private Network (VPN)
 - Tails (The Amnesiac Incognito Live System)
 - HTTPS Everywhere

It is important to explain some of the key practices to consider to use each of the above tools safely, and to allow enough time for participants to install and practice using them.

Part 3 – Some Hands-On Practice

4. Ask participants to check again their IP on What's My IP Address⁶ - they should do this once while using a VPN, and a second time while using Tor Browser. Do they notice a difference in the IP address, or with anything else?
5. This is a good opportunity to address another point of frequent confusion for users: Incognito Mode. Many times, users think they are browsing anonymously while using Incognito Mode on their browsers – here, you should ask participants to check their IP address while using only Incognito Mode (or its equivalent, depending on which browser they are using). What do they notice about their IP address now?

⁵<https://whatismyipaddress.com/>

⁶<https://whatismyipaddress.com/>