

The background of the slide is a photograph of a protest or riot at night. In the foreground, several people are silhouetted against a bright, fiery background. They are holding up their smartphones high in the air, likely to record the events. The background is filled with orange and yellow flames and smoke, suggesting a large fire or explosion. The overall atmosphere is one of chaos and civil unrest.

# Using VGI and UGC to Document human rights abuses

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**“much has changed in terms of how GIS works  
and how it is used”<sup>1</sup>**

**“Why then are we still being asked such similar questions  
about access, representation, expertise and power?”<sup>1</sup>**

1. Elwood, S. (2006)  
Photo: Muzaffar Salman/Reuters



*'most local people, asked if they can make a map, say no' <sup>2</sup>*



*'Yet all human beings can map;  
people have natural mapping abilities' <sup>3</sup>*

2. Chambers, 2006: 6

3. Blaut et al. 2003

Photo: HNB



The government responded by saying the video had been faked, that the uniforms of the security men were not right, and that the film had probably been shot in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Photo: NYTimes





Ahmad Biasi set out to prove that forces loyal to President Bashar al-Assad had been as brutal as the video seemed to show.

Photo: Independent







The creation of '*neogeography*' has '*freed [GIS] from the confines of the academic and opened it up to the people*' <sup>3</sup>



5. Rambaldi *et al.*, 2006: 2



A person wearing a dark hoodie is shown in profile, looking down at a smartphone held in their hand. The phone's screen is illuminated, showing some text or a map. The background is a dark, hazy night scene with a strong orange glow, suggesting smoke or fire from a protest or riot. Other people are faintly visible in the background.

**Maps produced collaboratively hold a much more diverse range of information, and in some cases highlight the importance of issues not otherwise considered**

Photo: Steve Dorsey/The Media Line



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A background image showing a person's hand pointing towards a bright, glowing screen, possibly a map or data visualization, with a warm, orange-yellow color palette.

PGIS has been lorded as very successful in promoting  
the inclusion of marginalised communities <sup>4</sup>

*'PGIS practice is geared towards community empowerment  
through measured, demand driven, user friendly and integrated  
applications of geo-spatial technologies'. <sup>5</sup>*

4. (Robbin, 2003; see Also: McCall, 2003; McCall & Dunn, 2012; Rambaldi *et al.* 2006)

5. Rambaldi *et al.*, 2006: 2

Photo: Peter Macdiarmid/Getty Images





**'By simultaneously allowing the expression of a variety of knowledges... ..PGIS creates a level playing field for comparing knowledge consensus and division. In so doing it allows a wider exploration of the cultural and political conditions that direct human understandings' <sup>6</sup>**

6. Robbins, 2003: 238  
Photo: ajmstudents



19/05/2014

09/02/2015







## 1.3 billion gallons of contaminated water flows from Mount Polley



**Date:** 04 August 2014  
**Location:** Cariboo F, BC, Canada

Translate to:  
English ▼

**Description of Event:**

In the early morning of August 4, 2014, a major breach occurred in an earthen dam built to contain millions of tons of mining waste -- called "tailings" -- at the Mount Polley copper and gold mine in central British Columbia. Now, three days later, an estimated 1.3 billion gallons of contaminated tailings have spilled from the breached pond, sweeping untold volumes of waste and debris into the salmon stream and lake systems in the region and potentially threatening the Fraser River system to the west.



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*VOZ allows us to articulate the work of social movements.  
It is very useful to visualize spatially what happens in our territories  
and share this with the world.*

- Jorge Rubiano of Semillas de Agua  
- Comité de seguimiento Colombia

Photo: London Mining Network



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