Tools of the trade: Data Journalism

"Maybe stories are just data with a soul."
– Brené Brown

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Investigative Environmental Journalism

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My journey into data journalism

2016

Image: News24

2019

Image: GroundUp

2020

Image: DailyMaverick

2021/22

Image: Wikipedia

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What is data journalism?

- Journalistic process based on analyzing and filtering large data sets for the purpose of creating or elevating a story.
- Data journalist :
  - Collects data on a variety of topics from a variety of sources to use in their reports;
  - Ensures the data sources used are reliable;
  - Ensures that data integrity is maintained.
- Tell a story in the best way possible
- Combines data with traditional reporting skills of writing and telling a story

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Introduction and journey into data journalism

Journalist: Story Idea

1. Collect

Find various sources to collect and collate data - then let the data give you a story idea

2.Clean

Use data tools to clean the data i.e remove duplicates, fix badly formatted data or remove incorrect details

3.Analyse

From the cleaned dataset, use tools for analysis to get better understanding

4.Visualize

Use visualization tools to present data in an easy to understand format

Data Journalists: Tell data-driven story

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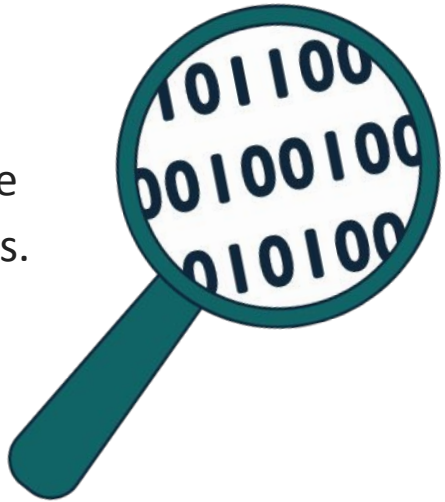
The purpose of data training

1. Teach journalists how to find, analyse, interpret and visualise data in compelling new ways
2. Develop the necessary data skills to be able to make sense of vast datasets easily and quickly
3. Effectively find and use evidence from an existing investigative hypothesis
4. Leverage data analysis to open up areas that would otherwise be impossible to fully investigate, these have become essential skills.
5. Breaking into data journalism



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Data journalism in practice

- #WildEye
  - Distributions of data points globally
- Explore the FinCEN data
  - Flow of transactions across countries
- Afghanistan, visualising 20 years of war -Al Jazeera
  - Statistics and infographics enriching the story
- COVID-19 vaccination tracker - Reuters
  - Interactive data visualized comparatively
- Visualised: Glaciers then and now - The Guardian
  - Animated change in glaciers over time
- More

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Useful tools for data journalism

- Collection:
  - Google News Scraper
  - Research more effectively using search operators
  - Investigative Dashboard
  - Import.io
  - Ushahidi
  - Use public registries and other administrative online data sources

- Cleaning:
  - CSV Fingerprint
  - Open refine

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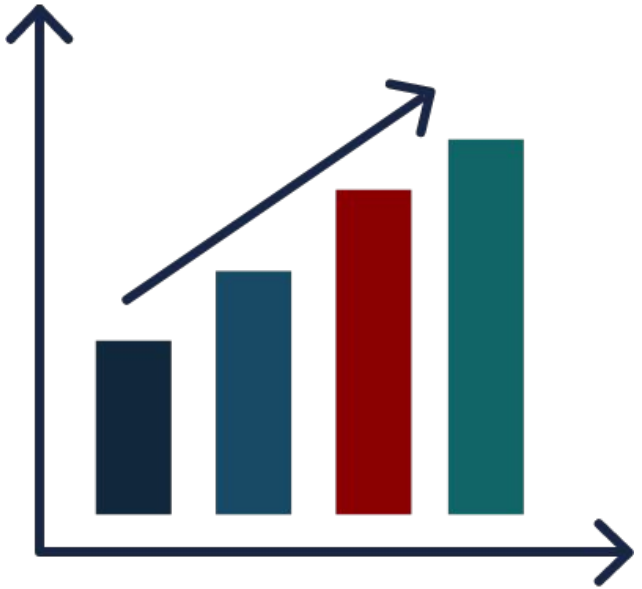
Useful tools for data journalism

- Analysis:
  - Google sheets/ Microsoft Excel
  - Tableau Public
- Visualisation:
  - Datawrapper
  - Infogram
  - Pixelmap
  - Coggle
  - Carto
  - Google Data GIF Maker



- More tools and resources

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Thank you!

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