Iran’s Mahsa Amini Revolution
Protest Crisis and the Role of Technology

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2019 Protest Shutdowns

- See ARTICLE19’s 2020 Tightening the Net report on the anatomy of the 2019 shutdowns
Lessons and Moves since 2019

- What has been defining this protest: User Protection Bill, or ”Tarhe Sianat”

  “Possibly, with the aim of implementing the Internet ‘Protection Bill’, and to detect ‘usual and unusual’ traffic, the country’s Internet [flow] is being intensely analysed. ‘Unusual traffic’ is traffic tunnelled through VPNs. The machines used for detecting the type of traffic cannot process this amount of data [simultaneously], and subsequently slow down the traffic, although bandwidth is available in abundance.”
2022: What’s New with digital protest repression?

- Mobile curfews
- Censorship of majority of foreign internet services
- VPN Disabling
- Regional disruptions in Sistan and Baluchistan, Kurdistan, and Khuzestan provinces
2022: Mobile Curfew

Netflows Gbps by ASN
2022: Regional Shutdowns

- IODA Data from October 8 11:55 to 9th October 20:50 UTC in provinde of Kurdistan
2022: Disabling Circumvention Tech?

- Sophisticated DPI
- Increased blocking of encrypted DNS
- Blocking of HTTP/3 and QUIC Traffic
2022: What can be done?

Satellite internet?
• Has security for uplink connections been considered?

Circumvention technology?
• How to develop tools to address what Iran is doing? New circumvention strategies?
• Distribution methods for VPNs: can new removals of tech sanctions help (i.e. Google can legally unblock Google Cloud Platforms in Iran)
• Return to domain fronting at Amazon, Google and Microsoft?