

ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment 2016

The Humanitarian Data Landscape: From Local to Global Use and Impact

The Government of the Netherlands, IDMC, IOM, NYU Governance Lab, OCHA

**Monday, 27 June, 18:15 – 19:30
Conference Room 11, United Nations Secretariat, New York**

This is one of the side-events to be convened during the ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment, in keeping with this year's theme: Restoring Humanity and Leaving No One Behind: Working together to reduce people's humanitarian need, risk and vulnerability.

Background and objectives

This side event will bring together data practitioners and stakeholders to talk about the current state of the humanitarian data landscape and assess the key drivers for improved data use in the coming 3-5 years. This event seeks to build on the outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) that focus on inclusive approaches that leave no one behind and changing the way we work to end need.

The effective use of data can improve the impact and reach of the humanitarian system. Data can be used to understand needs, target the right kind of support, monitor how a crisis is changing and understand impact. It can also be used by actors outside of a response to raise awareness, increase understanding and bring more resources to bear on a problem.

At present, data is not being used optimally to inform humanitarian policy and operational response. The reasons include a highly fragmented humanitarian system, latency in bringing multi-sourced data together to create a common picture, uneven capacity by humanitarians to use data in their daily work, and inadequate data protections to limit the risk to data subjects. There is also a trend to collect more and more data, without it always being entirely clear how the information collected will be used operationally.

At the same time, there are numerous opportunities to accelerate the progress that is being made. New technologies and data sources (i.e., social media, sensors, call detail records) are being used to gain a better understanding of humanitarian crises. Standards are being developed that support easier integration of data. First-mile data collection applications are allowing for faster access to data about affected people. Local and global open data platforms are surfacing data that has been difficult to find and use.

Actors such as IDMC, IOM and OCHA in coordination with many humanitarian and private sector partners have been at the forefront of efforts to both collect and streamline humanitarian data. This event will highlight the importance of collective efforts to efficiently and ethically collect, analyse and disseminate data across the humanitarian system.

The objectives of the side event are to:

- 1) Give participants a sense of the opportunities and challenges with using humanitarian data and how things can be improved going forward;
- 2) Promote the idea of open, connected data that can be used to improve how citizens, affected people and humanitarians prepare, respond and recover from crises;

- 3) Understand the patterns of human mobility in crisis – when, why, how and where people move, and which factors influence their decision-making;
- 4) Look at several cases of how humanitarian organizations are partnering to share and analyze data to improve reach and impact;
- 5) Assess the data policy environment for sharing and using humanitarian data and how this can be strengthened across partner networks.

Discussion points

Against this backdrop, the side-event will focus on the following suggested questions:

- How do we move from a fragmented humanitarian data landscape to one that is connected across geographies and partner organizations?
- How do we make the data that is being collected available to local communities for their decision-making?
- How do we ensure that data is shared and used in responsible ways so that no one is harmed from data ending up in the wrong hands? How can we assess data risk and what are effective counter measures?
- How do we increase the use and impact of data by humanitarians at all levels?

Intended outcomes/conclusions/recommendations

The side event will follow up on the outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit with a specific focus on core responsibility three – leaving no one behind – and core responsibility four – changing people's lives, from delivering aid to ending need.

Expected outcomes

- OCHA will ask for feedback and collaboration around its plans to establish a global humanitarian data center in the Netherlands in early 2017.
- IOM, IDMC, and OCHA will talk about an expected new collaboration on mobility data (pending ECHO funding).
- The Governance Lab will recommend a new framework for understanding how to assess data risk.

Format

The chair will introduce the topic and the participants. The moderator will frame the discussion and open with a round of questions to the panelists on various aspects of the humanitarian data landscape including data collection and use, open data platforms, global analysis, and data policy. A short film about the people working on data in the humanitarian community will be shown during the side event. (See Annex 1 for biographies of the speakers).

Chair: Eran Nagan, the Government of the Netherlands

Moderator: Raj Pannu, Co-Founder and CEO, Emergence, a global creative agency dedicated to social impact

Panel composition:

- Nuno Nunes, Global CCCM Coordinator, Preparedness and Response Division, Department of Operations and Emergency, IOM
- Justin Ginnetti, Head of Data and Analysis, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
- Sarah Telford, Head of the Humanitarian Data Exchange, OCHA
- Stefaan Verhulst, Co-Founder and Chief of Research at the NYU Governance Lab

Background Material

IOM: <http://www.globaldtm.info/>

IDMC: <http://www.internal-displacement.org/database>

HDX: <https://humdata.org/>

OCHA Think Brief – Building Data Responsibility into Humanitarian Action

<http://www.unocha.org/about-us/publications/policy-briefs>

Film ‘Making the Invisible Visible’:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7QX5Ji5gl9g&feature=youtu.be>

Contact

For more information, please contact:

-Sarah Telford, telford@un.org; Justin Ginnetti, Justin.ginnetti@idmc.ch, Nuno Nunes, nnunes@iom.int

Annex 1

Speaker Biographies

Justin Ginnett

Since September 2015, Justin has served as IDMC's Head of Data and Analysis. Prior to heading up this new department, Justin was an advisor at IDMC leading the development of new research and evidence on the risk of future displacement associated with disasters and the impacts of climate change. Prior to joining IDMC, Justin worked at (what is now) the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), contributing to the 2011 Global Assessment Report and supporting UNISDR's policy development on climate change adaptation. While at UNISDR, he also contributed to the IPCC's special report on climate change and extreme events. Justin holds a master's degree in law and diplomacy from the Fletcher School at Tufts University, where he studied climate change-induced displacement and forced migration of agro-pastoralists in the Horn of Africa. Previously, he earned bachelor's and master's degrees in English literature from the University of Pennsylvania.

Nuno Nunes

Nuno is the Global Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster Coordinator and the Global Displacement Tracking (DTM) Coordinator at the International Organization for Migration (IOM), where he is leading the unit that oversees global implementation of displacement tracking and field data collection in emergencies. Working with partners at different levels of the private sector, civil society, academia and international organizations, and through the coordination of CCCM's preparedness, prevention, and protection initiatives in natural disasters, Nuno is responsible for the organizations' efforts toward building collaborative approaches to management of displaced populations. He has been managing the team involved in the design and implementation of mobility tracking operations. Recent developments include components on ethics in humanitarian data; citizen driven assistance; and accountability through responsible use of existing data.

Raj Pannu

<http://www.emergence-creative.com/raj-pannu/>

Sarah Telford

Sarah Telford is a Senior Programme Officer with OCHA's Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX), an open platform for sharing data from humanitarian partners around the world. Sarah has worked with OCHA for nine years. Before her work on data, she was focused on improving humanitarian reporting across OCHA's field offices. Prior to joining OCHA, Sarah worked for the UK's Department for International Development in the Conflict, Humanitarian and Security Department in London. She has also worked with UNICEF and the UN in Afghanistan and worked with the International Medical Corps in Iraq. She began her career with the UN as a press officer with the Department of Public Information and shortly after joined the US Fund for UNICEF in New York to work on emergency communications. Sarah has a Masters degree in East Asia Studies from Columbia University and a Bachelors degree in English Literature from Hofstra University in New York.

Stefaan Verhulst

<http://thegovlab.org/about/team/stefaan-verhulst/>