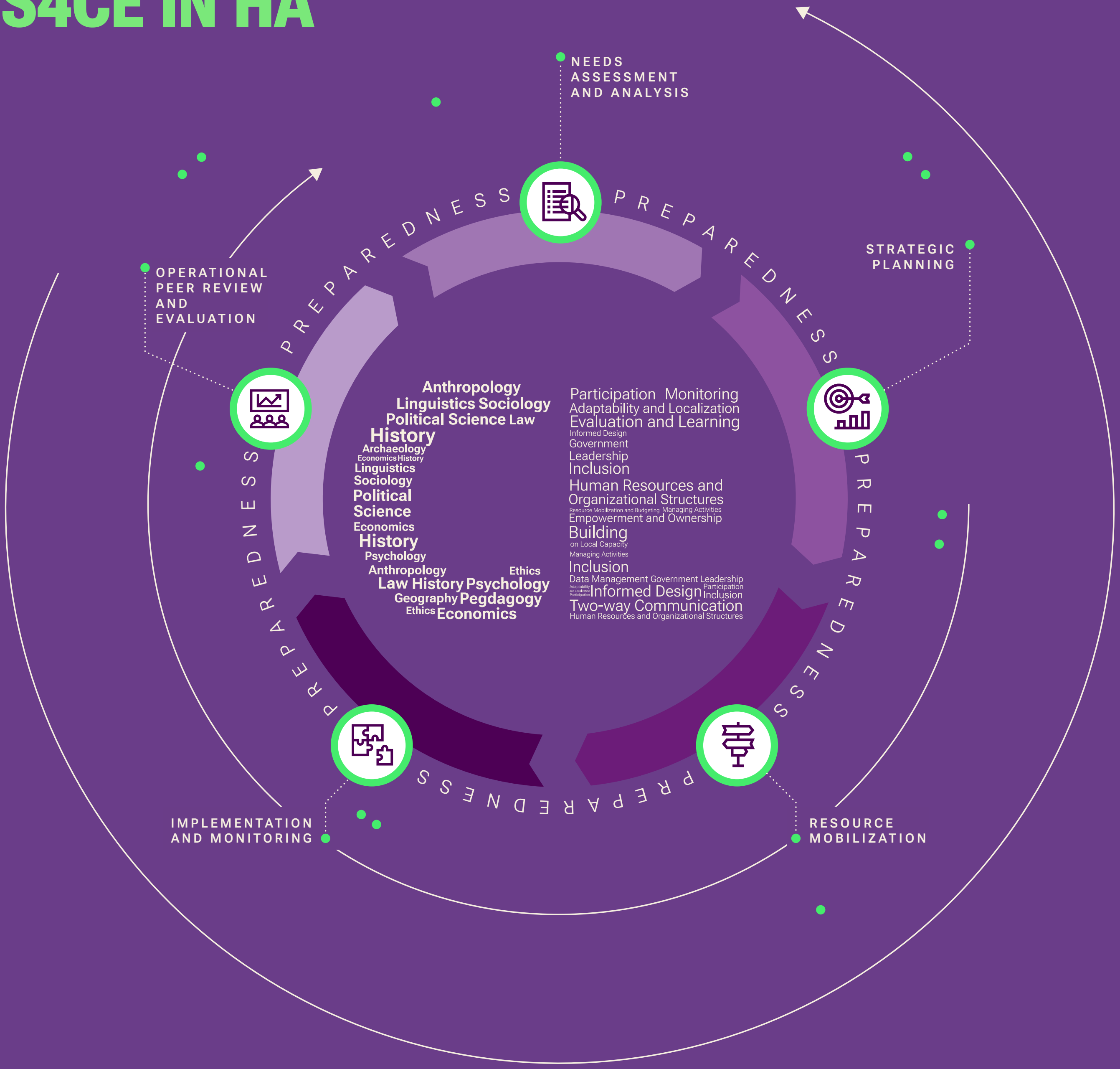
SOCIAL SCIENCES FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION

COMMON PRINCIPLES AND CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE APPLICATION OF SS4CE IN HA



NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS

STRATEGIC PLANNING

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

OPERATIONAL PEER REVIEW AND EVALUATION

Ministério da Saúde
FIOCRUZ
Fundação Oswaldo Cruz

sonar global

SS4CE
Connecting Community Engagement with Social Science in Humanitarian Contexts

Makerere University
1922 - 2022

Social Sciences for Community Engagement in Humanitarian Action (SS4CE in HA)
Common Principles and Code of Conduct for the Application of SS4CE in HA

FIOCRUZ Fundaçâo Oswaldo Cruz - Sonar Global
Makerere University - Sonar global
Institute Pasteur - Sonar Global
UNICEF SBC Unit - SS4CE in HA team

Research Team and Authors

Fundación Osvaldo Cruz – SoNAR-Global
Gustavo Matta
Renata Gabriela Cortez Gómez
Aline Degrave
Makerere University – SoNAR Global
David Kaawa-Mafigiri
Iradukunda Constance
Deborah Ekusai
INSTITUTE PASTEUR – SoNAR Global
Benedetta Lana
UNICEF SBC Unit - SS4CE in HA team
Maria Fernanda Falero Cusano
Rania Elessawi

Contents

Chapter IV

Chapter V

© UNICEF/UN0798316/

Foreword
Looking Ahead: Bridging theory and practice

The Social Science for Community Engagement in Humanitarian Action Project (SS4CE in HA) is an initiative launched at the end of 2020, funded by the Bureau of Humanitarian Affairs, USAID. The main objectives focused on co-creation of global goods, through an intentionally designed collaborative approach that connects with global humanitarian and public health systemwide mechanisms that harnessed active participation of humanitarian organizations, academic institutions and donors. The processes undertaken for the development of global goods are also further framed in the 'decolonization of aid' agenda and provide clear recommendations for implementation actions for driving more people-centred and community-led humanitarian and development programmes. As envisioned, the project made substantive progress to systematically align social science informed community engagement actions to humanitarian architecture, tailored to different elements and enablers of humanitarian programme cycle (HPC). Leveraging on the initial, exclusive Public Health Emergency (PHE) focus, at the time of the SS4CE project initiation, due to the COVID-19 response that was ongoing, the project developed a multi-pronged governance structure that could facilitate the linkages and inform all humanitarian crises (i.e., natural hazards, conflicts, PHEs). This governance structure provided technical oversight to the development of SS4CE global goods, as well as positioning the processes and outputs of the project with key humanitarian stakeholders, including the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS), Clusters and committees, for the uptake and mainstreaming within the on-going and relevant humanitarian programme processes.

Common Principles and Code of Conduct for the Application of SS4CE in HA is a partnership with SoNAR-Global, Makerere University of Uganda, Fundación Osvaldo Cruz and members of Technical Working Group-1 (TWG-1). These recommended principles are the outcome of two previous deliverables produced by the project; the ethics and data sharing mapping and the code of conduct mapping reports.

The principles suggested respond to the identified gaps and needs related to the application of SS4CE in HA.

Social sciences informed community engagement, not only addresses participation issues and immediate needs of the affected communities but also strengthens community systems where marginalized groups are equal partners in finding solutions, having wider knowledge and understanding of social science disciplines (e.g., conceptual frameworks, historical, political, sociological, economical) and providing pathways to deal with systemic fallacies and challenges (e.g., social justice, gender equity, decolonization, localization).

We hope that these recommended principles will contribute to reform community engagement processes, especially leveraging the benefits of social sciences for informing challenging humanitarian contexts and ensuring communities are at the center of humanitarian processes. This, in turn, will be of utmost importance for effective and efficient humanitarian action.

Sonar Global, Tamara Giles-Vernick
UNICEF, Vincent Petit

Key deliverables for the project are:

- Landscape report
- Ethics and Data Sharing Mapping Review
- Codes of Conduct Mapping Review
- Mapping of Capacity Development for the application of SS4CE in HA in Conflicts and Hazards
- Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Community Engagement
- Compendium of Case Studies on the Use of community engagement to Inform Decision Making
- Desk Review of Community Engagement Iindicators Across Humanitarian Response Plans (2022) and Documentation on Community Engagement
- Vision Paper on Community Engagement for Accountability to Affected Populations and Social and Behavior Change
- **Common Principles and Code of Conduct for the Application of SS4CE in HA**

Executive summary

© UNICEF/UN0813196/Alsunaidar

This document provides common principles for the ethical implementation of social sciences for community engagement in humanitarian action (SS4CE in HA). The common principles for data ethics, data sharing and code of conduct for the application of SS4CE in HA presented are part of the deliverables of the SS4CE in HA project.[1] These global goods were united under this single document, based on the recommendations to address the identified gaps brought by the mapping reviews; two previous deliverables of the same project, that preceded the development of these common principles. For the remainder of the document, it will be referenced as "common ethics principles and CoC".

The key added value and approaches that have anchored the development of this document are:

Acknowledgement of diverse knowledge systems for respectful, collaborative partnerships. The intention of these common principles is to contribute to creating more 'equitable and just' systems building on existing guidelines, and more explicitly recognizing the importance of diversity, equity and justice in global society and the actions required to achieve it. Systematically conceding and including the knowledge, experiences and perspectives of marginalized communities, recognizing intersectionality and challenging Western-centric approaches to knowledge production, will contribute to more respectful and collaborative partnerships. By recognizing and incorporating the diverse knowledge systems that exist across the world we can build a more just and equitable world for all.

Applying a decolonial feminist approach to ethical community engagement. These analytical frameworks bring reflections on roles and power dynamics in the humanitarian arena, shedding light on the importance of intersectionality, which is the recognition of how different forms of oppression (e.g., racism, sexism, classism, ableism) intersect and compound to create unique experiences of marginalization and exclusion. By applying a decolonial feminist approach, we can better understand how intersectionality operates within the fields of humanitarian aid, social sciences and ethics, working towards creating more inclusive and equitable systems (see e.g., Lorde, 1981; Manning, 2018; Gargallo Celentani, 2017). Applying a decolonial, feminist and inclusive analytical lens in SS4CE in HA is not only crucial to uphold ethics and social justice commitments, but it is also essential for achieving more effective and sustainable outcomes. By centering the perspectives, experiences and needs of communities, interventions are more likely to be relevant, appropriate and effective, and will promote the empowerment and resilience of communities in the face of humanitarian challenges.

Institutionalization requires systems change and builds on what is existing. Institutionalization of these Common Ethics Principles and CoC require humanitarian stakeholders to adopt them and commit to them in operational and research activities. The generalized adoption of the Common Principles and the CoC by organizational structures would create a channel for their integration into the existing body of ethics regulations and guidelines for HA, ultimately leading to increase accountability and actors' compliance.

The proposed common principles and CoC aim to be practical, applicable and linked to current ways of working in humanitarian action. The recommended principles are a combination of humanitarian and research principles with the opening for the inclusion of locally relevant ethics and conduct principles. The aim is to present practical and operational guidance on the ethical application of SS4CE in HA during preparedness and response in humanitarian action, considering the different stages of the humanitarian programme cycle (HPC) and the steps and processes involved in its development.

Overarching key Recommendations

SS4CE should be systematically integrated during the needs assessment and analysis stages of humanitarian programming, ensuring affected and at-risk communities are engaged in the process and providing essential local evidence for strategic planning, as well as contributing to the baseline information upon which situation and response monitoring relies.

It is necessary to dedicate more resources specifically to community engagement throughout the HPC. The ideal is to do it from preparedness, which implies also dedicating funds to this stage and not just to the response to emergencies. A decolonial approach implies that humanitarians help to develop local capacities, so that eventually local organizations, together with people, take control of the preparation and response to a crisis, including managing funding and resources.

Identify local knowledge and strategies historically or recently developed in the face of the humanitarian crises people and their communities have experienced and suffered through, and those that can be adapted to the response to a humanitarian emergency.

UNICEF/UN0766626/Duff

Identify, train and hire local cultural mediators, not only translators, to encourage contextualization.

Foster appropriate local hiring practices with appropriate salaries and working conditions that enhance dignity. Hire local researchers and data collectors that will contribute to the whole project cycle (e.g., analysis, strategy design, implementation and M&E).

Identify and engage with local authorities and local people that can act as local representatives to organize preparedness and response. This does not mean that humanitarians will only work with them, rather they must be interlocutors with the broader community. Care must be always taken that these representatives or local authorities do not displace or prevent the participation of certain groups.

Identify and work with local CSOs and NGOs already known by the community to implement the response to the context and to reach far, or vulnerable, people. Likewise, identify local researchers that know the community and its political and social-cultural dynamics. This collaboration must recognize the work that local organizations carry out, their experience and knowledge, and receive formal recognition.

Explore power dynamics and trustworthiness of authorities and institutions. Assess government/local authorities' commitment to humanitarian action, to what degree they could be involved in preparedness/response, and if sharing data with these entities poses risks to certain individuals, groups or populations.

Encourage the use of participatory methods. Use data collection methods, with intentionality and transparency, to engage with vulnerable or marginalized groups, such as women, people with disabilities, young, elderly people, asylum-seekers and refugees. Implement individual interviews, visit households and self-help groups, among other strategies.

Envision the creation of a Humanitarian Ethics Review Board (HERB). This global body will be formed by already existing ERBs/IRBs (from countries, academic institutions, etc.) but will focus on the intersection of social science research/ assessment and humanitarian action.

Implement responsible data management to make sure that constant reflections and assessments on ethics issues through every element of the HPC are made, including power imbalances among the diversity of actors in the field. Set sensitive data according to the type of crises and context:

- **Data collection should respond to the vital interest of individuals at risk**, and according to data minimization, de-identification and anonymization. Before data collection, people must be informed clearly about the objectives of collecting data, both written and plain language, their security and protection data measures and their right to reject or how, eventually, their data be corrected or deleted.
- **Respect of ownership of personal and community data.** Local and community accessibility to own datasets for further actualization and use, and
- **Be aware of the limitations of the sampling** and being critical about it being representative of the population.
- **The focus of monitoring and evaluations should be on empowering communities and recognizing the autonomy and capacity of local organizations.** This is to verify that communities have actively participated in decision-making (including their own involvement in the response) and that they are co-owners of the data, among other aspects.

Communication must be 'careful' and 'safe': communicate the plan to the community/individuals concerned in plain language and disseminate the findings without exposing participants.

© UNICEF/UN0799177/Al Asad

Acknowledgments

We want to sincerely thank everyone who contributed to the development of this guidelines, a process which was only possible through a shared effort. We are grateful to the TWG1 members for their participation, collaboration, invaluable contributions, as well as the SAG members for their feedback and guidance.

The project and development of this Common Principles and Code of Conduct for the Application of SS4CE in HA global good was made possible by the funding of USAID BHA, and the programme and technical steer of the UNICEF Social and Behavioral Change Section, and SoNAR-Global.

TWG-1 subgroup code of conduct members (in alphabetical order of institution)

CORE Group	Lisa Hilmi	lhilmi@coregroup.org
Epicentre	Rebecca Grais	rebecca.grais@epicentre.msf.org
Fio Cruz University*	Aline Degrave Gustavo Matta (**Chair**) Renata Gabriela Cortez Gomez	degravealine@gmail.com gcmatta@gmail.com rcortezgomez@gmail.com
GOARN	Lina Moses	Lmoses2@tulane.edu
ICRC	Emilie Venables (Social Sciences Research)	evenables@icrc.org
IDRG	Patrick Vinck	pvinck@hsph.harvard.edu
IHSA	Dorothea Hilhorst Kaira Alburo	hilhorst@iss.nl kzalburo@gmail.com
Institut Pasteur*	Benedetta Lana Tamara Giles-Vernick	benedetta-lana@pasteur.fr tamara.giles-vernick@pasteur.fr
IOM	Sweetmavoureen Agan	sagan@iom.int
Jackson Institute of Global Affairs	Nathaniel Raymond	nathaniel.raymond@yale.edu
Makerere University*	David Kaawa-Mafigiri (**Chair**) Deborah Ekusai-Sebatta Iradukunda Constance Martin Mbonye	mafigiridk@yahoo.com ekusai@gmail.com ciradukund@yahoo.com mmbonye2019@gmail.com
McMaster University	Lisa Schwartz	schwar@mcmaster.ca
NEAR	Tauheeda Yasin Martin	tyasin@near.ngo
New Castle University	Siobhan Warrington	siobhan.warrington@newcastle.ac.uk
UNICEF	Maria Fernanda Falero Cusano (**Chair**) Rania Elessawi	mfalero@unicef.org relessawi@unicef.org
UNICEF Inocennti	Ben Hickler	bhickler@unicef.org
USAID	Mary Jackman	mjackman@usaid.gov
OCHA	Stuart Campo (Team Lead Data Responsibility)	campo2@un.org
Oxford University	Susan Bull	susan.bull@ethox.ox.ac.uk
Save the Children	Hadley Solomon	hsolomon@savethechildren.org
WEF	William Hofman	william.hoffman@weforum.org
WHO	Joao Rangel de Almeida Katherine Littler	salavessaj@who.int littlerk@who.int
Yale University	Maya Prabhu	maya.prabhu@yale.edu

List of Abbreviations

CoC	Code(s) of Conduct
ERB	Ethical Review Board
HA	Humanitarian Action
HERB	Humanitarian Ethical Review Board
HNO	Humanitarian Needs Overview
HPC	Humanitarian Programme Cycle
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IASC	Inter Agency Standard Committe
IRB	Institutional Review Board
SAG	Strategic Advisory Group
SS4CE	Social Sciences for Community Engagement
TWG	Technical Working Group

© UNICEF/UN0766682/Duff

Introduction

This document provides common ethics principles and codes of conduct (CoC) for the application of social sciences for community engagement in humanitarian action (SS4CE in HA). The document speaks to global commitments made at the World Humanitarian Summit and Grand Bargain (2016) by the IASC and the UN Secretary General. It reaffirms the Call for Action to ensure a principled humanitarian response that places protection at the center of the humanitarian agenda, promotes gender equality, as well as equity and inclusion and aligns with the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

These common ethics principles and CoC are part of the deliverables of the SS4CE in HA project[2] financed by USAID BHA. This global good unites the Ethics and Data Sharing mapping and the CoC mapping under this single document, based on the recommendations from two previous deliverables of the same project. The set of global goods were developed through a consultative process with humanitarian practitioners, social sciences experts, civil society organizations (CSOs) representatives and a literature review of relevant academic and gray literature. The consultation process and its outcome did not include the direct voice of concerned (affected and at-risk) communities themselves. For this reason, faithful to the principle of "nothing about us without us" (see Bukuluki, 2022), which calls for the co-ownership of communities on what concerns them, the authors urge this work to be continued in a way that would integrate affected communities and their representatives as co-leaders and co-authors. This could be specifically considered in next steps to engage for the advocacy and institutional uptake and application of these common ethics principles and CoC within humanitarian institutions and the humanitarian systems' governance at large.

Based on the analysis of the gaps and challenges towards the integration of SS4CE in HA identified in the mapping process, these common principles call for a bottom-up, decolonial, feminist perspective to be adopted in all humanitarian processes and activities, from negotiation with donors and operations to the drafting of reports and publications. For this perspective not to appear esthetic or instrumental to the legitimization of humanitarian action, it needs to become a structural and overarching goal at all levels. The recommendations that follow orient ethical practice in humanitarian action, but they can by no means replace the systematic inclusion of context-specific, people led and local ethics deliberation processes. Only these deliberative efforts can set the opportunity and the ad hoc modalities for the ethical, adequate and effective integration of SS4CE in HA.

This newly integrated approach by no means implies ignoring or replacing existing guidance and regulations. On the contrary, it is intended to cover important aspects that were identified as gaps in the mapping exercise that precede these common principles document.[3] One of the main aspects it incorporates is the systematic recognition of other understandings of ethics and the need to incorporate this knowledge and a people-centered approach in all ethics processes. These recommendations must be adapted to the context (e.g., governance of national, medical, academic ethics boards), the nature of the type of crisis, and to the stage in the HPC.

Who are these common principles for?

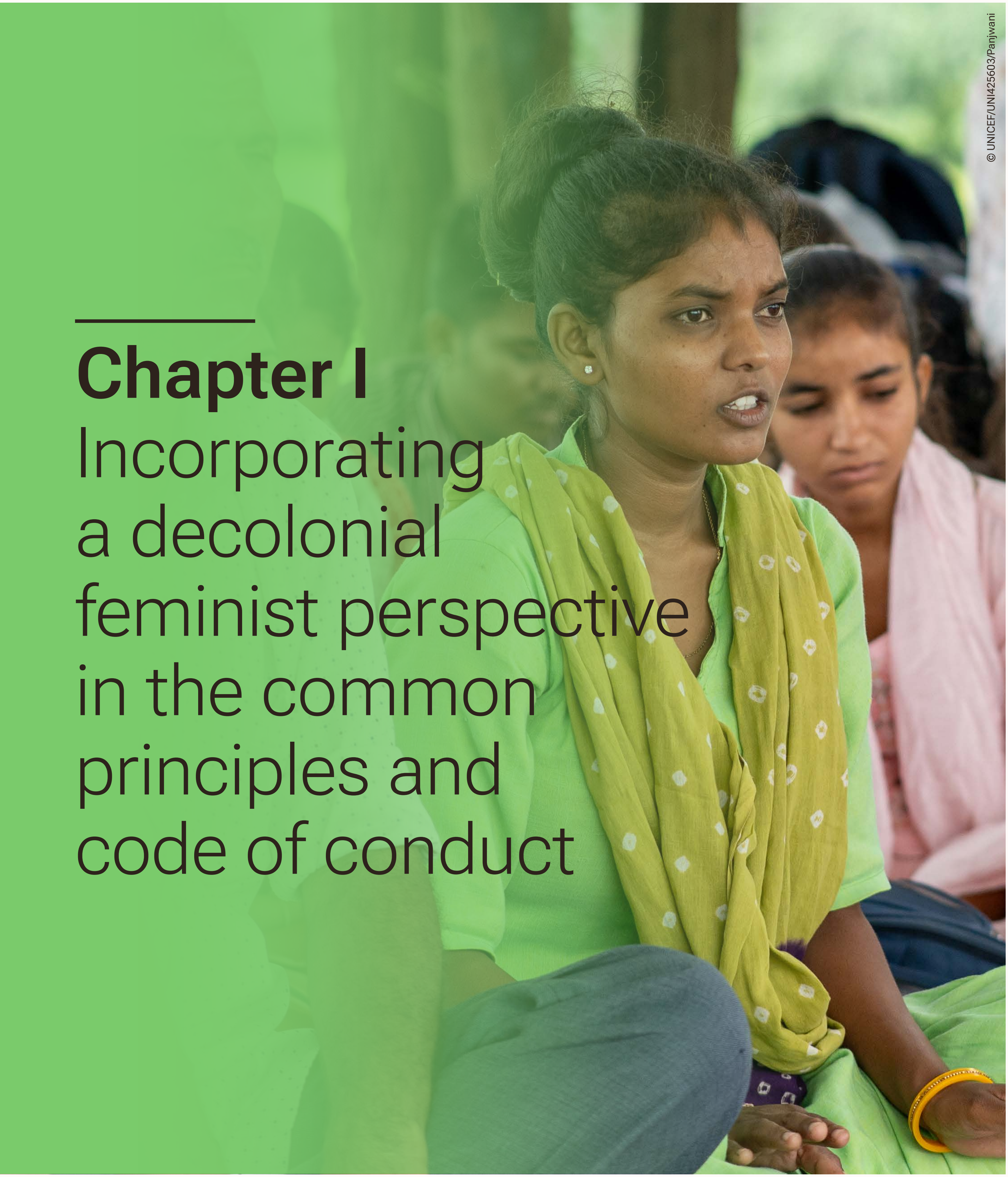
These common principles are intended as a common good; that is, an available resource for humanitarian practitioners, civil society and community organizations members, academics, donors and policy makers that work on, or contribute to, the application of SS4CE in HA.

How to use these common principles?

These common ethics principles and Code of Conduct present recommendations for the ethical application of SS4CE in HA and the management of social science data.

The common principles are divided into five chapters that include preparedness and response stages in the HPC:

- Chapter I explains the rationale behind the development of the common ethics principles and the CoC.
- Chapter II outlines the suggested common principles and code of conduct for the application of SS4CE in HA.
- Chapter III describes the application of ethics in the different stages of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle.
- Chapter IV presents recommended actions for different actors, towards the integration of the common ethics principles and CoC in humanitarian programmes and social sciences research.
- Chapter V showcases a set of case studies from real situations that presented ethical challenges during implementation of programmes / interventions in humanitarian contexts.



© UNICEF/UNI425603/Panjwani

Chapter I

Incorporating a decolonial feminist perspective in the common principles and code of conduct

The decolonial feminist lens recognizes the importance of cultural diversity and the need to challenge Western-centric approaches to knowledge production. Traditional aid models are often driven by this type of approach that perpetuate hierarchy and unequal power dynamics between donors and recipients. The traditional model of aid often fails to recognize the needs and priorities of the communities it serves, imposing solutions that often do not consider cultural or contextual appropriateness. Decolonizing aid involves centering the knowledge, perspectives, voices and agency of diverse cultures and communities requiring actions and resources aimed towards building more inclusive and equitable systems of knowledge production that are better suited to address the complex and diverse challenges faced today by local and global societies.

The origins and development of the international humanitarian system are rooted in the Western and especially European experience of war and disaster (Davey et al, 2013). Humanitarian assistance is intended to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity during, and after, man-made crises and disasters caused by natural hazards, as well as to prevent them and to strengthen preparedness for when such situations occur. Humanitarian assistance should be governed by the key humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence. These are the fundamental principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (RCRC), which are reaffirmed in UN General Assembly resolutions and enshrined in numerous humanitarian standards and guidelines.[4]

Excluded, silenced and marginalized peoples of the Global South tend to be more affected by humanitarian emergencies because of the multiple structural vulnerabilities they face, largely a result of the negative impact of colonialism and neocolonialism imposed by Global North nations. These affected and at-risk communities are prone to objectification by humanitarians, as they are often categorized and labelled as ‘beneficiaries’, ‘cases’ or ‘research subjects’ (Lough et al., 2021, as cited in Khan et al., 2015) and seen as passive recipients of assistance. These are the bases in which engagement between local communities, local or foreign researchers, international organizations and the multiplicity of actors in the humanitarian arena is shaped.

Community engagement is an essential aspect of humanitarian action. It involves working with communities affected by disasters or conflicts to ensure that their needs, perspectives and priorities are considered in the design and delivery of humanitarian programmes. However, community engagement has historically been framed within a colonial mindset that privileges the perspectives and expertise of aid agencies and external actors over those of the affected communities, which further limits the investments, resources and intended outcomes. Community engagement, depending on the meaning given to it, “risks becoming yet another seemingly depoliticized research tool contributing to marginalization of colonized and racialized groups” (Lazarus et al., 2015, as cited in Atallah et al., 2018). In many cases, aid agencies have viewed themselves as the primary experts on humanitarian action, disregarding the expertise and knowledge of the affected communities. This has led to a paternalistic approach to community engagement, where aid agencies dictate the terms of the engagement and prioritize their own goals over those of the affected communities. Decolonizing community engagement in humanitarian action involves acknowledging and addressing power imbalances and working towards a more equitable partnership between aid agencies and affected communities.

The social sciences, as we know them today, have their roots in Western European intellectual traditions, particularly in the fields of philosophy, political theory and economics. While the roots of these fields can be traced back to ancient Greece and Rome, it was during the Enlightenment period, in the 18th century, that they began to coalesce into distinct disciplines that we now recognize as the social sciences. Scholars sought to understand human behavior and society through empirical observation and rational inquiry. This period was characterized by a focus on reason, empiricism and the scientific method, which paved the way for the emergence of sociology, anthropology and psychology in the following centuries.

However the development of these disciplines, largely concentrated in Western Europe and North America, has led to criticism. Critics argue that scholars from other regions of the world were being -and continue to be- excluded from the development of social science theories and methodologies. The social sciences have often been used to justify Western political and economic dominance, while ignoring the knowledge and perspectives of non-Western societies (Atalas, 1993; Coburn et al., 2013; Connell, 2014, Openjuru et al., 2015; Agier, 2016). The social sciences have historically excluded the voices and perspectives of women and have often been used to justify patriarchal power structures as well. Decolonizing the social sciences involves acknowledging and rectifying the ways in which these disciplines have been shaped by and perpetuate patriarchal, colonial power structures. For example, much social science research conducted in the global South is often driven by Western researchers and institutions, which can lead to research that is extractive and insensitive to local contexts (Liverpool, 2021; Reidpath and Allotey, 2019; Sibai et al., 2019). Decolonizing social sciences involves centering the voices and knowledge of marginalized communities, including women of color, engaging in research that is collaborative and context-specific and recognizing and addressing power imbalances within the research process.

Whose Ethics count: contextualize and acknowledge diversity

Ethics are a fundamental aspect of the human social experience, permeating every aspect of human interaction, societal structure and cultural expression. Ethics principles are influenced by historical, social and cultural contexts, as well as views on community and in relation to their environment. Ethics frameworks applied in humanitarian action and social sciences have their origin in Eurocentric values and ideas as well (see SS4CE in HA Codes of Conduct Mapping, 2022). These Western ethics frameworks and theories have been imposed on non-Western societies, overshadowing the rich and diverse ethical traditions that exist outside of Western philosophy. Decolonizing ethics involves recognizing and respecting the ethics traditions and perspectives of diverse cultures and engaging in ethics deliberations that are inclusive and contextually relevant.

Applying a decolonial feminist approach to the fields of humanitarian aid, social sciences, community engagement and ethics is of utmost importance in the pursuit of justice, inclusivity and equity in global society. This approach refers to the process of undoing the historical, political and economic legacies of colonialism and patriarchy, which have been embedded in our social, political and cultural systems. It is based on the recognition of the ways in which these legacies intersect to create or maintain structures of power that are exclusionary and oppressive. In the context of humanitarian aid, social sciences and ethics must acknowledge and address the ways in which their fields have also been shaped by – and perpetuate – colonial and patriarchal power structures, knowledge systems, and practices.

The recommendations of these common principles call for a contextual redefinition and systematic integration of social sciences for community engagement in humanitarian action that is fit for purpose, inclusive and respectful of all forms of knowledge existing on the planet. At the same time, the proposed Code of Conduct stems from the recognition that there is no standalone code of conduct specifically tackling the use of social sciences for community engagement purposes in humanitarian action (SS4CE), nor any existing organizational code of conduct which makes explicit reference to this dimension. Despite evidence suggesting that there are unwritten principles adopted in field work that encompass principals and elements of social sciences or community engagement, the lack of coherent articulation of the three components (SS, CE & HA) in codes of conduct is identified as a significant flaw. To address the identified gaps and limitations, these common ethics principles and CoC bring together major humanitarian principles that have long guided humanitarian work and developed others over time.


© UNICEF/UN0760342/

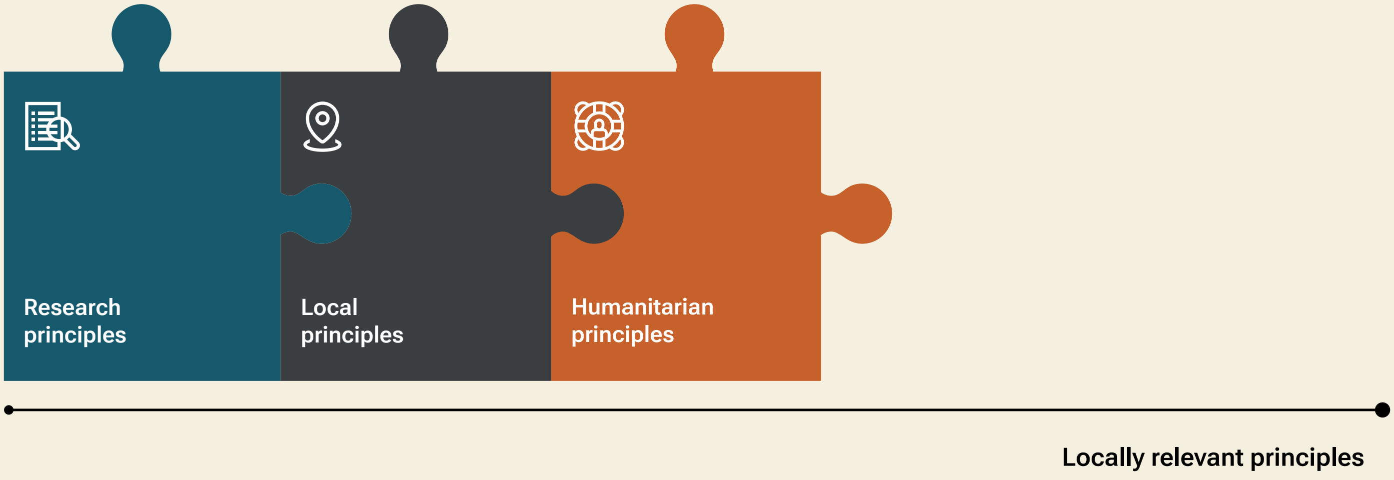
Chapter II

Common principles and Code of Conduct for the application of SS4CE in HA

The overarching ethical principles recommended include humanitarian principles,[5] research principles as well as affected and at-risk communities' understandings of ethical priorities. All these sets of principles have at their core the obligation to protect communities and/or participants' wellbeing and safety and to ensure that they are treated fairly, with respect and that they actively participate in humanitarian processes.

FIGURE 1

Locally relevant principles



While the general principles of research ethics used in non-emergency situations are like those in emergency situations, that is, adherence to the principles of respect for persons, beneficence and justice, the unique circumstances of emergency situations avail themselves with special considerations as the social fabric may be significantly disrupted and the functioning of institutional review boards (IRBs), where they may have existed, may be compromised. Emergencies may also be associated with perpetrators of violence, who may be the cause of the humanitarian crisis, and victims of the ensuing violence; a situation that may not be as applicable to non-emergency situations. Research aspects of a humanitarian crisis can be conducted during or after the emergency.

Social science research ought to be conducted at all stages of the humanitarian programme cycle to inform responses and affected populations are to be involved as largely as possible in assessment, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation phases of humanitarian action implementation.

These common principles and code of conduct document will be a living document that is updated regularly and that has universal relevance. Documentation of all activities and data sharing agreements between collaborating institutions will also be updated so that they remain relevant to the needs of the situation.

Suggested common principles

Humanity/ Dignity of Human life

The right to receive humanitarian assistance, and to offer it, is a fundamental humanitarian principle which should be enjoyed by all citizens of all countries. As members of the international community, humanitarians recognize their obligation to provide humanitarian assistance wherever it is needed. Hence the need for unimpeded access to affected populations is of fundamental importance in exercising that responsibility. The prime motivation of response to disaster is to alleviate human suffering amongst those least able to withstand the stress caused by disaster. When humanitarian aid is provided it is not a partisan or political act and should not be viewed as such.[6]

Social science perspectives recommend understanding all the aspects (i.e., context and impact) of the humanitarian situation that affect the concerned communities.

Humanity involves ensuring equity and equal opportunity irrespective of ethnicity, race, social status, gender etc. Attention should be devoted to inclusiveness through community engagement[7] of all people, including the most marginalized and vulnerable. The latter include people with disabilities, women,

© UNICEF/UN0790830/Nazir

children and members of minority groups. The unique challenges that men and boys face should not be overlooked and deserve equal consideration. Integrating a social science perspective means recognizing that dignity of life acquires different meanings and is underpinned by diverse elements distinct for each community. Social science can help observing, analysing and understanding social norms, histories, cultural practices and power relationships in each community. For instance, Ubuntu[8] or humanness concepts (e.g., fairness, social justice, group solidarity) should be incorporated in humanitarian design to signal the importance of including other conceptions than the European of humanity and dignity that exist in the world.

Impartiality

This principle states that HA "makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavors to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress".

In implementing this principle, social science knowledge and skills can help actors to establish dialogue and common priorities with local formal and informal leaders and community organizations, establish relationships by building mutual trust, and seek commitment for the sustainable and concerted implementation of programmes. Social science research, when conducted early in a humanitarian situation using participatory methods, can provide timely information that can help donors better identify the priority areas of intervention in affected regions without compromising on impartiality.[9]

Neutrality

This principle states that "in order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, HA may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature".

From the perspective of social sciences for community engagement, to implement this principle meaningfully, efforts should aim to generate data that is free of biases. To achieve this goal, there must be attempts to include the local population as much and as early as possible throughout the humanitarian programme cycle. Research teams ought to hire people who understand the local language and culture, while also being attentive not to fuel inherent prejudices. For this reason, selection of participants from all relevant spheres as represented in the humanitarian arena (e.g., local affected population, refugees, but also authorities of neighboring countries hosting refugees) should be emphasized. Social science should aim at documenting the concerns of all actors in a humanitarian situation and researchers should be trained to be cautious with claims that might push one agenda against the other or fuel underlying political, racial, religious or ideological controversies. Neutrality should be practiced throughout the study design including dissemination of results.[10]

Independence

This principle states that HA "...[s]hall endeavor not to act as instruments of government purposes other than those which are strictly humanitarian, nor will we act as instruments of foreign policy of donor governments. HA... [w]ill use the assistance we receive to respond to needs and this assistance should not be driven by the need to dispose of donor commodity surpluses, nor by the political interest of any particular donor. HA [v]alues and promotes the voluntary giving of labor and finances by concerned individuals to support our work and recognize the independence of action promoted by such voluntary motivation. In order to protect HA independence, dependence upon a single funding source will be avoided; foreign policy NGHAs are agencies which act independently from governments. HA actors therefore formulate their own policies and implementation strategies and do not seek to implement the policy of any government, except in so far as it coincides with our own independent policy. HA actors will never knowingly – or through negligence – allow themselves, or their employees, to be used to gather information of a political, military or economically sensitive nature for governments or other bodies that may serve".

From a social science and community engagement perspective, to implement this principle fully, efforts must be geared towards exploring how it is interpreted by the affected community. Independence can be jeopardized by failure to apply the right research methodology or reliance on biased sources of information. Triangulating research methods and asking participants from the community to verify the accuracy of their responses can help to mitigate biases. Integrating a decolonial social science perspective means encouraging the use of participatory approaches to understand local meanings, their richness, as well as their relevance. Approaches such as ethnography offer opportunities for understanding different cultural groups and reading into the social meaning of affected people and other actors' behaviors. Triangulating methods allow to better capture these complex meanings and avoid misinterpretations of results.

Beneficence

Humanitarian action in emergency situations must be conducted in the best interest of both the affected communities and of the people potentially impacted by those actions in the longer term, and the benefits should outweigh any harm involved. As it is generally agreed that the primary needs of affected populations in a humanitarian crisis are life, safety and security, these needs should receive the utmost priority. The results of any relief activities conducted in humanitarian crises should benefit the affected communities directly by improving their life, safety and security.

The role of social science research is to ensure that studies in humanitarian context are designed to contribute towards improving the position of the most affected populations rather than researchers' interests. There are rapid social science methods (e.g., transect walks, simple observations, rapid appraisals) that can be employed to collect timely information thus allowing humanitarian actors to take important decisions to improve crisis situations. The social science research agenda should be informed by a wide range of stakeholders to maximize beneficence in humanitarian interventions.

Cultural sensitivity

Being culturally sensitive is an attribute that actors involved in community engagement in a humanitarian crisis need to exercise. Social science research can and should aim at understanding the contextual factors that shape behavior in the community. Community engagement is particularly key in conducting culturally sensitive research as well as identifying any potential misunderstandings between affected communities and humanitarians. To achieve this aim, social science research should be conducted to inform the operational team(s) responsible for delivery of humanitarian interventions engaging directly with people and communities on the best practices that respect, among others, the community's culture, perceptions, economic conditions, social groups, political and power structures, norms and values, languages, beliefs, and history.

Trustworthiness

Evaluate the reliability and trustworthiness of local and national authorities: Do not assume that local/regional/national governments will collaborate in the deployment of humanitarian action, or that they will allocate aid equitably and inclusively. Local people do not always trust local, regional, or national governments. In fact, some humanitarian emergencies may be founded or exacerbated due to historical structural problems in which governments have been negligent. It is important to identify the scope and limitations of government participation, to define the extent to which it will be involved in humanitarian response preparation as well as delivery. This includes reflecting on whether the government will be given access to the data collected if it is suspected that this information can be used to harm some segments of the population. In cases where it is determined that the government will not act equitably, humanitarian action may be better deployed by local and international humanitarian organizations, and even by the affected people themselves. In this scenario, the relationship with local authorities must be negotiated to avoid harm to humanitarian staff, researchers and the population. Thus, it is necessary to find out how authorities and institutions are perceived by marginalized groups (Carter, 2022, p.14), and to assess government commitment to humanitarian action.


© UNICEF/UNI408878/Neikrawa

Preventing exploitative relationships

During community engagement in a humanitarian crisis, affected people can find themselves in a position of vulnerability and they can at times be induced into exploitative relationships with those delivering assistance by the described condition of powerlessness. Therefore, intimate relationships between humanitarians and affected people are considered unethical. Social science research should aim to ensure that its methods bring forward the voice of the affected populations, as well as potential perceptions of subjection or exploitation. Fairness in participant selection is key to ensure that efforts to reach the hardest hit social groups are successful and give a voice to the voiceless. It should also serve to collect the needs and priorities of minority groups whose agenda may not always be brought to the front by gatekeepers from the affected community.

Conducting ethical research/assessments: **Confidentiality**

Social science data collection should meet national and international ethical research standards and guidelines, and research teams should refer to Ethical Review Boards (ERBs) on emerging ethical issues that may not have been anticipated in the initial protocols. Protection of privacy and confidentiality should be ensured throughout the data management processes. Adequate data protection entails learning from each affected population what they consider private and confidential and thus harmonizing or updating existing protection policies and practices. Research should always aim at improving the situation by identifying priority and controversy areas, as well as hidden issues or issues perceived as uncomfortable. Research processes should be documented in ways that are not harmful. Data protection guidelines should be in place with no exceptions, and they should be updated to face new challenges as new information is learned and/or technologies developed. If collecting data with/among crisis affected people should at any phase put their lives at risk, then it should be suspended.

Conducting ethical research/assessments: **Data management**

Data needs to be collected in an ethical, consensual and sensitive way and be safely stored. The modalities of data collection need to be informed by ethical data management concerns in: a) training the research staff, who must be made aware of ethically-informed precautions and procedures, but also of dangerous or forbidden actions and best practices; b) identifying and formalizing the essential and/or preferrable conditions to be fulfilled to ensure ethically-sensitive and appropriate data collection (e.g., interviews led if possible in private spaces, with a psychologist present when dealing with mental-health vulnerable individuals or survivors of gender-based violence, with a parent or guardian present when dealing with children); c) using safe tools and practical techniques for data collection, management, and storage (e.g., use of safe software less susceptible to external breaches, use of safe recording devices, anonymization in storage); d) designing the internal structure of databases to allow, for example, for the easy elimination or obscurement of specific sensitive variables and tailored data sharing depending on partners.

Accountability

"Accountability is the means through which power is used responsibly. It is a process of considering the views of, and being held accountable by different stakeholders, primarily the people affected by authority or power" (HAP, 2010: 1). The community should be recognized the power to hold humanitarians accountable for their actions during a humanitarian situation. This principle calls for transparency and communication between humanitarian actors and affected communities, including using platforms that are suitable for reaching the entire population.

Social science can provide different methods and tools to ensure engagement between different stakeholders by synthesizing information generated from participants affected by humanitarian emergencies. In doing so, it offers a feedback component that is timely and context specific, and it allows for informed priority setting and decision making.

People-led Aid Governance

Research agenda in humanitarian crises is sometimes driven by powerful donors. Social science research should aim to generate data that captures all layers of the humanitarian situation and guide interventions by humanitarian actors. Donors should be guided with all relevant information to inform their decisions. Feedback mechanisms should be put in place to ensure that the research agenda reflects the local needs of affected communities rather than the interests of external players.

Protecting the rights of children

This principle affirms that no harm should be inflicted to any child while carrying out humanitarian research and operations. For instance, research teams should not operate any kind of discrimination in choosing children to interview; ensure that the child or their guardian know the purpose of data collection and who they are talking with, and that they give informed consent for all interviews, videotaping and, when possible, for documentary photographs; pay attention to where and how the child is interviewed, as well as to their perceptions of wellbeing, safety and security. Social science research should also pay attention to the hierarchies of power at family level to avoid creating or fueling gender-based domestic violence.

Comportment

This principle refers to the general conduct to be held by humanitarian actors around adults and children, for what concerns ways of greeting, religious practices, sitting arrangements, etc. In several cultures certain practices are of fundamental importance to show and gain respect. This aspect should be especially considered when research is conducted by outsiders who need to adopt a comportment that is considered appropriate by the local community. For instance, when setting up an interview, features like the dress code, the location, the time and even the identity (e.g., gender, age, role) of the researchers should meet the expectations of the community as much as possible.

Strengthen community engagement

Promote substantive, intentional, quality community engagement.[11] Differentiate between participation as the right to be listened to and the right to make decisions. Prioritizing co-construction of the process, a participation model that seeks to empower and increase leadership of local people and their collaboration at all stages of the process.

A telling example of how communities get organized autonomously face to challenges before humanitarian aid is deployed, is that of the 1985 earthquake in Mexico City, where people formed groups of volunteers (*"topos"*) and worked in the search and rescue of victims (topos.mx, n.d.). These groups arose spontaneously, but their work became a reference over time and was later formalized with the setup of specialized rescue groups that have since been deployed in rescue operations in several foreign countries.

Engagement with affected and at-risk communities must take place throughout all phases of humanitarian programmes; strengthening and sustaining people's capacities to respond to current and future emergencies should remain a priority for humanitarians. Local communities must be involved in preparedness not only because they have the right to co-own decision-making processes that concern them, but also because they know which actions are to be prioritized and which ones would work best in their local context. External agents can contribute expertise in crisis contexts, but they lack this comprehensive contextual knowledge, ways of thinking and knowing (Santos, 2011) . People are not passive in the face of problems, much less when their lives are at risk (Bukuluki, 2022). Across all societies and cultures, people develop forms of local knowledge about the problems that affect them. This knowledge entails explanations of causes (etiologies) as well as strategies to deal with them. It is crucial that social science researchers identify this pre-existing local knowledge to translate it operationally as many times humanitarian organizations arrive late, with limited human resources, and a partial understanding of people's needs (Sow, 2022). Most often the intentional outcomes from strengthening of community engagement acknowledge and reinforce other common principles, such as to:

- Promote collaboration and open dialogue by creating streams of bilateral information between all stakeholders (e.g., medical response coordinators, researchers, local frontline responders, community members). (**accountability**)
- Incorporate community insights into decision-making processes by consultation of the community leaders, community members, and local technical expertise. (**people-led aid governance**)
- Reflect the context-specific cultural values and norms. (**cultural sensitivity, comportment**)
- Encourage transparency on the part of responders to ensure the legitimacy of the response. (**accountability, trustworthiness**)
- Build trust and foster relationships between communities and responders for potential responses in the future. (**trustworthiness**)
- Reduce rumors that cause confusion and fear in the population by actively working to alleviate fear in communities.

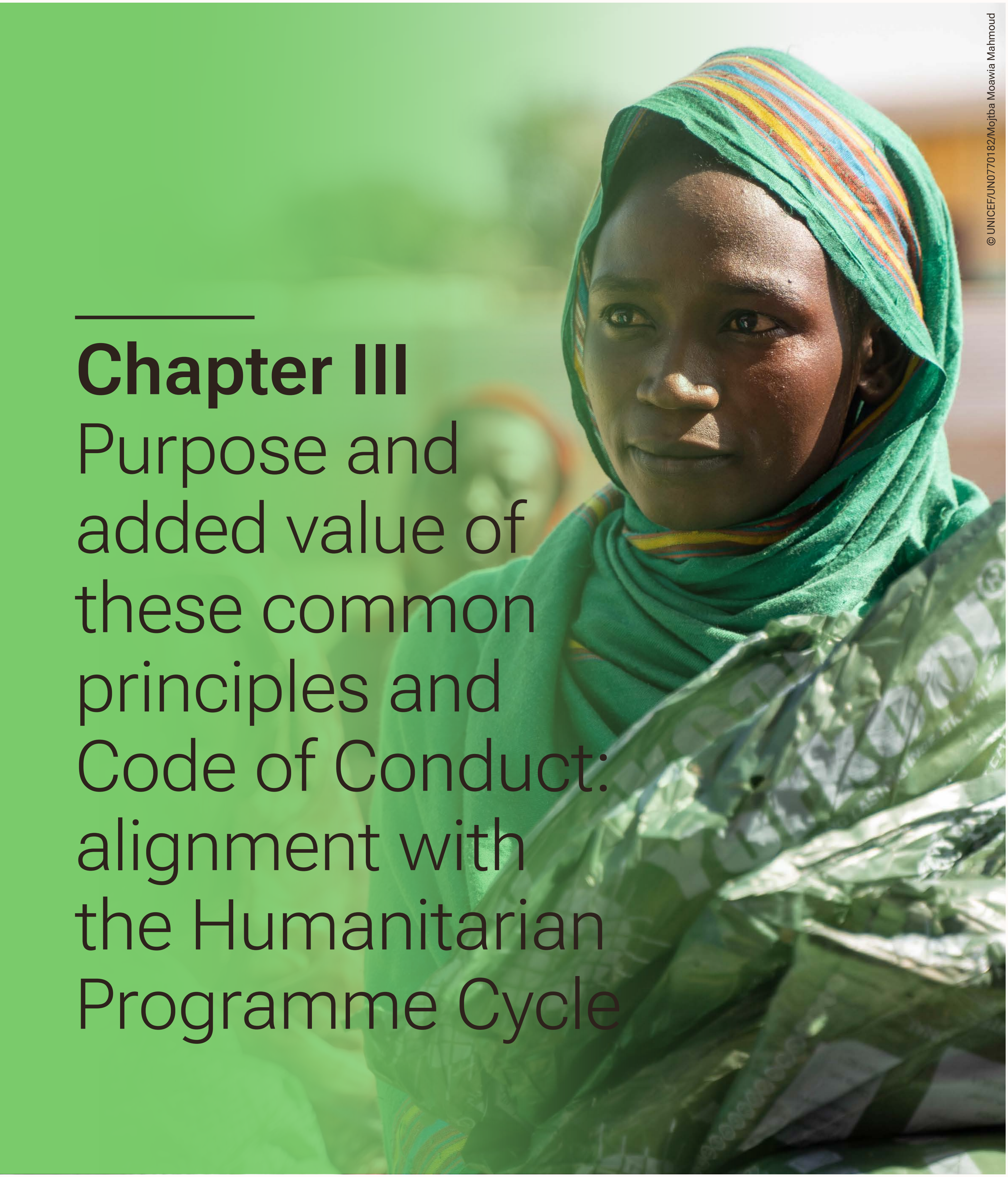
Compliance with/ Enforcement of the principles

To enhance compliance with the abovementioned principles in humanitarian contexts, local Institutional Review boards (IRBS) and ERBs must, all limits considered, provide approval in ways that do not hinder timely research. Social science research must be guided by them when they exist and are still functioning, by local ethics bodies, which have the authority, knowledge and means to enforce compliance with locally applicable regulations. To this end, social science research teams in humanitarian situations can contribute to the contextual and localized understanding of ethical principles applications by sharing with these bodies the experiences and lessons learned from their field work and from interacting with the various stakeholders from the community. This iterative process will help research ethics bodies to develop increasingly adapted guidelines that facilitate the smooth running of research activities, in compliance with national and international guidelines, regulations and legal frameworks.

Limitations due to emergency context: seek pre-approval

The application of these common principles requires that ethical issues are upheld in a way that is sensitive to the prevailing context according to the different stages of humanitarian crises. In the aftermath of a conflict, consequence of natural disaster or disease outbreak, approval from an Institutional Review Board for conducting research and operations may be difficult to be sought as lifesaving aid need to be timely deployed, and local ERBs might be affected by the crisis as well. The recommendation is to develop a basic. simple and standard protocol ahead and have it reviewed and pre-approved by the organization's ERB for these kinds of interventions. Ideally, a IASC based HERB could be tasked with the pre-approval of protocols to be implemented in these situations (see suggestion for the creation of a Humanitarian ERB (HERB)).

© UNICEF/UN0770182/Mojtba Moawia Mahmoud



Chapter III

Purpose and added value of these common principles and Code of Conduct: alignment with the Humanitarian Programme Cycle

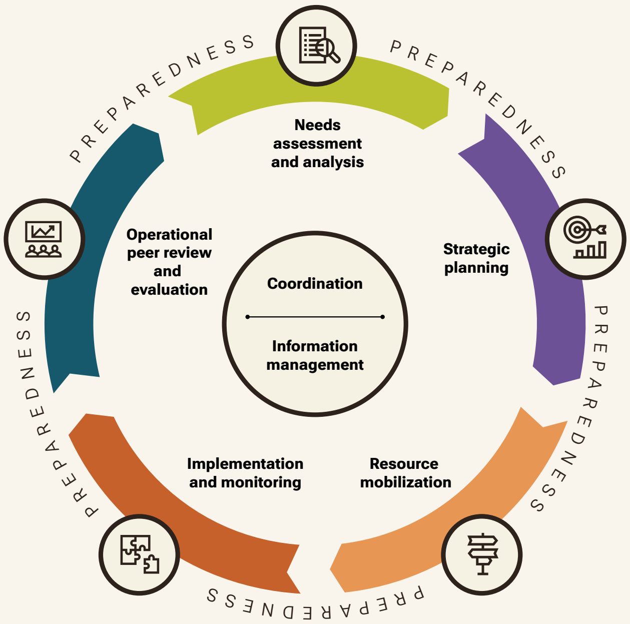
© UNICEF/UN0770182/Mojtba Moawia Mahmoud

The common ethics principles and CoC aim to be practical, applicable and linked to current ways of working in humanitarian action. The development process was based on practical recommendations to address the identified gaps brought by the Ethics and Data Sharing and CoC mapping reviews. The aim is to present practical and operational guidance on the ethical application of SS4CE in HA during preparedness and response in humanitarian action, considering the different stages of the humanitarian programme cycle (HPC) and the steps and processes involved in its development. The HPC consists of a set of interlinked tools to assist the Resident Coordinator/ Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC) and the Humanitarian Country Team to improve the delivery of humanitarian assistance and protection through better preparing, prioritizing, steering and monitoring the collective response based on evidence.

The HPC details the stages to prepare the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) for each country, for a protracted or sudden onset emergency that requires international humanitarian assistance. The plan articulates the shared vision of how to respond to the assessed and expressed needs of the affected population. The development of a strategic response plan is a key step in the humanitarian programme cycle and is carried out only when the needs have been understood and analyzed through the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) and the Joint Intersectoral Analysis Framework (JIAF).

Box 1: The Humanitarian Program Cycle (HPC)

The SS4CE in HA project seeks to advance CE through the integration of social science in all stages of HA, i.e., in all stages of the Humanitarian Program Cycle (HPC). The HPC is a tool to facilitate the preparation and provision of humanitarian assistance through five consecutive phases: (i) needs assessment and analysis (i.e., conducted collaboratively with all relevant actors, including from the local and community level); (ii) strategic response planning (i.e., the creation of management tools and strategy plans); (iii) resource mobilisation; (iv) implementation and monitoring; and (v) operational review & evaluation (i.e., both independent and internal assessment). Moreover, the HPC aims to foster accountability, funding, a focus on the vulnerable and a needs-based approach (OCHA, n.d.).



Recommendations for the application of principled SS4CE during preparedness

The IASC Task Team on Preparedness and Resilience has developed the 'Emergency Response Preparedness' (ERP) approach to enable the international humanitarian system to apply a proactive approach to emergency preparedness.[12] The Emergency Response Preparedness (ERP) is a participatory approach that focuses on needs; it evaluates what capacities and resources are available and ponders how to bridge the gaps. This is an important moment to implement SS4CE and ensure affected and at-risk communities participate in the process. There are three main elements in ERP which provide the opportunity to collaborate (see Fig 2).

1. **Risk Analysis and Monitoring:**
   The risk analysis process identifies the hazards that could trigger a crisis and ranks them by impact and likelihood. Risk monitoring should be undertaken using indicators identified as part of the risk analysis process. Monitoring provides early warning of emerging risks which in turn allows for early action, such as tailoring the contingency plan and where possible taking action that could mitigate the impact of the emerging risk.

2. **Minimum Preparedness Actions (MPAs):**
   MPAs are a set of activities that every country team must implement to establish a minimum level of emergency preparedness within the country. MPAs include risk monitoring, establishment of coordination and management arrangements, preparing for joint needs assessments, response monitoring, information management, and establishing operational capacity and arrangements to deliver critical relief assistance and protection.

3. **Advanced Preparedness Actions (APAs) and Contingency Planning (CP):**
   These should be initiated together to plan for specific risks when risk analysis and monitoring indicate moderate or high risk. A contingency plan sets out the initial response strategy and operational plan to meet the humanitarian needs during the first three to four weeks of an emergency. A contingency plan addresses what could happen and what might be needed; actions to take and resources required and gaps to be bridged. It lays the ground for a Flash Appeal, if required.

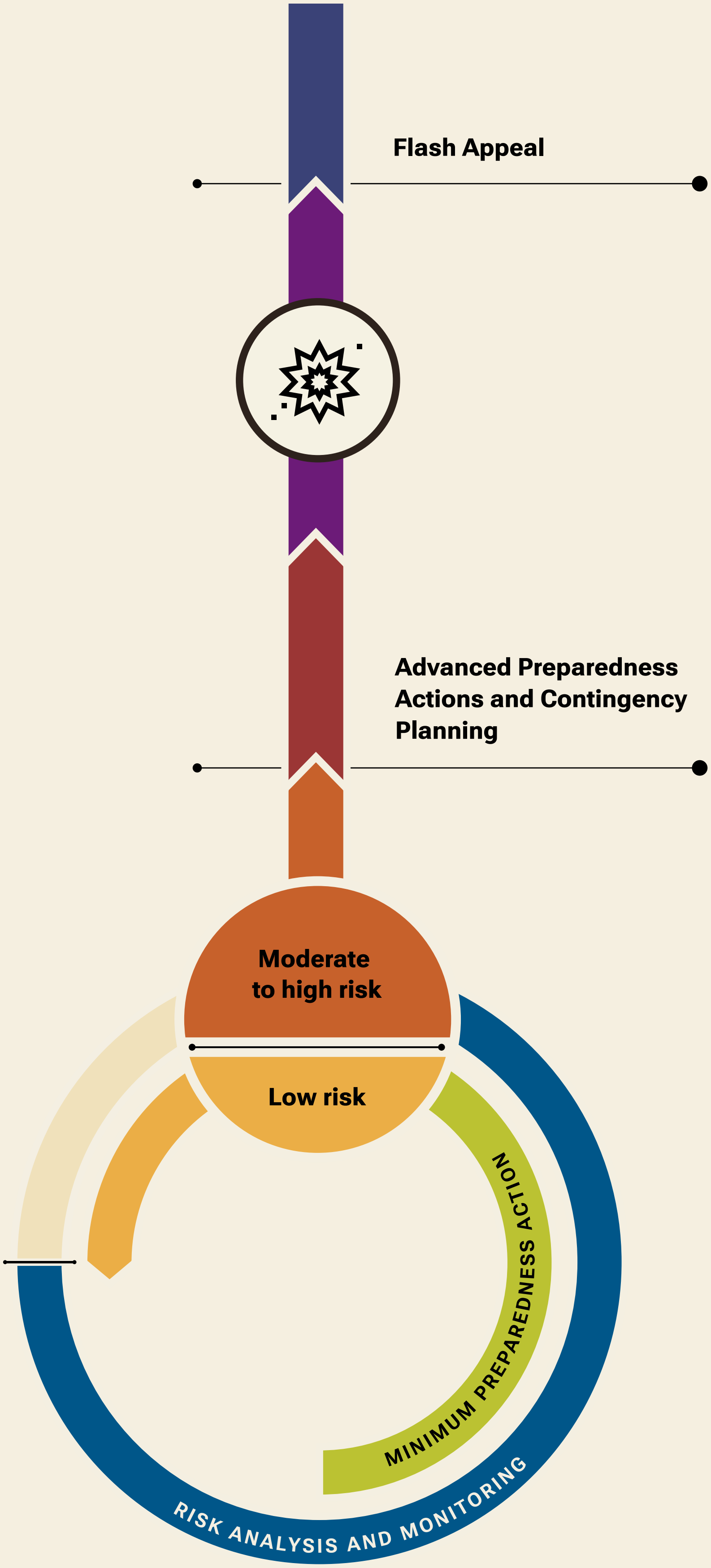


FIGURE 2

Emergency Response Preparedness Elements

Preparedness needs to be prioritized as a phase of active listening and, to some extent, social work to build reciprocal trust with the local population and understand their knowledge, practices, behaviors and values (including locally specific cultural and ethical values), but also their fears, their needs and their most pressing priorities. *This will ensure responses will be based on real needs, will build long-term structural capacity and will encounter the approval and support of local populations.*

Although emergency preparedness remains underfunded, evidence shows that investing in this phase is crucial to ensure timely and efficient responses. Considering that humanitarian emergencies are often cyclical (e.g., floods, earthquakes, conflicts, epidemics), there is enough evidence from decades of humanitarian crises and responses to learn from previous experiences. From a SS4CE perspective and considering there is no CE cluster in the IASC system, *it is important to build local and international research network that can systematically coordinate and work together at this stage and during crises (Geise et al., 2022)*. Even for AAP, currently working through a Task Force in the IASC system, evidence shows their work is not incorporated in the cluster system.13

SS can contribute with local data repositories on demographics, social, cultural, political, economic and geographical features that will allow for a deeper understanding of the operational context. To ensure reliance on local knowledge and optimization of collection efforts, a mapping of existing and accessible local data (e.g., state authorities, local NGOs or international NGOs already present on the territory, local associations, religious institutions) should precede the data collection planning during the MPAs. *Systematic data collection systems should be set up in collaboration with public authorities (e.g., mapping level of risk of specific villages and housing types built along a river subject to seasonal floods) both to allow for local capacity building, structural adaptation, and resilience, and to serve the effectiveness of future interventions.*

Preparedness allows for rigorous and comprehensive data collection to be carried out, adhering to standard ethical protocols. With more time for preparedness actions, this allows for standard SS research methods to be employed (as opposed to rapid ones in response) and for more substantial use of time-intensive qualitative ones to apprehend knowledge, perceptions, beliefs, and priorities of local people. Organizations carrying out data collection and analysis must conduct standard ethical reviews and clearances for research protocols through, internal ERBs (e.g., universities, ICRC, WHO and MSF), and national ERBs in the countries where the research will be implemented.

According to the mapping report by TWG1, 14 binding compliance and sanctioning mechanisms are not currently in place with regards to ethical aspects in humanitarian action. The ERB evaluation ensures supervision by an external expert community, this remains a first step towards accountability for actions performed in the field and it may trigger a virtuous cycle by generating an ethical culture and stronger knowledge about research in humanitarian settings and related best practices.

© UNICEF/UN0803190/

Recommendations for the application of principled SS4CE during the development of the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP)

Every year, starting in the month of June, countries with a humanitarian crisis start work on their respective Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). OCHA developed a series of tools to facilitate the systematic implementation of the HPC and the cross analysis of data to be presented in a global report, the Global Humanitarian Overview. This process consists of ten steps.[15]

Step 01

Agree on scope of the analysis and costing approach
1.1 Set the scope on the HNO analysis based on crisis context and develolop an analysis plan that will answer the key questions needed to inform planning and decision-making
1.2 Decide on most appropriate costing methodology for 2023
1.3 Present analysis framework and costing plan to Humanitarian Country Team for endorsement

Step 02

Undertake secondary data review: Analyse trends, identify opportunities for joint analysis with development/peace actors, and identify data gaps
2.1 Compile the evidence base (collect and collate)
2.2 Undertake secondary data review
2.3 Identify and determine how to bridge critical information gaps

Step 03

Plan and collect primary data (as appropriate)

Step 04

Conduct joint intersectoral needs analysis
4.1 Conduct preliminary intersectoral needs and severity analysis, and draft narrative
4.2 Calculate initial PiN and severity estimates
4.3 Analyse risk and arrive at projections, identify indicators to monitor situations and needs
4.4 Finalize intersectional needs analysis, PiN and severity estimates
4.5 Write up analysis results
4.6 Present and seek endorsement and validation from HCT (and government counterparts, where appropriate) on the analysis results and monitoring requirements

Step 05

Define the scope of HRP and formulate initial objectives
5.1 Determine the scope of the HRP based on the results of the analysis of needs and risks
5.2 Draft preliminary (intersectoral) strategic and specific objectives

Step 06

Conduct response analysis
6.1 Review appropriateness, relevance, and feasability of different responses
6.2 Articulate intersectional and multi-sectoral response approaches based on the results from the response analysis (based on severity, time-criticality, and complementarities/synergies)
6.3 Estimate target population number

Step 07

Finalize strategic and specific objectives and indicators
7.1 Finalize formulation of strategic and specific objectives
7.2 Identify indicators to monitor specific objectives
7.3 Cluster/sectors develop response plans and define cluster objectives
7.4 Sub-national and/or government consultation/review draft HRP response parameters
7.5 Present and seek endorsement by the HCT of the strategic objectives and approach, number of people targeted, and response monitoring framework

Step 08

Formulate projects/activities and estimate cost of the response plan
8.1 Initiate drafting of HRP
8.2 Project development, vetting and upload
8.3 Estimate the cost of the response
8.4 Secure HC/HCT endorsement
8.5 Finalize and draft response plan

Step 09

Conduct After Action Review

Step 10

Finalize and implement monitoring plan
10.1 Prepare the monitoring plan
10.3 Conduct monitoring activities throughout the year
10.3 Share infomration gathered by the monitoring work

There are steps where the systematic inclusion of social sciences is key to ensure affected and at-risk communities' participation in the process. It starts with the Joint Intersectoral Analysis (JIAF) when preparing the Humanitarian Needs Overviews (HNOs). The HNO describes the current Humanitarian Conditions of a crisis and their evolution centered on selected priority population groups and subgroups and geographic areas identified as being most vulnerable. Subsequently, and based on these descriptions, countries are able to develop their Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs) as part of their yearly HPC (see for instance the HPC 2023, https://kmp.hpc.tools/content/hpc-2023-facilitation-package).

Participation in key steps of this process ist fundamental to ensure engagement of affected and at-risk communities throughout the HPC. As explained earlier, as CE does not have a cluster or specific task force in the IASC; the systematic embedded participation of SS4CE is a challenge. Nevertheless, there are opportunities for joining in specific steps of the process according to the HPC guidance documents.

Needs assessment and analysis

Adopt transdisciplinary and qualitative approaches

Consider different types and sources of data, such as quantitative and qualitative data, from different disciplines (e.g., social sciences, biomedical, humanitarian studies) for different purposes (e.g., research, incidence, public policy), and enhance the application of transdisciplinary, comprehensive research approaches. For example, during health emergencies, modeling approaches used to be considered the main source of data to understand outbreak patterns, but they do not consider micro-scale interactions between individuals and how behavior is shaped by the social, cultural and political contexts (Bedson et al., 2021). Qualitative data can help propduce deeper insights concerning a variety of issues during a crisis, such as how people feel about their circumstances and what they are doing to face it, etc.

Adopt participatory research methods

Promote, and whenever possible, use participatory methods. Participatory methods (e.g., action research, participatory action research) in the social sciences have been used not only for data collection purposes but also to involve stakeholders in decision making and the designing of interventions – that is why they can be applied for research and humanitarian programming. Likewise, they focus on looking for solutions from the point of view of those affected, the main purpose being to reach social transformation which takes priority over the construction of knowledge. Implementing participatory methods is not an easy task during humanitarian emergencies, because people may be affected psychologically and physically, hence the importance to do it before the crisis, for preparedness.

Reduce power imbalances in research and promote equity and equality

Look for, and consult, networks of researchers that have already conducted investigations in the territory, who better know the social, cultural, political and economic context, and establish partnerships with them. Networks will help to have a broader and at the same time contextual view of the community and the issues that can arise during response to an emergency. It is important to allocate more funds to research in countries prone to humanitarian emergencies, specially from the Global South, that can be less prepared for a response. This can be done through assigning grants to local researchers. It is also important to pay attention to the power relations that can be established in North-South collaborations, especially when partners share a history of colonization. These power relationships between collaborators can be embedded in differences in race, ethnicity, class, disability and gender, so it is important to be aware of how these structural gaps may impact collaboration. Horizontal relationships are not natural, they must be built by taking care of the composition of the network, that is:

1. including diversity but also equality of members,
2. taking care of communication, which deserves a reflection on the implications of using the same language,
3. inclusive of researchers from minority or marginalized groups, and
4. recognizes knowledge and contributions even when done informally, to avoid extractivism; acknowledgements must be written and oral, in research publications, working papers, policy briefs, meetings, etc.

Hire local data collectors, ensure cultural adequacy

Collaboration at all stages implies, among others, including community members as data collectors. Their full integration in research teams guarantees their active involvement in priority setting, besides helping the efficacy of data collection in that some local participants would be more likely to trust and talk to other community members. It is fundamental for data collectors' staff to work according to local customs and cultural values, such as including female data collectors who, depending on the context, may be in the position to interact more easily with local women and children. Adapting to local cultural norms may also involve training female staff to face situations where local men may not want to speak, and work, with them. The social position and identity (e.g., social class, social group, gender, profession) of community members hired as data collectors within the local community also needs to be considered to avoid research biases.

Establish equal partnerships with civil society and local NGOs and CSOs

Involve civil society and local NGOs and CSOs because they can access difficult areas and they have contextual knowledge. As in the case of research collaborations and networks, there is a risk to establish unequal relationships and power imbalances between international and local organizations, also embedded by racial/ethnic, class and gender structural inequities that may be linked to historical colonization. Thus, it is important to be aware of these issues to establish meaningful collaborations that can benefit people affected by a crisis, which has a pragmatic component, but should not translate into utilitarian collaboration. It is important to recognize the experience and knowledge of civil society and local NGOs and CSOs and acknowledge their contributions in every endeavor where local and international organizations collaborate.

Establish inclusive, equal partnerships with key community representatives

When involving community representatives in preparedness, it is important to analyze who they are. Are they religious leaders? Are they community (political) leaders? What are the conditions of their inclusion: because people respect them, because they have experience working with social programmes, because they can convene and convince people, because they have worked with other organizations, researchers or the government? Who or how can we determine that they are 'community leaders'? Are there other types of 'community leaders' who are less visible because of cultural or political issues? How can these people be involved in the response? Is there a risk of bias, or to exclude some people in the response strategy because of the inclusion of certain community representatives (e.g., some leaders may benefit their relatives and exclude others)? It is important to include community representatives, but not only them. As mentioned above, it is necessary to include different people (e.g., women, young and elderly people, people with disabilities, minorities and displaced populations) to guarantee that all, or as many as possible, voices are heard and to identify special needs. Civil society, NGOs and CSOs workers can help to understand cultural and political dynamics, to identify other types of community leaders or representatives, and to reach people who would otherwise be excluded. (See CASE STUDY No. 2 – Datafication of communities: the Palestinian case).

Hire cultural mediators

Identify people who can work as cultural mediators, not only as literal translators. International humanitarian organizations such as Doctors without Borders implement cultural mediators, not only because of the need to communicate with patients, but also because they help to build trust by taking in consideration specific aspects of the culture of the patient. Cultural mediators have been trained to guarantee confidentiality, impartiality and neutrality. So, when there are no trained mediators, it is important to identify people who can guarantee these values. Cultural mediators are essential in humanitarian research work as they can help to explain with clarity and in the local language the purposes of data collection, its methods, who will be in charge and will ensure safety of data, as well as whom community members may contact if they want their data to be corrected or deleted.

Identify, mitigate and do not fuel community tensions:

Identify what community means for the locals and the diversity of communities that exist in a given territory. Do not assume that all the beneficiaries of humanitarian aid constitute a single community just because they find themselves to share a space during an emergency, or because they come from the same town. People can be divided by ethnic, religious or political issues, so it is important to identify these variables and to reflect on how work can be organized despite these divisions. Humanitarian emergencies can reproduce previous community divisions or even accentuate differences and unleash violence in humanitarian camps, so it is important not to force people to collaborate or share a physical space. It is important to identify differentiated spaces to separate communities, if necessary, especially when it is suspected that violence could break out.

Inclusivity in consultation - reach out to 'invisible' groups

Consultation must not be limited to community authorities; it must reach out to community members via qualitative research methods. In fact, communities can be divided by gender, class, race, origin and other social differences which can cause some people to be discriminated against and prevent their participation in decision making. Substantive consultation entails individual conversations, visiting households, reaching marginalized or excluded populations (e.g., women, people with disabilities, young or elderly people, IDPs, asylum seekers and


© UNICEF/UN0819030/Alsunaidar

refugees) through collective research methods. To guarantee that consultations reflect people's differing experiences and needs, breaking populations into different age and gender groups can be a good strategy (Lough et al., 2021). Sometimes some sectors of the population are hard to reach in activities that require their participation. It is important to identify which of these populations will not be reached through samplings and analyze which are the implications of these gaps.

Contextualize non-participation

In the case that some populations cannot be reached through participatory methods, researchers and local NGOs or CSOs' representatives can be consulted to find out what their situation is and if their nonparticipation only occurs in the context of the humanitarian emergency, due to the presence of humanitarian staff who is perceived as strangers/foreigners, or if the community has always been reticent to participate. It is important to contextualize their non-participation before implementing strategies to encourage it, and to identify in which contexts their participation is instead favored.

Informed consent and ethical monitoring

When people decide to participate in research (e.g., questionnaires, interviews), they must do it according to a proper informed consent process. When written, informed consent must be easy-to-read, clear and translated in all relevant languages. The collective benefits of participating should be transparent from the beginning, and they should be evident at the end of the process. It is also crucial to be candid and unambiguous on the foreseen outcomes of the research to avoid raising unrealistic expectations. Some outputs will be hard to achieve because of the circumstances, funding and other unpredictable obstacles, and people must know these shortcomings to cultivate a culture of trust between humanitarians (academic or practitioners) and the local population. Data processing by humanitarian organizations may often be based on vital interest or on important grounds of public interest (Kuner & Marelli, 2020, p.60). Clear information about envisaged data processing must be provided to individuals before data collection, and participants must be given the right to object, as well as clear information on the risk of physical or moral harm when (not) processing their data. After collection, there needs to be a constant ethical evaluation of the implications that data processing for each strategy or action might have on the life and safety of the people concerned. These evaluations may determine that some actions are not carried out if the minimum-security conditions are not guaranteed, both for affected people and for humanitarian staff, or if they do not bring any concrete benefit to the population. Above all, it is important to acknowledge that people should also retain the right to not participate or withdraw participation in any process or intervention, and that be respected and transparently communicated.

Ensure the ethical review of research protocols

One of the recommendations from the Ethics and Data sharing mapping exercise was the creation of a Humanitarian Ethical Review Board (HERB), a global body that specifically works on ethical aspects and compliance mechanisms related to ethical application of research in humanitarian action (SS4Ce in HA Ethics and data sharing mapping review, 2022). As this was a recommendation from this initiative, this highlighted a notion of absence of such a board and the role it could play. Ensuring ethical review of research protocols to be conducted for humanitarian programmes, in all settings and conditions, must be a priority. In all countries or situations, a first internal review should be sought from the academic institution, or organization requesting this research. Secondly, the research protocol should be submitted to locally relevant ERB/IRB for review and clearance.

CE in data analysis

An empowering model of CE implies the involvement of local researchers in all data processes, including analysis of data to avoid stereotypes and biases, and to provide a context-informed interpretation of results. This requires developed, clear data needs and plans, as well as resources.[16] To foster CE, different mechanisms and engagement tools might be used, from face-to-face engagement and personal interactions to technological platforms (e.g., hotlines, broadcast media, social media) (Smith, 2019, as cited in Lough et al., 2021, p. 14). However, the degree and modalities of local communities' engagement should not be imposed, but rather co-decided with the local community, in that "some communities may prefer to only provide input or be consulted at certain times, while others may prefer shared power and decision-making authority" (Organizing Committee for Assessing Meaningful Community Engagement in Health & Health Care Programs & Policies, 2022, p. 1).

Assess contextual data sensitivity

Implement an adaptive, contextual approach to sensitive data to safeguard data subjects in research and HA, since what may not be sensitive data in one humanitarian context might as well be in another. "Setting out a definitive list of Sensitive Data categories in Humanitarian Action is not meaningful [so that] appropriate safeguards (e.g., technical and organizational security measures) have to be considered on a case-by-case basis" (Kuner & Marelli, 2020, p. 15). When turning individual data into aggregate data, the latter must not divulge the actual location of small, at-risk groups, for example by mapping data such as country of origin, religion, or specific vulnerabilities to the geographical coordinates of persons of concern. (Kuner & Marelli, 2020, p.34).

Ensure anonymity and sensitivity in public dissemination of research outcomes

Assess what is the best way to communicate findings. Communicating findings may pose risks to some people if their identity can be identified through their testimonies. It is necessary to find ways to communicate findings without exposing participants publicly. This is possible by anonymization, de-identification, establishing sensitive data and following the principles of data minimization. The aim is to protect people's privacy and safety. The findings should be oriented towards finding solutions to the problems detected. Communication of findings should be directed to those participating in the research and those who did not but belong to the community.

Assess risks reflexively and iteratively

Risks are sociocultural constructions, so it is important to analyze the risks related to the nature of humanitarian crises, but also to visualize new risks that can be generated by response if it leaves out vulnerable populations, made invisible for political or cultural reasons. Hence the importance once again to consult experts in the local context to constantly assess the situation and the repercussions of the strategies in real time to adopt ethically responsible choices and behaviors.

Create conditions for people to validate planning

Communicate the plan to the people affected by the crisis in their language, step-by-step, from the priorities to the expected results. The benefits of the planned strategies should be clear to all. It is important that local people can have meetings with international organizations' high-level staff and not only with field workers, because often the latter do not have the power to set priorities.

Strengthen downward accountability by letting affected people evaluate

In the context of HA, critiques arise regarding a stronger focus on upward accountability to donors, as opposed to accountability to affected populations with the aim to empower communities (Lough et al., 2021). Operational peer review and evaluation should facilitate the inclusion of community members to assess to what extent the humanitarian response plan is aligned with people needs, if they have been involved in co-constructing or developing the plan. Evaluations should focus on empowering communities (or on considerations identified to be of greatest importance to communities and accountability to them).

Ensure that aid is unconditional and equally provided

If people at risk have not co-constructed or are not involved in the development of the plan, it is important to ensure, by asking directly to them, if they have access to the resources mobilized and activities put in place.

Be transparent on the role of local authorities

If local authorities have been involved in the inter-agency assessment, it must be stated what they have done, especially when it is known that people at risk have a bad perception of local authorities.

Recognize local organizations' autonomy and leadership capacities

The goal of CE is to empower communities by developing their capacities to make actions sustainable over time. In this aim the work of local organizations is pivotal and one of the areas where colonial relations become visible. It is important to go beyond sharing knowledge or including local organizations as 'assistants', and truly recognize their autonomy and capacity. The evaluation must identify in which activities local organizations have participated but focusing on to what extent they have led the work, not only proposing, or implementing, actions but also managing resources like funding.[17] Eventually, these organizations should be able to lead a humanitarian response in order to reduce dependence on the presence of NGOs and international organizations in the field. Solidarity with communities and local organizations must not limit their inputs (Carter, 2022), nor impede their self-determination.

© UNICEF/UNI424242/Neikrawa

Recommended actions during humanitarian responses

If correctly integrated and coordinated within the HPC, social science can contribute to ensure affected and at-risk communities' engagement and inform humanitarian action to make responses more ethical, effective and sustainable.

Social science researchers need to have a deep understanding of the problem and the technical response and work in close partnerships with all stakeholders in the humanitarian infrastructure to lay out the strategies that will be followed in addressing the crisis.

Social scientists/practitioners responsible for these tasks should be integrated at all levels to provide a social science perspective. They should ensure that any planned assessment is linked to the humanitarian objectives and ensures the participation of the affected including their knowledge, priorities and needs.

During responses, rapid methods for the assessments can be used. As mentioned earlier, aim at developing ethics pre-approval with standard protocols (linked with different types of crises).

Regular negotiations should take place with the different sectors to address the challenges found at the community side. At the same time, negotiations should also take place with affected and at-risk communities to discuss changes and adaptation at their level as well.

Information flow should be carefully controlled. Information should be shared in ways that do not jeopardize the intervention and that ensure protection of participants' data and privacy.

Social sciences application is key to setting up and leading community engagement. Exchange and feedback loops with the community need to be in place as soon as possible and continue throughout the response with all the needed adaptations.

Assessments should be flexible, and results should be made available and understandable (concise, simple writing, no academic jargon) in a timely manner to all stakeholders and to the affected communities.

Questionnaires should be adapted and translated to the local language(s), and local data collectors and researchers should be hired. Local ownership of data at all levels (e.g., design, collection, analysis, dissemination) must be ensured.

Mechanisms should be in place to exit the field while leaving affected communities in the capacity to deal sustainably with recovery and reconstruction. These mechanisms involve a progressive and linear transition of knowledge, tools and resources throughout the response linked with other stages of the HPC.

Integrate CE throughout response: If funding hasn't been prioritized for relationship building with locals during preparedness, the participation of local authorities, members, agents, professionals and institutions is important for an initial risk assessment and needs analysis, when humanitarian agents arrive. This must be done not in a consultation manner only, but in the shape of participatory planning, strategic design and application, as well in all processes throughout the emergency – if that is the decision of the community.

Continuous engagement should remain between key humanitarian actors and the affected communities after the end of operations, to continue the learning process and address potential unsolved issues.

Guarantee safe participation – halt it when unsafe: In conflict zones, it is important to anticipate the possibility of having to negotiate principled humanitarian aid with a diversity of actors – state and non-state authorities, directly with communities – and that may be formal (written agreements) or informal (Minear & Smith, 2007, as cited in Kelly, 2021). There are important experiences on good negotiation practices in armed zones that can serve as a reference (e.g., Kelly, 2021). It is highly probable that in conflict zones the possibility of listening to local voices reduces to zero. Therefore, it is important to evaluate the feasibility and dismiss local participation when individuals are at imminent risk.

Leave no one behind – pay attention to vulnerability and power dynamics in response planning: The division of tasks, responsibilities and resources must be made in attentiveness to which groups in the population are most affected and which of them might be excluded from an initial assessment. This process will be influenced by internal power imbalances, politics and cultural values. It is the role of humanitarian agents to be alert as to avoid sustaining inequalities when providing humanitarian services.

Ensure data collectors maintain good comportment, respect and cultural adequacy: Regarding data collection, it is important to have a team that the community can identify with, to feel comfortable in sharing and exposing themselves to, and trust regarding consent and respect on the usage of their data and the secrecy of their information.

Ask for informed consent – including on secondary data uses: During data collection, participants must be advised about their right to abstain during collection, how data will be stored and for what period, and who, has the authority to access it – as well as what will be decided or produced with the data used.


© UNICEF/UN0818645/Qadari

Recommendations for Data management

Implement data responsibility: Implement data responsibility in humanitarian action and include actions for data protection and data security.

Assess baseline data and plan data processing with the community: Shortly after the arrival of humanitarian agents it is important to discuss what data has already been collected, what it concerns, who it was collected from and for what purpose. The use of this existing data to inform HA must be authorized by the community. If consent to data sharing has not already been sought, the users of data must provide a clear declaration of how they propose to use the data, as well as policies and processes for data curation, protection, storage and data sharing. If the collection of further data is proposed, in addition to such declarations, decisions should ideally be made with the community about what data it is important to collect and analyze.

Limit the collection and communication of sensitive and biometric data: Sensitive data must be defined according to the context and type of humanitarian emergency. Special attention must be paid to minority groups to ensure their location is not identified (e.g., religion, country of origin) when safety and security are a risk for these groups. Biometric data must respond to the vital interests of the individuals concerned to "facilitate accurate resource allocation and fraud prevention", for example, when resources are limited and it is suspected that aid can be "fraudulently overprovisioned to another group of individuals" (Kuner & Marelli, 2020, p.134). Thus, it is important to clearly justify the collection of biometric data and to collect as few biometric identifiers as possible (e.g., one fingerprint) to reduce chances of identification.

Ensure data minimization and ethical data sharing: Although data processing must be aligned to humanitarian mandates and international and national laws, sharing data with governments and third parties also poses risks to individuals, not only because individuals can be targeted, but also because the uses that are given to the data can diverge from humanitarian assistance. It is very important to protect the data from the beginning of the humanitarian action, designating responsibility for security oversight, outlining protective protocols, introducing security systems where viable and training humanitarian staff on security procedures. Justifying the necessity of data collection, adhering to data minimization principles to gather only essential information, and ensuring that individuals from vulnerable communities can be identified whilst preserving their anonymity beyond the scope of the initial requirements must all be imperative aspects included in the guidance. When third parties have access to this data, as in the case of entities that administer cash transfer programmes (such as banks) on behalf of humanitarian agencies, special measures must be put in place to protect the individuals, who should be consulted about it and their preoccupations translated into adaptations of data sharing policies (see CASE STUDY No. 1 – The ethics of data sharing: the example of Cash and Voucher programmes).

Operate responsible and ethical data retention: Data retention during emergencies raises complex issues, because in these situations data collected by humanitarian organizations can be the only record available and serve to document the identity of people to help claims of reparation, identifying deceased or missing people, etc. It is important to assess constantly how long data must be retained (e.g., three months, one year), and after that period decide whether to delete or renew a retention period. Individuals must be informed about data retention periods so they do not lose control over data ownership. The deletion of the data should be done as soon as possible once the collected data has fulfilled its function. Deletion must be done by all entities that had access to that data.

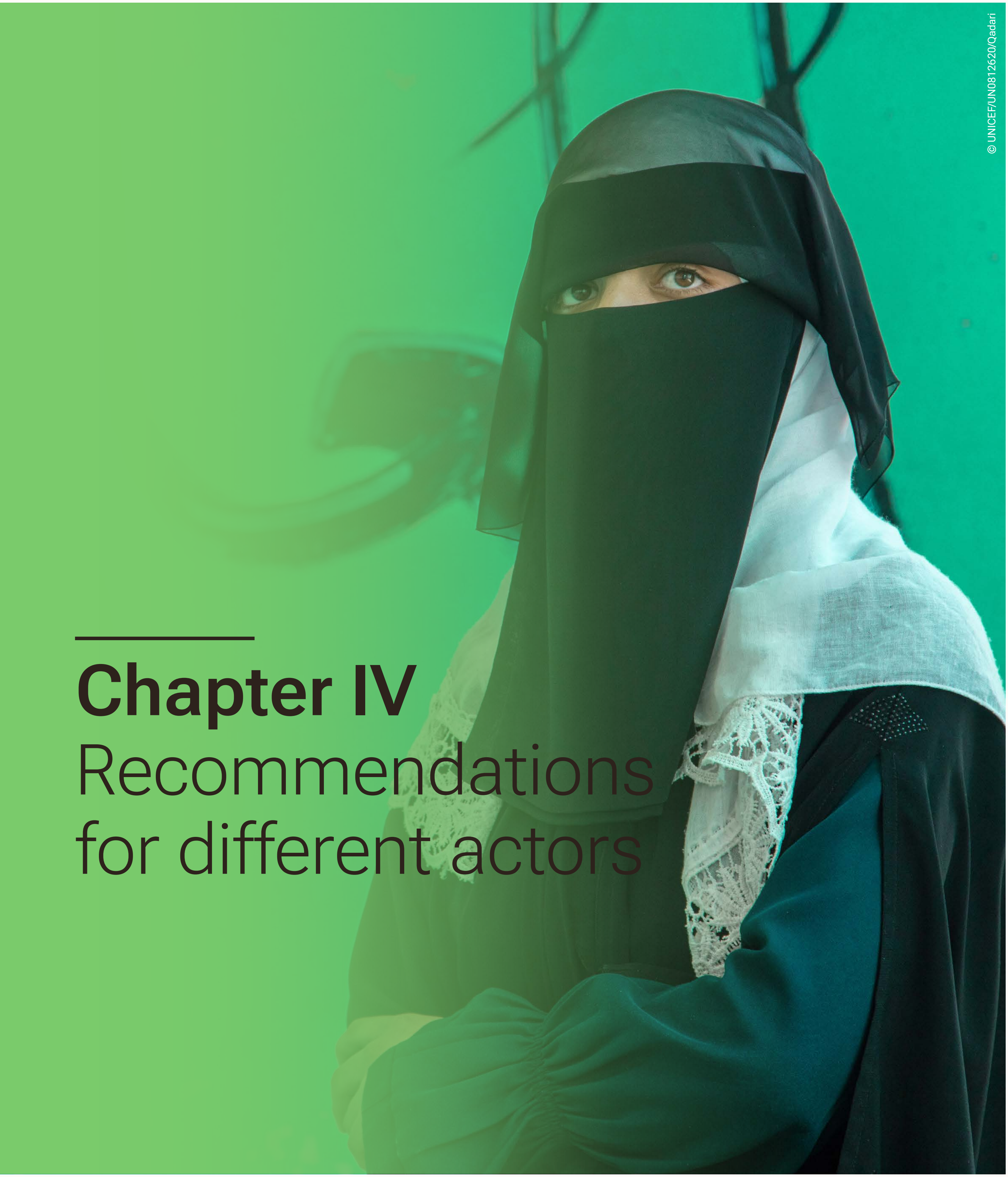
Uphold data responsibility and management: Regardless of the body overseeing the research process and of the efficacy of its enforcement powers, data responsibility ('the safe, ethical and effective management of personal and non-personal data for operational response') always applies. It is important to reassert that data responsibility goes beyond implementing informed consent. Rather, it implies constant reflections and assessments on ethical issues throughout the implementation, including actions for data protection and data security.

Ensure the highest level of anonymization in data processing for operational purposes: When deploying aid, many organizations are involved in voucher and cash assistance. When this kind of assistance is provided, anonymization has limitations, which increases the risk of re-identification. To deal with this kind of situation, Kuner & Marelli (2020, p.167) recommend: "to transfer, when feasible, a unique identifier (from which the receiving entity cannot identify the final beneficiary) and the amount of cash to be distributed to the commercial service provider (e.g., bank or mobile network operator), so as to limit the risks to the individuals concerned".

Account for limitations and biases in the representativeness of data: Many concerns arise regarding data processing, starting with sampling, representation and population estimates. Doing generalizations, misinterpreting findings and/or basing policymaking on inaccurate data can harm Data Subjects. Kuner & Marelli suggest that researchers "take care to understand the representativeness of the sample data, attempt to use broad and representative data sets, and report potential biases. Moreover, policymakers should account for these biases when making decisions" (2020, p.98). It is important to be aware of the limitations of the sampling and being critical about it being representative of the population.

Adopt ethical advocacy and communication: Considerations on sensitive data must include imagery (i.e., leaflets, online sources, campaigns' posters, etc.) used for fundraising, communication and advocacy, which can also be ethically problematic or unethical (e.g., individuals could be targeted if their images are spread on social media). Organizations like Medecins sans Frontieres have acknowledged the colonial heritage they portrayed in pictures (i.e., Global South as victims and white Global North as saviors), an issue they committed to change to promote global solidarity and humanitarian justice. The use of this type of data must be accorded to sensitivity criteria following the principle of 'do no harm' and not be restricted to photos taken by humanitarians, but photos and videos taken by agencies and professionals visiting the locations where humanitarian aid is deployed with previously informed consent. (See an example of this issue in CASE STUDY No. 3 – Portraying communities and power dynamics: MSF commits to tackle problematic imagery).

© UNICEF/UN0845849/Andriantsoarana



© UNICEF/UN0812620/Qadari

Chapter IV
Recommendations for different actors

Recommendations for social scientists working with Academic institutions (North South relations, equity among researchers)

- Social science researchers need to apply reflexivity in their research to be aware of biases and always question their positionality with regards to the subject of their study and the humanitarian context.
- Local social scientists may be the most suited to conduct research in and on specific crisis contexts. Their expertise should by no means be considered a priori secondary to that of external researchers.
- Social science researchers are a global community: the knowledge, expertise and contributions of researchers of the Global South and the peripheral Global North deserve equal space, consideration and attention.
- Social science researchers need to be aware that synthesizing information to produce knowledge is a responsibility. A decolonial, feminist, inclusive social science research can better guarantee that knowledge diversity and richness is represented in research outcomes and conclusions, thus leading to just and sustainable choices.
- Social scientists need to be aware of the risk of adopting a ‘roadside bias’ whereby the voices, needs and perceptions of the most vulnerable social groups are not heard because of their invisibility. Researchers have a responsibility to reach out to these fragilized groups in a way that is appropriate to local cultural norms.
- Social science encompasses a multitude of disciplines, approaches, methods and tools. Social scientists operating in humanitarian interventions have the responsibility to select the most appropriate ones depending on the needs of each context to provide timely, accurate and useful information and ‘do no harm’.
- Social science participative research methods shall be privileged over others to ensure that the voices of affected communities are put at the core of research efforts and activities.
- Social scientists conducting research in humanitarian contexts ought to make the needs of affected populations prime over their personal and institutional interests (e.g., funding, publications, affiliations).
- The value and quality of research work needs to be evaluated irrespective of the gender, status, age, nationality, religion, origin and identity of the researcher(s).
- Social scientists conducting research in humanitarian contexts need to be aware of the authority and power conferred by their role and they must not use it, intentionally or unintentionally, to obtain consent for research or personal purposes.

Recommendations for humanitarian practitioners applying social sciences for community engagement

Different humanitarian actors have institutional accountabilities as well as internal positions dedicated to work towards the engagement with communities in humanitarian operations. Depending on the stage of the HPC and the mandate of the organization, this work might have different objectives, methods of implementation and professional backgrounds in the implementing role. Acknowledging all these structural elements, in general terms, practitioners should observe the following principles:

Timely engagement with communities

Aim at contacting concerned communities prior to the implementation of the assessment/research with the intention of having direct participation from the onset of the task.

Reflexivity on biases and positionality of research

Practitioners need to apply reflexivity in their research to be aware of biases and always question their positionality with regards to the people participating in the assessment/research. This should be a continuous process, always reflecting on how things are being done and how they can be improved, and how the organization can do better.

Transparent intentionality

Practitioners must be clear about the intentions of the assessment/research in connection with the mandate of the organization they work with. They must inform possible participants of the direct benefits of participating.

Reciprocity

Practitioners should practice active listening and reciprocal knowledge exchange at all stages of the implementation of the assessment/research.

Co-creation

Practitioners and participants should co-create and commit to actionable steps for the implementation of the assessment/research, holding time-appropriate reviews on progress and sharing of results.

Collaborative and complementary partnership

Practitioners need to work in close partnerships with other players in the humanitarian arena, making sure that assessments/research are/is jointly conducted to avoid duplication of efforts and disturbing participants with multiple requests.

© UNICEF/UN0798288/

Recommendations for donors

The donor community is an important stakeholder in the conduct of social science research in humanitarian crises. The relationship between the donor and the research community can determine how research is conducted, who the target population is, and the scope of the study. This relationship can benefit from the consideration of the following principles:

Invest in social science research at all phases

Openness to learn from each other through candid communication and a willingness to invest in the procedures of the research process that may not be clear from the start could help inform the various players of the crisis with better information. The donors should be encouraged to invest in these preliminary activities and expect accountability from the researchers in the form of deliverables.

Flexibility in establishing donor priorities

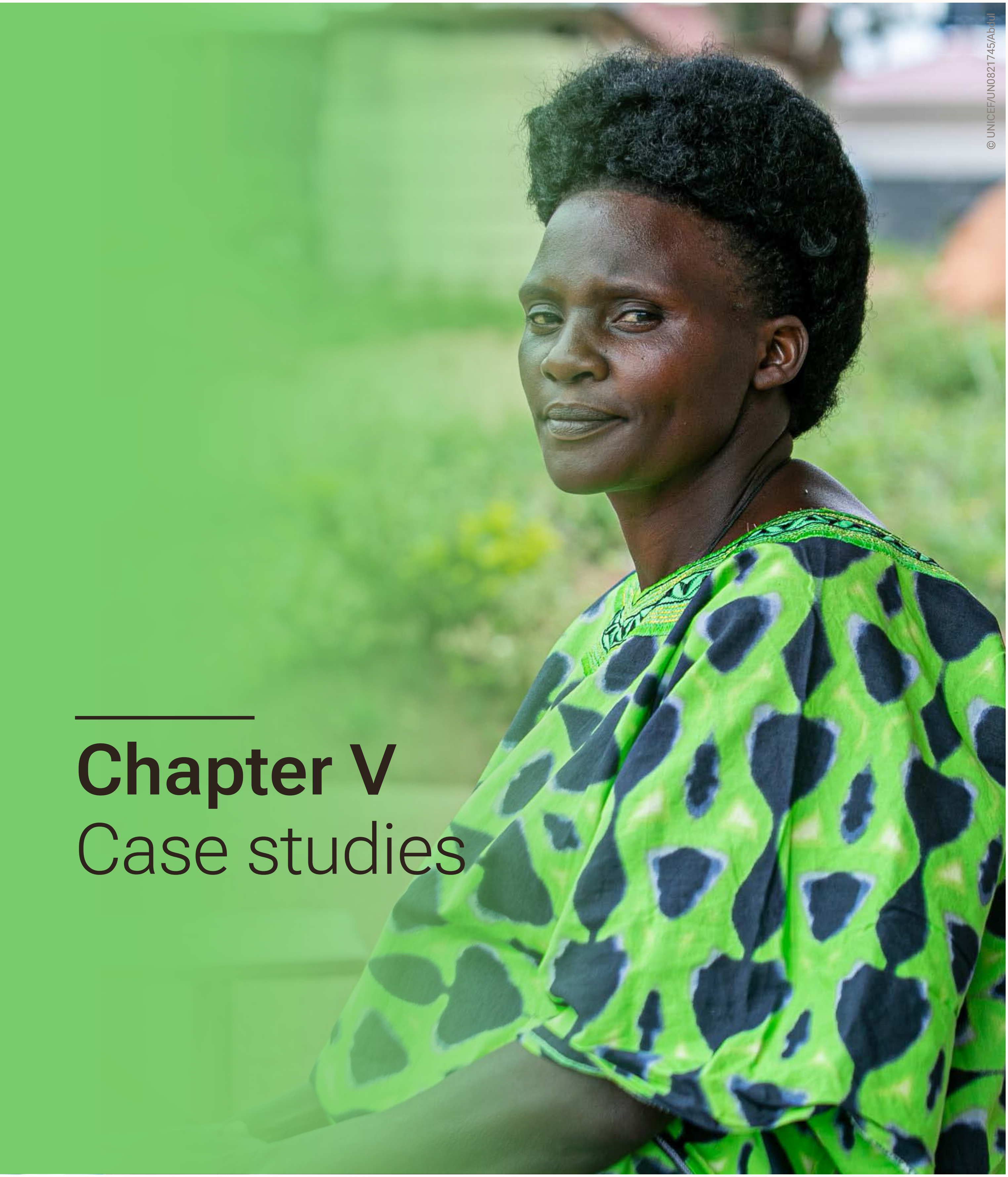
Donors should be willing to accept that some of the research and activities they fund may not align with their primary institutional and political priorities, but they are necessary for humanitarian interventions to be sustainable, people centered and effective. Higher flexibility is demanded from donors to fund social science research and community engagement activities. Social science can indeed provide useful and at times unexpected information that donors can use for their future decisions. For example, in Uganda during the current Ebola crisis, the donors applied what they had learned about best practices and decided to directly work with local NGOs to implement some relief activities. Sending funds to certain regions and institutions can be complicated and these difficulties may affect the good conduct of research. In this case, there can be ways through which the donors offer a flexible system whereby the researchers are formally part of the operational team to avoid the delays brought about by subcontracts.

Donors should have direct dialogue with affected communities

When feasible, and when they do not risk exacerbating the digital divide within communities, online meetings could be arranged where local organizations and people affected can get to know the donors' administrators and communicate the situation as they are experiencing it, as well as the risks they run into if humanitarian aid is not deployed. Patel (2021) suggests that donors "must provide opportunities for local organizations to feedback directly to them, rather than via intermediary partners".

Donors should look at humanitarian aid in a sustainable, long-term manner

It is important that donors realize that aid should not be focused on the crisis solely, but to sustain programmes and develop capacities so that people prevent and overcome current and future crises and be able to rebuild their lives and start again. The intention is that they are not left in the position of refugees or victims for life, but rather to contribute to self-determination and empowerment in the long term. "Aid in itself is a manifestation of inequality and imbalance of power. The current donors have gained more from centuries of exploitation of the world's resources including those of their former colonies" (Patel, 2021).



© UNICEF/UN0821745/Abdul

Chapter V
Case studies

Case Study No. 1

The ethics of data sharing: the example of Cash and Voucher programmes

Adapted from the report "Responsible Data Sharing with Governments" (Raftree & Kondakhchyan, 2021a).

Context

There is a growing emphasis in humanitarian action on linking Cash and Voucher assistance programmes (CVA) programmes and government-led social protection, which entails a close collaboration and the sharing of sensitive data collected by humanitarian actors, such as national ID number, biometric data, address, phone number, children's names, bank account or other financial information, citizenship status or health data (e.g., during Covid-19). CVA data sharing with partners in a consortium, donors, third-party service providers and government authorities can pose fundamental ethical challenges. According to the fundamental humanitarian imperative of preventing and alleviating suffering of affected communities, data sharing can only take place when it is performed for the greatest benefit, the least harm and following the informed consent of local communities. If ethically conducted, data sharing in CVA programmes can optimize programme planning and budgeting by avoiding duplication and so achieving greater efficacy in supporting local communities and their needs.

Main issues

However, sharing detailed CVA recipients' data with public authorities in fragile settings can expose individuals and groups within the community to the risk of being targeted by governments or third parties for other purposes. Moreover, the risk of onward data sharing reduces visibility and control over who owns the data and what they might do with it. Data collected in CVA programmes can include direct or indirect information on religion, political affiliation, ethnicity or other demographic data of individuals and groups, resulting into harm. In fact, when triangulated, CVA data can for instance provide information on group identities and behavior, indication on where urban refugees live, locations where cash and vouchers will be handed out, migration routes or other valuable information.

Risks and implications

The dangers associated with data management and sharing in these contexts mainly derive from:

- Low data protection infrastructure and standards in some government authorities.
- Limited control of HA organizations on onward data sharing for other purposes.
- Social protection data being combined with other datasets to reveal sensitive info.
- Potential changes in future data sensitivity or technology.

Where governments or third parties with whom those data are shared are unfriendly towards a segment of the population, CVA programmes' data sharing can expose individuals to multiple risks, such as:

- Tracking, forcible removal, or detention of asylum-seekers or refugees.
- Governments taking side in a conflict using data to identify opposed groups to target.
- Data can be shared with third parties having an interest in tracking a certain population and targeting it (e.g., a specific minority: limiting their access to services; or refugees: harming their families who remained on site).

- Data sharing between agencies and organizations and governments can weaken trust between agencies and their partners or local communities if they are concerned by potential third uses.
- Even when data sharing is legitimate and ethically sound in a specific configuration, governments can change leading to unforeseen use of shared data.

When is data sharing dangerous, either because it is unethical or outside of legal frameworks?

Requests for data can come through different channels (e.g., official, unofficial, private), at different levels (e.g., from national to municipal authorities), and they can be illegitimate because against the law or unethical. At times, and typically in conflict settings, these requests could be forced or coercive (i.e., critical data incidents, see OCHA, 2019). In some cases, refusing to share data means losing access to an area or interrupting operations. Negotiating this type of challenges must involve first discussing the issue with beneficiaries and the local community, and secondly putting in place a series of fine-tuned advocacy and diplomacy actions with concerned actors informed by communities' input, relevant ethical principles, and legal frameworks.

Examples of dubious or illegitimate data sharing requests:

- When the motivation for the request is unclear, nontransparent, or unaligned with the original purpose of data collection and the organization needs more information to determine its bases.
- When a legitimate data sharing offer or request (e.g., to oversee the rigor of CVA activities by a humanitarian actor) disguises a suspected motivation of political gain or is coupled with illegitimate or ambiguous requests of additional data.
- When a beneficiary list is asked by a government to add unqualified individuals to registries.
- When the government requires a beneficiary list or other data as a condition for a CVA programme to proceed.
- When an organization or agency decides to share beneficiaries' data with a government authority to gain power and influence without asking for informed consent of beneficiaries and/or in the case where other organizations have refused to share it.
- When beneficiary data is requested with the purpose of screening and excluding eligible persons or groups from humanitarian aid (including CVA).
- When a request for data sharing could result in targeting or active harm to a particular group of people (IDPs, refugees, ethnic group, political group) or when it is suspected that data will be shared onward to others who could use it to harm.
- When data-sharing is nontransparent or unaligned with the original purpose of data collection.
- All other situations where data sharing requests are used to gain financial or political advantage or as a means of exercising power and control.
- Sometimes, providing data becomes the only way to access a conflict-torn area. Illegitimate data sharing forced data sharing and coercion are critical data incidents or breaches.

When is data sharing ethically legitimate?

There needs to be a clear justification for data sharing requests, whose goals and purposes are aligned with humanitarian mandates and legal frameworks; data minimization and other protection mechanisms for groups and individuals need to be in place. Beneficiaries of CVA need to provide informed consent over sharing, in that communities must have ownership over their own data and privacy. Moreover, the whole population should be protected, so that the concrete possibility of causing harm to a specific section of the population must be carefully balanced out against the benefit of the majority by adopting inclusive ethical reasoning.

Examples of legitimate reasons for data sharing requests are:

- When eligible populations are being included in a social registry run by a government.
- When there is a need to control allocation to avoid duplication of benefits.
- As part of exit strategy: governments assume a responsibility formerly served by humanitarians.
- When humanitarian agencies are suspected of corruption and the government wishes to undertake an audit.

Relevant examples of good practices

a. Inclusive, bottom-up decision-making

The Cash Consortium for Iraq (CCI) operating CVA in the country decided to transition the most vulnerable segments of humanitarian cash caseloads over to government protection programmes. First, it started conversations with local populations illustrating the content of CVA databases and the possibility to share them with authorities. In their regular feedback surveys on CVA, the consortium included a question on the willingness to be referred to government structures. The surveys' results showed that the willingness was higher than anticipated but presented distinct variation across geographical areas. The consortium decided not to proceed with data sharing, but to conduct additional research with target populations to understand their preoccupations and preferences, as well as their awareness of risks and of different types and levels of data sharing.

b. Quoting law, building trust: declining unlawful data sharing requests

In 2019, the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) in Nigeria arrested Mercy Corp staff and vendors for transmitting cash in a rural area. The EFCC requested the CAV beneficiary list. The organization declined out of the preoccupation of onward data sharing with security agencies, and the consideration that sharing would violate both the principle of independence – by impeding them to work autonomously from government – and the standards for the secure use of personal data in cash and e-transfer programmes. The EFCC requests were ambiguous, and the organization assessed that it was dangerous to share beneficiaries' sensitive data. High-level advocacy and negotiations by the Humanitarian Country Team created the conditions to free the organization's staff and to obtain authorization of CVA activities by improving the operational environment. The country Cash Working Group (CWG) analyzed the Money Laundering Act justifying the detention and other relevant legal pieces; in parallel, they continued meeting with the EFCC to better explain their CVA project, its rationale, and partners. Together, EFFC and CWG agreed on the modalities and guidelines for the cash transfers. The CWG illustrated how local data protection laws framed which data could be shared or not and developed a National CVA policy to strengthen the operational environment for CVA in Nigeria. A closer and more regular collaboration with the federal government, and the framing of the refusal into local data protection laws allowed CVA activities to continue without sharing sensitive data of CVA beneficiaries.

Ethical considerations and recommendations

- Draw on pertinent data protection legal frameworks and ERBs advice (local, international, agencies') to ground and justify data policies. Refer to OCHA Data Responsibility Guidelines[2].
- When planning a CVA programme, assess the political economy of data (i.e., who might want data and why; what value the data holds for whom in the context), and include in risk assessment.
- Pre-define clear, realistic ad hoc frameworks with governments authorities that articulate the conditions for legitimate data sharing requests. Specify checks and balances and countervailing factors which could determine a refusal after legal and ethical evaluation of the request.
- Hire or train personnel with diplomatic, negotiation and legal skills to deal with illegitimate data sharing requests. Simulate data sharing configurations through experiential learning to ensure efficient, rapid action in real contexts.
- Require informed consent by beneficiaries from the beginning, explaining them carefully the conditions under which data sharing (i.e., which data, with whom, in which scenarios) could take place. Translate their feedback and preoccupations into adaptations of data sharing policies. When a specific data sharing request occurs, ask again for consent by illustrating the actor, context, purpose.
- Assess risks for each specific data request depending on context, actor, sensitivity of data requested, potential secondary uses. Discuss requests with communities, understand and integrate their concerns, their knowledge.
- Ensure data minimization, data security (e.g., encryption, tokenization and pseudonymization) and privacy by design. Only collect essential data, retain it for shortest time necessary, de-identifying data as soon as possible. Data minimization reduces the risks of data sharing, while data-security measures can protect in the case of illegitimate data sharing requests. Privacy-preserving design of data collection will minimize the amount of sensitive data that will be shared as this data will not be accessible for unintended use (e.g., encrypting devices and phones).
- Establish secure systems with limited access to reduce the amount of data shared with governments, whether legitimate or not. Security measures allow to also protect frontline workers and data collectors who are submitted to a great deal of illegitimate data-sharing requests.

- Work as a united front with humanitarian coordination bodies to align positions and develop a coordinated ethical approach to data sharing, as well as to receive guidance or advocacy/negotiation support on specific requests from entities such as Cash Working Groups (CWG), Humanitarian Country Teams (HCT) or the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG). Keep other organizations informed on data sharing intentions and actions.

Useful examples of tools and resources for ethical use of data and data sharing

- OCHA's Guidance Note Series on Data Responsibility in Humanitarian Action (OCHA, 2021).
- Case Study: Data responsibility and digital remote targeting during Covid-19 (Raftree & Kondakhchyan, 2021c).
- Data Responsibility Toolkit: A Guide for CVA Practitioners (Raftree and Kondakhchyan, 2021b)
- Handbook on Data Protection in Humanitarian Action (Kuner & Marelli, 2017)
- Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)'s Ethical Guidance on Data Responsibility in Humanitarian Action (IASC, 2021).

© UNICEF/UN0793780/

Case Study No.2
Datafication of communities: the Palestinian case

Adapted from the research paper "Decolonizing data relations" (Halkort, 2019).

Context

The ongoing datafication of communities, or the framing of people as data and numbers, perpetuates "colonial logics of extraction, exploitation, and enclosure" (p. 318). Far from encapsulating the complex identity, memory and features of communities, phenomena of datafication often reduce communities to opaque, scattered datasets which become valuable assets for public or private actors' interests and profiteering. Datafication produces paradoxical asymmetries of power where data about communities – in some cases crucial evidence of their existence – is under the control of third actors. Often, intergovernmental, and humanitarian agencies, NGOs, and civil society groups become the holders and keepers of large repositories of community data in the global South. Around 1.7 million Palestinian refugees were housed in 58 camps across the Arab world as of 2019 (UNRWA Communications Division, 2019 in Halkort, 2019). One-third of the overall refugee population – 5,442,947 people – live in camps and are regarded as belonging to the bottom socioeconomic strata of society. In Palestinian camps in Lebanon datafication intersects with measurement and value extraction, thus generating a questionable moral economy of data. This urges a reflection about the relation of data, subjectivity, and ethics.

Main issues

Datafication of the Palestinian population in Lebanese camps has intensified along generations. While socio-demographic records are the main political proof to identify and affirm the existence of this displaced community, data is spread among states hosting diaspora communities, organizations operating in the Palestinian territories and other international and governmental bodies creating a complex and scattered data ecosystem which escapes the control of the Palestinian community itself. One of the most comprehensive databases of community information is kept by UNRWA; it contains information on the socioeconomic, educational, and health status of every family receiving aid and social services. It must be noted that registration with UNRWA authorizes individuals to receive refugee status.

Risks and implications

Tying the obtention of refugee status to registration significantly contributes to the forcible datafication of the community, in that their physical subsistence as a project is inextricably linked to data proving it. This ontological importance embodied by data has led to paradoxes, tensions and contradictions that limit the possibilities for strengthening the voice of the refugees through data-driven activism and participatory research. Wider issues of social justice and decolonization are at stake in the struggle of Palestinians against datafication. The initial refusal which marked the reaction to the recent census led in camps by Lebanese authorities witnesses of the politically charged track record of what data collection has meant for this community. Yet, the vicious circle of datafication continues through involuntary but compulsory data sharing, in that the need for visibility and memory is what underpins the resignation of this community to being recorded, calculated and mapped. Moreover, the community in camps is experiencing research fatigue, not only by organizations and state authorities but also by researchers, journalists and filmmakers (see Case Study No 4). Even participatory methods, often invoked as a solution to top-down logics of data extraction have done little to solve this wider issue. Investments deriving from collective consultations and data provision efforts of the camps' population have rarely translated into improvements responding to the most pressing needs of the community at large. For example, funding has often been partly redirected to areas or instruments benefiting the influential community representatives who had been put in charge of overseeing the works (e.g., new electricity generators, water tanks, repairs). Power dynamics jeopardized collective mapping projects at the expense of the least influential and most marginalized. Datafication did not translate in the promised condition enhancements and political evolutions wished by the community, nor into improved dignity.

Whichever the methods and instruments enacted to collect, store, or share data, data holds a "material agency" (p. 318) of itself which impacts asymmetries in that data holders are in control of the redistribution of the potential 'benefits' and 'profits' deriving from such knowledge. Participatory research methods themselves are not a guarantee of reversing these power asymmetries when not coupled with a wider commitment to responding to the needs and preferences of the community at large, their consequent inclusion in defining research design and goals, and eventually with improved access of the community to the value embodied by knowledge and information concerning them.


© UNICEF/UN0464398/Abu Aseer

Example of a bottom-up, alternative practice reverting data (and knowledge) ownership to the community

A group of young activists from the Palestinian community living in camps set up an app to solve emerging issues (e.g., someone stealing electricity from their neighborhood) by interacting directly with the camps' community. Information about emerging issues and disputes is collected through WhatsApp and Facebook groups. When an issue is reported, the activist group shows up in full force and they act as arbiters with the involved parties, drawing on the reputation built up in leading such actions. They achieve significant impact on the ground compared with actions led by identified community representatives involved in camp management. Their success can be attributed to how they gained the trust of the camp population and the respect of local and international organizations. They are regularly consulted before the implementation of donor funds.

Ethical considerations and lessons learnt: The young activists' network is a striking example of how the "self-generating and self-legitimizing force of moral economies can provide a critical alternative to the analytical frame of 'social movements' and 'grassroots initiatives' that are often used to account for collective agencies" (Halkort, 2019, p. 324). The activists draw on the common knowledge and experience they share with the community about what is just to address emerging issues and disputes, without following "a set agenda or a preconceived register of values and goals" (Halkort, 2019, p. 324). Acting outside of logics of standardization promoting one-fits-all solutions, the activists draw their efficacy and legitimization from the trust and knowledge of their own community. "This stubborn resistance has turned these Facebook and WhatsApp groups into a powerful, self-generating social and technical infrastructure for the deliberation of justice in the arrangement of camp affairs" (Halkort, 2019, p. 324). The network established by young activists alters standard top-down paradigms of ethics and agency in camps, including with respect to data activism. It is a new form of "activism that no longer confines itself to producing knowledge differently, as former participatory practices have done, but rather enacts a different way of knowing altogether" (Halkort, 2019, p. 325). Their action offers an example of how the lost connection between data, subject, and the social realities it represents, can be reestablished. It brings back knowledge of where it originated, in the lived experience of subjects and it reasserts that people are not data. Data is not to be collected as a source of value accumulation, but as an asset to serve community needs, be they linked to memory and recognition or access to basic rights. Agency lies therefore in the subjects and must not be redirected to third parties by phenomena of datafication by which subjects have become the "object of knowledge" and "data fragments" (Halkort, 2019, p. 325). Decolonizing data in humanitarian action requires a reflection which goes beyond accurate and ethical ways of dealing with data collection, storage and sharing. Reflexivity as well as critical thinking about power dynamics informed by historical, decolonial and social justice perspectives are needed to reassert, day by day, action by action, the fundamental role and agency of communities and to constantly question why and for what purpose data is being collected.

Useful examples of tools and resources to fight datafication and ensure ethical research involving communities in HA:

- Datafication of the Humanitarian Sector: Efficacy and Ethics (UKAid, UKRI, IOM, 2020)
- The Grand Bargain: A Shared Commitment to Better Serve People in Need (IASC, 2016)
- Do no harm: A taxonomy of the challenges of humanitarian experimentation (Sandvik, Jacobsen & McDonald, 2018)
- Guidance Note - Research on Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrants by the European Commission (EC) Directorate-General (DG) on Research and Innovation (2021)
- Participation Handbook for Humanitarian Field Workers by the Groupe Urgence, Réhabilitation, Développement (URD, 2009)

Case Study No.3

Portraying communities and power dynamics: MSF commits to tackle problematic imagery

Adapted from the statement "MSF Heads of Communications commit to tackle problematic imagery" (2022) , and the video "We are committed to better representing our diverse global workforce in our communications and fundraising", (MSF Norway Communications and Fundraising teams in collaboration with experts, 2022)

Context

Humanitarian organizations collect sensitive data, including in the form of images. Use of images is often used for communication and advocacy purposes. Sensitive images have often been used for communication and advocacy campaigns to raise increased attention. However, this use can be ethically problematic or even unethical. In June 2022, the Directors of Communication at MSF released a statement addressing issues of problematic imagery and their use.

Main issues

The organization had been challenged both internally and externally about the use of sensitive photography involving patients in their care. Moreover, imagery (e.g., leaflets, online sources, campaigns' posters) used by the organization to raise awareness, raise money, or recruit staff would not always adequately represent or include local communities or the organization's staff.

Risks and implications

Most often, global North white staff was portrayed healing local communities' members, thus obscuring patient's families, local staff and other community members involved in interventions. Moreover, this representation as 'beneficiaries of the organization' has often portrayed patients as lonely and helpless, thus undermining their agency of people living with sickness.

The organization recognized publicly that these images had "propagate[d] a single story and perpetuate racist stereotypes of so-called white saviors and powerless victims". MSF publicly recognized that while their staff comes from all around the world (i.e., the majority of staff are currently from South Sudan, followed by DRC and Yemen), not everyone has equally been at the center of the organization's public communication. The organization explained that 80% of staff members are hired locally in contexts of intervention, and that in the mobile staff as well, a wide majority comes from Africa, Middle east, Asia, and Latin America. MSF acknowledged that the communicative bias had resulted from a more profound one inherent to humanitarian history which is profoundly rooted in the history of colonialism, neocolonialism, and "stubborn stereotypes of the white European expert and the distant other in need".

Ethical considerations and actions taken

These events prompted the organization to take immediate action and to reflect deeper on the ways they portray "people caught in crisis", that is local communities in humanitarian settings. MSF declared their role of bearing witness had to be guided by humanitarian principles and medical ethics, by respecting the dignity and agency and protecting the safety and wellbeing of people they treat. They committed to contributing to a paradigm of global solidarity and humanitarian justice over one of heroes and victims. Towards these ends they engaged in changing the way they communicate and lead advocacy, by better managing the collection, use dissemination and storage of photographs and video taken at medical projects. This includes not only material collected by the organization itself, but also content gathered by news organizations and independent photographers in their action sites. MSF explained they want the shift to be substantive and not formal or esthetic, to show a more representative picture of their actions. For this reason, they have committed to the following principles and recommendations.

Recommendations

- Accelerate a full review of the MSF media archive and tag images according to sensitivity criteria (e.g., minors, nudity, stereotyping, offensive or upsetting material, security risk, lack of dignity or unbearable suffering) and set up a panel of experts including external advisers to conduct a final review. All content will be preserved for historical record, but content violating organization's standards will no longer be available for publication on MSF channels or external media.
- Reach out to photo agencies and to individual photographers holding the copyright for sensitive images taken at projects. Although MSF does not control the usage rights or profit from the sale of these images, the organization asked agencies and individuals to comply with policy on restricting access to problematic imagery (e.g., photo involving minors and victims of abuse and exploitation). While some images have been removed, others remain. This prompted MSF to develop a more systematic process to address the issue.
- Review contracting and licensing procedures and TOR for photographers and videographers visiting MSF projects. The intention is to strike a balance between believing in the power of photojournalism to highlight the stories of people facing conflict and crisis and the obligation as a medical organization to respect the dignity of patients receiving care at their facilities and the principle to 'do no harm'.
- Conduct a thorough review of organization's content production guidelines, including to uphold diversity, equity, and inclusion. Informed consent processes have been clarified and specific language has been added to protect minors in their care.
- Strengthen training and development for MSF content producers, communications, and fundraising team, with the intent is to share best practices for gathering informed consent. Commitment to an ongoing process of learning and reflection with survivors of trauma, medical experts, ethicists, journalists, and academics.
- Provided email contact for public reporting of sensitive imagery related to MSF work.
- 'Pass the mic', that is have the people themselves, including patients, tell their own story with their own voice from their own perspectives and co-own the story. MSF stated the organization's own 'story' still includes white people working in Africa, because that is a reality, but that the narrative should shift showing that they are not at the center of every story. The organization also acknowledged that advocacy trends show that fewer people pay attention when images would tell the 'true story' of Southern healthcare staff leading interventions and field work, but they "take the charge of proving them wrong".

Useful examples of tools and resources on the decolonization of imagery and representation of communities in humanitarian action:

- Images of humanitarian crises: Ethical Implications (Holleufer, 1996).
- Decolonizing the Use of Images at IDS (Andrews, 2021) and IDS Ethical Content Guidelines (IDS, 2021)
- Who Gets to Decolonize Humanitarianism? (Aloudat, 2021).
- Photographers Without Borders (PWB)' Code of Ethics (PWB, n.d.)
- The ethical use of images and messaging (Roughneen, 2019)
- Images of Decolonization (Ganapathy-Doré et al., 2013)


© UNICEF/UN0821774/Abdul

© UNICEF/UN0769365/Filippov

Case Study No.4

Avoiding research fatigue and upholding ethics of research: towards a Code of Conduct for ethical post-disaster research

Adapted from the comment "Disaster-zone research needs a Code of Conduct" (Gaillard & Peek, 2019)

Context

Researchers are often attracted to the scene of natural disasters and other crises by curiosity and a wish to study phenomena to cooperate in finding or elaborating solutions. Post-disaster areas can become interesting laboratories to address a variety of questions on, for instance, the state of the infrastructure, the possibility of recurrent hazards, or response and coping strategies to post-disaster trauma and reconstruction. It is true that research leads to improved warnings and emergency-response plans and data can reveal lifesaving information in multiple ways (e.g., psychologists and anthropologists might study and support local coping mechanisms; historians and civil engineers might collaborate to examine and promote resilient traditional architectural features when rebuilding homes in cyclone-affected areas). Yet, although teams of academics and engineers are intensely involved in the study of these phenomena, they "are not always welcome in disaster zones" (p. 440).

Main issues

There is an urgent need to fight the exoticization and exploitation of crisis contexts and shift the research paradigm towards a deeper understanding of local context and trauma which would prioritize community needs. Post-disaster scenarios must not become another site for extraction of knowledge for the profit of third parties. When looking at research, either led by academics or by research units of agencies and organizations, 'profit' can take different shapes ranging from publications and academic reputation, to obtaining funding from donors for projects, and to a more general gain in influence and power by control over data and knowledge. Unethical research in areas hit by crisis can translate into an additional burden for local communities who can experience research fatigue on top of trauma. Moreover, when driven by media coverage and politics, research can overshadow certain crises over others which hold a higher 'geopolitical value'.

Risks and implications

Research fatigue does not only fundamentally increase collective traumatic stress, but it also hinders the trust of communities towards actors involved in disaster response and post-disaster reconstruction. Thus, badly conducted research and data collection can both inflict a wound on populations and jeopardize the effectiveness of interventions by leading to forgetting local communities' most pressing needs. In 2013, for instance, survivors of Typhoon Yolanda in Tacloban in the Philippines "were deluged with questionnaires, when their immediate concerns were to secure housing, food, clothing and education" (p. 442). Scattered, uncoordinated and overlapping research can also lead to incoherent efforts, data and findings which might confuse authorities and delay decisions.

But research fatigue is not the only facet of unethical research. 'Big' disasters that occur in populated areas frequently receive the most media attention, but the combined effects of small, repeated incidents can be just as destructive. For example, after the massive Nepal earthquake in April 2015, the impacts on infrastructure and the quality of shelters were widely studied, and aid donors gave millions of dollars to rebuild parts of Kathmandu. Yet in rural western Nepal, hundreds of villages cope with floods and landslides each year, unnoticed by the outside world (p. 441). This roadside bias (i.e., privileging the most 'visible' crises) and the political agendas underpinning it are in contrast with the global vision needed to generate culturally adequate structural resilience under the lead of local communities.

In fact, healthy (i.e., stable, not hit by crises) countries account for most disaster scholarship and funding. It is particularly telling, for instance, that less than 5% of publications on the 2010 Haiti earthquake were led by authors based in the country, and that 84% of articles published between 1977 and 2017 in Disasters, the flagship journal in the field, were led by authors based in countries of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. Yet 93% of the people killed by large disasters over the same period lived in non-OECD countries, according to the EM-DAT disaster database. Outside researchers are better placed in comfortable conditions to apply and receive fundings and write projects. However, locally based academics are often better placed to know, interpret, and bring forward the community's priorities. In 2011, following the Joplin tornado in Missouri, outside academics assessed damage to infrastructure. By contrast, locally based researchers were eager to learn how to support emotional health after witnessing a rise in post-traumatic stress in children and adults. "Both are important topics, but funding streams do not always follow local desires" (ibid.). Local researchers are too often consulted as translators or assistants, but they rarely design and lead projects, or even get funding to promote locally informed research goals.

Example: reacting to research fatigue

Hundreds of academics traveled to Indonesia in 2004 to gather perishable data after the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami. Locals were upset and tired out and many refused requests from researchers for interviews. The former governor of Aceh province, Indonesia, where more than 128,000 people died, described foreign researchers as "guerrillas applying hit-and-run tactics" (p. 440, citing Missbach, 2011). This translated into a change of attitude and policies by the Indonesian government, so that when in 2018 an earthquake and tsunami hit the Indonesian island of Sulawesi, dozens of researchers found themselves unable to enter the country. A special visa is now required to enter the country for research purposes, data-collection protocols need to be submitted to the government first and projects must have an Indonesian partner. Violators can face criminal charges and even prison. The new legal framework is grounded in the renewed will to protect survivors of crisis and to preserve the integrity of local scientific efforts.

© UNICEF/UN0795174/Wilander

Ethical considerations and recommendations

Humanitarian research in crisis needs to adopt new policies, both ethical and pragmatic, to optimize research efforts and data collection and achieve better coordination. This effort should be guided by the highest principle and common intent to prevent and alleviate suffering of hit communities, and only data which is crucial to this end needs to be prioritized in times of crisis (i.e., aim to data minimization), as ethical concerns should have at least the same primacy as research concerns. Disaster research must be scientifically rigorous as well as locally and culturally grounded. Very few countries currently have regulation for post disaster research, but it is most important that researchers comply with regulations where these exist, and that global standards are upheld even when absent. For instance, in New Zealand, the disaster research legal framework states that researchers must “avoid creating unnecessary anxiety by speculating to locals” (p. 441), while the Philippines only allow research on post-disaster trauma when affected communities want to share their feelings as a way to process the event. In fact, for a variety of reasons including but not limited to disciplinary ‘jurisdiction’ and composition, procedural times, lack of funding of peer-review processes, etc. University ERBs and national review boards are unable to fill the gap, so that what is needed is both a self-regulation ethical culture and the institutionalization of these norms within and across academic institutions and humanitarian organizations. It is fundamental that researchers are equipped with an ‘ethical toolkit’ to be able to help affected populations without causing harm. Some key recommendations for a common regulatory practice are:

Have a clear purpose. Researchers should collectively identify knowledge gaps by partnering up with local communities to establish emergent research priorities in dealing with disaster. A collaborative engagement will help define allocation of tasks and select who is best suited. The needs of local people should be central.

Respect local voices. Researchers involved in crisis settings should understand local languages, policies and practices and operate locally adapted knowledge brokering for local communities. “Concepts such as vulnerability and resilience do not necessarily translate well [...] Even when equivalent terms exist, they are sometimes deemed irrelevant because natural hazards are not always seen as such by local communities” (ibid.). Phenomena need to be understood through the lens of local ethics and knowledge (e.g., what is the cultural and spiritual meaning of hazards, what are the implications they carry attached).

Coordinate locals and outsiders. There is an urgent need to avoid redundancy and irrelevance, which lead to research fatigue. Locals should be given the space for co-defining research strategy and design. Respecting authorship of and integrating input and critiques by local researchers are crucial first steps to build an equal research partnership and mutual trust. This can only happen if local researchers are identified quickly in a crisis. Existing forums and initiatives (such as the UNDRR) could act as coordinating actors and advisers and elaborate a common code of conduct for research in disaster and crisis contexts.

Useful examples of tools and resources to conduct ethical research on hazards:

- The International Association of Volcanology and Chemistry of the Earth’s Interior (IAVCEI)’s guidelines on the roles and responsibilities of scientists involved in volcanic hazards evaluation, risk mitigation and crisis response (IAVCEI, 2015).
- The Geotechnical Extreme Events Reconnaissance Association (GEER)’s ethics protocol encouraging engineers working in hazards to adhere to “high standards of professionalism” and to be “respectful of local customs, traditions, privacy, and rights of affected individuals” could serve as a starting point for humanitarians (GEER, 2015).
- The Social Science Extreme Events Research (SSEER) network’s global map of social scientists who study hazards and disasters (SSEER, n.d.).
- The Council of Europe (CoE)’s Ethical Principles on Disaster Risk Reduction and People’s Resilience (Prieur, 2012)
- The Ethical Research in Fragile and Conflict Affected Contexts: Guidelines for Applicants guide (UKRI & UNICEF, 2021)

References

© UNICEF/UNI425491/Panjwani

Abramowitz, S., Giles-Vernick, Webb, J., Tappan, J., Uretsky, E., Varanda-Ferreira, J., Mason, K., Beyer, M., Collin, C. & Thomas, K. (2018). Data Sharing in Public Health Emergencies: Anthropological and Historical Perspectives on Data Sharing during the 2014-2016 Ebola Epidemic and the 2016 Yellow Fever Epidemic. Welcome Trust, UKAid, Institute Pasteur.

Agier, M. (2016). Epistemological decentring: At the root of a contemporary and situational anthropology. *Anthropological Theory, 16*(1), 22–47. https://doi.org/10.1177/1463499616629270

Alatas, Syed Farid. "On the Indigenization of Academic Discourse." *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 18, no. 3 (1993): 307–38. http://www.jstor.org/stable/40644778.

Atallah, D. G. , Shapiro, E.R., Al-Azraq, N., Qaisi, Y. & Suyemoto, K.L. (2018) Decolonizing qualitative research through transformative community engagement: critical investigation of resilience with Palestinian refugees in the West Bank, Qualitative Research in Psychology, 15(4), 489-519, DOI: 10.1080/14780887.2017.1416805.

Bedson, J., Skrip, L. A., Pedi, D., Abramowitz, S., Carter, S., Jalloh, M. F., Funk, S., Gobat, N., Giles-Vernick, T., Chowell, G., Almeida, J.R., Elessawi, R., Scarpino, S.V., Hammond, R.A., Briand, S., Epstein, J.M., Hébert-Dufresne, L., & Althouse, B. M. (2021). A review and agenda for integrated disease models including social and behavioural factors. Nature human behavior, 5(7), 834-846. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-021-01136-2

Bukuluki, P. (2022, 22nd September). Humanitarian Governance webinar series: Community engagement in humanitarian action: What Does "Nothing About Us Without Us" Mean? International Institute of Social Studies, SS4CE Unicef, USAID (Hum-Gov).

Carter, B. (2022). Integrating Local Voices into Programme Governance in Fragile And Conflict-Affected Settings. K4D Helpdesk Report 1180. Institute of Development Studies. DOI:10.19088/K4D.2022.110

Coburn, Elaine, Aileen Moreton-Robinson, George Sefa Dei et Makere Stewart-Harawira, « Unspeakable Things: Indigenous Research and Social Science », ***Socio***, 2 | 2013, 331-348. https://doi.org/10.4000/socio.524

Connell, R. (2014). Using southern theory: Decolonizing social thought in theory, research and application. ***Planning Theory***, ***13***(2), 210–223. https://doi.org/10.1177/1473095213499216

Data for children collaborative and UNICEF (2020). Ethical Assessment. Developed in Partnership with Ethical Intelligence Associates.

Denzin, N.K., & Giardina, M. (2007). Introduction: Ethical Futures in Qualitative Research. In N. K. Denzin, & M. D. Giardina (Eds.), Ethical Futures in Qualitative Research: Decolonizing the Politics of Knowledge (pp. 9-34). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315429090

Gargallo Celentani F. (2014). Feminismos desde Abya Yala: Ideas y proposiciones de las mujeres de 607 pueblos en nuestra América. Corte y Confección..

Geise, M., Dormolen, S., Maffi, P., Martínez Apráez, L., Maukner, A.C., Vries, D., Lana, B., Puri, A., Falero Cusano, M.F. & Elessawi, R. (2022). Integrating Social Science in Community Engagement in Humanitarian Action in Conflicts and Hazards, Capacity needs assessment and mapping of social science for community engagement trainings [Manuscript in preparation]. AIGHD – Sonar-Global, Institut Pasteur – Sonar-Global, UNICEF SBC Unit – SS4CE Team.

Halkort, M. (2019). Decolonizing data relations: On the moral economy of data sharing in Palestinian refugee camps. Canadian Journal of Communication, 44(3), 317-329. https://doi.org/10.22230/cjc.2019v44n3a3457

Hutchings, K. (2019). Decolonizing global ethics: Thinking with the pluriverse. Ethics & International Affairs, 33(2), 115-125.

Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC). (2016). Humanitarian Response Monitoring Guidance. https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/humanitarian_response_monitoring_guidance_2016_en_1.pdf

Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC). (2015). The Implementation of the Humanitarian Program Cycle, Version 2.0. https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/iasc-transformative-agenda/documents-public/iasc-reference-module-implementation-humanitarian

Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). (2021). Operational Guidance, Data Responsibility in Humanitarian Action. https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/operational-response/iasc-operational-guidance-data-responsibility-humanitarian-action

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). https://www.ifrc.org/who-we-are/international-red-cross-and-red-crescent-movement/fundamental-principles. International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Kelly, L. (2021). Lessons Learnt from Humanitarian Negotiations with the Taliban, 1996-2001. K4D Helpdesk Report 1044. Institute of Development Studies. DOI: 10.19088/K4D.2021.119

Kuner, C. & Marelli, M. (2020). Handbook on data protection in humanitarian action. International Committee of the Red Cross. https://www.icrc.org/en/data-protection-humanitarian-action-handbook

Kusumowardoyo, C. (2022, November 30th). [Experience from co-researching with people with disabilities]. Humanitarian Governance webinar series: Whose Ethics Matter? Critical reflections on community engagement in humanitarian action. International Institute of Social Studies, SS4CE Unicef, USAID (Hum-Gov).Liverpool, Layal (2021) Researchers from global south under-represented in development research. Nature, September 2021, DOI: 10.1038/d41586-021-02549-9

Lorde A. (1981, June 12th). The Uses of Anger: Women Responding to Racism [Conference]. National Women's Studies Association Conference, Storrs, Connecticut,.

Lough, O., Spencer, A., Coyle, D., Jainul, M. A., & Barua, H. (2021). Participation and inclusion in the Rohingya refugee response in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh: 'We never speak first'. HPG working paper. ODI. https://odi.org/en/publications/participation-and-inclusion-in-the-rohingya-refugee-response-in-coxs-bazar-bangladesh-we-never-speak-first/

Manning, J. (2018). Becoming a decolonial feminist ethnographer: Addressing the complexities of positionality and representation. Management Learning, 49(3), 311–326. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350507617745275

Mignolo, Walter D., & Walsh, C.E. (2018). On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis. Duke Univ Press.

Mugumbate, Jacob Rugare; Chereni, Admire (23 April 2020). "Editorial: Now, the theory of Ubuntu has its space in social work". *African Journal of Social Work*. **10** (1). ISSN 2409-5605

Openjuru, G. L., Jaitli, N., Tandon, R., & Hall, B. (2015). Despite knowledge democracy and community-based participatory action research: Voices from the global south and excluded north still missing. Action Research, 13(3), 219–229. https://doi.org/10.1177/1476750315583316

Organizing Committee for Assessing Meaningful Community Engagement in Health & Health Care Programs & Policies. (2022). Assessing Meaningful Community Engagement: A Conceptual Model to Advance Health Equity through Transformed Systems for Health. NAM Perspectives. Commentary, National Academy of Medicine, Washington, DC. https://doi.org/10.31478/202202c.

Osborne, J., Paget, J., Giles-Vernick, T., Kutalek, R., Napier, D., Baliatsas, C., & Dückers, M. (2021). Community engagement and vulnerability in infectious diseases: A systematic review and qualitative analysis of the literature. Social Science & Medicine, 284, 114246. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2021.114246

Patel, S. (2021, September 29th). Localisation, racism and decolonisation: Hollow talk or real look in the mirror? Humanitarian Practice Network. https://odihpn.org/publication/localisation-racism-and-decolonisation-hollow-talk-or-real-look-in-the-mirror/

Peace Direct. (2021, May 10th). Time to Decolonise Aid, Insights and lessons from a global consultation. Peace Direct, Adeso, Alliance for Peace Building, Women of Color Advancing Peace and Security. https://www.peacedirect.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/PD-Decolonising-Aid_Second-Edition.pdf

Quijano, A. (2016). "Bien Vivir" –Between "Development" and the De/Coloniality of Power. Alternautas, (Re) Searching Development: The Abya Yala Chapter, 3(1), 10-23. http://www.alternautas.net/blog/2016/1/20/bien-vivir-between-development-and-the-decoloniality-of-power1

Reidpath DD, Allotey P (2019). The problem of 'trickle-down science' from the Global North to the Global South. BMJ Global Health 2019;4: e001719.

Santos, B.S. (2011). Epistemologías del Sur. Utopía y Praxis Latinoamericana, 54, 17 – 39

Sibai AM, Rizk A, Coutts AP, Monzer G, Daoud A, Sullivan R, Roberts B, Meho LI, Fouad FM, DeJong J. (2019). North-South inequities in research collaboration in humanitarian and conflict contexts. Lancet. 2019 Nov 2;394(10209):1597-1600. doi: 10.1016/S0140-6736(19)32482-1. PMID: 31690433.

Social Sciences for Community Engagement in Humanitarian Action (2022). Social Sciences for Community Engagement in Humanitarian Action (SS4CE in HA) Mapping Review [Manuscript in preparation].

Sow, O. (2022, 30th November). Humanitarian Governance webinar series: Whose ethics matter? Critical reflections on community engagement in humanitarian action. International Institute of Social Studies, SS4CE Unicef, USAID (Hum-Gov).

Topos.mx (n.d.), Nosotros; Historia. Retrieved November 15th, 2022, from: https://www.topos.mx/nosotros/historia

Tuck, E., & Wayne Yang, K. (2012). Decolonization is not a metaphor. Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society, 1(1), 1-40.

Yep, K., & Mitchell, T. (2017). Decolonizing Community Engagement: Reimagining Service Learning through an Ethnic Studies Lens. In C. Dolgon, T. Mitchell, & T. Eatman (Eds.), The Cambridge Handbook of Service Learning and Community Engagement (Cambridge Handbooks in Psychology, pp. 294-303). Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/9781316650011.028

UNICEF. (n.d.). Overarching commitments. Core Commitments for Children. Retrieved November 15th, 2022, from: https://www.corecommitments.unicef.org/ccc-2-1

UNICEF (n.d.) Responsible Data for Children (RD4C). Retrieved November 10th, 2022 from https://rd4c.org/

UNICEF (2021). The Case for Better Governance Of Children's Data: A Manifesto.

Unicef (2018). Guidance on Risk-Informed Programming. How to integrate an analysis of risk into child irghts-focused planning and programming. Available at https://unicef.sharepoint.com/teams/Communities/RiskResilience-%20FragilityPeacebuilding/sitePages/Home2.aspx.

Case Studies’ references

Aloudat T. (2021, June 28). Who Gets to Decolonize Humanitarianism?. Centre for Humanitarian Action (CHA). https://www.chaberlin.org/en/blog/who-gets-to-decolonise-humanitarianism-2/

Andrews J. (2021, May 07). Decolonizing the use of imagery at IDS. Institute of Development Studies (IDS). ids.ac.uk/opinions/decolonising-the-use-of-imagery-at-ids/.

Association of Volcanology and Chemistry of the Earth’s Interior (IAVCEI). (2015, May 6). Guidelines on the roles and responsibilities of scientists involved in volcanic hazards evaluation, risk mitigation and crisis response. IAVCEI Task Group on Crisis Protocols. https://www.iavceivolcano.org/content/uploads/2020/11/iavcei_guidelines_for_eruption_hazards_and_risk_management.pdf.

European Commission Directorate-General on Research and Innovation (2021, September 14). Guidance Note - Research on Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrants. https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/guidance-note-research-on-refugees-asylum-seekers-migrants_he_en.pdf

Gaillard Jc., & Peek L. (2019, November 19). Disaster-Zone Research Needs a Code of Conduct. Nature, 575, 440–42. https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-019-03534-z.

Ganapathy-Doré G., Olinga M., Crowley C., Naumann M., Le Boulicaut Y., et al. (2013, May). Images of Decolonization, Images de la Decolonisation. HAL Open Science. https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-00821522/document. Accessed 1.12.22.

Geotechnical Extreme Events Reconnaissance Association (GEER). (2015, August 4). GEER Ethics Protocol. https://geerassociation.org/about-geer/ethics-protocol

Halkort M. (2019). Decolonizing Data Relations: On the Moral Economy of Data Sharing In Palestinian Refugee Camps. Canadian Journal of Communication, 44(3), 317-329. https://doi.org/10.22230/cjc.2019v44n3a3457.

Holleufer G. (1996, December 31). ‘Images of Humanitarian Crises: Ethical Implications’. International Review of the Red Cross, no. 315. https://www.icrc.org/en/doc/resources/documents/article/other/57jnct.htm

Kuner C., & Marelli M. (2017). Handbook on Data Protection in Humanitarian Action. For ICRC and VUB Brussels Privacy Hub. https://rm.coe.int/handbook-data-protection-and-humanitarian-action-low/168076662a

Institute of Development Studies (IDS). (2021). IDS ethical content guidelines. https://www.ids.ac.uk/download.php?file=wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Handout-web.pdf

Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). (2016). The Grand Bargain: A Shared Commitment to Better Serve People in Need. https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/grand_bargain_final_22_may_final-2_0.pdf

Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). (2021). Ethical Guidance on Data Responsibility in Humanitarian Action. https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2021-02/IASC%20Operational%20Guidance%20on%20Data%20Responsibility%20in%20Humanitarian%20Action-%20February%202021.pdf.

MSF Heads of Communications Commit to Tackle Problematic Imagery. (2022, June 24). Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) International. Retrieved December 02, 2022, from https://www.msf.org/msf-heads-communications-commit-tackle-problematic-imagery

Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF). (2022, December). We Are Committed to Better Representing Our Diverse Global Workforce in Our Communications and Fundraising [Video]. LinkedIn. https://www.linkedin.com/posts/medecins-sans-frontieres-msf_we-are-committed-to-better-representing-activity-7004463137143857153-_P4F/?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop.

OCHA The Centre for Humanitarian Data. (2019, August). Note No. 2: Data Incident Management. Guidance Note Series Data Responsability in Humanitarian Action. https://data.humdata.org/dataset/2048a947-5714-4220-905b-e662cbcd14c8/resource/51949711-43d0-4c08-accc-109154510ef6/download/guidancenote2_dataincidentmanagement.pdf?_gl=1*12et1su*_ga*MTYzNzI0OTEuMTY3MDM0OTYyMQ..*_ga_60ZNX2F68*MTY3MTcwMTY3Ni41LjAuMTY3MTcwMTY3Ni42MC4wLjA

OCHA The Centre for Humanitarian Data. (2021, October). OCHA Data Responsibility Guidelines. https://data.humdata.org/dataset/2048a947-5714-4220-905b-e662cbcd14c8/resource/60050608-0095-4c11-86cd-0a1fc5c29fd9/download/ocha-data-responsibility-guidelines_2021.pdf?_gl=1*o2a4t*_ga*MTYzNzI0OTEuMTY3MDM0OTYyMQ..*_ga_E60ZNX2F68*MTY3MTcwMTY3Ni41LjEuMTY3MTcwMTgwMi42MC4wLjA., 2.12.22.

Photographers Without Borders (PWB). (n.d.). PWD Code of Ethics. Retrieved December 02, 2022, from https://www.photographerswithoutborders.org/code-of-ethics#:~:text=Fluid%2C%20free%2C%20prior%20and%20informed%20consent.&text=We%20strive%20to%20maintain%20a,where%20one%20is%20benefitting%20financially

Prieur, M. (2012). Ethical Principles on Disaster Risk Reduction and People's Resilience. Council of Europe, European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement. https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016800c690f

Raftree, L., & Kondakhchyan, A. (2021a, March). Case Study: Responsible Data Sharing with Governments. CaLP The Cash Learning Partnership. https://www.calpnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/CaLP-Case-Study-Responsible-Data-Sharing-with-Governments.pdf

Raftree, L., & Kondakhchyan, A. (2021b, March). Data Responsibility Toolkit: A Guide for Cash and Voucher Practitioners. CaLP The Cash Learning Partnership. https://www.calpnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Data-Responsibility-Toolkit_A-guide-for-Cash-and-Voucher-Practitioners.pdf

Raftree, L., & Kondakhchyan, A. (2021c, March 21). Case study: data responsibility and digital remote targeting during Covid-19. CaLP Network, Choice & Dignity for People in Crisis. https://www.calpnetwork.org/publication/case-study-data-responsibility-and-digital-remote-targeting-during-covid-19/

Roughneen, D. (2019, June). The ethical use of images and messaging. Forced Migration Review, no. 61, 44-46. https://www.fmreview.org/ethics/roughneen

Sandvik, K. B., Jacobsen K. L. & McDonald S. M. (2018). 'Do no harm: A taxonomy of the challenges of humanitarian experimentation'. International Review of the Red Cross, 99 (1), 319–344. doi:10.1017/S181638311700042X.

Social Science Extreme Events Research Network (SSEER). (n.d), SSER Researchers Map. CONVERGE: Natural Hazards Centre - Institute of Behavioral Science. University of Boulder. Retrieved December 03, 2022, from https://converge.colorado.edu/research-networks/sseer/researchers-map/

UKAid, UKRI, IOM (2020). 'Datafication of the Humanitarian Sector: Efficacy and Ethics'. Data and Displacement WP2 - Policy Brief. Retrieved December 03, 2022, from: https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/pais/research/projects/internationalrelationssecurity/dataanddisplacement/data-displacement/news/20221109-policy_brief_datafication.pdf.

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and UNICEF. (2021). Ethical Research in Fragile and Conflict Affected Contexts: Guidelines for Applicants guide. https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/UKRI-161121-Ethical-Research-in-Fragile-and-Conflict-Affected-Contexts-Guidelines-for-Applicants.pdf

Urgence, Réhabilitation, Développement (URD). (2009). Participation Handbook for Humanitarian Field Workers. https://www.urd.org/en/publication/participation-handbook-for-humanitarian-field-workers/

Endnotes

1 The SS4CE in HA project deliverables are: Landscape report, Mapping of ethics guidelines for the application of SS4CE in HA, Mapping of Codes of conduct for the application of SS4CE in HA, Mapping of capacity development (packages, tools, resources) for the application of SS4CE in HA, including Literature and Grey Literature Review, SS4CE Competency Framework, Common Principles for Data Ethics, Data sharing and Code of conduct for the application of SS4CE in HA, Community engagement common M&E framework, CE data systems, tools, and guides desk review, and Compendium of Country Case Studies, Vision Paper on community engagement within humanitarian action (with Theory of Change)

2 The SS4CE in HA project deliverables are: Landscape report, Ethics and Data sharing mapping, Codes of conduct mapping, Capacity Development mapping, Community engagement mapping and Vision Paper.

3 For the comprehensive mapping review of existing guidelines considered see SS4CE in HA Ethics and Data Sharing mapping, 2022

4 https://www.ghdinitiative.org/ghd/gns/principles-good-practice-of-ghd/principles-good-practice-ghd.html

5 When referring to humanitarian principles, this includes IASC Operational Guidance on Data Responsibility in Humanitarian Action; research principles include UNICEF Responsible Data for children (RD4C) principles (see https://rd4c.org/). For further details on the background work for these recommended principles please see the following deliverables from the same project: Ethics and Data Sharing Mapping and Codes of Conduct) mapping.

6 IFRC fundamental principles. https://www.ifrc.org/who-we-are/international-red-cross-and-red-crescent-movement/fundamental-principles

7 Standard 3: Inclusion, Minimum quality standards and indicators in community engagement, UNICEF, 2019

8 Mugumbate et al (2020): "A collection of values and practices that people of Africa or of African origin view as making people authentic human beings. While the nuances of these values and practices vary across different ethnic groups, they all point to one thing – an authentic individual human being is part of a larger and more significant relational, communal, societal, environmental and spiritual world."

9 IFRC fundamental principles. https://www.ifrc.org/who-we-are/international-red-cross-and-red-crescent-movement/fundamental-principles

10 Ibid

11 Minimum quality standards and indicators in community engagement, UNICEF, 2019

12 https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2020-11/IASC%20Emergency%20Response%20Preparedness%20Guidelines%2C%20July%202015%20%5BDraft%20for%20field%20testing%5D.pdf

13 https://www.groundtruthsolutions.org/news/accountability-to-affected-people-is-not-a-solo-act

14 Please see Ethics and Data sharing mapping report.

15 https://kmp.hpc.tools/km/2023-hno-hrp-step-step-guidance

16 Part B, C, D provide minimum standards for the application of coordination and integration, implementation and resource mobilization that is required to ensure community engagement processes are planned, contextualized and defined. CE data processes should be clearly outlined and integrated. Minimum quality standards and indicators in community engagement, UNICEF, 2019

17 Initiatives to improve HA by recognizing unequal power dynamics between local and international organizations, and committed to change this are increasing, see for example: Pledge for Change. (2022). About us. https://pledgeforchange2030.org/about-us/

Social Sciences for Community Engagement in Humanitarian Action.

Common Principles and Code of Conduct for the Application of SS4CE in HA.

Ministério da Saúde

FIOCRUZ
Fundação Oswaldo Cruz

sonar global

SS CE
Connecting Community Engagement with Social Science in Humanitarian Contexts

Makerere University 100 1922 - 2022