



ICRC



Wilton Park

Programme

Digital Dignity in armed conflict: a roadmap for principled humanitarian action in the age of digital transformation

Monday 21 - Wednesday 23 October 2019 | WP1698

Online technology and social media networks have enabled agencies to become more effective, targeted and efficient in the delivery of humanitarian assistance and protection in conflict affected environments. The digital transformation has increased their capacity to respond more rapidly and flexibly to the needs of affected populations. This is manifested in multiple ways including the identification of early warning 'hot-spots', co-ordinated information and advocacy campaigns, registration and documentation of vulnerable persons in crisis situations, simpler and more secure cash transfers, protection including legal assistance; and increased connectivity with and amongst individuals, disrupted communities and families.

However, there are also serious risks associated with the large-scale collection and management of personal information. Conflict zones are often highly contested digital spaces and an unwitting digital footprint may exacerbate insecurity and escalate protection challenges. Misused, mishandled or misappropriated information could further damage the dignity and privacy of already vulnerable people.

The Wilton Park conference, to be held in partnership with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) will convene up to 55 experts from a range of disciplines to consider the implications of digital technology and large scale collection of personal information by humanitarian actors, for individuals affected by armed conflict.

Building on an existing body of work, including the ICRC's 2017 Handbook on Data Protection in Humanitarian Action and the December 2018 symposium on digital risks, the discussion will focus on human dignity in the context of the digital environment, with particular regard to the risks to the digital dignity of individuals and the attendant responsibilities of humanitarian agencies to 'Do No Digital Harm'.

In the context of principled humanitarian responses to conflict, and the increasing use of online technology to collect data, identify needs, and provide targeted support, the conference aims to:

- Promote ways in which digital dignity can be embedded into humanitarian practice and principles to ensure protection.
- Explore how to mitigate risk, increase safeguards, enable informed consent and promote good practice on dignity and privacy with affected individuals and communities.
- Increase awareness of the potential risks associated with data collection in a conflict environment.
- Develop recommendations for good practice, drawing on existing frameworks and international humanitarian law.
- Catalyse a new network of actors to take forward future work.

In association with:



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Federal Department of
Foreign Affairs FDFA



Norwegian Ministry
of Foreign Affairs

Monday 21 October

1300	Participants arrive and buffet lunch available
1500-1515	Welcome and introduction Julia Purcell Programme Director, Wilton Park, Steyning Thomas Ball Director, Section for Humanitarian Affairs, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oslo
1515-1645	1. Digital transformation in situations of armed conflict: risks, opportunities and unintended consequences <p>In what ways has digital transformation enabled humanitarian actors to respond more effectively in support of vulnerable individuals in conflict situations? What and where are the risks associated with the large-scale collection, storage and use of personal data in these environments? What are the particular protection risks for people sharing their data with humanitarian organisations, and how are these risks communicated? How to enable systematic informed consent? How to increase safeguards to tackle misuse and mishandling? What are the implications of profiling and predictive use on individual protection and personal liberty? How to respond to perceived 'trade-offs' between privacy, security and access to services?</p> Mark Silverman Adviser, International Committee of the Red Cross, Geneva Larissa Fast Senior Lecturer, Humanitarian Studies, Humanitarian and Conflict Response Institute, Manchester Barbara Schedler Fischer Deputy Head, Human Security Division, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Berne
1645-1730	Photograph followed by tea/coffee
1730-1845	2. Digital dignity: towards a common understanding? <p>How can different perceptions of digital dignity in conflict situations be applied in order to increase safeguards for rights? What are the ethical and legal concerns regarding personal information? What international frameworks, laws and standards should be applied? How to promote and communicate meaningful choice in situations of vulnerability eg 'individual agency', trust, ownership and informed consent? How to respond to the risk of 'over-collection' and duplication?</p> Robert Samupindi Information Management Officer, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Amman Jennifer McAvoy Director of Protection, Humanitarian Policy and Practice Team, InterAction, Washington DC
1900	Facilitators' briefing (Library)
1900	Reception followed by dinner

Tuesday 22 October

0800-0900

Breakfast

0915-1045

3. Resources, remedies and building systemic resilience

In what ways can existing mechanisms and standards be applied to incorporate digital dignity into good practice protocols for humanitarian and other actors? Where are the gaps and how to remedy? How to embed a culture of responsible data handling amongst humanitarian agencies, governments and other donors? How to preserve robust 'chains of custody' for sensitive information, eg in the context of evidence gathering and testimony? What are the particular risks of 'sub-contracting' across agencies, local actors and the private sector, and how should these be addressed?

Stuart Campo

Team Lead, Data Policy, Centre for Humanitarian Data, The Hague

Khaled Hijab

Founder and Executive Director, Tech Tribes, Amman

Caitlin Howarth

Manager and Early Warning Lead, Signal Program on Human Security and Technology, Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, Cambridge MA

1045-1115

Tea/coffee

1115-1245

4. Facts from the field: from principle to practical

How to uphold the principle of digital dignity for vulnerable persons, in fast moving and volatile environments? What are the specific challenges for humanitarian actors with regard to handling of personal information? What can governments/donors do to support good practice? Conflict zones often include highly contested digital space: what are the threats posed by disruption of critical infrastructure? And how to mitigate?

Session chair:

Matthew Wyatt

Head of Conflict, Humanitarian and Security Department, Department for International Development, London

Shashanka Saadi

Head, Emergency Preparedness and Response Programme, BRAC International, Dhaka

Mary Nunn

International Data Protection Coordinator, Médecins Sans Frontières, Geneva

1300-1400

Lunch

1400-1445

Garden tour (optional)

1500-1630

5. Digital footprint: future prospects

What are the emerging technologies that will impact on the collection and use of personal information? How to engage affected communities and individuals in the development of principled approaches to a digital footprint? How to promote privacy and anonymity by design and ensure digital investment in the protection of individuals? How to ensure future compliance with legal frameworks and other international norms in cyber space?

Session Chair:

Jon Fanzun

Special Envoy for Cyber Foreign and Security Policy, Federal Department for Foreign Affairs, Bern

Ben Ramalingam

Executive Director, Global Alliance for Learning on Adaptation and Management, Overseas Development Institute, London

Mark Latonero

Lead, Human Rights, Data and Society Research Institute, New York

Urvashi Aneja

Co-Founder and Director, Tandem Research, Goa

1630-1700

Tea/coffee

1700-1830

6. Roadmap for principled humanitarian action: respecting digital dignity in an age of transformation

Break out session - parallel groups to discuss practical recommendations and proposals

Co-facilitators:

Jonas Belina

Diplomat, Humanitarian Policy, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Bern

Emilya Cermak

Human Rights Officer, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Geneva

Christopher Dolan

Director, Refugee Law Project, Kampala

Florence Ensch

Deputy Director, Humanitarian Affairs, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Luxembourg

Markus Geisser

Senior Humanitarian Policy Adviser, International Committee of the Red Cross, London

Lara Macdonald

Policy Advisor, Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation, London

Jennifer McAvoy

Director of Protection, Humanitarian Policy and Practice Team, InterAction, Washington DC

Kjersti Sommerset

Senior Adviser, Section for Humanitarian Affairs, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oslo

1830

Facilitators' debrief meeting (Library)

1900

Reception followed by dinner

Wednesday 23 October

0800-0900

Breakfast and checkout

0915-1000

7. Recommendations and proposals: feedback from groups

1000-1045

8. A roadmap for principled humanitarian action

Responses to recommendations and potential ways forward

1045-1115

Tea/coffee

1115-1130

9. Evaluation survey

Completion of online survey

1130-1245

10. Next steps and future action

Round up and conclusions

Session chair:

Barbara Schedler Fischer

Deputy Head, Human Security Division, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Berne

1300

Lunch

1400

Participants depart