

Summary Notes: Discussion on data science and ethics within the Humanitarian Sector

Meeting Two: 1500 BST August 7th 2018

Participants: Bill Drexel, Caitlin Howarth, Daniel Scarnecchia, Eduardo Zambrano, Eleonore Fournier-Tombs, Jesper Dejby, Joseph Guay, Josje Spierings, Juliane Klatt, Justin Ginnetti, Laura Walker McDonald, Leonardo Milano, Mark Latonero, Nuno Nunes, Olivier Cecchi, Robert Trigwell, Samantha Watson, Stuart Campo, Tracey Li and Véronique Lefebvre from **Organizations:** Data & Society Research Institute, Do No Digital Harm, FlowMinder, Global Alliance for Humanitarian Innovation (GAHI), HHI Signal Programme, Impact Initiatives (REACH), IOM DTM, Leiden University, OCHA Centre for Humanitarian Data, and WFP VAM.

<p>Agenda (planned): 1) Definition of operational problem space 2) Definition of requirements – perspectives of data scientists 3) Contributions, ongoing initiatives that can provide input to this group, ongoing initiatives that can receive input from this group 4) Identify some examples from ongoing model work that would be interesting to discuss with other data scientists and ethicists Agenda (actual): 1) Participant introductions; 2) Summary of feedback from the last discussion 3) Highlighting some key discussion points around the definition of the problem space 4) The importance of peer review 5) How we are missing work from the ethics side of this discussion 6) Presenting real life case studies</p>	
<p>Overview: This second meeting was an action orientated meeting that identified some clear next steps for the group. It was evident that there needed to be a smaller more concise discussion on the objectives of this group and definition of the area that we wanted to work on. Additionally, right from the start, it was noticeable of the strong appetite to establish an operational peer review system where members of this group can run their work past their peers. The discussion also highlighted there remains a gap on the group’s knowledge of the ethic practioners and the work they are working on.</p>	<p>ACTIONS 1-3 (A1, 2 & 3): 1) establish a sub-group for better defining the operational problem space, 2) establish a sub-group for establishing a peer review mechanism and 3) do a more comprehensive mapping of the ethics work</p>
<p>Highlighting some key discussion points around the definition of the problem space: It was agreed upon that there needed to be a more specialist sub-group to discuss the problem space in more detail – people volunteered to engage. This discussion was held on August 30th, where the participants discussed what this particular group of stakeholders can do that other groups are not focusing on. The group decided to focus on better understanding the typologies of risks, and mapping the spectrum of harm related to data science activities when applied to the humanitarian sector. By mapping our activities along the spectrum of harm, and then as a group we can prioritize what we may want to focus on. Initially the breadth of the spectrum is based on the knowledge of the involved stakeholders (i.e. we currently keep it concise and driven by the current stakeholders).</p>	<p>ACTION 1 (1A): Through the sub-group, work collectively to map the spectrum of harm when talking about the overlap between data science and humanitarian work.</p>
<p>The importance of peer review: There was a strong appetite to establish an almost immediate peer review process using the expertise from the participants of this group. Therefore, on August 29th a sub-</p>	<p>ACTION 2 (2A): Through the sub-group, IOM will explore an</p>

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<p>group discussed about exploring an online repository where work can be uploaded too and commented on by peers.</p> <p>Additionally, it was discussed that we may want to develop some sort of group endorsement statement, that can then be put on reports stating it has gone through this review process e.g. “This work has been passed through a technical peer review by the members of the Humanitarian Data Science and Ethics group (URL)”. This will both legitimise the work, and also quietly advocate that peer review is vital component of research, and helps to support quality assurance, thus encouraging others to do the same.</p> <p>From the ethical review part, it was discussed that this will be raised on how to do this at the next meeting with the wider group. Submitting code / equations etc to the wider group may not make sense, so it may be more appropriate at inception stage or when more macro level discussions happen.</p>	<p>online repository where work can be reviewed and commented on. Juliane from IOM offered to research.</p>
<p><u>What type of ethics for data science are organizations involved in:</u> Like in the first meeting we discussed ethics with perspectives shared by participants, but did not collect systematic information on ethics work. We need to do a similar research into the on-going work by the ethic colleagues as this is a missing piece of the discussion.</p>	<p><u>ACTION 3)</u> To follow up and conduct a more comprehensive mapping of ethic work on this topic</p>
<p><u>Presenting real life case studies of data science practices:</u> It was discussed it may be useful to explain to the group what is the result or can be the result if we imagine combining all our different data science efforts in one country/region, e.g., Nigeria / West Africa.</p>	<p><u>ACTION 4)</u> DTM/IDMC/Flowminder to agree on country/region to present their different data science work</p>

Moving Forward

- Next Meeting, September 25th 1530pm BST. **Proposed Agenda** (please share feedback/comments/topics):
 - Update on Problem Space discussion, and short discussion about the taxonomy of harm/harm spectrum
 - Update on establishing a peer review mechanism
 - How will the ethic stakeholders engage?
 - Presentation of data science work for a specific context, e.g. Nigeria by DTM, FlowMinder and IDMC
 - AoB