

Correspondence between Protection Information Management Principles and the Signal Code Ethical Obligations for Humanitarian Information Activities

The Signal Code: Ethical Obligations for Humanitarian Information Activities (HIAs)	Protection Information Management (PIM) Principles
<p>1. Affected Population Needs Humanitarians ensure that humanitarian information activities (HIAs) are based on the needs of affected populations.</p>	<p>People-centred and inclusive: Data and information activities must be guided by the interests, well-being, and rights of the affected population and their hosts, which must participate and be included in all relevant phases. Activities must be sensitive to age, gender, and other issues of diversity.</p>
<p>2. Competency, Capacity, and Capability Humanitarians maintain minimum standards of competency, capacity and capability throughout the course of an HIA.</p>	<p>Competency and capacity: Actors engaging in data and information activities are accountable for ensuring that data and information activities are carried out by information management and protection staff who have been equipped with data and information core competencies and have been trained appropriately.</p>
<p>3. Agency of Affected Populations Humanitarians ensure and encourage the agency of affected populations throughout the course of an HIA.</p>	<p>People-centred and inclusive: Data and information activities must be guided by the interests, well-being, and rights of the affected population and their hosts, which must participate and be included in all relevant phases. Activities must be sensitive to age, gender, and other issues of diversity.</p>
<p>4. Minimize Adverse Effects Humanitarians identify and minimize adverse effects throughout the course of an HIA.</p>	<p>Do no harm: Data and information activities must include a risk assessment and take steps, if necessary, to mitigate identified risks. The risk assessment must look at negative consequences that may result from data collection and subsequent actions or service delivery for as long as the data and information activity is carried out.</p>
<p>5. Meaningful Consent Humanitarians promote and protect the dignity of populations by ensuring free and meaningful consent, and by abiding by internationally accepted human subjects research protections throughout the course of a humanitarian information activity.</p>	<p>Informed consent and confidentiality: Personal information may be collected only after informed consent has been provided by the individual in question, and that individual must be aware of the purpose of the collection. Further, confidentiality must be clearly explained to the individual before the information may be collected.</p>
<p>6. Ensure Data Privacy and Security Humanitarians ensure data privacy and security at every stage of an HIA.</p>	<p>Data responsibility, protection, and security: Data responsibility goes beyond data privacy and data protection. It entails a set of principles, purposes,⁴ and processes that seek to guide humanitarian work and leverage data to improve affected populations and their hosts' lives in a responsible manner while adhering to international standards of data protection and data security. Data and information activities must adhere to international law and standards of data protection and data security. Persons of concern have a right to have their data protected according to international data protection standards.</p>

<p>7. Reduce Future Vulnerability Humanitarians ensure that humanitarian information activities strive to reduce future vulnerability and neither degrade nor disrupt local capacity.</p>	<p>Not explicitly mentioned in PIM principles, however, it is included in the PIM/OCHA -led <i>Framework for Data Sharing in Practice</i> (http://pim.guide/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Framework-for-Data-Sharing-in-Practice.pdf) as:</p> <p>Assess current and potential future context:</p> <p>Examine the context (social, political, and security environments) from an information and data sharing perspective. Carefully consider future and possible changes in scenarios that could affect benefits and risks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware that data collected for a specific purpose may be used in the future for another purpose and that data may become more sensitive over time, depending on how it is used or how the security and political context evolves. • Jointly agree and document an intended time frame for which the data or information to be shared may be used. • Plan to periodically review whether information or data needs changed from the original purpose for which the data was collected. If so, a new purpose may need to be jointly defined and applied.
<p>8. Coordination Humanitarians coordinate, ensure complementarity, and prevent duplication of efforts in designing and implementing HIAs.</p>	<p>Coordination and collaboration: All actors implementing data and information activities must adhere to the principles noted above and promote the broadest collaboration and coordination of data and information internally between humanitarian actors and externally, with and among other stakeholders. To the extent possible, data and information activities must avoid the duplication of other data and information activities and instead build upon existing efforts and mechanisms.</p>
<p>9. Transparent and Accountable Humanitarians are transparent and accountable throughout the course of an HIA.</p>	<p>Impartiality: All steps of the data and information cycle must be undertaken in an objective, impartial, and transparent manner while identifying and minimizing bias.</p> <p>Also, 9. Is linked to “Defined purpose”, as one cannot be transparent and accountable if the purpose of HIA is not clearly defined.</p>
	<p>Defined purpose: Given the sensitive and often personal nature of protection information, data and information activities must serve specific information needs and purposes. The purpose must be clearly defined and communicated; proportional to both the identified risk and costs vis-à-vis the expected response; and aimed at action for protection outcomes, including the sharing and coordination of protection data and information.</p>

- *Signal Code Obligations* : https://hhi.harvard.edu/sites/hwpi.harvard.edu/files/humanitarianinitiative/files/signal_obligations_final_05.24.2018.pdf?m=1606847511
- *PIM Principles*: <http://pim.guide/guidance-and-products/product/principles-protection-information-management-may-2015/>