Outcomes: Negotiating with Leaders

How is data supporting decision-making in humanitarian response? Participants contributed their perspectives during the Nairobi Data Skills Workshop co-hosted by IFRC and the Centre for Humanitarian Data (Humanitarian Data Exchange). This handout includes the input from the session. This outcome handout is a companion to the Negotiating with Leaders [Session Plan 5]. We recommend using this document as a guidance to build a common language. After the session is completed, this document might be an aid to drive further conversation. These are a summary of considerations and talking points to guide conversations around data readiness and/or specific information products/tools with decision-makers.

KEY QUESTIONS

- **Useful:** What data do you consider useful to inform response?
- **Types of Data:** How do decision-makers use data? How can data be better communicated in order to reach its full potential?
- **Local Capacity:** How do you invest in local capacity and facilitate local ownership of data? Or, what needs to be done to increase local ownership?
- **Consensus and Negotiation:** How do we reach agreement on data to set priorities for decision-making?

OUTCOMES

Participants have a better understanding of the intended use of data. Data quality, sustainability and use can be enhanced when sharing and building capacity and facilitate local ownership.

Group 1 - Confusion/Knowledge gaps
Group 2 - Challenges in systems/new tech /processes
Group 3 - Trust, Accuracy, Bias, Quality
Group 4 - Security, Legal, Privacy

Confusion and Knowledge Gaps
- Use terminology that they know
- Human, non-technical language
- Use metaphors to show how the system works
- Explain quality and process clearly cost/benefit
- Focus on the end product
- Manage expectations on timelines
- Explain timelines, be realistic
- Data democratization "empower"
- Never over promise
- Prioritization, we want to explain
- Use 3 points - simplify and summarize in headlines
- Demonstrate - learn by doing, walk inside the data

Systems, new tools, and processes

Challenges
- Non-technical people
- Budget
- New systems do not work
- Does not like change
- Technology vs. transparency
- Simple vs. complex emergency

Solutions
- Talk their language
- Have parallel new vs. old systems running
- Prove added value (cost, effectiveness, reliability)
- Compatibility/interoperability
- Seek 'wins'

Trust, bias, accuracy, and quality

Challenges
- Data not accurate
- Data sources and reputation
- Data reliability
- Data collection methodologies
- Data verification
- Access to raw data
- Lack of data standards
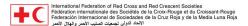- Data representation

Solutions
- Agreeing on a pre-crisis baseline
- Data triangulation
- Solid pre-crisis assessment registry
- Share data
- Include metadata
- Advocacy
- Awareness on how data can be used
- Engage in data preparation
- Do not wait until disaster
- Agree on standards
- Information Managers and Disaster Managers collaborate more closely
- Reinforced analysis
- creative/proactive

Security and Privacy

Challenges
- hacking/accidental release
- Unintentional use / Breach of sensitive data

- Data manipulation
- lack of awareness or tools or processes for security and/or privacy

Solutions
- ICT user restrictions
- Dedicated server
- Regular system security checks
- Documented access protocol
- Relevant data only
- Considerations about sensitivity (ethnicity, geo location, and GBV)
- Data sensitivity assessment
- Clear procedures on public, restricted, and secret data
- Availability of data policy
- Updated standard operating procedures
- Checklists
- Training
- Data ownership
- Data sharing agreements
- Informed consent understood and used for all activities
- Information provided on voluntary basis
- Protocol for destruction/storage policies
- Data sharing agreements
- Protection of confidentiality

FEEDBACK FROM OPERATIONAL MANAGERS
- Information management (IM) can drive us forward
- Sometimes we need to be more technical to improve our leadership
- How to do an assessment - this is something that every IM should do, it will improve your data
- Be confident if you are giving me the data, I need to trust you
- Ask questions, ask the right questions
- If something works, OPs managers will be reluctant to change it because it saves lives
- Fine tune your argument to convince managers
- Be good in advocacy
- Be convincing
- Go on an operational assessment mission to learn about secondary data
- Impose yourself to go as they might not understand IM, you will have to convince them
- Help us to understand
- In the field, you will obtain valuable experience which will improve your data workflow - how to collect, what to collect
- We need your skills, M&E skills are needed during the project too, not just after to meet the data needs of the project
- Keep asking questions, put your info and your argument in a nice package, produce clear and accessible content that recognizes the context
- "Be more involved' in every scenario