

Reporting by Session Note-takers at the 2019 Annual Consultations with NGOs

Date:	3 July 2019
Session Title:	Data Protection
Moderator:	Alexander Beck (UNHCR)
UNHCR focal point:	Alexander Beck
NGO focal point:	Laura Boone (IRC)
Major points arising from speakers and discussions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need to build awareness at all levels so that staff of humanitarian organizations and beneficiaries understand the importance of data protection. • Given the potential extremely harmful consequence for the beneficiaries concerned of non-compliance with data protection principles it is essential to maintain a clear accountability framework and to ensure transparency concerning the purposes of processing and actors with whom data is shared. • Data protection needs to be underpinned by a mandatory ethical framework, guided by the principles of purpose specification, informed consent and 'need to know' in order to ensure "do no harm". • There is a need for more shared and common tools, especially for supporting smaller partners increasingly burdened with requirements they find hard to meet. If you get data protection right, you have more cost-effective programming, you get more effective analysis, etc. 	
Recommendations/Conclusions/Decisions on the way forward	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on implementation of data protection / privacy principles. There is a need for more programmatic approaches to this in general and to bridge the disconnect between global policies and field level practice, to make the principles reality through very practical steps. Many NGOs need: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Training for their staff on data protection principles and practice; ○ Tools for improving data security including risk / impact assessments - IT expertise is costly and not accessible by many small NGOs. They should be provided with guidelines and best practices, and effective support tools/mechanisms in this area which could be built into common toolkits to be shared (community of practice among NGOs?). ○ Introduce the 'privacy by design and by default' concept and ensure involving the right stakeholders, beyond IT and/or Law. • All actors are also encouraged to make use of the ICRC/BPH (Brussels Privacy Hub) Handbook on Data protection in humanitarian action (2nd edition forthcoming): https://www.icrc.org/en/handbook-data-protection-humanitarian-action. 	
Top two quotes from the session	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data protection is about the fundamental right to privacy, it is about individuals we are supposed to serve and protect. • If you get data protection right, you get many other things right. • If you think someone is asking for too much data, push back! 	
Any general points regarding UNHCR-NGO partnerships	
N/A	