UNDERSTANDING DATA STANDARDS

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Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

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Standards are:

a criteria, a method, a model, a pattern, a template, or a framework to help assess and make judgements on quality and accuracy.

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Why do data standards matter?

Data Standards exist across the humanitarian space. Examples of their use include: indicators, reporting, measuring, survey design, financial management, data analysis, audit, and more.

Types of Data Platforms at IFRC

Federation-Wide Databank and Reporting System (FDRS)

- The Federation-wide Databank and Reporting System (FDRS) provides data insights on the world's largest humanitarian organization. Each National Societies reports on key indicators. Take a look - http://data.ifrc.org/fdrs

GO - Global Operations Platform

- IFRC Go aims to make all disaster information universally accessible and useful to IFRC responders for better decision making. See data about emergencies and deployments across all the regions - http://data.ifrc.org/fdrs

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Indicators and Reporting

One of the main types of data standards at IFRC is - the numbers reported in relation to an indicator.

Example: how many volunteers were engaged at IFRC this year? (View the data here: http://data.ifrc.org/fdrs)

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Indicators and Reporting

We report on indicators to help us achieve our goals. They help us measure our activities and services against our priorities.

Example: how many disasters and which types of emergencies did IFRC respond? (View the data here: https://go.ifrc.org/)

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Indicators and Reporting

We can use common types of data to assess and to compare our work.

Example: how many typhoons or hurricanes did IFRC respond in 2012? (View the data here: https://go.ifrc.org/)

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Why do Standards Matter

Standardization can help ensure that our data is compatible and comparable between different actors thus allowing for the internal and external actors to realise mutual gains.

Standardisation should be more about using similar or convertible metrics (as opposed to using the same tools) to ensure and easier comparability and aggregation and analysis of data.

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Benefits of Standards

- Measuring our reach, our leadership and success.
- Identifying gaps and needs
- Be more accountable to communities and to each other
- Be more transparent
- Compare, share, and coordinate our work
- Inform and collaborate with other humanitarian organizations.

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Other Data Standards

Data Sharing in humanitarian action is complex. There are two types of standards used:

HXL

- The Humanitarian Exchange Language (HXL) is a simple standard created to improve information sharing during a humanitarian crisis without adding extra reporting burdens. http://hxlstandard.org/

IATI

- The International Aid Transparency Index (IATI) Standard is a way to allow data to be compared. Key uses include financial and programmatic results reporting. http://iatistandard.org/

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Discussion

Standards save lives by addressing the time sensitivity of response, provide the potential to prevent rework or duplication, affect community engagement, and improve the quantity and quality of distribution. Often humanitarians don't have the time to talk with each other and fix the data workflows in the middle of an emergency. The risk is that the quality of the response cannot be assessed because we do not know what we distributed.

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THANK YOU

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