

THE CENTRE FOR HUMANITARIAN DATA

Connecting people and data to improve lives



OCHA

DECEMBER 2016

Overview

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The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is establishing a Centre for Humanitarian Data in the Netherlands. It will be operational by early 2017 for an initial three years.

The Centre's mission is to increase the use and impact of data in the humanitarian sector. The vision is to create a future where all people involved in a humanitarian situation have access to the data they need, when and how they need it, to make responsible and informed decisions.

The Centre will support humanitarian partners and OCHA staff in the field and at headquarters with their data efforts. It will be part of the city of The Hague's Humanity Hub, a dedicated building for organizations working on data and innovation in the social sector. The location offers OCHA and partners a new, neutral setting where a hybrid culture can be created around data collaboration.

The Centre is a key contribution towards the Secretary-General's Agenda for Humanity under core commitment four -- changing the way we work to end need. The Centre's activities will accelerate the changes required for the humanitarian system to become data driven.

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HDX and the new Centre are a leading innovation in the trustworthy use of data for humanitarian outcomes. They are a tremendous example of putting the principles of trust, accountability and action into practice.

-Bill Hoffman, World Economic Forum

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Objectives

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The Centre will have four objectives:

- 1 -

Increase the interoperability of humanitarian data through shared standards and integrated systems.

- 2 -

Increase the trust and cooperation across organizations sharing data in humanitarian response.

- 3 -

Increase the capability of people to access and use data in support of humanitarian efforts.

- 4 -

Engage existing and new partners in data problem-solving and awareness-raising.

Principles

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The Center will adhere to the following high-level principles:

Human-centered



We will use a human-centered design approach to our activities. We exist to help people use data more effectively to improve lives and reduce suffering. All user groups will be considered when designing solutions, products and services.

Open



The Centre will be open to collaboration with a wide variety of partners, including through shared working spaces, where feasible. Software and standards will be open source with all code made available in public repositories and supported through developer communities. Data will be open to the extent that partners wish for it to be open and as long as it does not infringe on the privacy or security of individuals.

Networked



The Centre will not be ‘the centre’ of anything but part of a network of data-focused partners. Entities with a comparative advantage in specific fields will be asked to lead aspects of the work rather than trying to do everything ourselves. We will seek expertise across disciplines and industries to ensure that we are understanding problems and solutions from different perspectives.

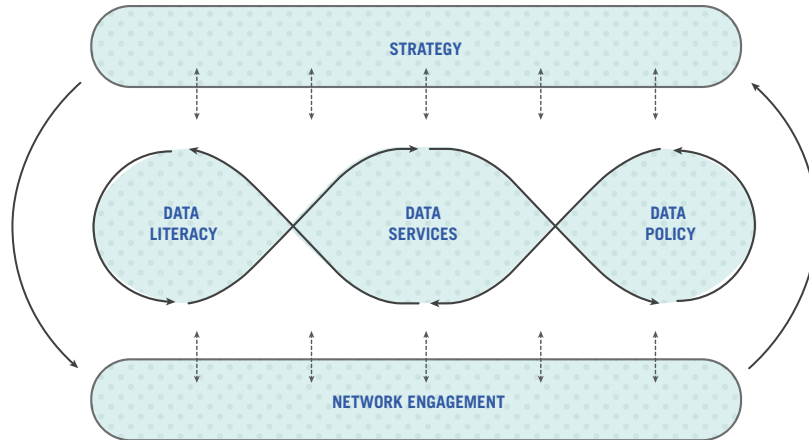
Agile



The Centre will be run with a start-up mindset. We will adapt to demand and new innovations. Projects will be developed in an incremental and iterative manner. We will be flexible in our approach to delivering on our mission and objectives.

Focus Areas

The Centre will focus its activities across four areas: 1) data services; 2) data policy; 3) data literacy; and 4) network engagement. The Centre will also have an internal focus on strategy.



Data Services



The Centre's data services work will include: a) direct management of the Humanitarian Data Exchange and support to other platforms; b) data standards adoption, including for the Humanitarian Exchange Language and the International Aid Transparency Initiative; and c) data visualization and reporting.

Data Literacy



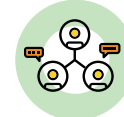
The Centre will offer in-person and remote training programmes for technical and non-technical users of data. The Centre will also manage a data fellows programme that will place data scientists and design researchers in partner organizations and OCHA offices to work alongside staff to build capacity.

Data Policy



The Centre will lead OCHA's data policy work and offer support to partners on using data responsibly. Safeguarding privacy and ensuring sensitive data is handled appropriately are critical issues for the humanitarian community as it becomes more data driven.

Network Engagement

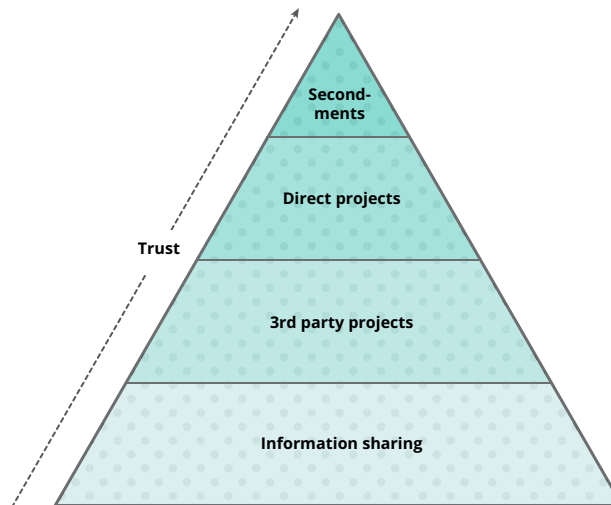


The Centre will further build and engage an active community in support of its mission and objectives. We will do this by creating physical and virtual spaces to work together on data challenges and creating a transparent collaboration model for people, organizations and companies to engage with us.

Collaboration Model

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There will be a number of ways for partners to collaborate with the Centre. This includes information sharing, projects and placement of staff into the Centre. The level of trust increases as the collaboration becomes more direct.



Collaboration examples include:

Level 1

An individual visits the Centre website to find out about community projects and to learn about upcoming events and trainings.

Level 2

An organization shares information with the Centre about a project that needs support and the Centre connects the organization with a partner who can help.

Level 3

A data manager in the field contacts the Centre with a request to clean data and build a visualization and the Centre creates a project, team and timeline to deliver on the request.

Level 4

An organization wants to support the Centre's data science activities and seconds a staff member for 6 months to work on a range of activities in The Hague.

Timeline

The Centre is a work in progress. We expect it to be operational by the first or second quarter of 2017. The exact timing is dependent on the finalization of legal and financial agreements. You can get the latest updates on our timeline through the Centre's website: centre.humdata.org

2016

MAY 2016

World Humanitarian Summit

OCHA and the Netherlands [announced](#) their intention to establish a new Centre for Humanitarian Data in The Hague as a concrete commitment towards the [Agenda for Humanity](#).

OCTOBER 2016

Design Workshop in The Hague

Over forty partners came together to give feedback on the Centre's business plan and to explore areas of collaboration.

NOVEMBER 2016

Design Workshop in New York

Over twenty-five partners met to think through various aspects of the Centre's business plan and to explore areas of collaboration.

2017

MARCH 2017

Centre for Humanitarian Data in The Hague

An initial team is based in The Hague to set up the Centre and begin working with partners.

AUGUST 2017

The Humanity Hub Opens

The city of The Hague establishes the Humanity Hub, a collaborative space for groups working on data and innovation in the social sector.

OCTOBER 2017

Official Launch of the Centre

Public event to formally launch the Centre for Humanitarian Data within the Humanity Hub in The Hague.

Contact

Send feedback or questions to hdx@un.org or [@humdata](https://twitter.com/humdata). We look forward to hearing from you.