

# RESPONSIBLE DATA MANAGEMENT

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING THIS TRAINING PACK  
FOR HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATIONS ON  
MANAGING PROGRAMME DATA



OXFAM

# INTRODUCTION

Managing data properly may be the greatest challenge of the information age. We now have more ways to collect, store, share, transmit, analyse and publish data than ever before. As new legal frameworks emerge and increasing attention is paid to the ethics of data management, humanitarian organizations are adopting new policies on how to manage data responsibly.

But policy alone is not enough; we need to *practise* responsible data management (RDM), and in many cases, change our organizational culture, individual attitudes and behaviour as to how we handle data.

This training pack has been developed to help introduce the principles of RDM, the planning processes that can be used, and to examine how we might handle unexpected issues that arise in different contexts. There are no hard-and-fast answers –

the materials have been designed as tools to encourage discussion and debate, and to be adapted as required.

They have at their heart the people affected by crises who we are trying to assist – people who are often at particularly vulnerable points in their lives. Poor data management can cause them harm. But when used sensitively and appropriately, the information we collect – their stories, perspectives and experiences – can help bring about tremendous positive change.

A child at a tap stand in Hassansham camp around 50km east of Mosul, Iraq.  
Tegid Cartwright/Oxfam



Children play in a river  
near an abandoned  
farm building, Iraq.  
Tommy Trenchard/  
Oxfam



# HOW TO USE THIS TRAINING PACK

To use this pack, trainers will need to have good knowledge of RDM issues and practices, and to familiarize themselves with the materials and topic in advance. There are links to further resources at the end of this booklet and at [www.oxfam.org.uk/responsibledata](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/responsibledata). Trainers should

also draw on their own organization's experts and data management policies.

All the materials in this pack, including editable versions of the customizable resources, can be downloaded and printed from [www.oxfam.org.uk/responsibledata](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/responsibledata).

## PLANNING A TRAINING SESSION

This pack can be used in different ways. All the activities can be combined to run a full-day training session specifically on RDM, supplemented by presentations from data management experts. Alternatively, they can be incorporated into other events. For example, the *Agree or disagree?* activity can be

used alone as a short introduction to the principles of RDM.

As this pack covers a wide range of RDM issues, you can select cards and scenarios that meet your specific needs, or use the blank cards or printable online versions to write your own.

## INTRODUCING THE TOPIC

We recommend that you start your training session with a short opening presentation. An example PowerPoint presentation can be found at [www.oxfam.org.uk/responsibledata](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/responsibledata).

If your organization has its own Responsible Data Policy, you may want to start by presenting that to participants.



Syrian refugees pick tomatoes at an informal refugee settlement, Jordan. Sam Tarling/Oxfam

## DEFINING RESPONSIBLE DATA MANAGEMENT

RDM focuses on treating the people whose data we manage with respect and dignity, and ensuring that we always act in their best interests. Data can be any kind of information about the individuals and communities that we work with: survey responses, registration information, photos, analysis, charts, etc. Some technical measures can be taken to protect data, such as password protection and encryption.

We also need to ensure that we are engaging communities in the process of data collection and usage as much as possible, without inadvertently putting people at risk.

It is important that we think about RDM throughout the whole lifecycle of the data. You can find out more about this in the enclosed leaflet, *Using the Data Lifecycle to Manage Data Responsibly*.

# THE ACTIVITIES



## 1. AGREE OR DISAGREE?

This activity introduces the key principles of RDM. You can adapt it according to the number of participants, time and space available.

- Hand out the cards to individuals, pairs or small groups to discuss for a few minutes, then ask them to feed back to the whole group.
- You could also put 'Agree' and 'Disagree' signs at opposite ends of the room and ask participants to stand in a line between the two, choosing their position according to how much they agree or disagree with each statement. Ask participants why they have decided to stand in certain places.

## 2. MAKING A PLAN

This activity guides participants through the process of making a data management plan, using a matrix that they can complete together. Example scenarios for the matrix are included in this booklet on page 7, but you can also use real scenarios that have been planned or implemented by your organization. The matrix (see page 6) can be copied onto a flip chart, and/or printed/photocopied and handed out. It is best used in small groups.

- Draw the matrix onto a flip chart, and/or hand out copies. Write your chosen scenario in the central box.

- Using the enclosed leaflet, *Using the Data Lifecycle to Manage Data Responsibly* for reference, ask participants to describe how they will carry out each stage of the process in line with the principles of RDM, and their own organization's relevant policies and standards.
- The process isn't linear, so encourage participants to draw arrows to link related stages.

## MAKING A PLAN: MATRIX

What is your <b>purpose</b> ? What are you going to do with the data?	What <b>methods/tools</b> will you use to collect the data?		
How will you get informed consent?	<b>SCENARIO</b>	Who will you collaborate with?	
How will you train your team? How will you involve the community?	What are the risks and how will you manage them?		
What measures will you take when you do the following with the data?			
Transfer	Access	Store	Share
How will you feed back to communities?	How will you <b>retain/archive/dispose</b> of the data?		

## MAKING A PLAN: EXAMPLE SCENARIOS

Here are some general scenarios that can be adapted for use in the *Making a plan* activity. You could also ask participants for their own scenarios, or draw on discussions from earlier activities. For a really effective session, draw on real data collection tasks that your organization is currently planning.

### PUBLIC CAMPAIGN

You want to help people experiencing serious human rights abuses have their 'voices' heard by global decision makers, to mobilize action to improve the situation.

### ASSESSMENT

You are carrying out an assessment in a remote, conflict-affected community, in order to decide whether and how your organization might work there.

Child's feet during class, Nairobi, Kenya.  
Sam Tarling/Oxfam



### MONITORING

You are developing a system for monitoring the impact of an aid programme in a highly insecure location.



### REGISTRATION

You are setting up a cash-based programme and need to register hundreds of people who are going to receive cash assistance.

### POLICY REPORT

You are publishing a report on the conditions required for displaced people to return to their homes. The report will be launched at a global donor pledging conference.

### 3. WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF...?

This activity helps participants to think through the actions they should take when problems and issues arise.

- Give the cards out to individuals, pairs or groups, depending on the time available and the number of participants.
- Ask participants to discuss, then feed back to the whole group.
- You might want to ask participants to structure their answers around key questions such as:
  - Which principles or standards are relevant to this situation?
  - Which resources (e.g. people, policies, guidelines, etc.) might help you decide what to do?
  - What can you do to stop this situation arising again, or be better prepared in future?



#### TRAINING TIP

Given the breadth of knowledge required to respond to all the issues that are likely to arise, it may be helpful to create a '**parking lot**' for issues where you need to follow up, or ask colleagues with specific expertise to advise you/answer participants' questions.



# RDM RESOURCES

## GENERAL BACKGROUND

ICRC: *Professional Standards for Protection Work* (Chapter 6)  
<https://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/other/icrc-002-0999.pdf>

(Currently in English and French.  
2017 edition will be published in  
French, Spanish, Arabic and Russian)

Responsible Data Forum:  
*Shooting Our Hard Drive into Space and Other Ways to Promote Responsible Data Management*  
[https://responsibledata.io/  
ways-to-practise-responsible  
-development-data/](https://responsibledata.io/ways-to-practise-responsible-development-data/)

PIM: Protection Information Management (A website hosting resources to enable the coordination, design and delivery of protection responses)  
<http://pim.guide/>

## FURTHER GUIDANCE

Security in-a-box: Digital Security Tools and Tactics  
<https://securityinabox.org/en/>

The Cash Learning Partnership:  
*Protecting Beneficiary Privacy*  
[http://www.cashlearning.org/  
downloads/calp-beneficiary  
-privacy-web.pdf](http://www.cashlearning.org/downloads/calp-beneficiary-privacy-web.pdf)

## REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Oxfam's Responsible Data Policy  
<http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/oxfam-responsible-program-data-policy-575950>

Oxfam's Mobile Survey Toolkit  
<http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/mobile-survey-toolkit-617456>

## USEFUL ORGANIZATIONS

UK Anonymization Network  
<http://ukanon.net/>

Information Commissioners Office (ICO)  
<https://ico.org.uk/>



A woman carrying kitchen utensils,  
IDP camp Kindjandi, Diffa region,  
Niger. Vincent Tremeau/Oxfam

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Your feedback is very welcome. To comment or request further information, please email [ictinprogramme@oxfam.org](mailto:ictinprogramme@oxfam.org)

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Cover photo: A group of women walking in a refugee camp in Diffa, Niger.  
Vincent Tremeau/Oxfam



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