DS reflection #1

The value of personal data has increased dramatically throughout the years, but in the meantime the usage and the application of collective data vary in countries. Organizations, researchers and companies in developed countries tend to employ reflective, practical tools to manipulate real-life problems and enjoy the benefit from the “data revolution”. While people in some developing countries, with lower access to well-equipped mobile devices, can barely understand financial services.1 Thus, insightful researchers and entrepreneurs have started to solve humanitarian problems with their fruitful data source.

I agree with Anna’s argument that good intend is not enough when determining those kinds of critical global problems. However, for most corporations that good intend is the start and the fundamental spirit of humanitarian acts. It should be more worthwhile to study scientific approaches to increase life standard rather than debate whether a good intend is adequate for companies to help people who suffer food shortage.

The transparency element put forward by Nira is quite ‘seductive’ in the digital world, since ordinary people and researchers would gain more information about the activities concerning international developments. However, many pitfalls remain in latency. First of all, the data acquired might be misleading because new types of data collection are sometimes biased3 and need to be validated. 4 Someone would take advantage of the data along with the data collection methods that researchers and companies might suffer tremendous loss in time and money.5 Another typical question to worry is the security problem originated in the transparency of data. Increasing in openness of data in both data based & human based issues can lead to correlational data leaking. As we have mentioned earlier, a good intend is vital for humanitarian aids. Wicked companies could easily manipulate the data to impose specific regulations, insurance rate for instance, to gain profit in stead of promoting international developments.

We can effortlessly anticipate that there would be obstacles like this during the progression of application, but the passion towards the newly adapted humanitarian approaches using digital data should not snub out. Solutions always surpass questions. If a good intend is the key to open the door of this innovative revolution, collaboration is then considered to be the golden path towards the common good. 6A ‘balancing act’ might be difficult, but so long as more and more followers stand out to consummate, challenges can change into chances.

Reference from Article “Don’t forget people in the use of big data for development.” Joshua Blumenstock. Nature: Sept. 10, 2018.

1. For instance, a 2015 study in Rwanda found that only 51% of borrowers were aware of the interest rate they were being charged.
2. Studies from the past couple of years show that related approaches can be used to generate high-resolution maps of crop yields and childhood malnutrition.
3. 3. When tools are trained on biased or patchy data, those who are poorly represented are often marginalized.
4. 4. New sources of data should complement, not replace, old ones. Conventional data sets are essential to calibrate and validate big-data applications.

5. But people soon caught on, to the point at which some would pretend to live in a thatched structure adjacent to their main iron-roofed house to become eligible for the aid.

6. As are the Data for Development challenges: in 2012 and 2014, the Paris-based phone company Orange made troves of data available to researchers all around the world, which enabled early work on poverty mapping and urban planning.