Crisis Information Management Advisory Group (CiMAG) Retreat
New York, 8 - 9 June 2015

Agenda

Venue:
One UN New York,
Diplomat Ballroom
One United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017

Overview and background

On 12 January 2010, a devastating earthquake struck Haiti. An estimated three million people were affected by the quake. Death toll estimates range from 100,000 to about 160,000. On 25 April this year, an earthquake that hit Nepal and neighbouring regions killed more than 7,000 people and injured more than twice as many. Hundreds of thousands of people were made homeless with entire villages flattened, across many districts of Nepal. Sudden onset disasters will continue to occur, highlighting the enduring need for disaster risk reduction, community resilience and enhanced collaboration and coordination amongst multiple agencies. Five years after the earthquake in Haiti, much has changed in the world of humanitarian response. From participants involved in search and rescue operations to what is today an emphasis on communications – and its fullest restoration - as an essential part of vital post-disaster needs, humanitarian relief and response is today very different to what it was just a few years ago, a change brought about largely by the advent, adoption and adaptation of web, Internet and mobile technologies by the UN family as well as a larger, global commons.

Nowhere was this change more evident in the UN than in its institutional response to Ebola. UNMEER was set up as a temporary measure to meet immediate needs related to the unprecedented fight against Ebola on 19 September 2014, after the unanimous adoption of General Assembly resolution 69/1, and the adoption of Security Council resolution 2177 (2014) on the Ebola outbreak. Colleagues in the UN, involved with UNMEER, have noted how the response dissolved boundaries between UN member states, UN agencies and departments, INGOs and the larger crisis-mapping communities. What were default and deeply ingrained modes of thinking and institutional response five years ago, during the Haiti earthquake relief efforts, have dramatically changed in a relatively short span of time. No longer is information hoarding, an unwillingness to collaborate, a resistance around coordination and the citation of technological impediments to more effective and efficient response mechanisms valid arguments or excuses for national governments, the UN system and civil society. First responders, often from the affected communities themselves, have the power to locate, inform, record, archive and disseminate

information critical to humanitarian response, forging new ways for the UN to harvest actionable intelligence from the glut of information, from the hyper-local to the national, after a large scale disaster.

Enduring questions over the capacity of the UN to more fully embrace, and help progressively inform, what is today a new humanitarian and emergency response landscape. Accordingly, this year's Crisis Information Management Advisory Group (CiMAG) meeting with focus on,

1. Review of progress in implementing the UN SG CiMS; Discussion of special concerns and proposals by CiMAG members.

2. An introspection of the UNMEER / UB Ebola response, e.g. the use of HXL and the principles of CiM

3. A retrospection of CiM efforts of the UN since Haiti 5 years ago, ending with UNMEER, to understand what's changed and what remain key challenges.

4. Moving forward, how geospatial assets within the UN (including for example new UAV imagery) can be better leveraged within the UN system writ large

As the group deliberates these issues, the following questions will be used for guidance and focus,

1. What are the most significant changes around aid delivery and response since Haiti, five years ago, with a focus on technology?

2. What are the potential opportunities of embracing these technologies more fully, and what are the pitfalls and challenges?

3. The rhetoric of saving lives masks enduring and deep-seated challenges around coordination and collaboration. What real progress has been made, if any, around information management during crises – and what technologies, if any, have helped?

4. Going from institutional resistance a few years ago, a more progressive culture has infused the UN family with a new outlook around how best to react and respond more efficiently and effectively to crises. However, rapid iteration and failing fast, though desirable over ossified architectures and responses, also brings with it institutional and reputational costs. How can the UN embrace innovation, which is inherently in flux, and at the same time institutionalise, for more systemic adoption, scalability and sustainability, agile, responsive mechanisms and technologies?

5. The UN SG's Rights Up Front initiative aims to drive and deliver a comprehensive rights based approach to the early detection of and effective, institutional responses to complex political emergencies. The information sharing and collaboration required mirrors CiMAG's discussions on humanitarian emergencies. What can be done to ensure IM responds, to the fullest extent possible, the needs of all actors in the UN system, as well as beyond?

This year we are planning a special briefing session at the end of the retreat with the top Management of the UN Secretariat, to report on and discuss our findings and recommendations in moving forward.

Agenda

8th June, Monday

08.00 – 08.30	Breakfast
08.30 – 09.00	Opening, Welcome and comments by Mr. Daniel Stauffacher, President, ICT4Peace Foundation
	Welcome by Ambassador Per Thöresson (Sweden)
	Welcome and Keynote by ASG UN CITO Ms. Atefeh Riazi,
09.00 - 09.45	Keynote by Dr. David Nabarro, Q&A
09.45 – 11.00	Ten-minute 'ignite' presentations on progress around the CiM strategy and strategic emergency and humanitarian responses by UN actors, in particular on recent Ebola response activities, if relevant. (Moderated by Sanjana Hattotuwa, ICT4Peace Foundation)

1. WHO
2. OCHA
3. DFS
4. UNICEF
5. UNDP
6. OICT
7. DPKO
8. UNHCR
9. UNOCC
10. UNOSAT / UNITAR
11. UN OHCHR
12. Global Pulse
13. DPI

11.00 – 11.15	Coffee break
11.15 – 12.45	Comments and outcome oriented responses to presentations and updates by UN CiMAG members, including specific issues and projects not covered in presentations. (Moderated by Sanjana Hattotuwa, ICT4Peace Foundation)
12.45 – 13.45	Lunch break
13.45 – 15.45	Special Remarks by ASG Peter Jan Graaff, (on behalf of UN Chef de Cabinet, Ebola Crisis Manager for Liberia.

Ten-minute 'ignite' presentations on progress around the CiM strategy and strategic emergency and humanitarian responses by,

1. DataPop Alliance
2. NetHope
3. World Bank
4. MapAction

5.　CDC
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　　　　　　　　　　7.　MapAction

15.45 – 16.00　　　Coffee break

16.00 – 17.00　　　Comments and outcome oriented responses to presentations, including specific issues and projects not covered in presentations. (Moderated by Sanjana Hattotuwa, ICT4Peace Foundation)

17.00 – 17.15　　　Concluding remarks by OICT & ICT4Peace Foundation

17.30 -　　　　　　Cocktail Invitation (location to be determined)

9th June, Tuesday

08.00 – 08.30　　　Breakfast

08.30 – 08.45　　　Welcome and comments by ICT4Peace Foundation followed by topline presentation of first day's discussions and challenges

08.45 – 10.30　　　**Group discussion:** It's been five years since the earthquake in Haiti, and actors outside the UN including but not limited to the Digital Humanitarian Network, Crisismappers and even Facebook, Google and other large web companies are part of a complex web of institutional response to crises. Interestingly, the apps, services and platforms of leading Internet, web and mobile chat companies are used by communities themselves to ascertain needs, find loved ones and exchange vital information. In Nepal, we have seen the likes of Facebook and Apple donating millions of dollars of aid, and leveraging the millions of registered users on their respective platforms to support aid efforts. Companies like Google now set up their own people finder platforms. The UAViators network brings together many disparate groups and individuals flying UAVs in support of aid, as well as disaster journalism. The DHN and crisismappers are now mature, 24/7 operations relied upon by sections of the UN. What has this progress resulted in? Is it more chaotic today as a consequence of these actors or is the aid and response landscape that much easier to engage with as a consequence of these large groups and platforms at play? What is the future of UN, crisis-mappers and corporate entity collaboration and coordination? Controversially perhaps, has the UN ceded some of its mandate in terms of first response to a more diverse, global as well as hyper-local set of actors, bound together by their use of technology? What is the future of collaboration around disasters?

　　　　　　　　　Moderator Mark Dalton, OCHA

10.30 – 10.45　　　Coffee break

10.45 – 12.30　　　**Group discussion:** What's on the horizon? Commitments and tangible outcomes to push forward CIM strategy, anchored to, *inter alia* UNMEER the 'Performance Peacekeeping' report by DFS/DPKO, UNOCC's on-going work,

Open and Big Data, data science, digital humanitarians/V&TC community engagement, the development of HXL, mapping and verification.

Discussion led by Kim Roberson, UNHCR

12.30 – 13.30   Lunch break

13.30 – 15.00   **Group discussion:** What are the key learnings from the discussions over two days, and what are the key points that must be communicated to senior UN leadership? What are the drivers of change that can be called upon to accelerate the support by senior UN leadership of efforts already underway to re-imagine aid delivery and design? How can the benefits of the strategic adoption and adaptation of technology be communicated to senior leadership – including cost-benefit analysis? This session will focus on key questions, include small group discussions and conclude by aiming at a short list of possible lessons that could be drawn from participants.

Moderated by Christina Goodness, UN, with key inputs by Lynette Larsen, outgoing Chief Information Management Officer, UNMEER

15.30 – 15.45   Coffee break

15.45 – 17.00   Concluding remarks by UN ASG CITO Ms. Atefeh Riazi and organisers (Moderated by Sanjana Hattotuwa, ICT4Peace Foundation)

- Suggested attire: Informal
- All discussions and presentations, amongst all participants, on all the days, whether in-session or informal, will be under Chatham House Rule, unless otherwise explicitly noted.

- **Coordinators**
  Content, conceptualisation and structure: Mr. Sanjana Hattotuwa (sanjanahattotuwa@ict4peace.org) | Logistics: Ms. Mildred Ochoa, OICT (mildred.ochoa@un.org)

Background Information on CiMS and CiMAG

The 2010 Report of the Secretary-General (A/65/491) on the Status of implementation of the information and communications technology strategy for the United Nations Secretariat, prominently underscores the Crisis Information Management (CiM) Strategy, Under the section 'United Nations system-wide harmonization efforts', the report notes (Pg. 38):

> "Crisis information management strategy. The Crisis Information Management Strategy is based on the recognition that the United Nations, its Member States, constituent agencies and non-governmental organizations need to improve such information management capacity in the identification, prevention, mitigation, response and recovery of all types of crises, natural as well as man-made. The strategy will leverage and enhance this capacity and provide mechanisms to integrate and share information across the United Nations system. The Office of Information and Communications Technology, together with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support, has worked closely with United Nations organizations such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and WFP and other entities such as the ICT for Peace Foundation in developing and implementing this strategy. It is envisaged that membership will be expanded to include other United Nations organizations in the near future."

In December 2014, the UN General Assembly approved the update of the UN Secretary-General's Strategy, to better exploit the enormous potential of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) for decision-making and delivery capacity of the United Nations in the areas of peace and security, humanitarian operations and development, human rights and international law. The strategy is contained in the SG's report of 10 October 2014 on Information and Communication Technology in the United Nations (A/69/517). The report mentions: "The (UN) Office of Information and Communications Technology will explore opportunities to develop capacity in analytics and potential means of collaboration with other United Nations entities throughout the global ICT community on the development of analytics solutions to allow for operational flexibility in support of the delivery of their mandates. Analytics could assist in crisis management efforts and the Office would seek to work with the Crisis Information Management Advisory Group (CiMAG) to seek to explore this further."

Subsequently, the General Assembly in its resolution dated 26 December 2014 (A/C.5/69/L.26*) welcomed the new Information and Communications Technology Strategy in the United Nations, as contained in the report of the Secretary-General, and requested him to provide, in 2015, detailed information on the implementation of all the elements of the proposed new strategy.

Members of CiMAG include inter alia: UN CITO, Office of SG, OCHA, DPKO, DFS, DPA, UNHCR, WFP, OHCHR, UNDP, UNICEF, DSS, UNFPA, PBSO, ICT4Peace.

Reports on the CiMAG Retreats of previous years are to be found below:

- Report of Crisis Information Management Advisory Group (CiMAG) Retreat 2014, http://ict4peace.org/crisis-information-management-advisory-group-cimag-retreat/
- Report of Crisis Information Management Advisory Group (CiMAG) Retreat 2013, http://ict4peace.org/report-of-crisis-information-management-advisory-group-cimag-retreat-2013/
- Report of the Crisis Information Management CiMAG Retreat 2012, http://ict4peace.org/report-of-the-crisis-information-management-cimag-retreat-10-12-june-2012/

- UN Crisis Information Management Advisory Group (CiMAG) Meeting 2011, http://ict4peace.org/cimag-19-5-2011/
- UN Crisis Information Management Advisory Group meeting 2010, http://ict4peace.org/un-crisis-information-management-advisory-group-meeting/
- UN CiMAG Retreat 2010, http://ict4peace.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/CIM-Strategy-Key-Points.pdf