Let’s Ex-Change! Members’ and partner’ initiatives on principles and risk
Initially conceived as a dynamic round robin session following-up on the previous sessions, the lead discussants’ initiatives on how organisations are working in a principled manner, managing risk and how some initiatives are providing guidance and supporting NGOs and partners to manage risk can be found below.

Ms. Birgit Kainz-Labbé, Coordinator, Civic Space Unit, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

Birgit Kainz-Labbé has been working in the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human rights (OHCHR) since 2004. In the last years she has coordinated OHCHR civic space work. With her team she has sought to strengthen strategic engagement at the country level to preserve and expand the collective space for civil society and enhance the response to online attacks against civil society actors. She has been co-leading the work on a UN-wide initiative to ensure better cross-UN-pillar coordination around civic space and protection of civil society (see in this context recent civil society consultations at: https://www.globaldevhub.org/civicspace

Before that she served as Special Assistant of the Director of the Thematic Engagement Division and supported the Special Rapporteurs on Torture and on Human rights while Countering Terrorism (2004-2009). Between 2000 and 2003 she worked as OSCE Human Dimension Officer and Rule of Law Coordinator for Central Asia in Almaty/Kazakhstan. Birgit Kainz-Labbé studied political science and Russian language at the University of Vienna and obtained the “European Master’s in Human Rights und Democratization” degree in Venice/Bologna und Strasbourg.
The UN and civic space in humanitarian contexts

The UN is exploring how to step up work on:

- Promoting civic space: advise on, and proactively advocate for, safe participation of diverse civil society groups in national decision-making processes, including through protests; seize opportunities to expand the space for civil societies and systematically highlight the positive contributions of civil society
- Partnering with civil society: enhance civil society engagement with the UN and strengthen policies and practices on participation of / partnerships with civil society, drawing on examples of good practice from across the UN system
- Protecting civil society actors: coordinate and strengthen UN responses to protect civil society actors effectively, including from reprisals against those who cooperate with the UN and by identifying and disseminating examples of good practice across the UN system.

For more information, please visit the Secretary-General’s Call to Action for Human Rights, committed to promoting civic space.

Ms. Emma O’Leary, Senior Humanitarian Policy Advisor, Norwegian Refugee Council

Emma O’Leary is a Senior Humanitarian Policy Advisor with the Norwegian Refugee Council, and a subject matter expert on the impact of counterterrorism measures on principled humanitarian action. She is the author of ‘Principles under Pressure’, NRC’s recent report on this issue. Emma’s knowledge in this area developed over several years working in Yemen and Afghanistan for NRC and for International NGO Safety Organisation (INSO) focused on issues of humanitarian access and negotiations. Emma has carried out workshops and briefings on the topic for a wide range of stakeholders, from humanitarian organisations in Afghanistan, Nigeria, Palestine and Somalia, to sanctions formation experts at European Union and UN Security Council levels. Prior to joining this sector Emma worked for a private consultancy firm in the City of London. She has a BA in Politics and History, and received an MA in Latin American Studies from the University of London.

Counterterrorism measures and principled humanitarian action

The impact of counterterrorism measures on principled humanitarian action continues to be felt globally – affecting where and how we programme, the communities we seek to assist, how donors fund us, and causing increased risk, and increased risk aversion in the sector. In 2015 NRC released the Risk Management Toolkit in Relation to Counterterrorism Measures in order to increase the humanitarian community’s understanding of these issues, and highlight set we take towards mitigating these, while maintaining a principled approach. The Toolkit is being revised for 2020, containing new updates and more information on issues like counterterrorism language in grant agreements and how to develop internal policy on
engagement with non-state armed groups. Join us to get a preview of the new Toolkit, and to learn more about how you and your organisation can use the resources.

For more information, please consult NRC’s Practical Guide for Project Cycle Management and Counterterrorism Risks report which draws on content from NRC’s ‘Toolkit for principled humanitarian action: managing counterterrorism risks’, to be released in April 2020.

Ms. Katherine Starup, Head of Protection Unit – Global Protection Advisor, Danish Refugee Council

Kathrine Starup is Head of Protection Unit - Global Protection Advisor at the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and has more than 25 years of experience with humanitarian and displacement work. Kathrine has specialised in protection, displacement solutions for IDPs and refugees, protection information management and mixed migration. Kathrine has worked with the UN and international and local NGOs in the field and at headquarters and has field experience from Africa and Asia. Prior to joining DRC, Kathrine worked with UNHCR in the field. Kathrine is the co-founder of the Protection Information Management - PIM Initiative www.pim.guide (co-lead by DRC & UNHCR). DRC is the co-founder of the Joint IDP Profiling Service - JIPS www.jips.org and Kathrine sits on JIPS’ Executive Committee (since 2009); and she sits on the ICRC-led Advisory Group for the ‘Professional Standards for Protection Work’ since 2011.

“Safe, Responsible and Meaningful Data Management for Evidence-Informed Protection Outcomes

The Protection Information Management (PIM) Initiative, co-led by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and UNHCR, set out in 2015 to strengthen the management, sharing and coordination of protection data and information to effectively inform protection analysis, protection strategy and response that reflect the actual needs, concerns and context of the displaced and displacement-affected populations.

With an increasing group of partners from NGOs, UN agencies, academia and other institutions the PIM Conceptual Framework was developed. PIM Conceptual Framework comprises the PIM Common Terminology, PIM Principles, PIM Process, PIM Matrix, Core Competencies as well as the Framework for Data Sharing in Practice. The PIM Framework was developed with the purpose of facilitating and ensuring safe, responsible and meaningful management of data and information for evidence-informed protection outcomes. In this way, each of the components of the PIM Framework serve to provide a principled, standardised and purposeful approach to data management, with the PIM Framework components offering commonly understood and agreed upon definitions, principles, standards, processes and competencies. PIM is helpful in ensuring the efficient and targeted use of resources and to enable the coordination, design, and delivery of protection responses.
The PIM Strategic Framework 2020-2021 sets the direction for further development, consolidation, and dissemination of the PIM Conceptual Framework, to be used to achieve evidence-informed quality protection outcomes for affected people in displacement situations.

For more information, please reach out to Kathrine Starup, Head of Protection Unit – Global Protection Advisor, DRC at kathrine.starup@drc.ngo and visit the Protection Information Management’s website.

Mr. Marco Rotelli, Special Advisor and Regional Representative for Africa, ICVA

Since late 2016 Marco has been representing ICVA in Africa in Dakar and Nairobi. He has served in operations with NGOs and the UN in most of the major humanitarian crises since the early 2000s. After several roles in the Italian NGO INTERSOS, including Director and Secretary General he is now the organization’s President. He has participated to most of NWOW global and regional works and he is an active member of the Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus Community of Practice. He is a regular lecturer in Universities and Think Tanks on subjects related to the contemporary challenges of humanitarian aid, including access, principles and civil-military interactions and brings with him extensive experience of humanitarian practice. He owns a degree in Political Science and a Master Degree in Diplomacy and International Relations. He is currently studying refugees protection and force migration studies at the School of Advanced Studies-University of London.

How Can NGOs engage in the Humanitarian, Development and Peace Nexus?

Since the World Humanitarian Summit, the aid community has been working to ensure that its Humanitarian and Development actions and the Peace dimension, are organized to contribute to the achievements of the SDGs. NGOs have been pioneering the features of the Nexus for decades and, based on their experience, have now the opportunity to influence and shape the global discussion and the implementation of a formal Nexus approach. During this session, participants will debate the impact of the Nexus on operations and the relevance for NGOs and will share experiences, reflections and positions to influence the debate at the global, regional and country level. They will be briefed and updated be updated on the opportunities to engage with the key actors.
Ms. Jules Frost, Head of Programmes and Partnerships, CHS Alliance

Jules L Frost is the Head of Programmes and Partnerships at the CHS Alliance. She leads programme development and management, partnership building, and fundraising efforts in support of the Alliance’s 150+ members. She is an influential and dedicated international humanitarian executive with 25 years of experience. Before joining the Alliance, Jules was Medair’s International Director and served with World Vision in senior humanitarian roles including the Senior Advisor for Civil-Military Relations, Director for Global Operations, and Head of Innovative Partnerships.

How can NGOs use the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) to ensure that they are delivering aid that works better for people affected by crisis, and for the aid workers who serve them?

The CHS makes Nine Commitments to affected people and communities. It was designed so that its application can be measured. Measuring your performance through the CHS verification scheme helps you learn the extent to which accountability has been incorporated into your work and highlights which areas you might consider improving. The CHS is a framework standard and the CHS Alliance assists organisations to apply this standard, to verify performance against its commitments, and to improve over time. Join us to find out how the CHS Alliance is supporting organisational cultural change, building capacity, strengthening accountability, and working to bolster the integrity of the international aid sector. By committing to and applying the CHS, your organisation can further assist people and communities vulnerable to risk and affected by disaster, conflict or poverty access quality assistance and hold organisations accountable.

More information about the CHS Alliance is available at www.chsalliance.org. Sign up to receive our monthly newsletter at bit.ly/CHSAnewsletter and contact Jules Frost at jfrost@chsalliance.org for more information.

Mr. Pierre Hauselmann, Executive Director, Humanitarian Quality Assurance Initiative

Pierre Hauselmann is the Executive Director of the Humanitarian Quality Assurance Initiative (HQAI). Before being at HQAI, he was Head of Verification at Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP) International and then at the CHS Alliance. He moderated the writing group that developed the final version of the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS). Pierre has 25 years of experience in ethical standard development, certification and verification. HQAI conducts independent audits of the quality & accountability
of organisations working in humanitarian aid and development. In other words: HQAI verifies the correct application of a given standard - currently the CHS - from head office to the field. To date 55 organisations are covered by HQAI’s services.

The CHS - consolidating best practice

HQAI conducts audits against the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS). Created by the sector and for the sector, the CHS describes the essentials of principled, accountable and high-quality practice and puts affected people at the centre of the response. Through a system of independent quality assurance, HQAI assesses the degree to which implementation of the CHS has been successful. We are therefore able to determine the performance of organisations and suggest ways in which they can improve. Cross-cutting topics like PSEA, Do-no-harm, localisation or diversity, are presented in HQAI’s reports as indices which makes them easier to read and more useful for the organisations’ learning. Organisations that have undergone an external audit against the CHS confirm that it builds trust with a variety of stakeholders, including donors, and can facilitate access to direct funding. Further, donors increasingly recognise HQAI’s reports in their due diligence processes or partner assessment frameworks, a clear step towards harmonisation of reporting requirements. While our work is important and beneficial for organisations of all sizes and types, we found that it is essential for many national organisations. Being independently assessed, audited national organisations learn faster and can credibly demonstrate their performance and possibly access to direct funding.

For more information, please reach out to contact@hqai.org and visit HQAI’s website.

Mr. Sudhanshu S. Singh, Director, Humanitarian Aid International

Sudhanshu S. Singh, an Indian humanitarian and development professional with over 32 years global experience, is founder and CEO of Humanitarian Aid International (HAI). HAI aims to become first Indian organisation, working globally with the Indian identity on poverty alleviation and disaster management. HAI is also currently hosting the international secretariat of Charter4Change. Sudhanshu has worked with several international organisations at the Asia-Pacific level, and has been involved in managing responses to almost all major disasters in the Asia-Pacific region since 2001. Sudhanshu has been closely engaged with Agenda for Humanity, Grand Bargain and Charter for Change. He was member of the steering group of World Humanitarian Action Forum (WHAF). Sudhanshu is also one of the founders and International Coordinator of Alliance for Empowering Partnerships (A4EP) and will be leading the discussion on “The Grander Bargain 2030”.

Sudhanshu S. Singh, Director, Humanitarian Aid International
Beyond 2021 – The Grander Bargain 2030

The Alliance for Empowering Partnerships (A4EP) is a global network of organisations committed to rebalancing the humanitarian architecture and practices to enable locally-led responses. The Grand Bargain (GB) has achieved slow progress on the 51 commitments made in 2016. The commitments largely remained confined to the headquarters of the signatories and is yet to reach humanitarian actors at country level. The Agenda for Humanity also aimed at shrinking the humanitarian needs, but the humanitarian needs have continued to grow, as also highlighted in the most recent Global Humanitarian Overview (GHO2020). In the absence of a long-term humanitarian framework, it is challenging to seek sustainable reform of the humanitarian architecture. This session will discuss a paper produced by A4EP “A Grander Bargain 2030”, exploring the concept of a framework for dedicated humanitarian goals which ensures longer-term principled humanitarian response.

For more information, please contact Sudhanshu S. Singh at ssSingh@humanitarianaidinternational.org and Smruti Patel at smruti.patel09@gmail.com and visit the following website: https://reliefweb.int/report/world/grander-bargain-2030.

Mr. Mohamad Mansour, Deputy Director and Head of Operations, ABAAD - Resource Center for Gender Equality

Mohamad Mansour is the Deputy Director and the Head of Operations at ABAAD- Resource Center for Gender Equality. With 15 years’ experience in humanitarian and development organizations, Mr. Mansour has worked with International and National NGOs on strengthening the coordination mechanisms and on donor relations, advocating for healthier and stronger national systems through localization of the response. ABAAD – Resource Center for Gender Equality a UN ECOSOC accredited lead gender organization and member of the UN Global Compact- Gender focused organization in Lebanon and throughout the MENA region and which was granted “WOMANITY Award” and the “UN SDG Action Award”.

The humanitarian cost of a politicised response

Caused by many social, economic and political factors, a shift in humanitarian needs is observed in several contexts and crises in Lebanon and is affecting a wide range of the population. Meanwhile, the assistance is still earmarked and excludes some geographical areas or certain groups of people in need. This contributes to instability and tension due to the non-neutral/ impartial response. ABAAD is raising the question of the humanitarian cost of an increasingly politicized response and the direct impact on the different stakeholders whereas donors need to fulfil their commitments to non-politicized & non-earmarked funds guided solely by humanitarian needs.
Mr. Antonio Donini, co-founder of United Against Inhumanity (UAI) and Humanitarian researcher

Antonio Donini is the co-founder and member of the Executive Committee of United Against Inhumanity, an emerging civil society movement that challenges the inhumanity of war and the erosion of asylum (http://www.against-inhumanity.org). As part of UAI, he is working on the establishment of an Independent Humanitarian Watch and a potential “Inhumanity Index”. Antonio is also a Visiting Fellow at the Feinstein International Center at Tufts University and Research Associate at the Global Migration Centre at the Graduate Institute in Geneva. He works on issues relating to humanitarianism, the future of humanitarian action and migration. He has worked for 26 years in the United Nations in research, evaluation, and humanitarian capacities.

Protecting Humanitarian Principles: the role of citizens and civil society

Much emphasis has – rightly - been put on the risks faced by people trapped in, or fleeing from, war as well as the way humanitarian agencies can balance the risk-access equation to undertake humanitarian action in a principled manner. But citizens have a role to play too. At United Against Inhumanity (UAI), we believe that citizens and civil society – everywhere – have a moral responsibility to challenge war-related inhumanity. Expressing indignation and challenging the behaviour of all warring parties, as well as governments that sit on the sidelines and/or do nothing to ensure respect for basic humanitarian norms, is not only the right thing to do; it can also help to modify facts on the ground. If we do nothing, we become accomplices to that which leaves us indifferent. UAI is committed to facilitating discussions on how citizens can increase the political cost for those who disregard core humanitarian norms including the fundamentals of the laws of war. Interested NGOs are welcome to contact us at the address below and we will keep you informed of our plans.

For more information on United Against Inhumanity please contact us at contact@against-inhumanity.org and visit our website where you will find our Call to Action and other documents including a Declaration – Say NO to the Inhumanity in Syria – that all are invited to sign.
Mr. Gareth Price-Jones, Executive Secretary, Steering Committee on Humanitarian Response

Gareth Price-Jones, the Executive Secretary of the Steering Committee on Humanitarian Response, supports the SCHR Principals in setting and driving forward the SCHR agenda in line with its vision and mission. Since his first field deployment in 2001 Gareth has gained over 19 years’ senior experience in eleven countries, mainly in Asia, and has led INGO operational responses in a number of contexts including the 2005 Asian Tsunami, the 2010 Haiti Earthquake and in the Syrian conflict. He’s particularly passionate about contributing to longer-term, strategic global solutions to complex humanitarian problems, and is active in the humanitarian policy arena, based out of Geneva. He is an IASC Principal and currently represents NGO stakeholders on the Grand Bargain Facilitation Group.

Managing the risks of abusive staff

In 2019 SCHR launched the Inter-Agency Misconduct Disclosure Scheme to address the specific problem of known sexual abusers moving within and between different humanitarian and development agencies. As at January 2020 it has 15 signatory organisations in various stages of implementation, with several other organisations preparing to sign. We anticipate an increase in signatories in mid-2020 once existing signatories have successfully demonstrated implementation at scale. This session aims to inform you about the scheme and help you understand how you can use it to mitigate the risk posed by staff with a record of abusive behaviours to you, your beneficiaries, your staff, your partners and your donors.

For more information, please reach out to schr@ifrc.org and visit SCHR’s website.

Ms. Heather Hughes, Deputy Director, European Interagency Security Forum

Heather Hughes is Deputy Director at the European Interagency Security Forum (EISF soon to be GISF). Heather is a humanitarian security risk management (SRM) expert, with over 20 years of experience in developing strategic and operational SRM, from policy and practices to crisis management and capacity-building. Moving on from being Oxfam GB’s first Global Security Adviser, she then supported a wide range of NGOs to manage security risks as ILS Director of Risk Advisory Services. She continues this work at EISF, an NGO-led, peer-to-peer platform that builds collective knowledge and skills on SRM in the humanitarian space.
Committed to improving the safety and security of staff and operations, EISF works to enhance access to, and impact for, crisis-affected populations, by producing original research and guidance, and facilitating collaboration within the sector.

Can we talk about principled humanitarian action, if organisations don’t apply a principled approach to protecting their staff and partners?

In increasingly complex environments, operations’ success is even more reliant on effective humanitarian security risk management to guarantee sustainable access to affected populations. EISF (soon to be Global Interagency Security Forum) works to this end, fostering an inclusive, innovative, and collaborative approach to protecting staff and operations. Bringing together practitioners from over 100 NGOs, we facilitate information-sharing within and beyond the NGO world, and produce original research and guidance that tackle current challenges within the humanitarian sector. Join us to learn more about our findings and initiatives and discuss pragmatic ways to protect principled humanitarianism.

For more information, please contact Heather Hughes at eisf-dd@eisf.eu and visit EISF’s website.

Ms. Melissa Pitotti, Co-creator of the Initiative to Cultivate Caring, Compassionate Aid Organisations, incubated by the CHS Alliance

Melissa Pitotti is co-author of the recent CHS Alliance report, "Working Well? Aid worker well-being and how to improve it." She and her co-author, Mary Ann Clements, have a podcast called "Embodying Change" hosted by Change Making Women. Melissa has been working in the humanitarian sector since 2001 in various capacities: donor, government, inter-agency, NGO and volunteer. She believes in the power of coalitions and enjoys bringing people together to tackle common challenges. After working on refugee protection, humanitarian financing and the triple nexus for ICVA, Melissa now works for the CHS Alliance on addressing the silent epidemic facing aid workers struggling with burnout, depression, anxiety and other challenges.

This work is making us sick. An honest conversation on risks to staff mental health and well-being

A 2018 research project by Liza Jachens and others on “effort reward imbalance and burnout among humanitarian aid workers” was the first study to address burnout in a large and diverse sample of humanitarian aid workers across several geographical regions. It found 32% were at risk for emotional exhaustion (emotionally drained and unable to unwind/recover); 10% were at risk for depersonalization (excessively distant, cynical attitudes towards affected populations); and 43% were at risk for low personal achievement (ineffectiveness, inefficacy, and incompetence). Melissa will share some examples of efforts underway to address this
phenomenon, including some very practical steps that can be taken in any organisation. She will then provide the latest on a multi-stakeholder, multi-year movement being built to shift our sector's culture to one of care and compassion.

For more information, please contact the co-initiators of the Initiative to Cultivate Caring, Compassionate Aid Organisations Melissa Pitotti at mpitotti@chsalliance.org and Mary Ann Clements at maryann@maryannuclements.com and visit the CHS alliance website.

Ms. Insaf Mounadi, International Advisor, International Detention Coalition

Insaf Mounadi is a Tunisian woman with a decades’ worth of experience as a protection officer. Insaf started working with the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) in a refugee camp in the south of Tunisia, then moved with the same organization to work in Libya. Later, Insaf worked with the United Nations Organization for Migration (IOM) Libya mission as a senior protection officer during peace time, as well as throughout several emergency situations, leading the protection team focused on alternatives to migration detention. In addition, Insaf has completed several short-term assignments throughout the MENA region including in Turkey, Algeria, Jordan and Lebanon as a supporting protection officer for DRC offices in those locations. Her main areas of expertise within the boarder remit of protection, is mixed migration including forced displacement and alternatives to detention in transit countries. Currently, Insaf is working as an advisor on mixed migration governance alternative solutions, in the MENA Region, as a professional-level volunteer member of the International Detention Coalition (IDC).

Emergency dilemmas and alternatives to detention efforts

Humanitarian organizations face several dilemmas when implementing their interventions and working in armed conflict contexts in national/local settings, such as using lawful frameworks to find alternatives to detention during temporary stay as well as durable solutions all the while dealing with realities of armed groups managing detention centers. So how can we provide dignified and principled responses that does not involve militias? Join us to learn about IDC’s efforts and processes to find suitable alternative solutions in the Libyan context, with examples drawn from the broader MENA Region.

For more information, please contact Insaf Mounadi at insaf.mounadi@gmail.com and visit the following websites: 1. There are alternatives (globally) There_Are_Alternatives – International Detention Coalitionidcoalition.org › publication › there-are-alternatives-revised-edition and 2. There are alternatives: Africa There_are_alternatives: Africa – International Detention Coalitionidcoalition.org › publication › atd-africa