

Humanitarian Innovation Hackathon

Challenge C

Managing sensitive biometric data collected
from disaster-displaced communities

13.6 Million

people remained displaced by
disasters at the end of 2025, the
highest figure on record

Global Goals Alignment

SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions. Consider how your solution protects privacy, human rights and the ethical governance of sensitive data.

SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities. Consider how your solution protects vulnerable, disaster-displaced populations from discrimination and misuse of personal information.

SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals. Consider how governments, disaster agencies, NGOs and technology providers can strengthen secure identity management for disaster-displaced communities.

Overview

Over the last decade, biometric data has played an important role in registering and supporting people displaced by disasters. Common forms of biometric data include fingerprints, iris scans and facial photographs.

Advances in AI have enabled real-time biometric scanning and rapid registration, particularly in the aftermath of cyclones, floods and other disasters, when large numbers of people move through evacuation centres in a short space of time.

These developments raise important ethical questions about the collection, storage and use of biometric data for disaster-displaced populations, as well as the implications of applying real-time biometric tracking to communities already coping with the upheaval of losing their homes.

Challenge Task

How can humanitarian organisations suitably manage sensitive biometric data collected from disaster-displaced populations? A specific disaster-displacement context (such as a cyclone evacuation centre, temporary relocation site, or flood-displaced community) can be used to give your ideas clearer context.



THE GLOBAL GOALS
For Sustainable Development



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Geographical Context

Unless otherwise stated, all challenge responses should be developed for application within the Pacific Islands region. Teams are encouraged to consider the environmental, cultural, social, economic and logistical characteristics of Pacific Island region and communities when developing their solutions.

Considerations

In designing your innovations, the principles of Humanitarian Engineering need to be employed. These principles can be summarised as solutions that are:

Effective

The solution addresses the key elements of the challenge.

Resources considered

the solution takes into context the resources (e.g. human, IT and finances) available for low and middle income settings.

Appropriate

Considers community needs and is culturally acceptable within the regional context.

Sustainable

Consideration for how the solution will be sustained into the future (e.g. changes in technology).

Do no harm

The innovation considers inclusiveness and does not cause harm.

