Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to ask Heads of Offices to nominate an Information Management Officer (IMO) focal point in their office to work with ISB (total time commitment will be no more than one day) on identifying data to migrate to web platforms.

The Information Services Branch (ISB) is in the process of integrating key features of OCHA’s community web platforms, including ReliefWeb, Humanitarian Response (HR.info) and the Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX). The goal is to create internal efficiency in how we manage information and to make it easier for users to find the information they need to do their work. An initial step in this consolidation process will be to move the data that is currently stored on HR.info over to HDX so that there is one place for humanitarian data.

HR.info has been hosting the Common Operational Datasets (COD) Registry since 2012. The CODs are critical operational data needed to support all actors in a humanitarian response. They include seven categories: administrative boundaries, populated places, transportation networks, water bodies, elevation models, population statistics, and humanitarian profile. These datasets were defined and agreed by the IASC in 2010. The COD Registry currently includes 1,058 datasets on 93 countries.

HDX was launched in July 2014 with the goal of making humanitarian data easy to find and use for analysis. Broader in scope than the COD Registry, HDX currently includes almost 2,000 datasets from over 100 organizations. In its initial year of operations, HDX worked closely with OCHA’s Colombia and Mali offices to create custom country pages. It also created crisis pages for the Ebola Response and Nepal Earthquake. HDX has recently developed new features to support visualizations of geospatial data in order to enhance the data that will be moved from the registry. An introductory video on HDX can be seen here.

The migration of the COD Registry to HDX will take place over the next several months. The data will be moved in three separate month-long phases. The work will begin with an initial batch of 13 offices, many of which are already working with HDX. The list of locations and phases is attached below.

I would like to request that you nominate an IMO from your office to work with ISB on this process. Please send the name of the focal point to CJ Hendrix (hendrix@un.org) by Friday, 31 July. Further details of the migration plan and support process will be shared with the IM focal point. If you have any questions or comments please contact Mark Dalton (dalton@un.org).

The consolidation of humanitarian data onto one platform is an important milestone for OCHA and brings us one step closer to improving situational awareness in humanitarian response.
Thank you for your support.

Best regards,

Reena