# **Global Information Management Functional Team** **(GIFT) Annual Workshop** **7-8 July 2020**

In light of the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic, and to ensure that we keep the momentum generated by the critical work done so far by the GIFT, it was decided to hold the annual Workshop remotely.

The Workshop, run in MS Teams, gathered 60 colleagues from across OCHA - country and regional offices and Divisions - ensuring a multi-disciplinary approach to its collective work. The Workshop was planned around two plenary sessions - on Day 1 each GIFT group presented the work to date, seeking feedback from all GIFT members through a Q&A session, and on Day 2 after working in thematic work streams, groups reported back on progress made and gaps to be addressed.

At the technical level, the workshop ran smoothly - despite evident challenges faced by colleagues in some of our deeper field locations, where connectivity is poor. At the practical level, team leads successfully created virtual breakout MS Teams rooms where on Day 2 they gathered their respective team members to advance on their work and agreed on immediate next steps.

## **Summary of Day 1:** **Groups presentations on key objectives, progress and next steps**

## **Gender and Geographic Diversity and IM Skill Set Groups**

The work of these groups has been conducted separately but has intersected at many points due to common findings and proposed solutions that would help rectify the gaps identified by both teams.

Regarding key findings of the Diversity group:

**Gender**. While across OCHA the progress is noticeable (as of June 2020 we are at a 50/50 ratio institutionally), a persistent gap remains in the IM community, where only 20% of the staff are women.

*NOTE: Although this group conducted thorough analysis of the gap in each job category (P, G, NO), in order to adhere with the SG policy on parity, the focus will be on International Staff.*

**Geographic Diversity.** Across OCHA, there is a persistent gap although less noticeable than in the previous years, as we have reached a 45/55% ratio (non-WEOG/WEOG). As we look at the distribution, the gap is more noticeable at HQ:

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| Distribution at Headquarters | Distribution in the Field |
| * WEOG 72% * Non WEOG 28% | * Non WEOG 57% * WEOG 43% |

One of the most important findings of this group, which aligned with those of the IM skills revision group, is a rather important gap in attracting more women candidates for IM job openings. The numbers are very telling:

* % Women applying for IM Jobs in 2019-20 – **14%**
* % Women hired in 2019-20 – **24%**

Among the key recommendations:

* Agree on a set of standard outreach efforts, including developing an accountability framework to document efforts towards gender parity and geographic diversity.
* Revise IM JOs together with EO/HR and OAD, to draft new IM profiles based on the core skill sets identified by the GIFT:   
  1. Data Visualization
  2. Content Management
  3. Coordination
  4. *Analyst* (this has been put on hold until the work done by the Situational Awareness group has advanced further).

This will help address the main recommendations of the IM Skill Sets group:

* By opening IM JOs to a larger range of “soft skills”, we will address the clear bias towards IM as purely ‘technical” work.
* By recognizing and including important soft skills that many of our IMOs already have, we would enable them to move more easily across functions and up the ladder.
* More comprehensive profiles will ensure that our IM workforce can count on the right people for the right job at the right time.
* In recognition of the exceptionally talented IM workforce OCHA already has, IM Unit Heads will be asked to identify any gaps in skill sets that our IMOs can be trained for, to enrich their professional profiles. IMB commits to work closely with IM Unit Heads and SDL on this.

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| Resources |
| [Gender and geographic diversity working group report](https://unitednations.sharepoint.com/sites/OCHAGFTIM/SiteAssets/SitePages/GIFT-Workshop--7-8-July-2020/GIFT_Gender_Geographic_Diveristy_Report_Jan2020.pdf?web=1) |
| [IM Skill Sets working group report](https://unitednations.sharepoint.com/sites/OCHAGFTIM/SiteAssets/SitePages/GIFT-Workshop--7-8-July-2020/SkillSets%20GIFT%20Report.pdf?web=1) |



**Situational Awareness and Analysis (SAA) & IM Vision**

**Overall purpose**

OCHA has recognized the importance of situational awareness and analysis within humanitarian settings and the need to provide decision-makers with actionable conclusions tailored to specific operating environments. OCHA’s strategic objective 2 calls for evidence-based and collective situational awareness that informs decisions on humanitarian action. To achieve this goal, OCHA needs to analyze multi-layered information and present a meaningful synthesis, explanation, interpretation and anticipation of humanitarian situations. The ultimate result of this work is to improve the effectiveness and timeliness of humanitarian action.

Strategic Objective 2 is linked to the **Results Framework outcome on Information Management**: Evidence-based and collective situational awareness informs decisions on humanitarian action. It seeks to ensure that OCHA and the humanitarian system benefit from streamlined data and analysis to inform a rapid, effective and principled response. Given that the objective is linked to IM and recognizing that it is a truly cross-functional endeavor, the GIFT is the perfect mechanism to take this forward, joining up HQ, RO, CO, as well as the different functional areas and organizational entities in OCHA.

**Components of the work**

* **Situational awareness** has been recognized as a critical, yet often elusive foundation for successful decision-making in complex and dynamic humanitarian operations. As defined in the August 2017 Stimson report “Strengthening Situational Awareness in the UN, **situational awareness encompasses knowledge (who, what, where), understanding (why) and anticipation (when)**. Situational awareness is the ‘end state’ that allows for decisions on strategies, policies, plans, programmes, staffing, advocacy and funding. As such, situational awareness is based upon a vast number of components. These include (but are not limited to) context-, country- and region-specific understanding of historical, political, cultural, sociological, religious, demographic, economic, public opinion, and impact of the crisis on affected populations and services
* **Situation analysis** **is the multi-layer process by which the components of a situation and their relations are examined and interpreted** to produce the state of situational awareness necessary for decision-making. In other words, situation analysis is the practical analytical work that enables awareness of the situation for decision-makers to act and produce a set of (most likely) drivers that impact the design of humanitarian vision, strategy, tactics, policy, advocacy, programs and access modalities.

Situational awareness and analysis (SAA), therefore, include comprehensive presentation of the crisis and being aware of what is happening in the broader context of the operational environment and being able to understand the impact of the crisis.

It is recognized that SAA requires a multi-faceted and cross functional approach that involves all functions within OCHA. The current gap within OCHA is that we often bring data components together and provide summaries, but we do not consistently and sufficiently interpret it and use it to anticipate the next steps. The “softer” components such as political, social, cultural, are currently not consistently taken into account when creating a “contextual understanding” of the environment we operate within.

The group is currently mapping SAA practices in the field along the following components: analytical domains, geographical Scope, event type, data, internal workflow, analysis process, analysis tools, analytical outputs, population group, users of the analysis.

The next steps for the group include:

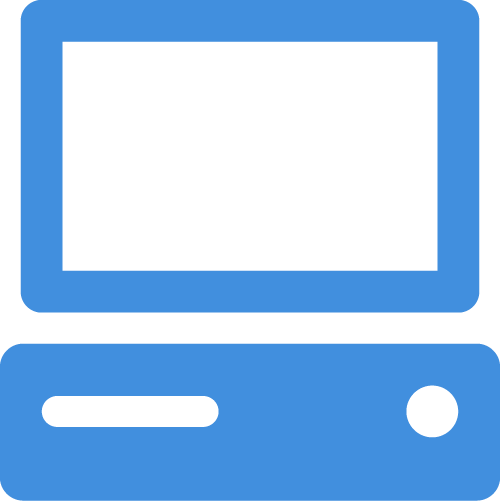
* Send out a request to GIFT members to share good practices on SAA, including on data structure
* Bilateral follow-up for on these good practices
* Draft quality criteria for OCHA SAA

In the longer term, the work plan of the group includes:

Objective 1: A shared understanding of high-quality SAA (end of 2020)

Objective 2: Develop and test scalable SAA approach to different contexts (2021)

Objective 3: An agreed upon OCHA-wide cross functional SAA approach (2021 and onwards)



**Digital Platforms**

Given the broad scope of work, the group has been organized around 5 sub-groups:

1) **Governance Framework**

1. Terms of references for OCHA Governance Board
2. Hosting Innovation and Support
3. Request/Review Process for Digital Tools and Services
4. Performance Monitoring/Project Management/Costing

2) **Content Management**

3) **Data**

4) **Enterprise Architecture**

5) **Integrated Platforms**

Most of the progress has been achieved in Digital Governance and Content Management:

Digital Governance – summary of progress:

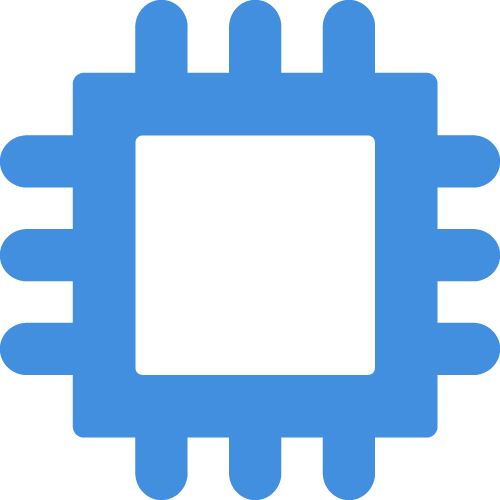
* TORs for the Governance Board have been drafted.
* Innovation Hosting:
  + It currently supports 35 Sites. Since September, it has migrated 35 Sites to AWS. The total cost of the project was $100,000USD including consulting, staff time costs. Additionally, teams that are using AWS Account include Colombia, DRC, GIMAC, Sudan, Yemen, ReliefWeb
  + In terms of field support, the group is now working with the ROLAC team with 345W and SARA tools and maintains custom URLs for RO Syria.
  + There are both benefits and challenges to Innovation Hosting.

Benefits– Flexibility to build, no HQ interference, minimal requirements for access.   
Challenges —Lack of AWS knowledge, higher than expected costs.

Content Management: summary of Progress:

The subgroup is established to design a framework for harmonization across platforms and improved and more coherent taxonomy. The group is working on:

* Finalizing contact management guidelines - the group finalized the Contact Management guidelines and agreed on the next steps (endorsement & dissemination).
* Developing reporting SOP for documents, infographics and maps.
* Design an advisory role for a single source document repository.
* Further developing tools section.
* Seeking advice from the Data Centre on data protection language.
* Share with IMWG to seek feedback.
* Decision on ownership of OCHA digital properties development, maintenance and updating.



**IM Standards Working Group - Software Standards**

The group presented the software list they listed in their recommendations. There are many advantages from having one core set of Software for the organization:

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| **Budget and pricing** | **Training and capacity building** | **Stronger corporate approach** |
| * Single process * Single vendor negotiation * Better pricing (more licenses from a single buyer) | * Cheaper as focused on one core set of skills * More agile * More results oriented | * OCHA unique software packages * More systemic approach to issues * Replicability and predictability * Core products based on same technology |

The Software selection process has been done keeping four things in mind:

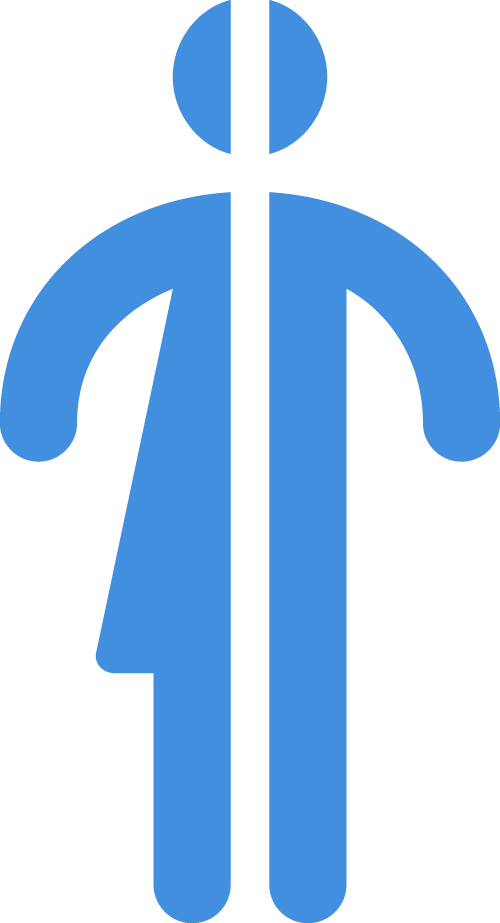
* **Humanitarian context**: sudden onset vs protracted crisis
* **Geographical context**: countries under embargo or under import restrictions
* **Software lifecycle**: We need to think about how to replace a software when it becomes obsolete, in addition to investigating and researching the security aspect of each software.
* **Budgeting**: Put in place appropriate costing for each division and country offices.

Immediate next steps:

* Review the proposed software list and discuss with OAD and HOOs. Include in the discussion that these are standard operating costs similar to administrative costs to run our operations.
* Ensure the list is appropriate based on OCHA’s current operating environment
* GIFT to endorse recommended standard software list.
* Identify with EO the cost of additional contracts and how to get such contracts in place
* Get costing approval by OICT for roll out in 2021.
* Develop a process for revision and decommissioning the software and develop recommendations on security and data sharing agreements.
* Develop a roll out plan to implement the recommended software to all OCHA divisions and field offices to ensure adoption and buy-in of the software list.
* Consider the establishment of a hardware standards team to equip OCHA with the right know-how.
* Identify new group members to sustain the work.

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| Resources |
| [GIFT IM Software Standards Report](https://unitednations.sharepoint.com/sites/OCHAGFTIM/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2FOCHAGFTIM%2FShared%20Documents%2FTechnical%20and%20Quality%20Standards%2FSoftware%20Discussion%2FFinal%20Documents%20june%202020%2FStandards%20DOC_v20052020_NV_RC%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2FOCHAGFTIM%2FShared%20Documents%2FTechnical%20and%20Quality%20Standards%2FSoftware%20Discussion%2FFinal%20Documents%20june%202020&p=true&originalPath=aHR0cHM6Ly91bml0ZWRuYXRpb25zLnNoYXJlcG9pbnQuY29tLzpiOi9zL09DSEFHRlRJTS9FVXZtRkdRcmFZUkduZGloWkhWQWJzUUJsSThNcEZSTEc4alNjVVdyV0hDeVRRP3J0aW1lPWdYMW1UMThxMkVn) |

## **Summary of Day 2** **Groups worked individually to advance the work and establish a timeline for the remaining work. Groups then reported back in plenary at the end of their session.**



**3 multidisciplinary teams were set up to start drafting the new IM JOs (P2, P3, P4)**

3 groups spent the second half of the workshop working hands on to draft the new JOs as defined by the GIFT and endorsed by the IM Functional Lead.

All groups count on participation from EO/HR to ensure the process is undertaken according to best HR practices, to ensure the changes stay within the 30% margin to avoid classification and to adhere to the terminology proposed in the GIFT report.

Ultimately, the groups will produce less technical, more soft skills-focused JOs, to attract a wider range of candidates and recognize the full spectrum of skills that our IMOs already put at the service of the organization.

The groups are also adding a list of additional skills for each JO that the Hiring Manager can choose from and add under Work Experience as needed, depending on the needs of each operation/office and based on existing vs lacking capacity.

The three groups are working to complete this exercise by the end of July. Once the drafts are in place, they will be reviewed by EO/HR and then shared with the IM Functional Lead and OAD for endorsement.



**Situational Analysis and Awareness**

The group went through the questions and comments from the GIFT workshop participants stemming from the presentation on day 1. The main topics were as follows:

Question 1. How do you turn the intuition aspect of SAA into a more structured product?

*The group believes that it is too early to look into a structured product. Focus should be on critical thinking, qualitative skills, and expert-judgement. We would like to move away from intuition and de-bias the process by focusing on the system 2 type of thinking.*

Question 2. From the IM side, we have advanced into turning raw data into dynamic data through visualizations, but how do we put the right people in the room to interpret information and what products will come out of that?

*The group discussed this and narrowed the question down to: how do you bring together an analysis group? The aim is to become analysis coordination experts - to be able to bring the right people together to establish an efficient team that provides correct answers to decision makers. It will be important to look at the capacity issue of coordination which is dependent on the size of offices.*

Question 3. Is it easier to integrate SSA in a new office rather than an established office with common structure?

*The group believes that the most important aspect is to focus on how an office goes about bringing together the different components. The “whole of office” approach will be the way forward and what will determine success.*

Question 4. While each country is different, should we not be able to have global standards that we work off from?

*The group agrees with this and supports the creation of a standardized approach that can accommodated depending on the operating context. This way, OCHA country offices could save time and focus on the more qualitative aspects of its work around SAA.*

Wiht regard to data management:

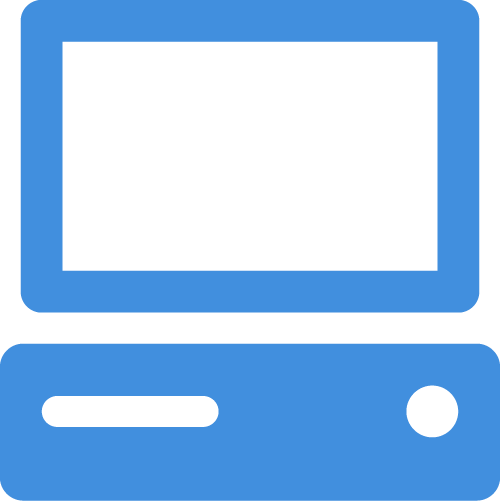
Question 5. What volume of resources (both human and funding) are we talking about to implement the type of data structure and database that was presented?

*Initial capacities are required to set up the system (knowledge of SQL and scripting through R or python). This can be maintained by one or two IMOs. Clusters will be required to produce data frequently. In terms of funding, the amazon web service fees vary from around USD 500 to 4,000 (high frequency use on a daily basis). However, there is a free plan option that allows individuals to do a lot. Should we be able to have “off the shelf” systems, OCHA would save a lot of time and effort.*

*The group would like to refer to the standards group to compile options with pros and cons of the different services for colleagues in the field.*

Question 6. Is it possible to turn the database into an online WEB interface to feed data directly by the sectors?

*It is possible to set-up a web interface for data entry. This has been tested in the Syria crisis; however, there has been issues related to security and connection to the database. Other options would be testing Microsoft forms and KoBo.*



**Digital Platforms**

**Digital Governance**

The Governance team focused on three immediate deliverables:

* **Innovation**: by strengthening technological capabilities and ungoverned key services to the field, guidelines on project development lifecycle, and lower costing
* **Professionalized solutions**: Manage risks with business continuity planning, assist innovative and custom applications to apply standards and best practices to reach more scalable, enterprise-level systems
* **Platform reviews**: Establish transparency, accountability, and regulatory compliance from staff members, and provide guidance on both light and in-depth review processes

The working group also addressed:

* Composition of the Governance Board and [Terms of Reference (TOR)](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/file/3cfc9b36-82ca-417c-ac45-fc4910a56d8c?tenantId=0f9e35db-544f-4f60-bdcc-5ea416e6dc70&fileType=pdf&objectUrl=https%3A%2F%2Funitednations.sharepoint.com%2Fsites%2FGIFTDigitalGovernanceworkstream%2FShared%20Documents%2FGeneral%2FInfomration_Management_Review_TOR.pdf&baseUrl=https%3A%2F%2Funitednations.sharepoint.com%2Fsites%2FGIFTDigitalGovernanceworkstream&serviceName=teams&threadId=19:53dd3d187d2a4d9ba22a8d50ae2679c5@thread.tacv2&messageId=1594214219333&groupId=69fc547d-fefa-4f27-8943-fca690d96ddc)
* Roadmap of process implementation
* Indicators to measure efficiency and accountability for each stage of the governance model

*For this purpose, John Marinos, Muditha Sampath, and Devashri Kulwal were identified to work with the Governance Framework. Lead: James Kunjumen.*

The work that will be prioritized in the next two quarters:

* Finalize Terms of References and responsibilities of the Governance Board
* Outline process of entire lifecycle of applications used. More field participation is needed to help outline a process that better reflects field requirements.
* Budgeting

*The group calls on more field participation to finalize the work.*

**Content Management**

The session focused on two main points:

* **Finalizing the Contact Management guidelines**
  1. A good part of the discussion revolved around privacy, protection and retention of data. As there is a lack of expertise in this area, the group sees an opportunity in reaching out to the Centre of Humanitarian Data and asking for a review of the data protection and security language used in the framework.
  2. The group recognized the need for the guidelines to be flexible in order to adapt to different scenarios. The framework will therefore provide a list of tools commonly used for content management, however choosing the best option for each context will remain the responsibility of the IMO (or IMU).
  3. The group has decided on the final steps to be taken, which include seeking Andrew’s endorsement and then disseminating the guidelines. These will be made available on the OCHA IM Toolbox, shared via the OCHA IM Skype group and possibly shared with partners through the IMWG.
  4. Given the constant evolving of technology and the humanitarian context, the group has decided that the guidelines should be reviewed on an annual basis.
* **Review and prioritize work for the coming months**
  1. Group members agreed to now tacke standards and guidelines for product dissemination, identified as priority for the field.
  2. During the discussion it became apparent that the taxonomy harmonization is not perceived as a pressing issue at field level. For this reason, it has been put on hold.

**Data-focused Subgroup**

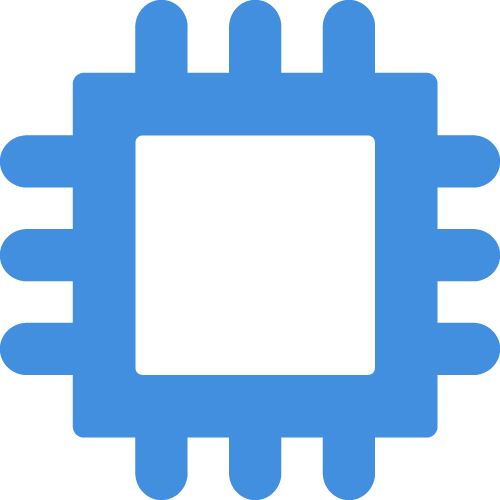
The group identified the following priorities:

* Upgrading to a newer version of CODS. Colleagues who use this software are welcome to comment on the next version and list their requirements.
* Data catalogue work to include corporate data standards. Data that is to be shared with partners could be standardized.
* Master datasets - in relation to taxonomy for content management (*on hold*).
* HPC tools and data consumption to be further discussed (*on hold*).

*The group noted the need for support from the Centre for Humanitarian Data.*

**Innovation Hosting**

The group agreed to communicate with all offices the right service solution and the functionality that AWS provides.



**IM Standards - Software**

The group approved the software identified by the team and added Mentimeter to the core list. Mentimeter allows to build interactive presentations with an easy-to-use online editor. share and export results for further analysis and compare data over time to measure progress.

The second and critical part of the work of this group will look at budget implications and design a corporate budgeting solution which would allow OCHA to have a core budget line for standard software for all offices/divisions. The work will start in September. Part of the discussion will look at centralizing commissioning of software contracts in IMB since the branch already manages licenses, processes for training and support, and works with EO to make procurement more streamlined. In this scenario, more PSC funding will be needed.

Team Lead for the second part of the work (to start in September): Suzanne Connolly.

# **Working Groups**

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| --- | --- |
| Digital Governance | Content Management\* |
| * James Kunjumen (lead) * Andrej Verity * Christian Flamm * Sebastien Fornassier * Fakhr E Alam Khan * Ranu Gupta * John Marinos * Kristina MacKinnon * Saeid Kdaimati * Devashri Kulwal * Bernard Chedid * Muditha Sampath | * **Adrian Ciancio (lead)** * Marina Colozzi * Remi Galinier * Miguel Angel Hernandez Rivera * Francis Tchassem * Florentino Urriola * Gavin Thorpe * Tomaz Tplan * Tsegai Tesfai * Ramon Shinkfield * Punya Sapkota |

\*This group is also looking at Taxonomy Harmonization, single source document repository, Contact Management guidelines

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| Situational Awareness | IM Standards |
| * **Fawad Hussain (lead)** * Erik Kastlander * Luigi Nicoletti * Tarek El-Gebely * Willem Muhren * Mostafa Shbib * Tala Chammas * Yakoubou Mounkara Oumarou * Nick Imboden * Brenda Eriksen | * **Roberto Colombo (lead)** * **Suzanne Connolly (lead)** * Alam Khan * Janet O’Callaghan * Kuda Mhwandagara * Sameer Al Rubaye * Sandeep Bashyal * Francis Tchassem * Kashif Rehman * Reem Nashashibi * Tor Bothner |

IM JOs Drafting Teams:

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| Coordination | Content Management | Data Visualization |
| * **Albert Abou Hamra (lead)** * Eva Vognil * James Steel * NK Shrestha * Michael Arunga Obare (OAD) * Tamara Roura (EO/HR) | * **Majed Abuqubu (lead)** * Ana Maria Pereira * Kristina Mackinnon * Stuart Campo * Olivier Uzel * Jessica Jordan (OAD) * Francis Castillo (EO/HR) | * **Javier Cueto (lead)** * Dita Aggreani * Joel Opulencia * John Ratcliff (OAD) * Rebecca Thorgeirsson/Kabore (EO/HR) * Michael Kahara Gituko * Noel Victorino |