

Organisations that collect personal data (first name, location etc.) need to safeguard this information in order to protect the individuals or groups that they are working with.

Furthermore, all individuals have rights relating to their personal data, which also need to be taken into account.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE ?


The adequate protection of beneficiary data is a basic prerequisite for any humanitarian or development projects and ensures that the collected data does not harm the beneficiaries in question.

Prerequisites

- None

HOW CAN WE DO IT?

- **What rights do interviewees have?**
 - To accept or refuse the collection or storage of their data at any moment (with «informed consent»)
 - To be aware of the purpose, the collection process and all those who will have access to their data
 - To view, access, update or correct data about themselves
- **What responsibilities do organisations have?**
 - To ensure that people they collect data on are aware of their data protection rights
 - To ensure that data cannot be linked to specific people if it is accessed by unauthorised individuals, by using techniques such as:
 - Anonymisation: store Personally Identifying Information (PII) separately from sensitive information (e.g. name separately from political affiliation) using an « identifier » (or unique code) to link the two databases
 - Aggregation: ensure that specific individuals cannot be identified by only sharing aggregated data publicly (even for data presented in graphs or maps)
 - To ensure data is adequately protected
 - Ensure that access to the raw data is strictly controlled and secure
 - Ensure that the data is transmitted in a secure manner. For example, only use encrypted transmission methods (i.e. where the original, intelligible data has been made unintelligible). Avoid using email accounts that are not secure or USB sticks.
 - Ensure that the data is stored in an encrypted format.
 - To minimise the amount of information that is collected: do not collect and store information that will not be used
 - To destroy sensitive data when it is no longer needed
 - To not share data about an individual unless they have given their permission to do so

- 
- The reference document for this subject within the humanitarian sector is the [«Professional Standards for Protection Work » from ICRC \(2nd edition 2013\)](#)
 - Other essential links: the Me and My Shadow project pages on [data protection and traceability](#) and [The Engine Room's platform on responsible data](#)
 - Don't hesitate to ask for help from an expert about this complex subject