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MY THOUGHTS SHARED

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Could we measure Humanitarian Innovation?

With all the discussion and focus over the past few years about humanitarian innovation, I wonder if we could find a way to measure it? Not at the granular, project level but rather at the country or disaster level. I had no real idea on how we could approach this until I came across the 2014 [Global Innovation Index \(GII\)](#). The [GII](#) is an annual publication that includes a composite indicator that ranks countries/economies in terms of their enabling environment to innovation and their innovation outputs. After spending some time looking into the details of their various indicators, sub-indexes and resulting composite index, the obvious question became: "Why can't we do the same with humanitarian innovation?"



Reaching out to [WIPO](#), as one of the entities responsible for the [GII](#), I managed to arrange a meeting with Mr. [Sacha Wunsch-Vincent](#) and Ms. [Daniela Benavente](#). Over lunch, [Daria Kireeva](#), [Craig Williams](#), [Andrew Thow](#), and I chatted with them about how the [GII](#) was created, the challenges they faced, and the solutions they found.

Inspired that a Humanitarian Innovation Index (HII) might be possible, [Daria Kireeva](#) spent a couple weeks studying the [GII](#) model and looking at how it could be morphed to a nation-level HII. She came up with a rough set of possible indicators to feed the "input / output" framework that the [GII](#) used but could be appropriated for an HII. Although many will be relevant, some we realize are more fanciful and could be replaced with more appropriate data sources. Although not for public distribution, [Daria](#) even collected the relevant data for most of the countries where [OCHA](#) works in order to see what the index would look like and how countries would rank.

My story



I am a disaster responder and information management officer for [UN-OCHA](#). I have a passion for simple and sometimes even seemingly childish innovative new concepts. I want people to collaborate with me to find the best solutions, new ideas, problems with my logic, and new bits that make my ideas work. I want to put my pieces on the table and start working. I do not believe that I have brilliant ideas, but rather I want to discover them.

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About a month ago, we were contracted by the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) Innovation Theme focal point, Ms. Mahsa Jafari, to discuss the concept. About five weeks ago, I was invited to present the HII framework concept to the WHS innovation working group. My pitch was that we could build off the GII concept and do it soundly by finding, as a group, the right indicators to compile input and output indexes all with the goal of launching the HII at the 2016 WHS summit. Hopefully the WHS or a similar group will be interested to take on the challenge.

Although our work was modeled after GII in that it would compare countries, we recognize that the HII framework could also be applied to organizations if the right indicators were identified. But, given I work for UN-OCHA, I don't think that it is my job to say that one organization is more innovative than another.

If you are interested in the concept or even taking our early efforts to the next level, please get in touch directly or by leaving a comment below.

