

Humanity First

Prototype Stakeholder Testing

Dec 22 – Jan 23



What is Humanity First?

The Humanity First prototype is being developed to support organisations and individuals working with technology on humanitarian challenges to investigate the consequences of their products or services, address risks, and engage people and communities as decision-makers in the design process.

In its current form, the prototype involves three domains and nine principles, which are guided by the core humanitarian principle to 'do no harm'.





Why you're being asked these questions today

Our work to develop the Humanity First approach is happening iteratively and collaboratively.

We want to learn from our stakeholders – particularly those working with technology on humanitarian issues – about how the current prototype resonates, so that we can continue refining it and begin to move from principles to practice.

Your input helps us to understand what we're getting right (or wrong) so far, so all feedback is helpful. We encourage you to be as open and evaluative as you would like to be in providing your responses.





If you want to know how we got here...

(Or, if you prefer to get to the prototype, skip ahead!)

01

In its 2020 Impact Model, Humanitech identified Humanity First as one of its core principles, defining it as “going beyond human-centred to humanity-centred design, ensuring people are at the core and in control of frontier technologies”.

The principle came out of a growing practitioner reaction to innovation practices that were introduced wholesale into the humanitarian sector, with seemingly little regard for complexity, context, and more than a century of community learning and practice.

02

In early 2022, to further define the concept and build it into a practical approach, Humanitech began a project developing the Humanity First prototype to contribute to responsible, ethical and inclusive innovation in the humanitarian sector and beyond.

We wanted to build on the best of humanitarian and technology development practice to produce a toolkit for humanitarians and technologists working on solving complex social problems with the aid of technology.

03

Drawing from our literature review and research base, our initial prototype was developed in collaboration with a diverse group of cross-sector stakeholders. It was released in October in the form of a set of principles. The prototype integrates components of human-centred design, systems thinking, and principles of co-design – along with considerations of ethics, accessibility, and the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

The prototype was then further refined through feedback from our Humanitech Lab cohort, Advisory Board and other stakeholders.





Humanity First Prototype

Domains



Community as HQ



Move at the speed of trust



Be a good ancestor

Do No Harm GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Promote dignity, safety and trust in the design, use and regulation of technology.

This means scrutinising ethical considerations throughout the lifecycle (by asking the hard questions), testing responsibly (by not experimenting with poorly understood tools on people and communities), and being transparent and realistic about the benefits and harms.



Empower people and communities

Recognise people and communities as experts and decision-makers, involving them in the design of technology products and strategies for their safe use from the outset.



Bring the right people in the room

Provide access and build capacity for diverse voices and perspectives – especially those on the margins – to participate in decision-making.



Be inclusive

Ensure technological tools and solutions have broad, societal benefits and that these benefits are accessible to many.



Take time to understand the problem

Recognise the complexity of environments and relationships that humanitarian technology innovations are trying to intervene in and allow time to develop an understanding of the people, networks, cultures, politics, infrastructure and markets that technology product is targeting.



Explore and create collectively

Bring together stakeholders from different sectors, disciplines, and backgrounds in reciprocal partnerships to explore and develop common understandings and strategies around technology products or solutions.



Protect data and privacy

Design technology products with respect for privacy rights and ensure the security of personal data. This is important for everyone, but especially when working with vulnerable people and communities.



Adapt, improve and share

Learn from what others have done, leverage it, adapt, and share insights (and capabilities) with others.



Sustainable for life

Build sustainable products and solutions that can adapt as needs and contexts change.



Be alive to consequences

Consider the present, future, intended, unintended, social and ecological impacts of technology products, and take steps to address the risks.



Domains



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These domains build on a depth of work from practitioners, researchers and people with lived experience in contexts of humanitarian action and community development, including with First Nations people and communities.

They seek to amplify the most incisive and resonant ideas of what it takes to pursue responsible, ethical, and inclusive innovation in these contexts.

These specific terms draw from ideas shared by, respectively, Robin Mays who talked about putting community as the centre of decision-making in the 2020 Future of Vulnerability report, Kristin Alford who spoke about the importance of taking things at the pace set by communities at the 2021 Humanitech Summit, and Bridgette Engeler who challenged us to take a futures lens and leave a good legacy at the 2022 Humanitech Summit.



Visualising the principles

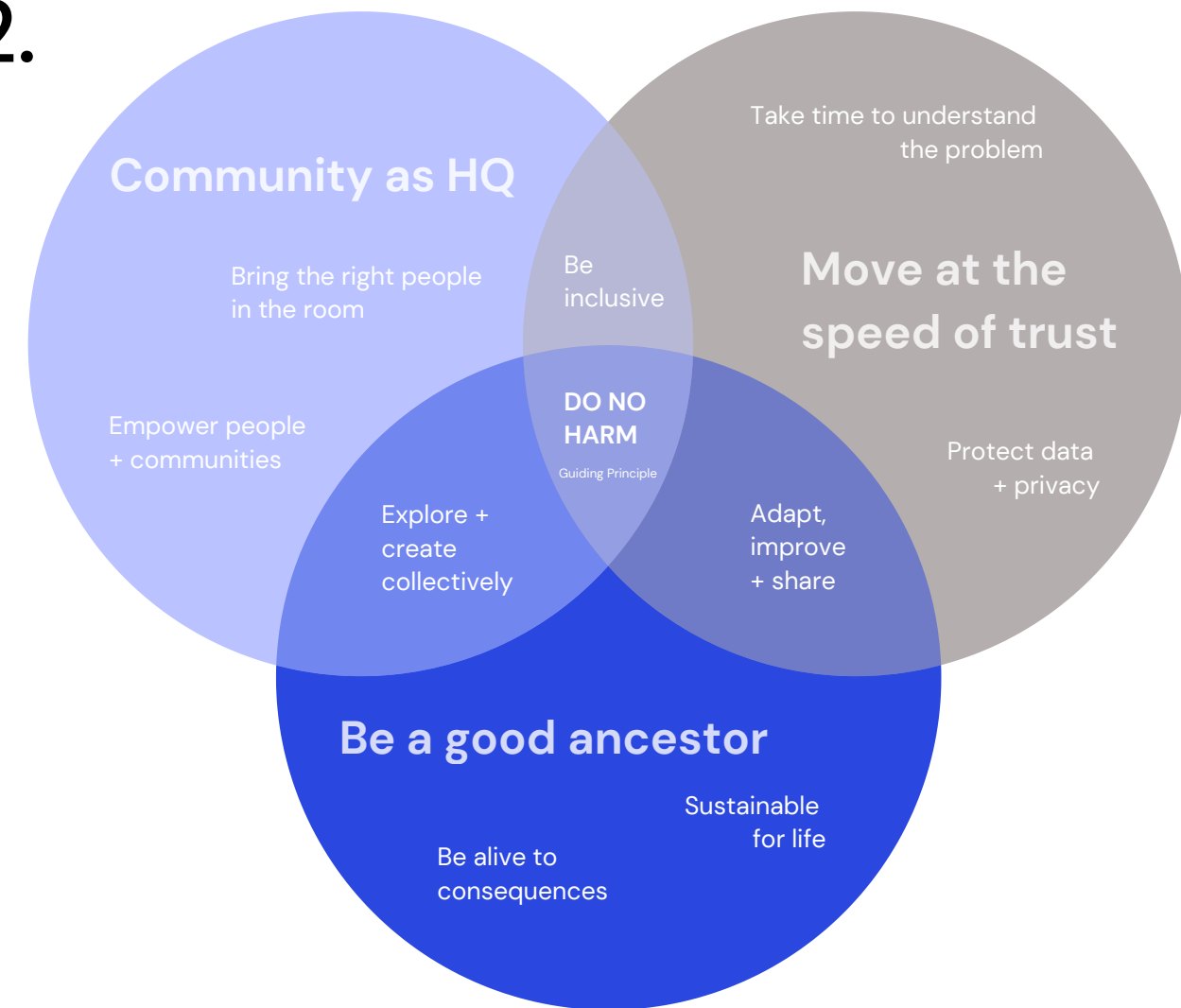
We are interested to explore whether a visualisation of the principles aids understanding.

To do this, we have created three rough concepts for consideration which are captured on this and the following page.

01.



02.

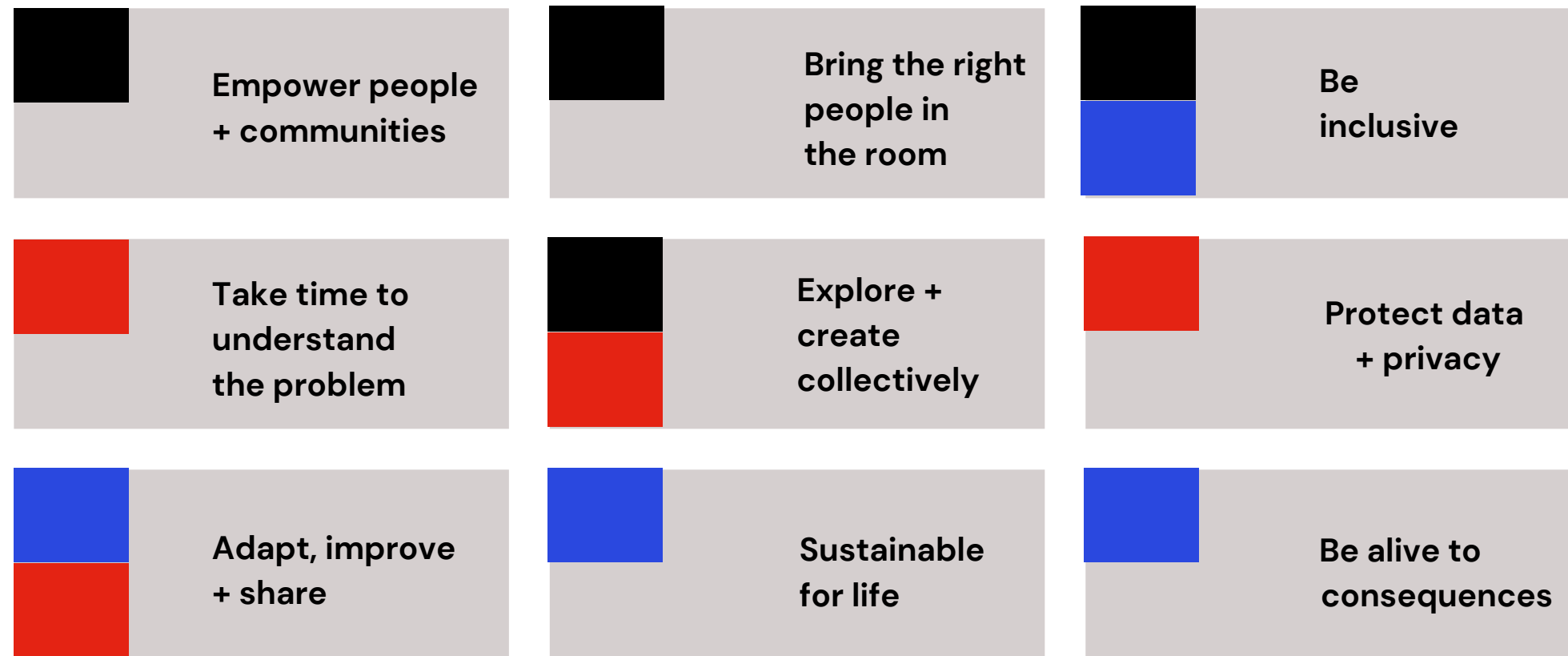




03.

DO NO HARM

Guiding Principle



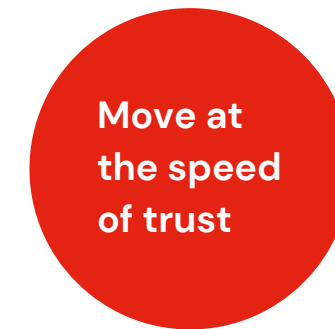
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