Missing Persons Community of Interest
Code of Conduct, Engagement Framework and Existing Resources
(A collaboration document by the Missing Persons Community of Interest)

Background
The Missing Persons Community of Interest (MPCI) began through the conversations and after action reporting of the communities working with and among missing persons projects in support of the 2010 Haitian earthquake disaster response and recovery. The MPCI began informally convening via conference calls to discuss how lessons learned in Haiti and other past disasters could be incorporated to prepare for future crises.

Overview
MPCI is an open community with participants from local disaster management, international humanitarian relief organizations, private sector technology companies, non-profits, technology volunteer communities and individuals. The community believes in a free and open exchange of lessons learned to increase the potential for innovation and relationship building but is conscious of the need of crisis response organizations who may request closed information sharing sessions and capabilities to share within the MPCI. This open community seeks to augment and support crisis response authorities if they seek to work in the best interest of the persons affected by crisis.

The MPCI will be an open body without membership however will require members of the community to contribute to and abide by the MPCI Code of Conduct. This code recognizes a level of responsibility of those who seek to assist in missing persons information prior to, during and after crises.
- MPCI is an independent association of individuals and organizations dealing with missing persons related issues
- MPCI is focused on missing people related issues
- MPCI is self organized and run
- MPCI is a collaborative group
- Information generated and shared within MPCI is public unless otherwise noted

Objective
The goal of the MPCI is to provide an open forum to foster dialogue, education, training, relationship building, policy and community standards development to accelerate the incorporation of lessons learned, emerging technologies and community input to improve and innovate how and under what conditions missing persons information is collected, managed, and acted upon.

Engagement Framework
MPCI will work in a collaborative and open environment and abide by a code of conduct as agreed upon in this document. The MPCI will work to develop an engagement strategy which takes into consideration the needs of the community and the capabilities of its membership to forward the community's ability to accomplish its objective. The framework will include:
- MPCI collaboration (establishment of small workgroups, recruitment into the community,

conference calls, in-person meetings)
- Virtual and physical sharing of best practices, research and dialogue
- Policy development
- Pre-incident partnership strategies with national governments and INGO's
- Community technical standards development
- Community policy guidance (code of coordination, privacy, security)
- MPIC Incident Coordination Plan
- Opportunities for pre-scripted projects/programs for volunteer technology communities
- Media/Communications Plan
- Metrics

Code of Conduct (Modified from [Ubuntu Code of Conduct](#))
The Missing Persons Community of Interest began with the desire to help others connect with their loved ones. We believe this is an important service where not only crisis response organizations and authorities can provide assistance, but where individual volunteers can help response authorities in a responsible and respectful manner. We believe in understanding the crisis response community, their incident management protocols, security and privacy considerations in order to be effective contributors to this community. We seek to do no harm, rather to understand and contribute in a responsible and effective manner, supporting the response and recovery effort rather than detracting from it.

As a open community, work done for this community will be placed in the public domain, both policy and intellectual property. We collaborate freely on a volunteer basis to provide resources, both intellectual and software, for everyone's benefit. We improve on the work of others, which we have been given freely, and then share our improvements on the same basis. That collaboration depends on good relationships within our community. To this end, we've agreed on the following code of conduct to help define the ways that we think collaboration and cooperation should work. If you wish to sign the code of conduct, you can (TBD). This code of conduct covers our behaviour as members of the Missing Persons Community of Interest, in any forum, mailing list, wiki, website, Internet chat, public meeting or private correspondence. If and when there is a need for a governing body to manage the growing MPCI, a governance body is ultimately accountable to the MPCI and will arbitrate in any dispute over the conduct of a member of the community.
- **Be considerate.** Our work will be used by other people, and we in turn will depend on the work of others. Any decision we take will affect users and colleagues, and we should take those consequences into account when making decisions.
- **Be respectful.** MPCI members treat one another with respect. Everyone can make a valuable contribution to the community effort. We may not always agree, but disagreement is no excuse for poor behaviour and poor manners. We might all experience some frustration now and then, but we cannot allow that frustration to turn into a personal attack. It's important to remember that a community where people feel uncomfortable or threatened is not a productive one. We expect members of the MPCI to be respectful when dealing with other contributors as well as with people outside the MPCI and with members of the crisis response community.

- **Be collaborative.** Collaboration is central to MPCI and to the larger crisis response community. We encourage individuals and teams to work together whether inside or outside the MPCI. This collaboration reduces redundancy, and improves the quality of our work. Internally and externally, we should always be open to collaboration. Wherever possible, we should work closely with crisis response organizations to coordinate our efforts in all areas whether they be technical, advocacy or documentation. Our work should be done transparently and we should involve as many interested parties as early as possible. If we decide to take a different approach than others, we will let them know early, document our work and inform others regularly of our progress.
- **When we disagree, we consult others.** Disagreements, both social and technical, happen all the time and the MPCI is no exception. It is important that we resolve disagreements and differing views constructively and with the help of the community and community processes.
- **When we are unsure, we ask for help.** Nobody knows everything, and nobody is expected to be perfect in the MPCI. Asking questions avoids many problems down the road, and so questions are encouraged. Those who are asked questions should be responsive and helpful. However, when asking a question, care must be taken to do so in an appropriate forum.
- **Step down considerately.** Members of any open and volunteer community come and go and MPCI is no different. When somebody leaves or disengages from a project, in whole or in part, we ask that they do so in a way that minimises disruption to the project. This means they should tell people they are leaving and take the proper steps to ensure that others can pick up where they left off.

The Ubuntu code of conduct is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 licence. You may re-use it for your own project, and modify it as you wish, just please allow others to use your modifications and give credit to the Ubuntu Project!

Available/Existing Scholarly Research/Data on Missing Persons:

- ICRC Missing Persons Webpage
- ICRC: Guiding Principles/Model Law on the missing
- ICRC: Missing Persons and their Families
- Rule 117. Accounting for Missing Persons
- ICRC Resource Center: What does the humanitarian law say with regard to the restoration of family links?
- ICRC Magazine: "I'm Alive"
- ICRC Restoring Family Links Strategy - March 2009
- ICRC:The Restoring Family Links Strategy (and implementation plan) - November 2007
- ICRC: The Missing and transitional justice: the right to know and the fight against impunity
- CrisisCamp After Action Report - Haiti
- ICRC: Managing the dead in catastrophes: guiding principles and practical recommendations for first responders
- Refugees Untied: Code of Conduct

- [UK - National Policing Improvement Agency: Collection of Missing Persons Data (A Code of practice for Police Service on collecting and sharing data on missing persons with public authorities)](#)