



# An unexpected alliance: why humanitarians should be building partnerships with companies and academia & how to achieve that

24<sup>th</sup> March 2023

<https://www.rc3events.org/>



An initiative of  
the Netherlands  
Red Cross

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# Speakers



**Robert Monné**  
Managing Director

Analytics for a  
Better World



**Fiona Terry**  
Head of Centre for  
operational research &  
experience

International  
Committee of the  
Red Cross



**Makoala Marake**  
Senior Lecturer

National  
University of  
Lesotho



**Céline White**  
Training Manager

PIROI



**Marc van den  
Homberg**  
Research lead

510

# **Speaker presentations**

**5 x 5 min**

# Introducing Analytics for a Better World



**Analytics for a  
Better World**



# Robert Monné

Thesis on information integration to respond to floods in Bangladesh



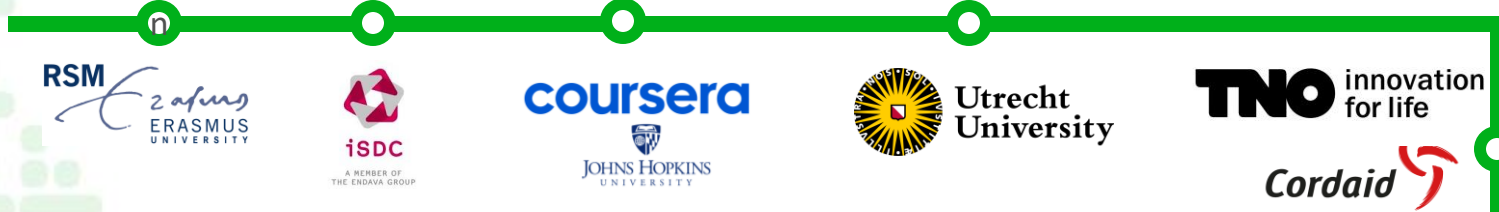
## What is analytics and how to use it?

Hands-on Data Science

MSc Information Science

BSc Business Administration

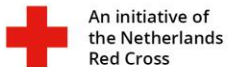
Trainee



## How to create value with data & analytics?



## How to create impact with data and analytics for non profits and social good?



Managing Director

- Initiating and Scaling the institute
- Strategy & Partnership development

1. MSc Thesis
2. Training
3. Consultancy

Reach out: [LinkedIn](#)





# Analytics for a Better World

Founding partners:



UNIVERSITEIT  
VAN AMSTERDAM

**ORTEC**  
OPTIMIZE YOUR WORLD

Founder's vision [1](#) and [2](#)

# What partnerships are we building?



An initiative of  
the Netherlands  
Red Cross

THE OCEAN  
CLEANUP

## Nonprofits

(Global institutes, Public sector, NGOs)

- Have problems worth solving, and domain knowledge for scoping
- Make impact through network of beneficiaries, volunteers and staff



THE WORLD BANK  
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## Researchers

- Research on SDGs and novel analytics techniques
- Education to increase awareness and build skills

 **Analytics for a  
Better World**

## Business

- Analytics tooling development and implementation
- Training and knowledge sharing
- Funding/sponsorship

London  
Business  
School

MIT  
MANAGEMENT  
SLOAN SCHOOL



UNIVERSITY  
OF AMSTERDAM

ORTEC  
OPTIMIZE YOUR WORLD

Deutsche Post DHL  
Group

MOTIONS  
FACT BASED DECISIONS



GUROBI  
OPTIMIZATION

BUILDING  
BLOCKS

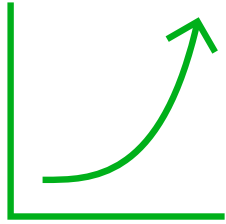


# How do we build partnerships?

- Start small and build towards a common and inspiring mission
- Pursue joint activities with mutual value through complementary contributions (research, company, nonprofit)
- Personal relations and trust by key stakeholders, and build on personal motivation from core team and contributors
- Difficult topics such as IP, investments and contracts: focus on common ground, being equal and open



# Value for NGOs



Increase impact  
of internal  
operations and  
external  
programs



Building in-  
house  
analytics  
capability



Ecosystem:  
Access to  
experts and  
talent



## THE CENTRE FOR OPERATIONAL RESEARCH AND EXPERIENCE

# Role of the CORE

- Conduct evidence-based, ethically generated research studies
- Advise on research across the ICRC
- Established and run an ethics review board for research
- Promote and facilitate the uptake of research findings in policy and operations



# Academic Collaborations

- 2-year study on the Roots of Restraint in War
- Call for proposals
- Influential Policy report
- Symposium in academic journal



# Humanitarian Action Challenges

- Collaboration between EPFL, ETHZ and ICRC on finding technical solutions to humanitarian challenges
- <https://eha.swiss/projects/>
- Example: Monitoring Patterns of Violence



The background features abstract, overlapping green geometric shapes in various shades, creating a modern and dynamic visual effect. The shapes are primarily triangles and polygons, some semi-transparent, layered against a white background.

Prof Makoala V. Marake

The National University of Lesotho  
Academic Alliance for Anticipatory Action

# My Current Role & Who's Who of My Partnership Experiences

- Currently Project Coordinator - Lesotho Chapter of the 4As Consortium
  
- Previous Partnerships with Public, Private and NGOs in Research
  - **Lesotho Red Cross Society - FbF action research on drought**
    - ✓ Drought Scoping
    - ✓ Snow and Cold Waves
  
  - **World Food Program**
    - ✓ Early Warning Systems
    - ✓ Disaster Risk Reduction Instruments
    - ✓ Climate Risk Assessment
    - ✓ Climate Change Adaptation - Action Research



# The How of My Partnerships

- Commissioned Works
  - Action Research
  - Student Attachments and Internships
  - Consultancies
  - Training
  - Volunteerism
  - Collaborative works

# Value of Partnerships

- ❑ Capacity Building through networks
- ❑ Resource mobilization
- ❑ Leveraging field tested knowledge and experience
- ❑ Student training
- ❑ Student attachment
- ❑ Student and staff internships

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of green, ranging from light lime to dark forest green. These shapes are primarily located on the left and right sides of the frame, leaving a large white central area for text.

Kea Leboha

Thank you

**An unexpected alliance: why  
humanitarians should be building  
partnerships with companies and  
academia & how to achieve that**

**PIROI - Reunion Island University**

Celine White - Training and research manager



# PIROI - French Red Cross - Reunion island



# PIROI - French Red Cross

## Regional Intervention Platform for the Indian Ocean - French Red Cross

Established since 2000 in Reunion Island

7 National Societies  
/ 9 members with IFRC & ICRC

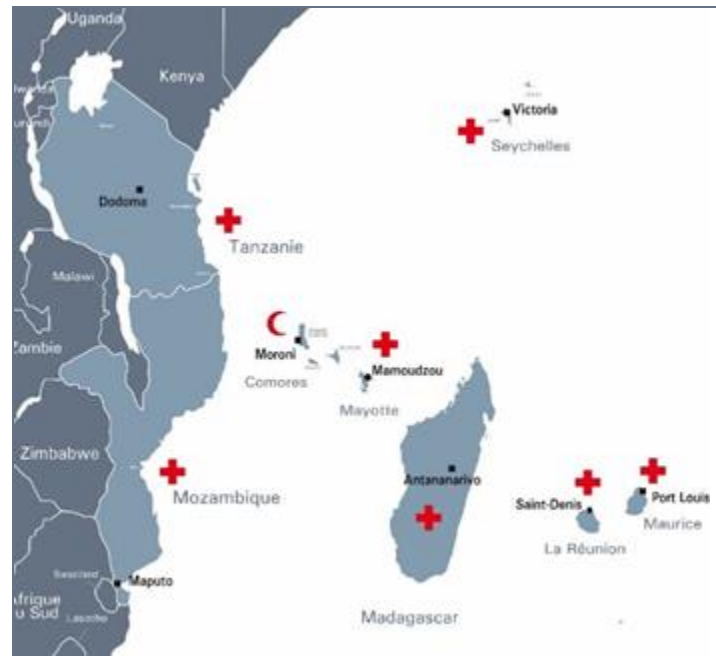
### Disaster risk management program

#### WHO ?

- ↳ Risk exposed populations
- ↳ National Societies of the RCRC Movement
- ↳ Disaster Risk Management actors : civil protection, governments (Min. of health, education, DRM state representatives...)

#### WHAT ?

- ▶ Knowledge and competencies on Disaster Risk Management are strengthened
- ▶ Regional / national / local capacities are increased
- ▶ Population are informed / sensitized
- ▶ Emergency response



# PIROI - Master 'Risk and environment'

Reunion Island University

## WHY ?

► Knowledge and competencies on Disaster Risk Management are strengthened in the Indian Ocean Islands

↳ Provide academic opportunities to develop regional capacities

↳ Knowledge, contacts and capacities from a humanitarian actor

## WHO ?

↳ Entry level : Undergraduate students (Licence - 3 yrs)

↳ Risk management in private / public sectors

↳ Young graduates professionals at the end (Master degree)

↳ Local professional actors - apprenticeship (alternance)

## HOW ?

↳ Creation of an official partnership between University & PIROI

↳ PIROI responsible of the 'professional units' in the Master's curriculum

↳ Member of the selection committee + juries + professional projects + employment of an apprentice (2 yrs)

↳ Involving other DRM actors

# PIROI - Reunion Island University

## RESULTS

**2014 - 2020** : accreditation / building the academic program / establishing the partnership

2020 - 2021 : first promotion with 9 students

2021-2022 : second promotion with 10 students

↳ End 2022 : first promotion to be graduated (60% students employed)

2022 - 2023 : third promotion with 13 students

## CHALLENGES & NEXT STEPS

- Pluridisciplinary program (Department of Human and environmental science)
- Keeping professional actors engaged
- Management / administration system of the academic sector
- Regionalisation (creating partnerships with other IOI universities)
- Adding a professional diploma for local authorities actors





**Céline White - Training and research manager**  
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510

Partnering with academia;  
a 510 perspective

Marc van den Homberg  
Scientific lead





## 510 team composition



# Needs Red Cross National Societies are driving

## Host National Society



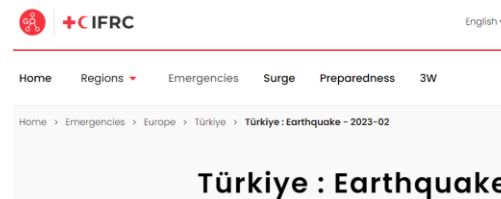
## 510 themes

Anticipatory Action

Water and Landscape

Emergency support

## Projects



## Matching research questions with students & partners

*510 themes*

*Research questions*

*Bottom-up via students/researchers*

*Top down via partner*

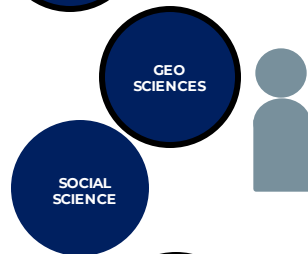
Anticipatory Action

*How to develop a trigger model for floods and droughts?*



Water and Landscape

*What is the flood risk reduction when using Nature-based solutions?*



Emergency support

*What is the accuracy of damage assessments using AI as compared to the ground truth?*





# Collaboration with universities: bottom-up and top-down

- Iterative and interactive process to match
  - Red Cross interests
  - MSc student expertise and interest
  - University supervisor expertise and interest
  - Academic requirements of university
- Make sure we have a right to play given what others are doing already (keep track of literature)
- Collaborations with specific academic researchers, built up over time through multiple joint MSc thesis supervisions and PhD case studies are very fruitful and do not require formal agreements/MoUs etc at an organizational level



# Success factors

- Ensure -from the start- the linkage to a 510 project and support from within 510, not only from the direct 510 supervisor
- Ensure a minimum of data is available when the student starts
  - For data science related research can be only secondary data
  - For social science/disaster risk management research, primary data is a big plus. However, field data collection is time consuming to organize, requires commitment of Host National Society.
  - Establish strong collaboration among MSc student, 510 and university supervisors through regular meetings, decision moments (kickoff, mid-term, green light) and contact, especially in scoping and analysis phase.
- A proper handover and follow-up
  - Explore ways in which MSc research can be built into 510s products (if this was not part of MSc research itself).
  - Be proactive; once a student has moved into a job in a different field follow up is very difficult to realize. Option to have a volunteer already start alongside MSc student or to overlap with a new MSc student starting up.
  - Explore options for publishing MSc research as this is a severe quality check and provides an evidence-base

# Q&A



# Q&A

- Are there any questions from the audience for the panel?
- How do you deal with resistance within your organization in terms of engaging with researchers, given that research might not be right away implementable/useful (time lag), differences in languages and way of working etc?
- How do you avoid power imbalances in collaborations?
- How do you deal with the (digital) divide between the Global North and the Global South?
- Why would an MSc student from abroad do research in a country if a country has themselves very good MSc students?
- What would you like to achieve in five years?
- How do you balance the academic interest in publishing with getting things really done and implemented?

# Contact us:

<https://www.rc3events.org/>



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**THANK YOU ☺**  
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