

Bringing Communities into the Conversation

Exploring AI for humanitarian impact in Antakya



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In November, **NESTA** travelled to Antakya, Turkey to gather community input on the use of AI tools for damage assessment. Working with a local expert facilitator, they held two community dialogues with a diverse range of 24 Antakya residents. Supported by the **UK Humanitarian Innovation Hub (UKHIH)**, NESTA has been designing and testing a conceptual **AI Safety Label** as part of ongoing research supporting the responsible adoption of humanitarian AI tools. Through these community dialogues, NESTA are seeking to better understand the perception of affected populations on the use of AI tools.

In Antakya, NESTA conducted **digitally-enhanced community dialogue sessions** that combined accessible, interactive media, facilitated group discussion, expert Q&A and polling. This format ensured that participants were able to meaningfully engage with complex questions and relate them, and the AI damage assessment tool, to their experience while learning about the preferences of others.

Tangible outputs for humanitarians

Participants were positive about the technology and appreciated being able to give their views. They spoke about their hopes and fears for the use of AI for damage assessment, and recommended guardrails that organisations should work towards to help them limit the risks from the technology, e.g. Dedicated staff training on how to use the AI tool and ongoing impact monitoring. We've used the results to create a prototype **AI Safety Label** that can be shared with decision makers in the sector.

Our experience in Antakya showed us that it's possible to engage communities in **balanced, contextually-grounded discussions** about the value of AI for crisis response. And that these sessions produce tangible, practical outputs that humanitarians can use to guide ethical decision making about AI.



Research group in Antakya, Turkey, November 2024

At a glance

Location: Atakya, Hatay region. A region severely impacted by February 2023 earthquake

Participants: 24 local residents (across two sessions)

Gender: Equal representation of men and women

Education: Balanced across different education levels

Age: Wide range of ages represented



Growing AI use: Research has shown an increased adoption of AI tools in humanitarian organisations.

Key challenge: Low awareness of risks and mitigation strategies for responsible AI use.

Solution: Independent AI Safety Label (AI assurance process) to guide decision-making.

Community-led input: Risk assessment capturing community views on AI tool acceptability for specific purposes.



Over the past 4 months, we engaged with people in various roles.

We spoke to both large UN agencies and smaller, local NGOs.

Next, we will finalise the AI Safety Label design.

This will combine insights from testing in Antakya and conversations with the humanitarian community.

Participant feedback

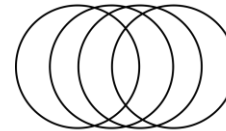
“I am educated to primary school level, and as this kind of ordinary person I've never had the chance to learn what AI is.

Now after this workshop I understand it, and I know how to explain it to others.”

For further details about this project visit
ukhih.org/CCI



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