

## Press release 05.05.2016

**iTRACK** - Integrated system for real-time TRACKing and collective intelligence in civilian humanitarian missions

The European research project iTRACK was successfully launched in May 2016. The project brings together academics, innovators and end users to build the **next generation intelligent tracking platform** to provide **better protection for civilian humanitarian missions**. The iTRACK approach combines technology development with process and policy innovation to address real-world practices of humanitarian aid workers. ,

On May 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> 2016, representatives from academia, SMEs and end-users, from 8 EU member states, Jordan and the US, came together in Kristiansand, Norway to launch the project. With about 4 million € funding from the European Commission under the Horizon 2020 Programme, iTRACK will build **a distributed intelligent tracking platform** that empowers aid workers on the ground to detect and react to risks and threats as they emerge. In this way, the project aims to bridge the gap between monitoring and better protection. The project also entails a training and simulation track that will enable humanitarians to test and improve the iTRACK solutions throughout the project.

iTRACK is focused on improving protection and effectiveness of humanitarian missions with integrated intelligent socio-technical tracking solutions to support threat detection, navigation, logistics, and coordination in humanitarian disasters. The collective intelligence and intelligent systems developed by iTRACK will play an important role in boosting both protection and efficiency of responses by providing the means for responders on the ground to acquire valuable information in real-time, to help them self-assess the situation, make informed decisions, communicate and organise their response.

The project is coordinated by the Centre for Integrated Emergency Management at the University of Agder from Norway and also includes three other research and academic partners, providing expertise on logistics, policy analysis and remote sensing: the HumLog Institute of the Hanken school of economics from Finland, Delft University of Technology from The Netherlands and Teknova AS from Norway. The consortium includes two Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), the United Nations World Food Programme and the Information Management and Mine Action Programs Inc. (iMMAP) from Washington DC.

Five Small or Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) and one industrial partner are also involved. The industrial partner is INTRASOFT International, based in Luxemburg, an IT company which will be responsible for the software of the iTRACK platform. Two UK-based SMEs are involved, Trilateral Research, a consulting company which provides expertise in privacy and ethical issues and K-now, which specializes in commercializing research based knowledge management technologies. Treelogic, an SME providing ICT based research and development in ICT is based in Spain, Teleplan Globe, an expert in secure communication systems, is a Norwegian company and ARTTIC, a French consulting SME, will serve as the project administrator and lead the activities related to dissemination.

This ambitious multidisciplinary project will last three years and its results will be implemented, deployed and tested in simulations with humanitarian practitioners with pilot applications with the **World Food Programme** and **iMMAP** in on-going conflict disasters in the Middle East. iTRACK recognises the fact that technology innovation can only be successful if it addresses decision-makers' needs and will therefore also work on policies to reflect work practices and decision-making procedures of humanitarian responders. iTRACK combines technology and process innovation that supports better self-organisation of civilian humanitarian responders.

The project is funded by the European Commission under the H2020 Secure Societies programme (grant n° 700510).