

GENEVA CENTRE OF
HUMANITARIAN STUDIES

CENTRE D'ÉTUDES
HUMANITAIRES GENÈVE



Strategy

2021 - 2025

Tawila, internally displaced persons camp.
Explaining to the population the role of ICRC.
Photo © ICRC

A Joint Centre of



UNIVERSITÉ
DE GENÈVE

THE
GRADUATE
INSTITUTE
GENEVA

INSTITUT DE HAUTES
ÉTUDES INTERNATIONALES
ET DU DÉVELOPPEMENT
GRADUATE INSTITUTE
OF INTERNATIONAL AND
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES



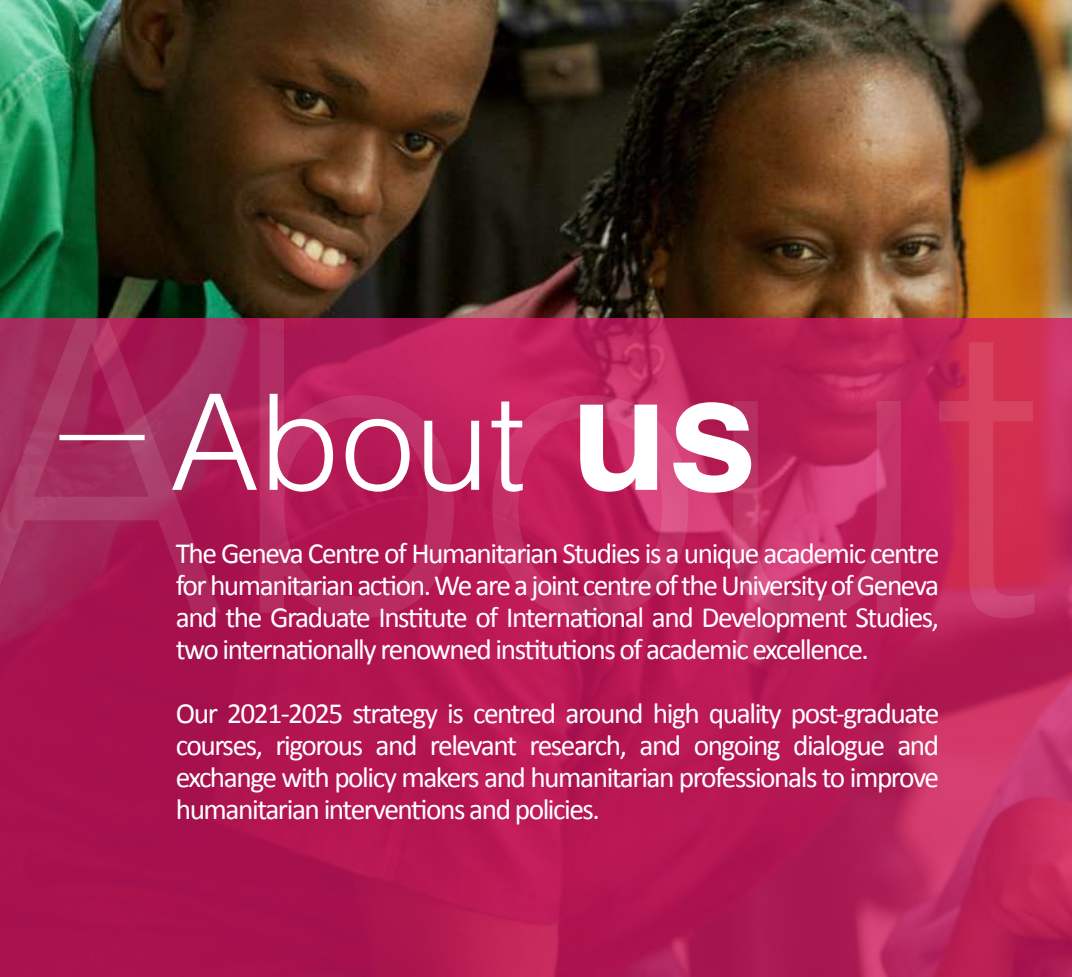
We value the **Geneva Centre of Humanitarian Studies** for its executive education programmes that draws on a great diversity of academic and practitioners' insights and expertise. It means the Centre can bring diverging perspectives and practices within the humanitarian sector to the fore and debate novel approaches”.

Gilles Carbonnier, Vice President,
International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

“The Geneva Centre of Humanitarian Studies has become a key partner of the Ministry of Public Health in Afghanistan. Their expertise in public health and research is well recognised and valued in the country”.

Sayed Ataullah Saeedzai, Director General,
Monitoring Evaluation and Health Information System,
Ministry of Public Health





— About us

The Geneva Centre of Humanitarian Studies is a unique academic centre for humanitarian action. We are a joint centre of the University of Geneva and the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, two internationally renowned institutions of academic excellence.

Our 2021-2025 strategy is centred around high quality post-graduate courses, rigorous and relevant research, and ongoing dialogue and exchange with policy makers and humanitarian professionals to improve humanitarian interventions and policies.



Port-au-Prince, physical rehabilitation centre Klinik Kay Kapab. Photo © ICRC

The Humanitarian — Capital

Geneva. End of the year ceremony, Master's students 2019
Photo © Geneva Centre of Humanitarian Studies



Geneva is the historic home of humanitarianism, thanks to the creation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) by a group of residents in 1863. Geneva now hosts 31 United Nations and international organisations, some 300 non-governmental organisations, and 172 diplomatic missions.

We use our location and our institutional partnerships to our advantage through strategic relationships to promote humanitarian dialogue, and enhance our academic programme and research agenda. The University of Geneva with its numerous faculties and institutes and The Graduate Institute with its international relations expertise enrich the academic content of our courses. We also ensure our students can benefit from our unique connections within Geneva International, including key international organisations via our public events and our guest lecturers, whom are leading experts in their field. Our students, many of whom come from countries affected by humanitarian crises also represent a valuable resource for our Centre and our Geneva institutional partners.



Mogadishu, Keysaney Hospital. In the pharmacy.
Photo © ICRC

Humanitarian Landscape – and Challenges

While 2020 was a very challenging year for everyone, it was especially so for humanitarian organisations who faced the double burden of the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing humanitarian crises, and these challenges continue into 2021. Our experience of the pandemic has significantly informed our new vision on how the Centre can best contribute to the further development of the sector, making it more inclusive, self-critical and aware of its own constraints. Thanks to the support of our sponsors, the Centre can offer a dozen students from affected countries the opportunity to pursue our Executive Master. We give careful consideration to applications from refugees and survivors from all forms of violence. We will also invest time to increase the number of scholarships. We also continue to support and empower the humanitarian professionals working within the sector via our training courses, many of whom are often working locally, responding to humanitarian crises.

The COVID-19 pandemic has profoundly tested global financial, political and societal capacities, as well as the legitimacy and capacity of governments. This pandemic has shown the necessity of adopting systemic responses that involve numerous sectors and diverse actors in society. The pandemic has confirmed both the

need for innovative, political, long term solutions to global challenges, and the importance of empowering local capacity and community engagement to respond to crises at the local level. We are seeing that the responders to today's humanitarian crises and global health emergencies are once again local communities, public services and national NGOs, underscoring the importance of investing resources in domestic humanitarian professionals and institutions.

Our aim is to make sure they have access to the latest science, programme knowledge, training and guidance, and have the power and knowledge to make the most effective decisions. Global solidarity has been shaken by a protectionist instinct during the COVID-19 pandemic with the closure of borders, nationalistic competition and the deeper stigmatisation of specific groups such as refugees, internally displaced people and migrants. The rule of law is being challenged by the perception that human rights become secondary in times of global health emergencies. The notion of public common goods was challenged as soon as vaccines became available. Analysing these trends from various perspectives provides insights into the future of humanitarianism and the challenges that will be experienced by populations living in crisis.

Transforming – Humanitarian Action

The humanitarian environment and system are evolving rapidly. As highlighted during the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, the access by humanitarian workers to resources - be they finance, knowledge or skills -- has been limited by numerous structural barriers. Teaching institutions are mainly in Western countries, access to visas is more difficult than ever, and many critically-needed courses are too expensive for humanitarians from low- and middle-income countries. The majority of such courses are offered in English, making them even more difficult for non-Anglophone humanitarians to access. These key challenges have guided our new strategy and how our Centre will contribute to transforming humanitarian action by co-producing courses and research with universities located in affected countries, continue to promote diversity amongst our student cohorts and ensure that evidence is widely translated and accessible to professionals. The close links with InZone, a University of Geneva programme on higher education for refugees, will also help our Centre transform and adapt course access, content and format.

The Geneva Centre of Humanitarian Studies remains a strong promoter of and catalyzer for multi-disciplinarity. Within this approach the Centre is internationally recognized for its expertise in humanitarian public health. This area of excellence will continue to be expanded through research, teaching and policy influence while also investing in other areas and disciplines.

Our Vision

Current and aspiring humanitarian professionals have access to past and latest evidence-based knowledge to better respond to the needs of populations in crisis.

Our Mission

Through research, education, and humanitarian dialogue and exchange, the Centre will strengthen the capacity and practice of humanitarian professionals wherever they work in order to empower them to respond effectively to global humanitarian challenges. We also aim to contribute to critical reflections on contemporary humanitarianism with the view of bringing positive transformations to the humanitarian system.



Mannar. An ICRC employee explains the activities carried out by the institution to restore family links.
Photo © ICRC



Valle de los ríos Apurímac, Ene y Mantaro (VRAEM).
The ICRC supports the communities affected by violence.
Photo © ICRC

— Our principles of action

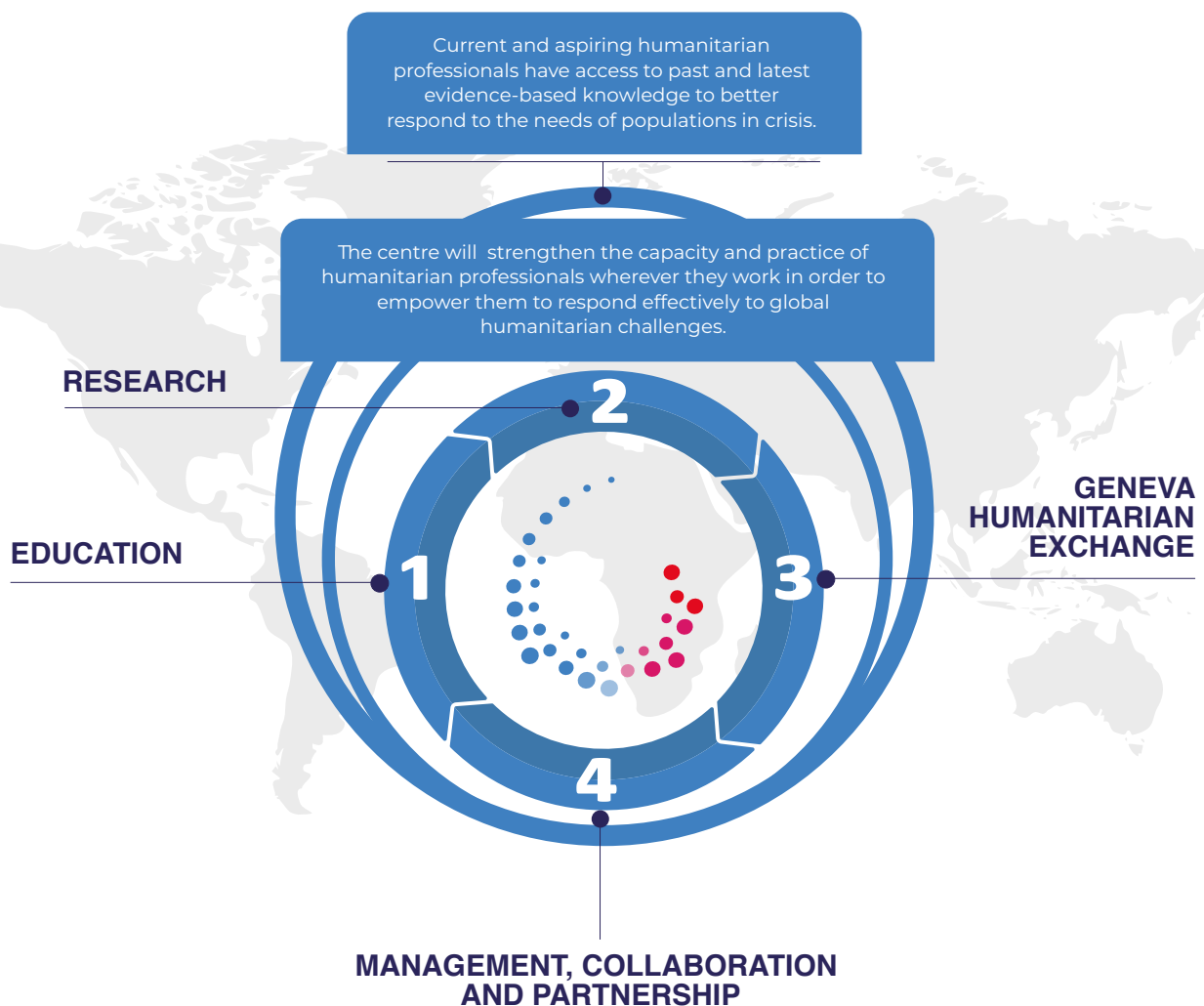
Our principles of action will guide us for the next five years in our organisational and operational decision-making at the Geneva Centre of Humanitarian Studies - these have been defined as:

- Inclusive
- Diverse
- Quality-focused
- Evidence-based
- Sustainable growth
- Collaborative
- Innovative
- Agile

Institutional – Commitments

The Geneva Centre of Humanitarian Studies is committed over the next five years to transforming our activities at all levels in order to:

- Break down the barriers to humanitarian learning through the localisation of courses in affected countries, with an emphasis on peer learning, an increase in the range of online courses and the duplication of some courses in French and potentially other languages.
- Offer broader narratives on different schools of thoughts in humanitarianism and diversify training and research by proactively revising the curriculum and content of courses and attracting a larger proportion of lecturers and researchers from crises-affected countries.
- Adapt the Centre to humanitarian reality by continuously analysing new trends and under-researched issues and remain a pioneer in innovative approaches.



Strategic – Objectives

Pillar 1

Education

Strategic objective: Deliver a cross-disciplinary, cross cultural and modular education programme in humanitarian studies adapted to the work constraints of humanitarian professionals promoting peer learning.

Outcomes

1.1

The Centre will ensure humanitarian professionals have access to a flexible, modular education programme with an emphasis on online & blended learning and have a platform to share their knowledge and experience

1.2

The Centre reaches out to the broadest humanitarian community, including national staff, by delivering online and localised courses through partnerships, and adapting the language for francophone regions and potentially other languages

1.3

The Centre will ensure humanitarian professionals and refugee populations have access to bursaries and open access resources

1.4

The Centre will introduce a Humanitarian Action Bologna Master programme for future humanitarian professionals

Pillar 2

Research

Strategic Objective: The Centre undertakes rigorous research to increase understanding of emerging humanitarian practices, policies and concepts.

Outcomes

2.1

The Centre develops studies to explore underdeveloped areas of research, such as public health, attacks on healthcare, forced migration, climate crises and innovation and digital transformations

2.2

The Centre develops partnerships with universities and other actors in crisis-affected countries to contribute to the transformation of humanitarian research and practice

2.3

The Centre's researchers will actively contribute to courses to ensure a learning loop between research and training

Pillar 3

Geneva Humanitarian Exchange

Strategic objective: The Centre stimulates debate and analysis on key humanitarian trends and issues, provides services including capacity building, and makes evidence accessible to a diverse range of stakeholders.

Outcomes

3.1

The Centre organises debates, webinars and events with diverse actors and partners. It is recognised for the quality of events, and for the diversity of the themes discussed and experts involved

3.2

The Centre develops a range of support services: providing technical advice, evaluations and capacity building while developing key partnerships at global, regional and local levels

3.3

The Centre further develops the Humanitarian Encyclopedia: a collective platform with regional hubs to stimulate debates and analysis around key humanitarian concepts

Pillar 4

Management, collaboration and partnerships

The Centre will use a collaborative management style both internally, ensuring the potential of all staff is fully recognized, and externally through reciprocal collaboration with partners to maximize each other's expertise.

Outcomes

4.1

The Centre consolidates, adapts, and develops new management tools and policies to increase responsiveness and agility of the institution

4.2

The Centre ensures the capabilities of all staff are fully recognized and used by assessing and developing their full potential

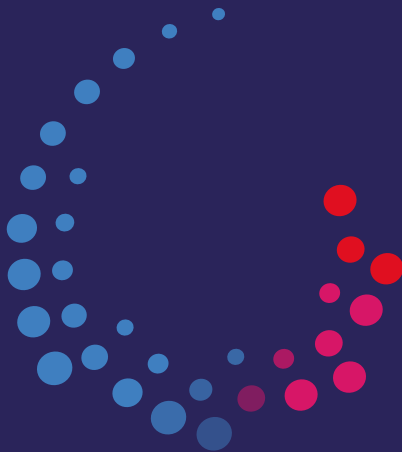
4.3

The Centre increases the diversity of their staff and guest lecturers



— In a few **words**

The Geneva Centre of Humanitarian Studies has the ambition to grow and play a full role in improving humanitarian response and influencing humanitarian practice and policies. The Centre will strengthen its position as a centre of academic excellence, building on its research and training. We will contribute to current debates and stimulate conversations on relevant and sometimes sensitive topics. We will train the future managers of humanitarian programmes and organisations and inspire a new generation of graduates to start their career in the humanitarian sector and contribute to its positive transformation.



28, Boulevard du Pont-d'Arve, 1205 Geneva ☎ +41 22 379 56 50 ✉ humanitarianstudies@unige.ch

www.humanitarianstudies.ch