

# 2024 Annual Report

Shaping the future  
of humanitarian  
professionals

FACULTY OF MEDICINE  
GENEVA CENTRE OF HUMANITARIAN STUDIES



UNIVERSITÉ  
DE GENÈVE

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# Introduction

# Letter from Director

This past year, we were confronted with increasing resource constraints and humanitarian emergencies. In this context, we managed to keep the pace and remain focused on our mission. Thanks to our committed and creative teams, our courses continued to support our many students from all around the world and new research projects were launched.

More than 700 candidates applied (all courses included). Highlights include, among others, the executive course on *Addressing Sexual Violence in Conflict and Emergency Settings* conducted in French for the first time in Bukavu (DRC) with the support of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and the launch of the new course Patient Safety in Humanitarian Crises: Addressing Healthcare-Related Incidents in partnership with MSF and the Hôpitaux universitaires de Genève (HUG).

One of our most significant accomplishments in 2024 was the successful launch of the Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) Operational Research for Humanitarian Professionals, co-developed with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Aga Khan University. This free online course was designed to build a bridge between humanitarian practitioners and academic researchers. It reached a major milestone by attracting 10,000 participants by the end of the year.

Encouraged by this success, we launched another MOOC in December 2024 — Migration, Health and Equity in Europe — co-developed with the Lancet Migration European hub. These initiatives demonstrate our commitment to accessible, high-impact education for professionals in the humanitarian field.

Throughout the year, our Centre continued to serve as a neutral academic space for dialogue on complex humanitarian issues. We participated in key events such as the Humanitarian Network and Partnerships Weeks (HNPW) and The Geneva Health Forum in Geneva. Whether in-person, virtual, or hybrid, these platforms enabled valuable exchanges with partners, alumni, students, and colleagues.



**Professor Karl Blanchet,**  
Director

Looking back to this 2023–2024 academic year, I am very proud of all our achievements and would like to thank our students and researchers, who contribute significantly to the reputation of our Centre and its commitment to improving humanitarian response. I am also deeply grateful to our donors and partners, whose continued support makes all of this possible.

I also take this opportunity to warmly thank the Faculty of Medicine, Continuing Education and the University of Geneva for their ongoing and precious support all throughout this academic year.

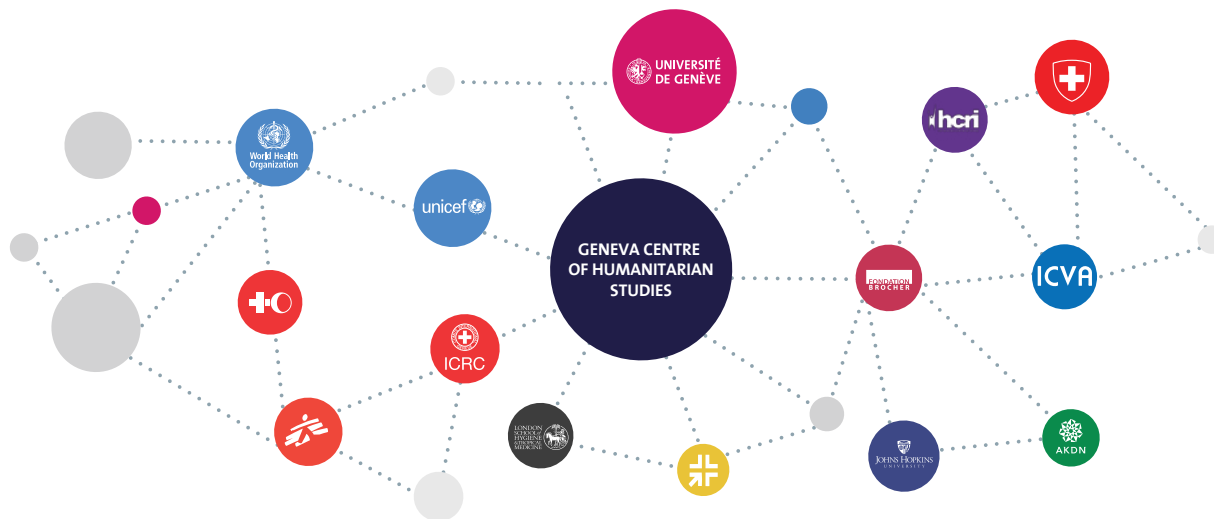
# Who we are

The Geneva Centre of Humanitarian Studies is a unique platform dedicated to advancing professional practice, research, and dialogue in the field of humanitarian action.

Junior and mid-level humanitarian professionals gain access to the latest evidence-based knowledge to enhance the quality, accountability, and relevance of humanitarian action. We equip them with the analytical tools and strategic insights needed to navigate in complex emergencies and deliver ethical and effective responses.

Rooted in Geneva's unique humanitarian ecosystem, we leverage our location and our institutional partnerships to enhance our academic programmes and research agenda. The University of Geneva (UNIGE), with its numerous faculties, institutes and international relations expertise, enriches the academic content of our courses.

Our students also benefit from our unique connections within International Geneva through public events and our expert guest lecturers.

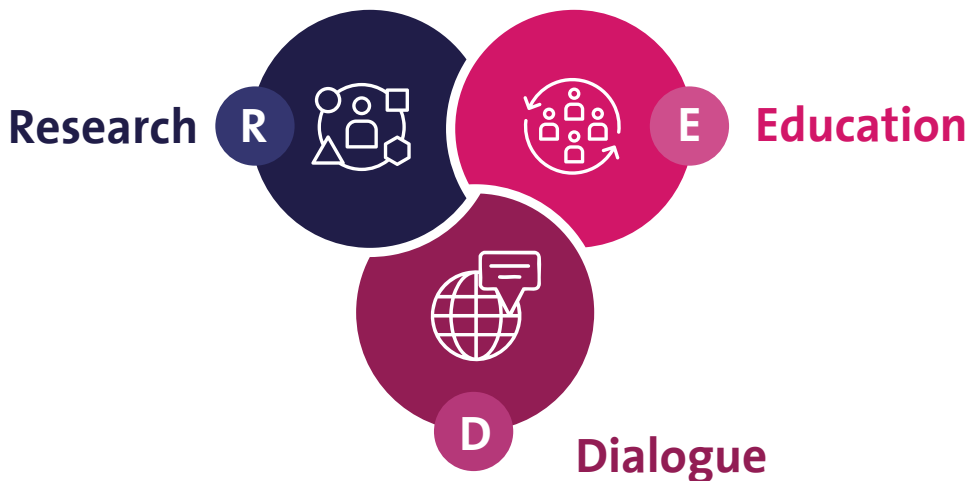




# What we do

Through research, education, and humanitarian dialogue and exchange, the Centre strengthens the capacity and practice of humanitarian professionals worldwide in order to empower them to respond effectively to global humanitarian challenges.

We also aim to contribute to critical reflections on contemporary humanitarianism, with a view to bringing positive transformations to the humanitarian system.





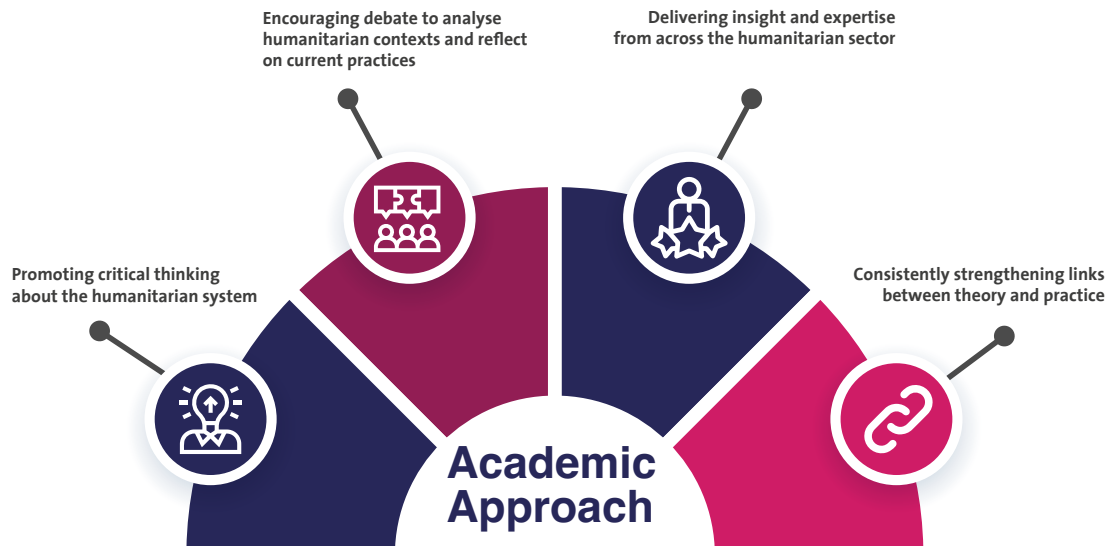
# 02 About Us

# Academic Approach

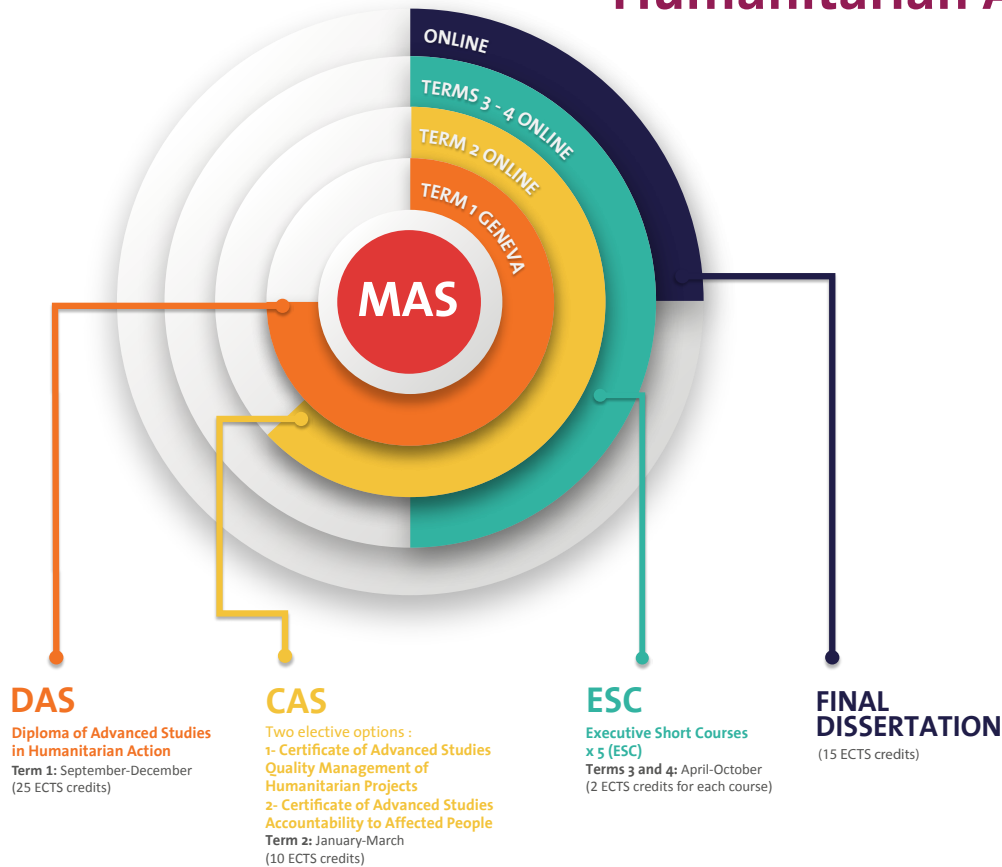
Our course directors are experts in a wide range of disciplines, including public health, international humanitarian law, political science, history, anthropology and management, reflecting the variety of competencies required by humanitarian professionals.

As the global humanitarian landscape evolves, we adapt our courses to provide the support and skills needed for humanitarian professionals. We value reflexivity, encouraging humanitarian professionals to question assumptions, confront ethical dilemmas, and engage with diverse perspectives.

Through interactive and participatory, cross-disciplinary and multi-cultural approaches, students strengthen their capacity to develop effective humanitarian strategies that support populations affected by crises. We enhance learning by:



# Master of Advanced Studies in Humanitarian Action



# Our Courses

## Master of Advanced Studies in Humanitarian Action (MAS)

The MAS in Humanitarian Action blends online and residential learning, equipping professionals with crisis response skills. Developed in collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), this unique programme offers cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural education, fostering critical analysis for effective humanitarian response. It explores the humanitarian system, its normative frameworks, power dynamics among actors, and various contexts like armed conflicts, disasters, and migration. The Master of Advanced Studies is a flexible course, with two-thirds online, and options for a 14-month or a 2-3 year duration.

More info



## Diploma of Advanced Studies in Humanitarian Action (DAS)

The DAS is a residential programme that aims to offer professionals a critical understanding of the humanitarian system and an ability to contextualise humanitarian action in today's world. Taking an interdisciplinary approach, it explores the historical, political, social, cultural and economic roots of humanitarianism and the power dynamics at play in relationships between States, non-State actors, international organisations, international and local non-governmental organisations and affected populations. Finally, the programme addresses the colonial legacies of past and present humanitarian interventions to identify new avenues for contemporary and future crises.

More info



## Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS) Quality Management of Humanitarian Projects

This CAS programme addresses the dynamics and components that guarantee the quality management of adapted projects and cohesive teams. It integrates fundamental principles such as inclusion and diversity, do no harm, accountability and participation into processes, methods and tools of project and people management. The course follows the Result-Based management approach and takes into account ethical issues, specificities of contexts and organisational mandates. Participants will be able to apply a qualitative framework in order to manage projects and teams in line with local and international prerogatives.

More info



## Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS) Accountability to Affected Populations

This CAS programme focuses on improving Accountability to Affected People (AAP) within the humanitarian sector. It covers the components, underpinnings, and practices of AAP in various contexts, enabling participants to uphold the principle of accountability in their work. The course explores existing modalities and practices, critically assessing their promises and limitations. By enhancing understanding of accountability as a mindset and utilising tools, it empowers vulnerable communities and enhances responsiveness. The online course, with a residential week in Nairobi, Kenya, is organised in partnership with UNICEF.

More info



## Executive Short Courses (ESC)

We run a range of Executive Short Courses (ESC) led by senior academics and experienced humanitarian professionals looking at various aspects of humanitarian action – Humanitarian Leadership and People Management – Project Cycle Management – Addressing Sexual Violence in Conflict and Emergency Settings – Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflicts – Planetary Health – Digital Innovations in Humanitarian Action – Patient Safety in Humanitarian Crises – Health Systems Assessment in Humanitarian Crises – Negotiating on the Frontlines – Health Emergencies in Large Populations – Cash and Voucher Assistance in Humanitarian Crises – Humanitarian Advocacy: From Bearing Witness to Activism.

More info



## Massive Online Open Course (MOOC)

The free Online Open Course (MOOC) “Operational Research for humanitarian professionals” launched in 2023 achieved a milestone and reached 10’ 000 participants by the end of 2024. The MOOC focuses on providing practical and theoretical knowledge to conduct research in humanitarian settings.

On December 5th, a new MOOC on Migration, Health and Equity in Europe was launched in the same format as the one mentioned above. 12 lecturers coming from different European countries were involved.

More info







A school teacher in Asira ash-Shamaliya, Nablus governorate, speaks with her mother during a break. Gaza, 24 February 2021.

Photo: © Atta Jabr / ICRC



# 03 Highlights

# Students Testimonials



Having worked in the humanitarian field as a communication and media officer for over five years, I have been actively engaged in various situations. Working closely with the operational team inspired me to enhance my skills and capabilities to effectively respond to humanitarian crises and emergencies. A year before enrolling in the Master of Advanced Studies in Humanitarian Action, I participated in an Executive short Course focusing on the relationship between media and humanitarian organisations. The knowledge gained from this course positively impacted my work and the projects I was involved in, motivating me to pursue further learning. This dedication culminated in my participation in the MAS programme.

One of the key moments in the MAS was during Module 4, which explored Humanitarian Normativity: Ethics, Laws, Principles. During this module, I had the opportunity to attend and reflect on two conferences in Geneva. One conference was held at the Human Rights Council under the Fourth Cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), while the other involved reviewing the work of the Committee against Torture at the UN office in Geneva. Participating in these conferences allowed for a deeper understanding of the practical application of humanitarian principles and legal frameworks, and opened the door for further research of the IHL and IHRL.

The MAS programme offers a comprehensive approach that encompasses both theoretical and practical aspects of humanitarian action. It covers various facets of humanitarian work, from emergency response to project management. The programme has equipped me with a diverse set of skills and competencies, ranging from context analysis and identifying needs to negotiation, protection of civilians, and advocacy. In addition to other areas like humanitarian innovation, and planetary health, which can be indeed an imperative aspect in our current time.



**Majd Aljunaid**

Master of Advanced  
Studies in Humanitarian  
Action (2023 - 2024),  
Alumnus



As a Social and Behaviour Change Specialist at UNICEF India Office, Delhi, for the past 15 years, I was intrigued by the concept of Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) when it was first introduced in India during the 2018 Kerala floods. Since then, as the AAP focal point, I have been actively engaged in integrating AAP principles into our work.

This course presented an excellent opportunity to deepen my understanding of AAP's core concepts, programming, coordination, and contextualisation while also enabling me to transfer this learning to SBC and other programme networks within UNICEF India. Given that our office primarily provides upstream technical assistance to national and state governments, even during and after disasters, this platform allowed me to learn from global experiences and share India's AAP model with a wider audience.

Beyond the learning aspect, participating in the course also offered the unique privilege of being part of the University of Geneva's esteemed programme and engaging with experts from diverse backgrounds.

## Why would you recommend this course?

It is a comprehensive course with a good mix of theory and application. The course coordinators and speakers/resource persons are excellent! The environment during the course is enabling which helps in the learning process given that the participants are coming with diverse experiences and backgrounds.



**Shalini Prasad**  
Student of CAS  
Accountability to Affected  
Populations (2024)



# Addressing Sexual Violence in Conflict and Emergency Settings

A fruitful year and celebrating  
10 years of engagement



Localised pilot course in Bukavu, DRC (June 2024) on Addressing Sexual Violence in Conflict and Emergency Settings

2024 marks a significant milestone in our Centre's history as we celebrate the 10th anniversary of our *Addressing Sexual Violence in Conflict and Emergency Setting* course, a decade-long journey that has evolved through partnerships and experimentation across diverse settings and emerging areas of practice. The course remains profoundly relevant in today's landscape, offering critical tools and approaches amid escalating conflicts in regions like Eastern DRC, Sudan, Ukraine, and the Middle East where sexual violence continues to be used as a weapon and where survivors face increasingly complex challenges in accessing comprehensive care.



# Check the 2024 highlights....

## Localised pilot course in Bukavu, DRC (June 2024) on *Addressing Sexual Violence in Conflict and Emergency Settings*: enhancing capacities and strengthening partnerships

From June 3-7, 2024, the Geneva Centre of Humanitarian Studies, in partnership with SOFEPADI and MSF Switzerland, co-facilitated a pilot localised course on *Addressing Sexual Violence in Conflict and Emergency Settings* in Bukavu, South Kivu (DRC), bringing together participants from a variety of local and international organisations and involving facilitators and experts from a wealth of international, national and community-based organisations. This initiative marked the culmination of a localisation effort aimed at grounding the course in local expertise and knowledge systems, and fostering meaningful partnerships and local ecosystem that enhances responses to sexual violence. The intensifying conflict in Eastern DRC and increasing cases of sexual violence highlighted the urgency of specialised training for practitioners and managers. The course helped centralise best practices, engage key actors, and catalyse targeted research.

The course was co-created through the collaboration of a diverse network of local and international partners, all deeply engaged in the region and bringing extensive expertise in humanitarian response, survivor support, medical and legal assistance, and academic research. SOFEPADI, the National Network for Survivors of Sexual Violence in the DRC, the Panzi Foundation and Hospital, the Centre d'Excellence Denis Mukwege (Université Evangélique en Afrique), Enfants de Panzi et d'Ailleurs, Physicians for Human Rights (PHR), Médecins du Monde Belgium (Mdm Belgium) , MSF, ICRC, UNHCR, UNFPA, all played a crucial role in shaping the course. Their collective efforts fostered knowledge sharing, strengthened advocacy, and reinforced sustainable partnerships, ensuring a multidisciplinary and locally relevant approach to addressing sexual violence in the region.

The pilot demonstrated the potential for localised training to drive sustainable, impactful change. Strengthening partnerships, refining methodologies, and ensuring accessibility will be key to transitioning this pilot into a long-term, recurring training programme that not only enhances survivor-centered responses in Eastern DRC but also fosters networks of peers, supportive and empathetic communities of practice, and collaborative spaces for critical thinking and action.



## Transforming humanitarian practice: cross-regional learning modules on complex dimensions of sexual violence response (September 2024)

Between January and July 2024, four innovative modules were developed and successfully piloted in September 2024, engaging over 100 participants from 32 organisations across 35 countries. The modules addressed critical emerging issues in sexual violence response, particularly focusing on underserved populations such as children conceived in sexual violence and male survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, along with examining sexual violence and transactional sex in forced migration contexts, and developing survivor-centered ecosystems. These modules brought together diverse expertise from survivor-led organisations including Grace Agenda (Kenya), SEMA Ukraine (Ukraine), ALUMNI Network (Ukraine), Forgotten Children of War (Bosnia), the Association of Detainees and Missing Persons in Sednaya Prison (ADMSP – Turkey-Syria), and Thistle Flower (Germany), alongside organisations such as the Enfants de Panzi et d'Ailleurs (Switzerland/DRC), Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), HIAS, and the Center for Victims of Torture (CVT).

The educational initiative benefited from speakers with several institutions including the University of Warwick, University of Essex, University of Birmingham, Centre d'Excellence Denis Mukwege (Université Evangélique en Afrique), and the Geneva Graduate Institute. This multi-stakeholder approach enabled participants to engage with both theoretical frameworks and practical field experiences, fostering a comprehensive understanding of complex issues while promoting evidence-based approaches to humanitarian response.

Participants reported enhanced understanding of complex issues and valued the diversity of expertise presented. The programme's emphasis on practical examples from field actors, including MSF's work in the Central Mediterranean, HIAS's initiatives in Panama, and CVT's programmes in Jordan and Ethiopia, provided concrete implementations of theoretical concepts. The integration of survivor-led perspectives proved particularly valuable, transforming traditional approaches to humanitarian response and fostering more nuanced, context-specific programming. Organisations across various geographical contexts, from Ukraine to the DRC, contributed to a rich comparative analysis of both challenges and effective responses in different settings.

# BIENVENUE



Health Emergencies in Large Population (H.E.L.P)  
course, May 2024 in Geneva.

# Our Students in Numbers

The number of applications received from candidates interested in our courses increased by 7% (almost 700 applications, of which 130 requests for the MAS with scholarship).



# 263

people studied  
at the Centre

A decrease of 3% in  
comparison to 2022-2023



# 59%

of them being  
**female** course  
participants

62% in 2022-2023

## In terms of continent of origin

# 53%

of the course  
participants  
came from



**Africa**  
and **Asia**



and **42%** from  
**Europe** and  
North America



# Who are our students?

(51% from low- and middle-income countries)



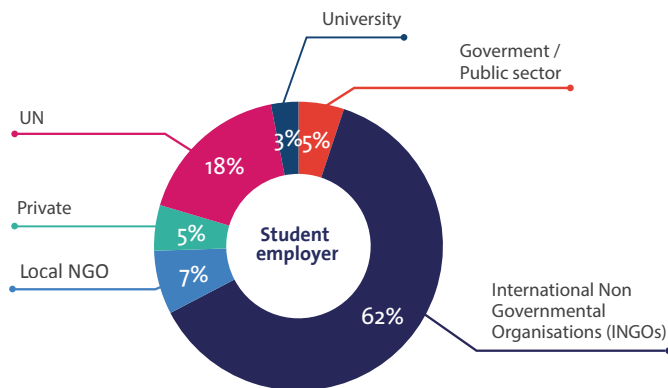
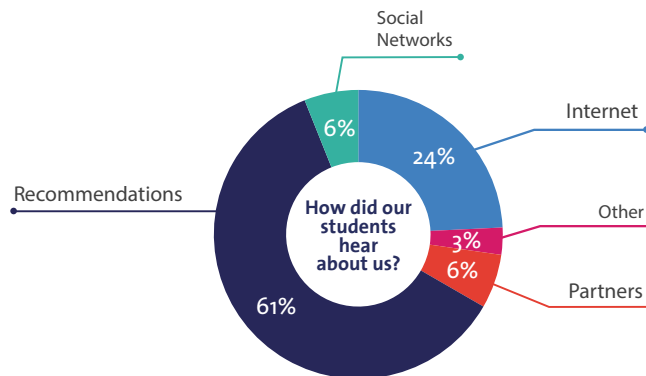
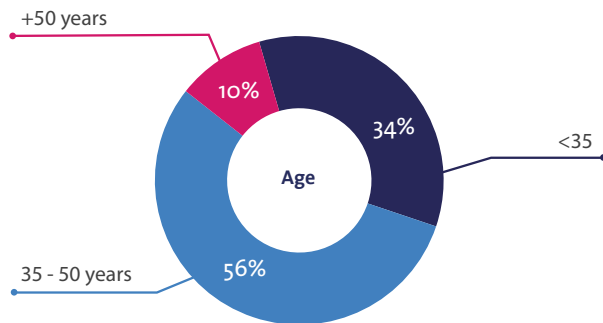
**1** MAS

**1** DAS

**2** CAS

**18** ESCs

**263** Students



## Why did our students study with us?

01	Improving my knowledge
02	Acquiring a specific skill
03	Updating my skills in a particular area
04	Professional transition
05	Training offered/paid by my employer

# Research

## Assessing the primary health care system in Afghanistan

In 2024, the Centre undertook a research study in Afghanistan with the Aga Khan University. This initiative, commissioned by UNICEF and funded by the Asian Development Bank, has focused on assessing the existing healthcare structures, identifying gaps, and proposing a resilient, integrated approach tailored to Afghanistan's evolving health needs.

The study used a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods to comprehensively examine how healthcare services in Afghanistan are delivered and accessed. Conducted between September and December 2024, the research included a desk review of reports and secondary data from international and national organisations, alongside systematic and scoping reviews related to Afghanistan's healthcare system and community health workers. Secondary data analysis drew on national household surveys (AHS 2012, 2015, 2018, and the 2022–2023 MICS), health facility assessments across 34 provinces, and Health Management Information System (HMIS) data from 2019–2023.

To complement the quantitative data, field work was conducted by Prof. Blanchet and Dr Mirzazada and Aga Khan University researchers through interviews with 210 healthcare professionals and community workers across half of Afghanistan's provinces, along with site visits to selected health facilities. Regional workshops were held in five locations to gather additional input from provincial health directors, NGO service providers, hospital directors, and university representatives. Further stakeholder consultations with government officials, NGOs, UN agencies, and donors were organised in December 2024 to validate the findings and ensure that the study addressed key healthcare system priorities.





د لومړنيو روغتيايي پاملرنو مطالعې مشورتي ورکشاپ  
Consultative Workshop on Primary Healthcare Study

October 2024  
Kabul, Afghanistan

A regional research workshop after a week of fieldwork organised by the research team in Jalabad, Afghanistan

# Research

senselet | ሰንሰለት

## Senselet

Senselet | ሰንሰለት means “chain” in Amharic: a series of things depending on each other as if linked together. The aim of the Senselet project is to enhance and strengthen the capacities of people working with healthcare supply chain management (HSCM) for essential non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in Ethiopia. Over three years, the project will build competencies in collaboration with local academic partners and identify areas for improvement to ensure access to care for patients in areas marked by humanitarian crises and disasters.

The Senselet project is based on a partnership between the Addis Ababa University (AAU), the Kühne Foundation, the Geneva Centre of Humanitarian Studies, Novo Nordisk A/S, the World Diabetes Foundation, and their additional network of dedicated humanitarian stakeholders, NGOs and representatives from the Ministry of Health (MoH), the Ethiopian Pharmaceutical Supply Service (EPSS) and the Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI). Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI).

**Timeline:** 2022-2025

**Funding:** the Kühne Foundation, Novo Nordisk A/S, the World Diabetes Foundation.

**Partners:** Addis Ababa University (AAU), the Ethiopian Pharmaceutical Supply Service (EPSS), Ethiopian Red Cross.

More info



## Pulse

In recent years, there has been increasing recognition of the crucial role of community engagement in the successful delivery of public health interventions in humanitarian settings, including for vaccine delivery. However, that evidence is fragmentary and has rarely been used as the systematic basis for planning public health interventions. The study was conducted in Nigeria and Ethiopia and aims to understand how community engagement can be researched and improved during vaccinations programmes.

**Timeline:** 2022-2025

**Funding:** United Kingdom Humanitarian Innovation Hub (UKHIH)

**Partners:** London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, Addis Ababa University, Childcare & Wellness Clinics, International Federation of the Red Cross Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Ethiopian Red Cross Society and the Nigerian Red Cross.

More info







## RIAH: Researching the Impact of Attacks on Healthcare

A consortium of researchers, led by the Humanitarian and Conflict Response Institute at the University of Manchester in collaboration with the University of Geneva's Centre of Humanitarian Studies, John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and the University of California, Berkeley, have developed a new research programme: Researching the Impact of Attacks on Healthcare (RIAH). The programme currently receives funding from the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). The aim of this multi-institution and interdisciplinary research programme is to improve our understanding of the immediate, long-term, and wider impacts of attacks on healthcare on populations in contexts that have experienced armed conflict. In 2022, data collection in Afghanistan was completed with national researchers and the analysis is underway.

**Timeline:** 2019-2025

**Funding:** UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)

**Partners:** The University of Manchester, John Hopkins Center for Humanitarian Health, Insecurity Insight.

More info



## CHH-Lancet Commission on Health, Conflict and Forced Displacement

The Johns Hopkins Center for Humanitarian Health (CHH)–Lancet Commission on Health, Conflict, and Forced Displacement is an initiative launched in January 2024 to address the urgent need for structural changes in the current humanitarian architecture.. The Commission is chaired by Professor Paul Spiegel, Johns Hopkins Center for Humanitarian Health, Baltimore, USA, Dr Ozge Karadag, Bahcesehir University (BAU), School of Medicine, Istanbul, Türkiye, ChiChi Undie, Baobab Research Programme Consortium, Population Council, Nairobi, Kenya, and Professor Karl Blanchet, Geneva Centre of Humanitarian Studies. The Commission is organised by working groups and corresponding themes: Evolution of the humanitarian system, ethical and legal frameworks, humanitarian architecture, leadership, governance, coordination, innovative humanitarian financing, research and evidence, priority humanitarian packages, Measuring success, technology and artificial intelligence, climate change, and crosscutting themes (e.g. gender, hard-to-reach populations).

**Timeline:** 2026

**Funding:** Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Commission des affaires humanitaires et coopération internationale (CAHCI) (HUG/UNICE)

**Partners:** Johns Hopkins Center for Humanitarian Health

More info



# Research

## Lancet Migration Regional Hub

The Lancet Migration European Regional Hub, co-led by Lancet Migration and the Geneva Centre of Humanitarian Studies, aims to make a positive impact on the lives of people who migrate to or within Europe, and the environments in which they live, through multidisciplinary research, as well as leadership, engagement, dissemination of research, and advocacy. To launch the initiative in 2021, we asked experts to share their thoughts on the topic and their vision for the Hub. The experts, including Professor Bernadette Kumar, Co-Chair, Lancet Migration, and Co-Lead European Regional Hub; Norwegian Institute of Public Health, and Professor Karl Blanchet, Co-Lead European Regional Hub; Geneva Centre of Humanitarian Studies, cover the challenges and opportunities in migration and health in the European Region, and how the European Regional Hub can advance migration health through sustainable multidisciplinary research, policy, and practice. In May 2024, we launched at the Geneva Health Forum a special issue on Migration, Health and Equity published in the Lancet European Regional Health.

**Timeline:** Ongoing

**Funding:** None

**Partners:** European universities

More info



## Advancing sexual & reproductive health and rights in humanitarian crises

The goal of this study is to identify, prioritise, and validate the most pressing research gaps within the field of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in humanitarian crises. Through a systematic review and a series of global and regional consultations, the study will produce in 2025 a research agenda for the field.

The study combines a series of consultations in various regions and with global experts on the most pressing issues to be investigated by science.

**Timeline:** 2024-2025

**Funding:** Elrha

**Partners:** Avicena

More info





Red Cross volunteers visiting a community member during a vaccination campaign in Northern Nigeria during the Pulse study.







The research team visiting community health workers in Baghris province, Afghanistan, in the early hours of the day.

# Events

The Centre offers a neutral academic safe space for discussion and debate on sensitive humanitarian issues.

## In 2024

we continued building on that energy by participating in several events that allowed us to connect with colleagues, partners, alumni, and prospective students. These events, whether in-person, online, or hybrid, are central to fostering meaningful exchanges and strengthening collaborations.

Our Centre continued its longstanding collaboration with the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum for their annual theme, together with our Head of Learning, Dr Valérie Gorin. For 2023–2024, the Museum selected “digital dilemmas” as the focus of its public engagement efforts. Through this new theme, the aim was to initiate a discourse on the transformative impact of digital technologies on the human experience. Participants from diverse backgrounds – including artists, educators, humanitarian practitioners, museum professionals and members of the public – were invited to debate, discuss, consider and re-think how we might respond to emerging digital challenges in a progressive and civic-minded way. In the humanitarian field, as in our daily lives, digital transformation has progressed rapidly in recent years, as evidenced by developments such as the technological transformation of humanitarian hubs, innovations in the delivery of urgent assistance, and the use of biometric data, artificial intelligence (AI) and telemedicine to map and respond effectively to the growing number of crises and disasters in the current era. The wide variety of digital devices available, and the enthusiasm they arouse, must not obscure the ethical and security challenges posed by digital technology, particularly when it comes to protecting vulnerable people.

## May

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From May 6 to 10, 2024, the Centre participated for the first time in the Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week (HNPW) in Geneva. The HNPW is an annual humanitarian conference, that provides a collaborative space for practitioners and experts from a large variety of humanitarian stakeholders including UN agencies, NGOs, the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, academia, the military, private



sector initiatives, and Member States. This participation was a great moment for our Centre to engage in a forum for humanitarian professionals and exchange experiences. We met numerous colleagues, Alumni and prospective students eager to discover innovative tools and approaches, build connections, and work together to address shared challenges.

On May 13th 2024, the Geneva Centre of Humanitarian Studies co-hosted a webinar with Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and the Lancet Migration European Regional Hub on the health and wellbeing consequences of restrictive European migration policies amidst the new EU Pact on Migration and Asylum and a recent MSF report. Expert panelists reflected on the findings and important implications and considerations moving forward in terms of research, policy, and practice. The message was clear: the EU needs to adopt a fair approach to migration that respects the health and wellbeing of all. More research and advocacy is desperately needed to protect the health needs of all refugees, asylum seekers and undocumented migrants in Europe.

At the Geneva Health Forum from May 27 to 29, 2024, The Lancet Migration European Regional Hub hosted a lunchtime session on the launch day of The Lancet Regional Health-Europe Series on “Addressing migration and health inequity in Europe”. This Series was co-chaired by Professor Bernadette Kumar and Professor Karl Blanchet, co-Chairs of the Lancet Migration European Regional Hub. The themes span widely – from vaccine equity to racism and discrimination, and universal health coverage. There was an opportunity at the end of the presentations to engage in a lively discussion about the current state of health equity research, policy and practice among refugee and migrant groups in Europe and sharing of good practices for an equitable way forward.

During the same forum, the photography exhibition “Humanly possible: Community engagement on the frontline of vaccine delivery” was held. Co-organised with the UK Humanitarian Innovation Hub, the exhibition highlights the collective action needed to promote the use of vaccines to protect people of all ages against disease.

The striking collection of portraits and stories from Nigeria have been captured by photographer Etinosa Yvonne, showcasing community engagement volunteers in Kano, who tell their personal story of their engagement with the vaccine programme. This exhibition is part of our ongoing research project PULSE.

## Oct.

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From October 23 to 24, 2024, the Centre participated for the first time in AidEx, the world's leading humanitarian aid and disaster relief event held at Palexpo, Geneva. This fair serves as a pivotal platform for professionals from UN agencies, NGOs, governmental bodies, donors, and the private sector to convene and address challenges in aid delivery. The event features high-level conference sessions, workshops, discussion groups, and training programmes designed to foster collaboration and innovation in the humanitarian sector. AidEx also includes an extensive exhibition showcasing the latest products and services aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of aid delivery. As one of the only academic centres dedicated to professional humanitarian training, we were present to show our courses, together with 200 other organisations from sectors such as logistics, communications, medical and pharmaceuticals, shelter, W.A.S.H, financial services, and more.

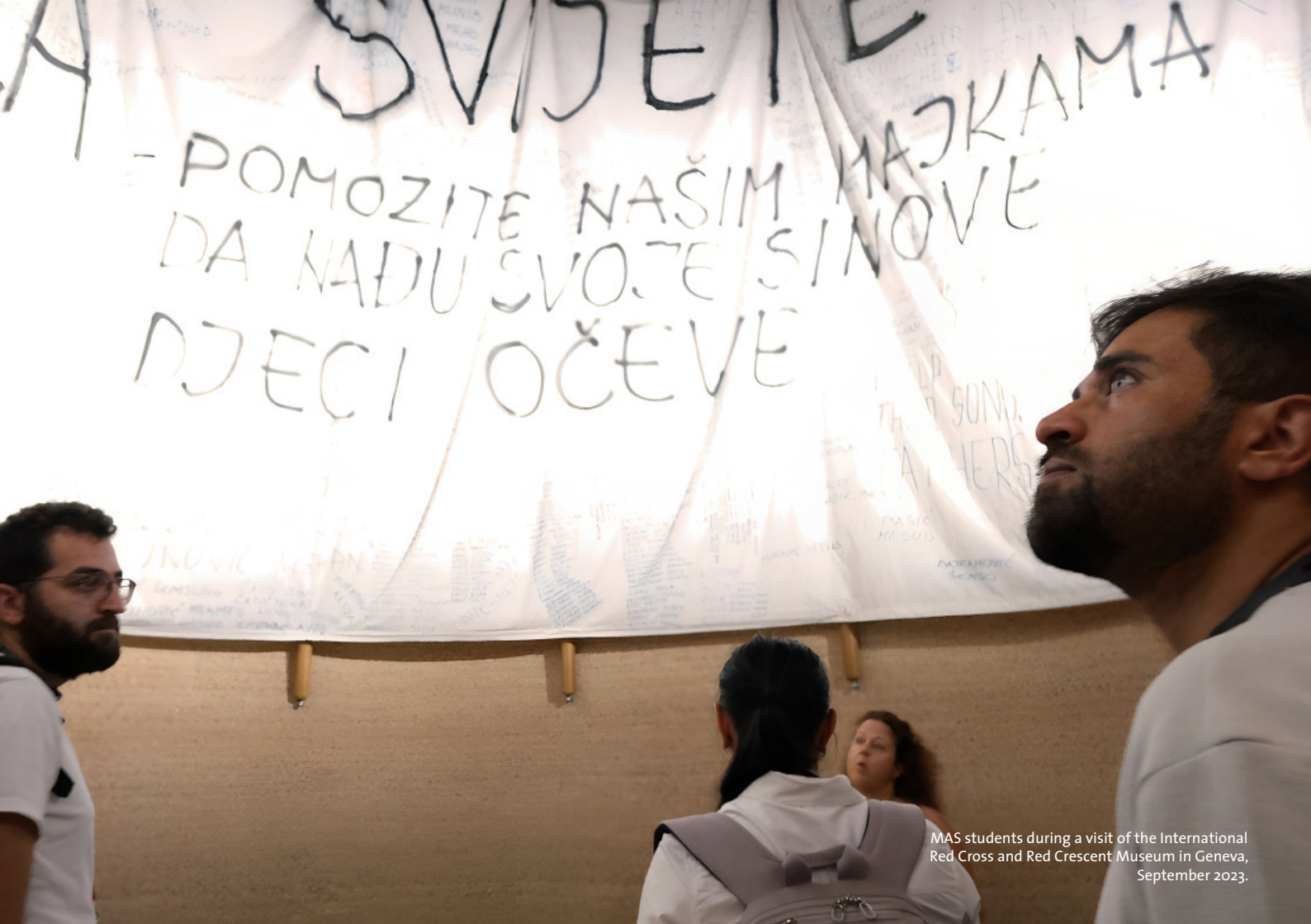
## Nov.

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On November 1, 2024, the Director of our Centre, Prof. Karl Blanchet, participated to an important debate on the future of international cooperation, together with Patricia Danzi, the head of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), and Dr Frédéric Esposito from the Global Studies Institute. The debate was organised at the University of Geneva by the Swiss Press Club, and explored the strategies the SDC could adopt to address major challenges in a context of global instability and budgetary constraints, and to respond to new expectations, both humanitarian and political.

*Explore highlights from some of these occasions with the photo gallery capturing some of the moments that shaped our year in various events like Humanitarian Partnerships & Networking Weeks, AidEx, CINFO Forum and more. gathered in a conference to reflect on the future of the humanitarian sector. This day was a crossroads of reflection and sought to redefine the role of Geneva's university hospital institutions in the current environment of International Geneva and humanitarian aid. Dr Rony Brauman, former President of Doctors without Borders and researcher at the CRASH MSF closed the conference as a key note speaker.*





MAS students during a visit of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum in Geneva, September 2023.



# 04 Acknowledgments

# Finances

The financial year 2024 marked a turning point for our centre. After several years of positive financial performance, we concluded the year with a deficit of **CHF 34,192**. This negative result comes despite a particularly active and productive year, rich in academic and humanitarian initiatives. While operational costs remained under control, certain programmes contributed to the negative result.

In 2024, our activities were supported by various funding sources.

The Centre received CHF 300,000 in core funding from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). Unfortunately, this will be the final year of support, marking the end of a remarkable 23-year collaboration. We would like to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt thanks to the SDC for their longstanding and invaluable partnership. Their contribution has enabled the Centre to offer high-quality education to humanitarian professionals, strengthening their capacity to develop appropriate and effective responses to crises. In this way, the Centre contributes indirectly to improving humanitarian action worldwide.

In addition, the Centre also received a 3-year contribution from the SDC for the *Addressing Sexual Violence in Conflict and Emergency Settings* including an evaluation of the course and four scholarships per year. The support of the SDC is highly valued by us.

We are also grateful to the Republic and Canton of Geneva for their financial contribution in the form of registration fee scholarships for the MAS and/or the DAS in Humanitarian Action. This support is extremely valuable, as it enables many scholarship recipients to attend our education programmes. The Centre warmly thanks the Canton for their continued trust and meaningful support.

We extend our sincere gratitude to a private Geneva foundation that has supported us since the creation of our MAS in Humanitarian Action in 1998, through the provision of scholarships. This long-standing support contributes significantly to the diversity and inclusiveness of our MAS programme, making it possible for professionals from a variety of contexts to join us in Geneva and strengthen their skills.

In 2024, the UNIGE also supported the Centre to develop a new Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) entitled Migration, Health and Equity in Europe. This funding has allowed us to initiate the design and development of the course, which aims to explore the complex intersections between migration and health within the European context, with a focus on equity and access to care.

The Centre also received funding from the City of Geneva to develop an Executive Short Course on designing context-sensitive negotiation strategies in humanitarian settings. This course is scheduled to be delivered in 2025 as a residential session in Doha (Qatar), Amman (Jordan) and Istanbul (Türkiye). This initiative aims to equip humanitarian professionals with practical tools and frameworks to navigate complex negotiation environments more effectively.

In 2024, the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) via the University of Manchester provided a contribution of CHF 19,856 for the project Researching the Impacts of Attacks on Health-care (RIAH).

The Centre received a 3-year contribution from Kühne Foundation to contribute its expertise and knowledge to conduct a baseline situation analysis to analyse the emergency supply chain both during disasters and in humanitarian settings and to demonstrate the potential link between an effective supply chain and increased access to quality NCD services in Ethiopia.

The Centre received financial support from Swiss National Science Foundation (Scholars at Risk) and from the Integration Delegation of the UNIGE to allow an Afghan researcher to pursue his public health research activities at the Centre. This contribution reflects a shared commitment to inclusion and academic solidarity.

United Kingdom Humanitarian Innovation Hub (UKHIH) via ELRHA provided a contribution of 617,698 GBP to the Centre for the PULSE project to establish an evidence base and practice network to support community-led vaccine deployment strategies in humanitarian contexts.

In 2024, we received a 18-month grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to support the ESTIMATE project, which develops innovative methods to measure vaccination coverage in areas that are inaccessible due

to insecurity or logistical constraints. Focusing on Somalia and Ethiopia, the project aims to fill critical data gaps by testing alternative survey approaches and analysing how coverage evolves as countries transition from mobile outreach to fixed-site services. The ultimate goal is to generate actionable evidence that helps Ministries of Health design more effective and sustainable immunisation strategies in humanitarian settings.

We gratefully acknowledge the financial contribution received from UNICEF to develop the project *“Implementation Research to Strengthen Primary Health Care (PHC) and Community Health Systems in Afghanistan – Phase 1.”* This funding has been instrumental in initiating the first phase of the research, enabling us to lay the groundwork for evidence-based strategies aimed at reinforcing primary health care and enhancing the resilience of community health systems in Afghanistan. We deeply appreciate UNICEF’s partnership and trust in our work.

The Stellar Development Foundation commissioned our Centre to conduct a comprehensive review and assessment of the effectiveness of the SAA initiative launched in Ukraine.

In addition to their invaluable direct financial contribution, the University of Geneva (UNIGE) and the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies (IHEID) provide lecturers, office space, classrooms, and administrative support. As of September 2024, the Centre is solely affiliated with UNIGE. We extend our sincere thanks to IHEID for their longstanding collaboration and the significant contributions they have made to the Centre’s development.

Looking ahead, we anticipate challenging years to come. Due to significant budget cuts from the Swiss Confederation and a general decline in funding across the humanitarian sector, our financial environment is becoming increasingly difficult.

Our main challenge will be to find innovative and sustainable solutions to secure the necessary funding to continue our mission. We are committed to exploring new partnerships, diversifying our income streams, and strengthening our resilience in order to safeguard the quality and impact of our work.

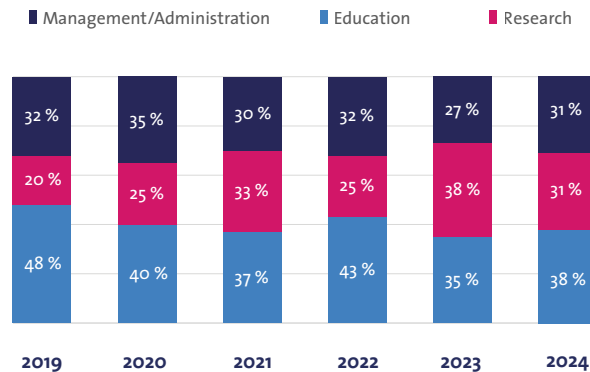
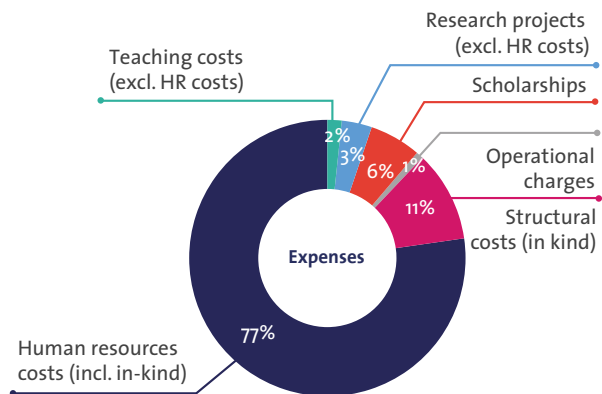




MAS students during a visit of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum in Geneva, September 2023.

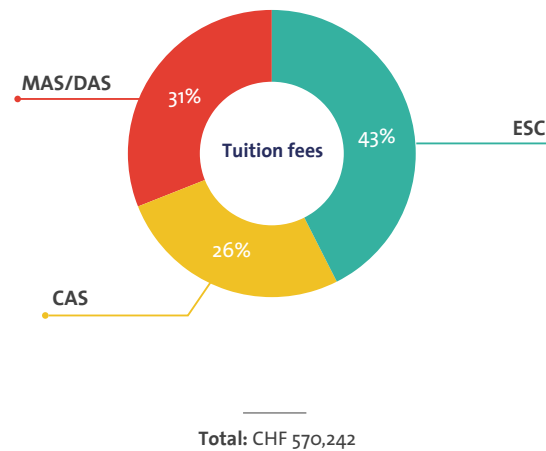
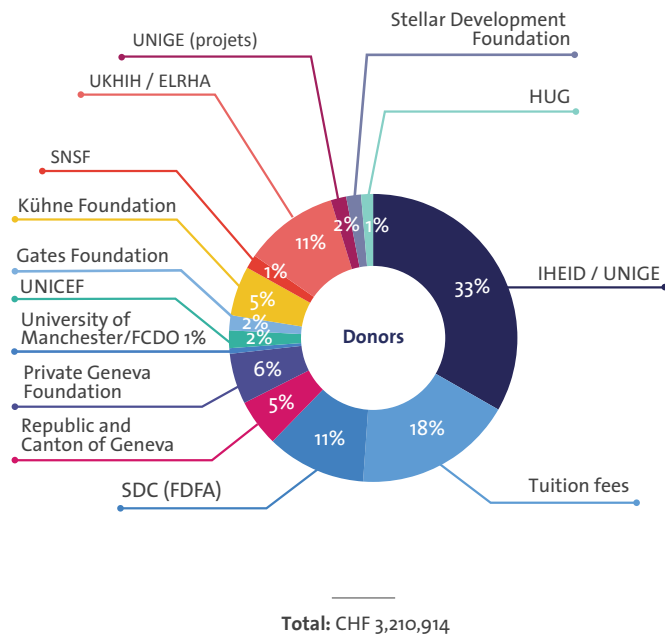
# Finances

## EXPENSES





## INCOME



# Our Donors

## Public institutions:

- City of Geneva : Délégation Genève ville solidaire (DGVS)
- Federal Department of Foreign Affairs: Swiss Development and Cooperation (SDC)
- Hôpitaux Universitaires de Genève (HUG)
- Republic and Canton of Geneva: Service de la solidarité internationale (SSI)
- Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF)

## Private institutions:

- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- Kühne Foundation
- Private Geneva Foundation
- Stellar Development Foundation

## Other organisations and academic institutions:

- United Kingdom Humanitarian Innovation Hub (UKHIH) / ELRAH
- United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)
- University of Geneva (UNIGE)
- University of Manchester / Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)

# Our Partners

Our partnerships are at the core of what we are. Over the years, we have built a rich network of collaborating institutions that contribute to our achievements. We are very grateful for their ongoing support and look forward to continuing our work with them.

## Strategic partnerships:

- Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)
- Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
- The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

## Technical partnerships:

- Addis Ababa University
- Aga Khan University (AKU)
- Centre for Humanitarian Health, Johns Hopkins School of Public Health
- Childcare and Wellness Clinics, Abuja
- EMPHNET
- Health in Humanitarian Crises Centre, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
- Humanitarian and Conflict Response Institute, Manchester University
- International Federation of the Red Cross
- International Museum of the Red Cross and Red Crescent
- UNICEF

## University of Geneva and Graduate Institute partnerships:

- Centre for Humanitarian Medicine and Disaster Management (WHO Collaborative Centre)
- Hôpitaux Universitaires de Genève (HUG)
- Institute of Global Health, UNIGE
- InZone



MAS students during a visit of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum in Geneva, September 2023.

# Board of Directors

Board of Directors (until August 2024)

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Head of HIV/AIDS Unit of the University Hospital of Geneva

**Mr William Empson**

Head of Learning & Development  
Médecins Sans Frontières

**Ms Mohini Ghai Kramer**

Global Head of Learning & Development,  
International Committee of the Red Cross

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International History, IHEID

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Faculty of Law, UNIGE

**Mr Daniel Bongard-Zollinger**

Head of Humanitarian Aid Resources Field  
Swiss Humanitarian Aid, SDC-FDFA

# Our Team 2024

## Management

### **Prof. Karl Blanchet**

Director

### **Joëlle Gentile**

Administration Manager

### **Dr Valérie Gorin**

Head of Learning

Course Director for the DAS Module “Humanitarianisms: Historical, Moral and Political Foundations of Aid”; for the DAS Module “The Humanitarians: Relationships and Interactions in Aidland”; for the ESC in Media and Aid Organisations: A Relationship at Stake; for the ESC in Digital Innovations in Humanitarian Action: Opportunities and Challenges

## Academics

### **Claire Barthélémy**

Course Director for the Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS) in Quality Management of Humanitarian Projects; the Executive Short Course (ESC) in Humanitarian Leadership and People Management; and the ESC in Humanitarian Advocacy: from Bearing Witness to Activism

### **Prof. Julie Billaud** (until August 2024)

Course Director for the DAS Module “Revisiting Needs and Vulnerabilities”; Associate Professor, Department of Anthropology and Sociology, IHEID

### **Dr Joanna Bourke-Martignoni**

Course Director for the DAS Module “Humanitarian Normativity: Ethics, Laws, Principles”

### **Erna Burai**

Course Director for the CAS in Accountability to Affected People

### **Sandrine Delattre**

Course Director for the CAS in Quality Management of Humanitarian Projects; and the ESC in Humanitarian Project Cycle Management

### **Marc DuBois**

Course Director for the DAS Module “Humanitarian Projection: Sectoral Responses to Crisis”

### **Dr Anne Golaz**

Course Director for the ESC in Planetary Health

### **Dr Katarzyna Grabska** (from September 2023)

Course Director for the DAS Module “The Humanitarians and the Social World of Aidland”

**Dr Fleur Hierink** (from October 2024)  
Researcher

**Hélène Juillard**  
Course Director for the ESC in Cash and Voucher Assistance in Humanitarian Crises: What works?

**Baptiste Martin**  
Course Director for the ESC in Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflicts

**Dr Rosemary Jouhaud**  
Researcher

**Alex Odlum** (until June 2024)  
Researcher

**Laura Pasquero**  
Course Director for the ESC in Addressing Sexual Violence in Conflict and Emergency Settings

**André Picot** (until August 2024)  
Course Director for the ESC in Negotiation in Humanitarian Crises

**Dr Jonathan Polonsky**  
Researcher  
Course Director for the ESC in Health Emergencies in Large Populations (H.E.L.P.)

**Benjamin Schmid**  
Project Coordinator for the MOOC on Research in Humanitarian Settings, and the MOOC on Migration, Health and Equity in Europe; Course Director for the ESC in Non-Communicable Diseases in Humanitarian Settings

**Dr Shafiq Mirzazada**  
Researcher

**Dr Aimad Ourahmoune**  
Course Director for the ESC in Patient Safety in Humanitarian Crises: Addressing Healthcare-Related Incident

**Swetha Ramachandran** (until January 2024)  
Teaching Assistant, IHEID

**Dr Emilie Venables**  
Course Director for the ESC in Addressing Sexual Violence in Conflict and Emergency Settings

## Administration

**Marianne Boddèle**  
Education Administrative Officer

**Derya Cakim** (until August 2024)  
Teaching Assistant, IHEID

**Nathalie Malär Hay**  
Administrative Assistant

**Thuy Melich**  
Education Administrative Officer

**Fatima Morgan**  
Education Administrative Officer

## Teaching Support

**Ludovic Clément**  
Distance Learning Specialist

## Communications

**Charlotte Lang**  
Communication Officer

**Irina Wavre-Saminskaya**  
Communication Officer

## PhD students

**Maysoon Abuabdalla Elbukhari Ibrahim**

**Sandra Isano**

**Daniel Martinez**

**Fara Temessadouno**





MAS students during a visit of the International  
Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum in Geneva,  
September 2023.



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