Shaping the future of humanitarian aid together

This course offers insight into important trends and practical advice on how to implement good practices. It provides an interactive open learning process based on concrete case studies. Aimed at both experienced and junior professionals, it supports peer learning and future network building. Together with the participants, we want to shape the future of humanitarian aid.

Many NGOs and independent professionals participated in the development of this course. It covers topics that are central to the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS) and were debated at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul. These include:
- the need for a stronger localization of humanitarian aid and how this will affect the work of international NGOs
- a better integration and participation of the populations affected by crisis and ways to increase their influence on aid decisions
- new technologies and innovative approaches enabling humanitarian organizations to become more efficient, transparent, and accountable
- a more effective and open-minded cooperation between the humanitarian and development sectors

"Humanitarian aid is at a crossroads. International NGOs have to find new ways of working. Localization of aid, as well as participation, accountability of and towards affected populations, and innovation are key factors to take into account. This course tackles these challenges and enables participants to find new pathways to a more efficient and fair humanitarian system based on the Core Humanitarian Standard and the humanitarian principles."

Tony Burgener, Managing Director, Swiss Solidarity
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Reasons to attend this course

• The course provides insights and means to ensure that communities affected by crisis are at the centre of our programmes, from assessments to impact analyses.

• The course establishes a bridge between generations. Junior staff with sufficient field experience can challenge more experienced humanitarian specialists and vice versa.

• The course is practice-oriented and provides a safe learning environment for participants to benefit from recent field experiences presented by high-level experts, NGOs, and fellow participants.

• Participants will become part of a dynamic network lasting beyond the course duration, allowing them to continue jointly reflecting on their engagement and the future of humanitarian aid.

Module 1: Cooperation with local partners

• How to identify challenges and barriers preventing successful partnership, and propose solutions to overcome them.

• How to identify and use the most suitable and good practice partner assessment tools.

Facilitated by Smrutti Patil, co-developer and author of the ‘Seven dimensions of localization framework’, and the founding member and co-ordinator of Alliance for Empowering Partnerships (AEP), an advocacy platform for localization.

Module 2: Beneficiary-related issues

• How to apply the different CHS standards and tools.

• How to use CHS verification tools in order to assess accountable selection.

• How to handle feedback and complaints, especially sensitive ones.

Facilitated by Ester Dross and Peter Zihlmann (Director of ebaix), both experienced humanitarian practitioners and lecturers with a strong background in humanitarian quality and accountability mechanisms.

Module 3: Needs assessment

• How to accurately conduct a needs assessment, based on evidence and in light of a strategic planning.

• How to identify and use the most suitable and good practice assessment tools.

• How to define the target groups and the development of contextalized beneficiary criteria.

Facilitated by François Grünwald, Executive Director of the French Think Tank and learning platform Groups URD (Urgence-Rehabilitation-Développement).

Module 4: Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA)

• How to assess the feasibility of CVA and how to design and implement a simple project.

• Trends and impact of CVA in the aid sector, new technologies, and links to social safety nets.

• How to identify key challenges, opportunities and risks related to CVA.

Facilitated by Stefan Bumbacher, who is since 2017 seconded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) as a Senior Technical Officer to the Cash Learning Partnership (CALP) in Geneva.

Module 5: Impact Analysis and Learning

• The importance of impact analysis, also in humanitarian contexts.

• Evaluation methods from development cooperation that could be adapted into humanitarian programmes.

• How to apply impact evaluations to the humanitarian programming cycle.

Facilitated by Prof. Dr. Isabel Günter, Director of NADEL, the Center for Development and Cooperation of the ETH Zürich. She is an experienced researcher and lecturer, including in the domain of impact analysis.

Module 6: Safety and Security Risk Management

• The importance of SSRM in humanitarian operations.

• How to support local partner organizations in their SSRM.

• How to carry out plans and checklists.

• How to integrate SSRM into management processes.

Facilitated by Franziska Heizmann, freelance consultant since January 2007. She has worked in many challenging contexts and is an experienced lecturer and advisor to major humanitarian organizations in SSRM.

Block course 1 (October 2019)

Block course 2 (January 2020)

Block course 3 (March/April 2020)
Audience
The course is designed primarily for programme managers with several years of experience in humanitarian aid or in development cooperation. The practical relevance of the course will be guaranteed through mutual exchange based on case studies and experiences.

The course also targets junior professionals with less experience. In order to simultaneously serve both target groups and ensure a mutually stimulating course flow, junior professionals may occupy no more than one-third of the study places.

Admission
Experienced professionals:
• Master’s degree (university or technical university)
• At least 3 years of relevant professional experience in humanitarian aid or in development cooperation
• Fluency in written and spoken English

Junior professionals:
• Current employment at a humanitarian organization
• 10 months’ field experience in either humanitarian aid or in development cooperation at the beginning of the course
• Fluency in written and spoken English

In individual cases, experienced persons with other qualifications can be considered.

Calendar
The six course modules are split into three week-long blocks. Each block requires six full days of attendance.

• Block week 1: 07 to 12 October 2019
• Block week 2: 13 to 18 January 2020
• Block week 3: 30 March to 4 April 2020

Accreditation
15 ECTS are awarded upon successful completion of this CAS. Each block week, including transfer tasks and any assessments, are worth 4 ECTS.

The certificate thesis is worth 3 ECTS and can be composed in either English, French, or German. In-person attendance to all course elements must be at least 90%.

Application and course fees
An application form is available at www.cde.unibe.ch/continuing_education.

Course places are limited to 24 participants. The closing date for application is 2 September 2019.

Tuition fees are 8,500 Swiss francs / 7,500 Euros for six modules offered in three block weeks. The fees include preparatory and follow-up learning material, individual expert supervision of written assignments, and lunches and snacks during course hours.

Course participants must cover their own transportation, other meals, and accommodation costs. A list of cost-effective accommodation options in Bern can be provided upon request.

Location
The course will be held at the Centre for Development and Environment (CDE), Mittelstrasse 43, University of Bern, centrally located near the main railway station.

Information and advice
More information can be found at www.cde.unibe.ch/continuing_education.

If you have any questions, please contact Ulla Gämperli, by email (continuing-education@cde.unibe.ch) or by phone (+41 (0) 31 631 35 27) on a Monday, Wednesday, or Thursday afternoon.