



HUMANITARIAN  
ENCYCLOPEDIA



CERAHGENEVE

Centre d'enseignement et de recherche  
en Action Humanitaire de Genève  
Geneva Centre for education and research  
in humanitarian action

# A Collaborative **Online Platform** for Humanitarian Professionals and Researchers



A JOINT CENTRE OF

THE  
GRADUATE  
INSTITUTE  
GENEVA

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



UNIVERSITÉ  
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## The need for a more **collaborative response** to humanitarian crises

In modern humanitarian crises, a collective response that is timely, adequate and well-coordinated is imperative to be able to adapt to an ever-changing environment and complex situations. Today, collaboration between the first responders - including local actors from civil society organisations or public authorities - and international humanitarian organisations is key. As such, the recognition and inclusion of these new actors in the humanitarian sector requires the need to create a common understanding and formulation of the key humanitarian concepts in order to build a bridge between these diverse actors, at multiple levels, and promotes an open dialogue to improve collective humanitarian action.

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## The need for an online, **inclusive space for dialogue** and exchange

Creating an online space where humanitarian practitioners, academics, researchers, local actors and international organisations can share evidence, knowledge and information to make informed decisions would be a valuable resource and public good. This space needs to guarantee and promote open dialogue and mutual respect.

In collaboration with the University of Geneva, this project uses the concept of 'digital humanities' in the creation of an interactive, online database, providing the environment and tools for producing and curating material that is not necessarily born as digital but becomes so via the open source platform. This approach creates new ways of learning that involves collaborative, transdisciplinary and online research and publishing.

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## The need for a **pluralistic co-production** of knowledge

The diversity of perspectives and views on humanitarianism guided by history, academic and professional disciplines, culture, religion, organisational cultures and contexts is seen as a richness and can be used to understand the various meanings some of the humanitarian concepts may take in some situations.

Recognizing diversity, pluralism and sometimes consensus will help build a common source of knowledge. It is important that the development of new knowledge is guided by the needs of humanitarian professionals, and is co-produced with academics from various disciplines such as history, anthropology, politics, sociology and linguistics.

# The Humanitarian Encyclopedia

The Humanitarian Encyclopedia offers this inclusive online space for dialogue and promotes co-production of new knowledge to enhance collaboration in future humanitarian responses.

The Humanitarian Encyclopedia is the product developed by humanitarian professionals and academics, aware of the need for common understanding, and sharing knowledge as a public good and co-producing new forms of knowledge to guide future humanitarian responses.

The Humanitarian Encyclopedia provides:

- A living repository of co-produced humanitarian concepts
- An open source library of relevant humanitarian resources
- A dynamic mapping of humanitarian actors
- An interactive platform with online forums, webinars and e-learning modules





## JOIN THE HUMANITARIAN ENCYCLOPEDIA PROJECT

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