



HUMANITY

INTRODUCTION FOR TEACHERS

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Institut für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
in Bildungsfragen IZB

Schweizerisches Rotes Kreuz



INTRODUCTION FOR TEACHERS

EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Teachers, dear Readers,

“Humanity can be learned.” This is the proposition that underlies www.project-humanity.info, a project-based learning platform for schools. I am convinced that it is also a valid proposition. However for humanity to be learned, we need to be able to answer the following questions: What exactly does the concept of humanity include? How is it interpreted by the humanitarian community? And above all: How do students perceive the various possible interpretations as they gain a deeper understanding of the Humanitarian Principles through their work on this project? Why is it worth the effort to examine those principles in detail? And why do they matter to us all? Project Humanity is intended to help students find answers to those questions – not just any answers, but **their own answers**. Our central concern is to enable the young participants to contribute **their own viewpoints** as they work on the project, so that they learn to present them and to argue them, while at the same time developing a willingness to listen to and to accept other points of view. The teachers who volunteered to participate in a pilot testing of the project have, together with their classes, provided an impressive demonstration that the work involved in trying to better understand the Humanitarian Principles is definitely worth the effort. Through their participation, some 200 students in Swiss schools have already become sources of knowledge concerning this highly relevant social issue, sources moreover that are **capable of conveying to others what they have learned, using their own words and their own arguments**. We would be very pleased to see you and your classes join us in this search for answers and we thank you for your commitment to the project.

Do you have questions, or would you like some assistance with preparations for conducting the project in your school? Please get in touch directly with the IZB Institute for International Cooperation in Education at the University of Teacher Education, Zug.

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Introduction to Project Humanity

Economic and political crises, ecological disasters, epidemics and global inequalities are rendering humanitarian contexts today ever more complex. For the humanitarian community, including such relevant actors as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the Swiss Red Cross (SRC) and the Swiss government, the task of raising public awareness of what are known as the Humanitarian Principles is thus an important imperative of our time.

Project Humanity addresses that imperative. As a teaching tool and school learning project, it focuses on spreading awareness of the Humanitarian Principles. This new teaching tool is intended to assist

Institute for International Cooperation in Education (IZB)

The Institute for International Cooperation in Education – in German, *Institut für Internationale Zusammenarbeit in Bildungsfragen IZB* – is a research and development institute at the University of Teacher Education, in Zug, Switzerland. The IZB places the international dimension of education at the centre of its academic endeavours and of the services it provides. The thematic focus at the IZB is on issues of interculturalism, education in development cooperation, and the

teachers in creating learning spaces where students are sensitized to humanitarian concerns, so that they are better able to form an opinion on the issues and thus gain greater confidence in their own capacity to act.

This background also helps to explain how the project name was chosen. ‘Humanity’ stands for the four Humanitarian Principles: humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence. These four principles constitute the basis for all humanitarian action around the world. They are central to establishing and maintaining access to civilian populations afflicted by war, armed conflicts, technological disasters and natural disasters.

The Institute for International Cooperation in Education (IZB) has developed, on behalf of the Humanitarian Aid department of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), a teaching tool in the form of an e-learning platform, together with a school learning project for use in lower-secondary level schools. In order to ensure factual and conceptual accuracy, the IZB was assisted throughout the development phase of the project by experts from the SDC, the ICRC, the IFRC and the SRC.

In addition to this innovative and fruitful cooperation between the government, educational institutions and international humanitarian organisations, advisory support was also provided by the foundation ‘éducation21’, which gave particular scrutiny to the promotion of ESD-specific skills (education for sustainable development). These qualitative validations served as important building blocks in the development process, and in advancing our objective of stimulating both meaningful and holistic teaching and learning processes.

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

The SDC is the Swiss government agency for international development cooperation within the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. It is responsible for the overall coordination of international development activities and cooperation with Eastern Europe with other federal offices, and for the humanitarian aid operations of the Swiss Confederation.

Teaching methodology

Project Humanity and the e-learning platform that was developed to go with it were designed to make it possible not only to promote heightened awareness of the Humanitarian Principles, but, beyond that, also to encourage students to formulate their own opinions and proposals. This is a particularly important aspect, since students are today increasingly confronted with complex humanitarian contexts both in their school careers and in their private lives. This means that in addition to a deeper examination of the issues involved in humanitarian action, one of the educational priorities of the project is to place the focus on the students themselves, and on the stances they develop in the discussion of humanitarian contexts as they participate in the project.

The project is broken down into five learning modules. This modular structure makes it possible for classes to complete either individual elements of the project or the entire project as a coherent whole. We recommend that all of the learning modules be completed, in the order indicated, and within as compact a time frame as possible (by organising a project week, for example). Completion of the full project requires two half-days of classes (for modules 1 and 5) and three full days of classes (for modules 2, 3 and 4).

Completing individual modules separately, without the rest of the project, is most practicable for module 1 (familiarisation with the Humanitarian Principles), module 2 (reflecting on one's own values and on the values of others) and module 3 (analysing current events in terms of humanitarian action and the significance of the Humanitarian Principles).

Core content of the individual modules

In the following we will present the individual modules and their learning objectives, together with the respective educational and methodological priorities pursued:¹

In terms of content, the project is introduced by a set of preparatory study materials to be worked through before beginning with the five modules. The purpose of these study materials is to allow the students to get an initial thematic overview of the issues involved in humanitarian actions and the Humanitarian Principles. Following up on that, the first module serves to develop a common foundation for gradually going deeper into the subject, as suited to the students' level, and for proceeding in a more detailed manner in the remaining four modules.

Following this general consideration of the scope of humanitarian concerns, the focus of the second module is on having the students reflect upon themselves and their own personal values, as well as on those of their classmates. The participants thus have an opportunity to become more fully conscious of their own values, here understood as personal qualities that they themselves consider to be morally desirable. This makes it possible for them to identify and to characterise their personal values as the basis for their own patterns of thought, interpretation and behaviour.

The third module builds on the knowledge and insights gained in the first and second modules. The group effort to gain greater familiarity with the Humanitarian Principles and the detailed reflections of each student on his or her own personal values serve equally as a foundation for considering in greater depth the practical application of the Humanitarian Principles. In this learning sequence students are asked to focus their thoughts on the function and the meaning of the Principles and, more specifically, on how the Principles relate to the reality of humanitarian contexts.

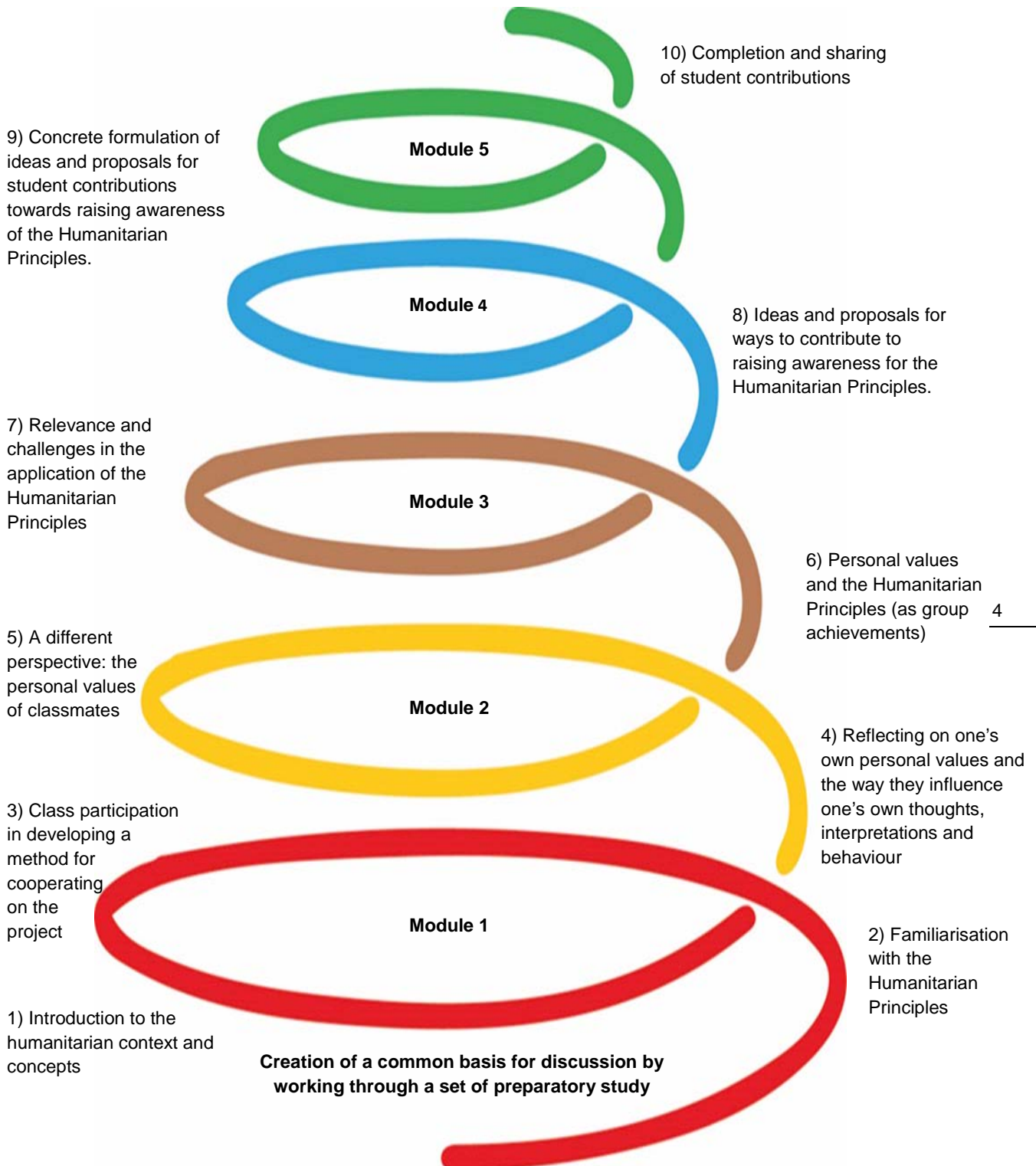
¹ The modules and directions for all exercises are available online at <http://www.project-humanity.info/en.html>.

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The fourth module is intended, first, to give students an opportunity to take a stance and to develop their own opinions on the issues. In a second step, they then work in self-chosen project groups, where they learn how to argue their own standpoints and to make them useful for the group. The multifaceted experience and the knowledge they have acquired through completing the first three modules may well inspire them to seek ways to make their own small contribution to raising greater awareness of the Humanitarian Principles. The focus of the fifth and final module is on the goal-oriented implementation of the participants' contributions, as documented in the form of action plans.

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Module order and core contents



Humanitarian aid

What kind of help do people in need require? This is the central question that humanitarian aid must address. But what exactly is meant by the term humanitarian aid? How can it be defined? What does it have to do with Project Humanity? What are the fundamental characteristics and guiding principles of humanitarian aid? And how does it differ from other forms of help – such as development cooperation, for example?

Taking the Swiss government as an example, therefore, students are here presented with illustrations of how people are offered assistance in different kinds of emergencies, at different times and in different contexts. Responsibility for coordinating such assistance lies with the SDC. The SDC is a part of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). Among the areas for which it is responsible is the humanitarian aid provided by the Swiss government. Before looking in greater detail at the SDC's various humanitarian aid activities, it will be useful first to explain what precisely humanitarian aid is, and how the timing of such aid makes it different from other forms of assistance.

What is humanitarian aid?

Humanitarian aid is generally understood to mean help offered in response to humanitarian emergencies, the cause of which may be natural disasters, epidemics or violent conflicts. It is an area of action that is part of an international system involving various state and non-state actors, using a variety of cooperation structures and procedures, with different sets of rules and financing mechanisms.²

Humanitarian aid can be defined as need-oriented emergency relief that is provided in the wake of man-made crises or natural disasters. Whenever governments and local actors find themselves overwhelmed by events, unable or unwilling to provide adequate assistance, it is the job of humanitarian aid to save lives, alleviate misery and to protect the human dignity of the people affected – and to strengthen preventive and preparatory measures for similar situations.³ The beneficiaries of humanitarian aid are thus all people who find themselves suddenly in need of help when a disaster occurs, irrespective of the ethnic, religious or political group they belong to and proportionate only to the scale of their need.⁴

What is still missing from this definition – which brings us back to Project Humanity – are the four Humanitarian Principles (humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence). For the work itself and for the actors in the field of humanitarian aid, these principles represent the basis of all action and thus play a constitutive role for all humanitarian aid. Humanitarian aid includes both the supply of vital goods such as food, water, sanitary facilities, shelter, clothing, health services and psychosocial support. At the same time, it seeks to offer protection against violence and persecution and to provide support for coping strategies. In addition, it contributes to reducing the risks of future crises and disasters to which the affected people are exposed.⁵

In contrast to development assistance, which is provided over a longer time horizon, the SDC's humanitarian aid focuses, as a rule, on emergency relief, reconstruction and rehabilitation of affected regions, and disaster risk reduction. As a governmental organisation, the SDC's humanitarian aid differs

² Lieser Günter, *Was ist humanitäre Hilfe?*, in: Handbuch Humanitäre Hilfe, Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg, 2013, p. 9

³ Lieser Günter, *Was ist humanitäre Hilfe?*, p. 13

⁴ Weingärtner, Lioba et al., *Die deutsche humanitäre Hilfe im Ausland*, vol. I, Hauptbericht, Bonn/Berlin, Federal Republic of Germany, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development/Foreign Office, 2011, p. 3

⁵ Lieser Günter, *Was ist humanitäre Hilfe?*, p. 13

also from that of other, non-state actors in this area – such as non-governmental organisations (NGOs) like Médecins Sans Frontières.

Swiss Humanitarian Aid

The humanitarian aid that the SDC provides on behalf of the Swiss government is an expression of solidarity with people in distress. As the Swiss government's competence centre for international cooperation, the SDC is responsible for development cooperation with the South and East and multilateral cooperation, as well as for Switzerland's humanitarian aid. (SDC areas of activity: see text box).⁶

Through prevention and relief measures, the Swiss Humanitarian Aid department of the SDC seeks to contribute to safeguarding the lives of endangered people and the alleviation of suffering. To assist with the prevention of risks linked to natural disasters, Swiss Humanitarian Aid helps partner countries to put rapid response mechanisms in place. It provides support for the victims of crises or armed conflict and works to assure unrestricted access to population groups in need and advocates for their protection.

The Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit (SHA) is the operational arm of the SDC's Swiss Humanitarian Aid department. It comprises a corps of some 700 experts on call for service whenever needed. The SHA can be mobilised both for emergency deployment and for middle or long term missions. The SHA's experts are also available for seconding to partner agencies of the UN.⁷

In addition, the SDC provides humanitarian aid in the form of funding for the activities of the ICRC and the humanitarian organisations of the UN. It also supports humanitarian NGOs.

The Swiss government supplies food aid in 38 countries via more than 22 Swiss relief agencies and the UN's World Food Programme.⁸

At the operational level, the SDC's humanitarian aid activities are focused on three priority areas: emergency assistance (1), reconstruction and rehabilitation (2) and disaster risk reduction (3).

SDC Priorities	
<p>Development cooperation with the South</p> <p>Helping the poor in Africa, Asia and Latin America to help themselves</p>	<p>Global challenges</p> <p>Climate change, food and water crises and migration are issues of concern to all mankind in a globalised world</p>
<p>Humanitarian aid</p> <p>Direct and unbureaucratic help for people in need</p>	<p>Development policy</p> <p>Development policy encompasses all political, economic and social measures designed to help sustainably improve living conditions in developing countries.</p>
<p>Cooperation with Eastern Europe</p> <p>Support for transition and reform processes in eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)</p>	<p>Research and culture</p> <p>Research plays an indispensable role in reducing poverty and global threats. Art and culture are essential factors in the promotion of peace and sustainable development.</p>
<p>Multilateral cooperation</p> <p>Sustainable solutions through international cooperation with multilateral institutions</p>	

⁶ SDC, *Activities*, https://www.eda.admin.ch/deza/en/home/aktivitaeten_projekte/aktivitaeten.html

⁷ SDC, *Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit*, https://www.eda.admin.ch/deza/en/home/aktivitaeten_projekte/aktivitaeten/humanitaere_hilfe/skh.html

⁸ SDC, *Humanitarian Aid*, https://www.eda.admin.ch/deza/en/home/aktivitaeten_projekte/aktivitaeten/humanitaere_hilfe.html

The SDC provides emergency relief assistance in response to crises, conflicts and natural disasters. The primary objective of its operations is to save lives and alleviate suffering. Swiss humanitarian aid efforts are centred on the needs of the affected people. At the same time, the SDC also seeks ways to give them a role in humanitarian efforts. Providing emergency relief is the main mission of Swiss Humanitarian Aid. This includes, among other things, ensuring the supply of drinking water, food and emergency medical care for people in need. It also involves providing temporary shelter for refugees and internally displaced persons, and protection for those belonging to the most vulnerable population groups.⁹

The second priority area, that of reconstruction and rehabilitation, is chiefly concerned with restoring the living conditions of stricken communities. The goal is to overcome the effects of war and natural disasters and to make long-term improvements in the areas of housing, infrastructure, and income. Here, Swiss Humanitarian Aid acts in response to catastrophic events caused by external forces (earthquakes, flooding, violent conflict). Reconstruction comprises both the physical aspect of rebuilding and, simultaneously, elements of social and economic rehabilitation. Examples include the renovation of public buildings such as schools and hospitals, the repair of roads and bridges, and restoration of the water supply. Reconstruction and rehabilitation implies more than the mere completion of construction projects. It also takes into account economic, environmental and social factors, and is intended to help restore the self-sufficiency of affected communities in the aftermath of a crisis or natural disaster.¹⁰

The third and final priority area of the SDC's humanitarian aid operations is that of disaster risk reduction. Natural disasters can strike both rich and poor countries. The consequences of such events, however, are often felt much more acutely in the countries of the global South. Decades of development progress can be wiped out overnight. Climate change has brought about an increase in the intensity and frequency of natural disasters. Reducing disaster risk is essential, not only in order to save lives, but also to achieve sustainable development.

Disaster risk reduction (DRR) occupies an important place in all SDC programs. This preventive approach is indispensable in countries where there is a higher risk of natural disasters. The goal is to save lives and to safeguard the development gains already made. DRR activities address the problems associated both with rapid-onset disasters, such as floods, and with slow-onset disasters, such as extended periods of drought. DRR is more than just a priority area for the SDC – it is a working methodology. In high risk countries each project is assessed in terms of its exposure to potential disasters.¹¹

⁹ SDC, *Emergency relief*

<https://www.eda.admin.ch/deza/en/home/themen/katastrophenvorsorgenothilfeundwiederaufbau/katastrophenundnothilfe1.html>

¹⁰ SDC, *Reconstruction and rehabilitation*,

<https://www.eda.admin.ch/deza/en/home/themen/katastrophenvorsorgenothilfeundwiederaufbau/wiederaufbau.html>

¹¹ SDC, *Disaster risk reduction*,

<https://www.eda.admin.ch/deza/en/home/themen/katastrophenvorsorgenothilfeundwiederaufbau/katastrophenvorsorge.html>

The Humanitarian Principles

In the introduction, we noted that the four Humanitarian Principles (humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence) are the foundation on which all humanitarian action is based. In the following, therefore, we would like to take a closer look at the origins of the concept of Humanitarian Principles, the organisations that invoke them, and why this is relevant today in connection with humanitarian operations.

Fundamental Principles or Humanitarian Principles?

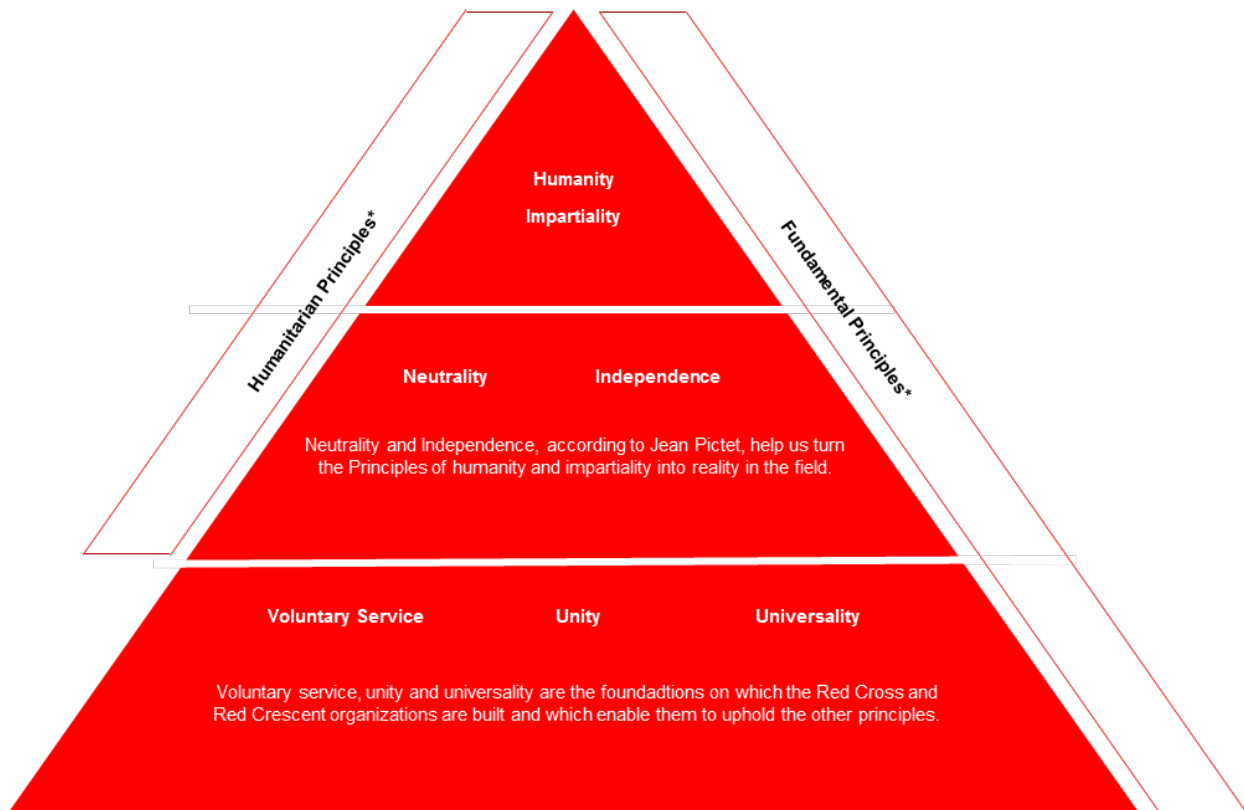


Fig. 2: Jean Pictet's Pyramid, * Scope of application of the 'Humanitarian Principles' and the 'Fundamental Principles'

In Project Humanity we speak mainly of the Humanitarian Principles. There also exists, however, a very similar concept known as the Fundamental Principles. While the Fundamental Principles and the Humanitarian Principles closely resemble each other, the terms should not be used synonymously. In addition to the different number of individual principles they refer to and the slight variations in the way those principles are defined, the major distinction between the two concepts lies in the fact that they are used by different organisations. The concept of Fundamental Principles originated with the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. All members of that movement are required to act at all times in accordance with the seven Fundamental Principles. The Humanitarian Principles have their source in the United Nations (UN) and are thus anchored in UN resolutions. They have been expressly accepted worldwide by the overwhelming majority of all humanitarian organisations.

Development of the Fundamental Principles and the Humanitarian Principles

The Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement did not come into being as abstract principles. They originated in the real actions of caring people who were prepared to spontaneously come to the aid of the wounded and dying on the battlefield of Solferino in 1859. In the aftermath, efforts were made to identify general concepts and guiding principles that could serve as a basis for future humanitarian action.

A first attempt to formulate them can be found as early as 1862, in Henry Dunant's 'A Memory of Solferino'. It was not until many years later, however, on 8 October 1965, that the 20th International Conference of the Red Cross, meeting in Vienna, adopted and promulgated the Red Cross 'charter', including the seven Red Cross Fundamental Principles. The seven Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross are binding and obligatory for all members of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement around the world. This means that a national Red Cross or Red Crescent society can only be recognised if it adheres to the movement's principles.

The seven principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement may not be distorted or misused in order to harm people. They serve all of those who work under the sign of the Red Cross or the Red Crescent as a source of practical guidance for the performance of their activities. Important in this context is the fact that the seven principles are conceptually, materially, and logically interrelated. Together they constitute a coherent whole. It is only taken as a whole that the 'charter' can be said to characterise the movement and endow it with its special and unique character.¹² Humanity is the highest fundamental principle, and the guiding ethical principle for all of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's activities, as noted by Jean Pictet in his 1979 commentary to the Fundamental Principles.¹³ All of the other principles can be properly interpreted only if they are understood as being grounded in the fundamental prerequisite of humanity. Thus, for example, acts of inhumanity cannot be committed or tolerated in the name of neutrality. Wherever there is a conflict with another principle, the principle of humanity must take precedence.

The Fundamental Principles that were first adopted by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement have since taken on a much wider relevance that extends also to other humanitarian organisations. Their proven effectiveness over the years in the operations of the Red Cross and Red Crescent organisations has been recognised, for example, by the United Nations. Thus, in 1991, with the adoption of UN General Assembly Resolution 46/182, it was expressly stated that UN humanitarian aid operations were to be carried out "in accordance with the principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality".¹⁴

The principle of independence was added by the United Nations in 2004 with the adoption of UN General Assembly Resolution 58/114. That resolution first reaffirms the three principles named in the 1991 resolution and then goes on to note "that independence, meaning the autonomy of humanitarian objectives from the political, economic, military or other objectives that any actor may hold with regard to areas where humanitarian action is being implemented, is also an important guiding principle for the provision of humanitarian assistance".¹⁵ The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian

¹² Swiss Red Cross (SRC), Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, *Die sieben Rotkreuzgrundsätze*, <https://www.redcross.ch/de/internationale-rotkreuz-und-rothalbmond-bewegung/rotkreuzgrundsätze>

¹³ Pictet Jean, *The Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent: Commentary*, 1979, p. 7

¹⁴ United Nations, UNGA Resolution 46/182, Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations, 1991, <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/46/a46r182.htm>

¹⁵ United Nations, UNGA Resolution 58/114, Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations, 2003, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/58/114&referer=http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/resguide/r58fr.htm&Lang=E

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Affairs (OCHA), whose responsibilities at the UN include the coordination of humanitarian actions, now uses the term Humanitarian Principles when referring to these four core principles derived from those of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. For the UN and its organisations, the Humanitarian Principles are a central building block for establishing and maintaining access to civilian populations affected by natural disasters, armed conflicts, or other complex emergency situations.¹⁶

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is made up of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), and the member National Societies (e. g. the Swiss Red Cross (SRC)).¹⁷



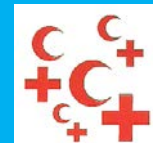
The International Committee of the Red Cross

is an impartial, neutral and independent organisation whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence. The ICRC also strives to prevent suffering by strengthening international humanitarian law and universal humanitarian principles. The ICRC is also at the origin of the Geneva Conventions and serves equally as the guardian of those four treaties on international law in war.



The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

is the world's largest volunteer-based humanitarian network with 189 member National Societies. Together, the IFRC acts before, during and after disasters and emergency situations in order to improve the lives of the affected population groups.



The National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

embody the work and principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. National Societies act as auxiliaries to the public authorities of their own countries in the humanitarian field and provide a range of services including disaster relief, health and social programmes. During wartime, National Societies assist the affected civil population and support army medical services where appropriate.

A commitment to the Humanitarian Principles and their application has moreover been recognised and endorsed by the vast majority of humanitarian organisations. Thus, the principles of humanity, impartiality and independence are expressly mentioned in the 'Code of Conduct for International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief', which has been endorsed by over 500 non-governmental organisations.¹⁸

¹⁶ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), *What are the Humanitarian Principles?*, 2012, p. 1

¹⁷ Red Cross & Red Crescent (RCRC), *The Magazine of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement*, 2015, Issue 1, p. 2

¹⁸ International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, *The Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement: Ethics and Tools for Humanitarian Action*, Geneva, 2015, p. 7

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In order to facilitate correct usage of the terminology, the table below provides definitions and explanations of the various concepts associated respectively with the Humanitarian Principles and the Fundamental Principles:

	The 4 Humanitarian Principles OCHA definition¹⁹	The 7 Fundamental Principles Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement definition²⁰
Humanity	Human suffering must be addressed wherever it is found. The purpose of humanitarian action is to protect life and health and ensure respect for human beings.	The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.
Impartiality	Humanitarian action must be carried out on the basis of need alone, giving priority to the most urgent cases of distress and making no distinctions on the basis of nationality, race, gender, religious belief, class or political opinions.	The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.
Neutrality	Humanitarian actors must not take sides in hostilities or engage in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.	In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.
Independence	Humanitarian action must be autonomous from the political, economic, military or other objectives that any actor may hold with regard to areas where humanitarian action is being implemented.	The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their Governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be

¹⁹ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), *What are the Humanitarian Principles?*, 2012, p. 1

²⁰ International Committee of the Red Cross, *The Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement*, <https://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/red-cross-crescent-movement/fundamental-principles-movement-1986-10-31.htm>

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		able at all times to act in accordance with Red Cross principles.
Voluntary service		The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is a voluntary relief organisation not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.
Unity		There can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.
Universality		The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is a worldwide institution in which all Societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other.

Glossary

Armed conflict

Situation in which two or more organised armed groups are party to an international or internal confrontation involving the use of armed force. Both state and non-state groups can be parties to an armed conflict. (EHL)

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

The SDC is the Swiss government agency for international development cooperation within the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. The SDC is responsible for the overall coordination of international development activities and of cooperation with Eastern Europe with other federal offices and for the humanitarian aid of the Swiss Confederation. (SDC)

Epidemic

An epidemic affects a disproportionately large number of individuals within a population, community or region. Non-pandemic diseases, such as cholera, typhoid and bubonic plague, affect many individuals in a same community during short terms. (ReliefWeb)

Ethical dilemma

A situation in which the pursuit of one worthy goal conflicts with another or does harm instead of good. (EHL)

Refugee

A person who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution or as a result of war or a situation of generalised violence seeks refuge outside of his or her country of nationality or habitual residence. Some refugees are entitled to receive a special status after arriving in the host country. The conditions for obtaining such status are set forth in the Geneva Refugee Convention of 1951. (EHL)

Fundamental Principles:

The Fundamental Principles originated with the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. All units of that movement are required to act at all

times in accordance with the seven Fundamental Principles.

Disaster

The term disaster refers to a major event with harmful consequences that go far beyond those of ordinary accidents or natural occurrences. A disaster threatens the life and health of a large number of people, causes substantial property damage and often destroys the livelihoods of the affected population. When a disaster threatens the very existence of those concerned, creating a situation that the society and government are unable to cope with effectively, we speak of a humanitarian crisis. (Young Caritas)

Conflict parties (combatants)

Those who are involved in hostilities. This can include government troops as well as armed forces that have not been officially recognised by a government or a state. (EHL)

Humanitarian

Intended and designed to alleviate human distress, mindful of human dignity, human, humane, benevolent. (Duden)

Humanitarian act

Act performed by a person to protect the lives and human dignity of someone he or she would not ordinarily be inclined to help or protect; a humanitarian act is likely to involve personal risk or loss. (EHL)

Humanitarian aid

Wars, poverty, natural disasters and technological disasters cause untold suffering. Helping victims is a humanitarian imperative. Humanitarian aid provides relief and supports victims in their efforts to rebuild their lives. (Young Caritas)

Humanitarian crisis

The term humanitarian crisis is used to designate situations where human beings are in severe distress and at risk of life and limb. Unlike emergency situations that can be dealt with by regular rescue forces, humanitarian crises are so overwhelming that the governments and societies

concerned are unable to cope with them on their own. Humanitarian crises are often a result of disasters or conflicts. (Young Caritas)

Humanitarian principles

The Humanitarian Principles have their source in the United Nations (UN) and are thus anchored in UN resolutions. They have been expressly accepted worldwide by the overwhelming majority of all humanitarian organisations.

International humanitarian law

Rules that seek, in times of armed conflict, to limit the suffering caused by war by protecting persons who are not, or are no longer, taking part in hostilities and by restricting the methods and the means of warfare that may be employed. (EHL)

International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is made up of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), and the member National Societies. (RCRC)

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

The IFRC is the world's largest volunteer-based humanitarian network with 189 member National Societies. Together, the IFRC acts before, during and after disasters and emergency situations in order to improve the lives of the affected population groups. (RCRC)

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

The ICRC is an impartial, neutral and independent organisation whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence. The ICRC also strives to prevent suffering by strengthening international humanitarian law and universal humanitarian principles. In addition, the ICRC is at the origin of the Geneva Conventions and serves equally

as the guardian of those four treaties on international law in war. (RCRC)

National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

The National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies embody the work and principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. National Societies act as auxiliaries to the public authorities of their own countries in the humanitarian field and provide a range of services including disaster relief and health and social programmes. During wartime, National Societies assist the affected civil population and support the Army medical services where appropriate. (RCRC)

Natural disasters

Earthquakes, hurricanes, tsunamis, floods, droughts, volcanic eruptions and avalanches that have serious consequences are natural events. Increasingly, however, human beings must share part of the responsibility for such natural disasters. Through the overuse of natural resources, resulting in such things as the deforestation of tropical rainforests or climatic stress caused by environmental toxins, the frequency of natural disasters has risen in recent years and their consequences have become more severe. (Young Caritas)

Non-governmental organisation (NGO)

An NGO is an independent organisation that does not represent either a government or a state. Many NGOs are devoted to humanitarian or human rights causes. (OCHA)

Emergency aid

Emergency aid means, first, ensuring the supply of drinking water, food, and emergency medical care for people in need. It may also include providing temporary shelter for refugees and internally displaced persons, and protection for those who belong to the most vulnerable population groups. (SDC)

Technological disaster

Under this category are classified the following kinds of disasters: 1) car, rail, aircraft or

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navigation disasters; 2) Damage or collapse of structures that are part of the public infrastructure (bridges, buildings, etc.); 3) Urban fires caused by technological failures or explosions of any type; 4) Pollution events: concentration of polluting substances in the air, water or soils at

levels harmful to human health, crops or animal species. (ReliefWeb)

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