

*Essentiel
scientifique*



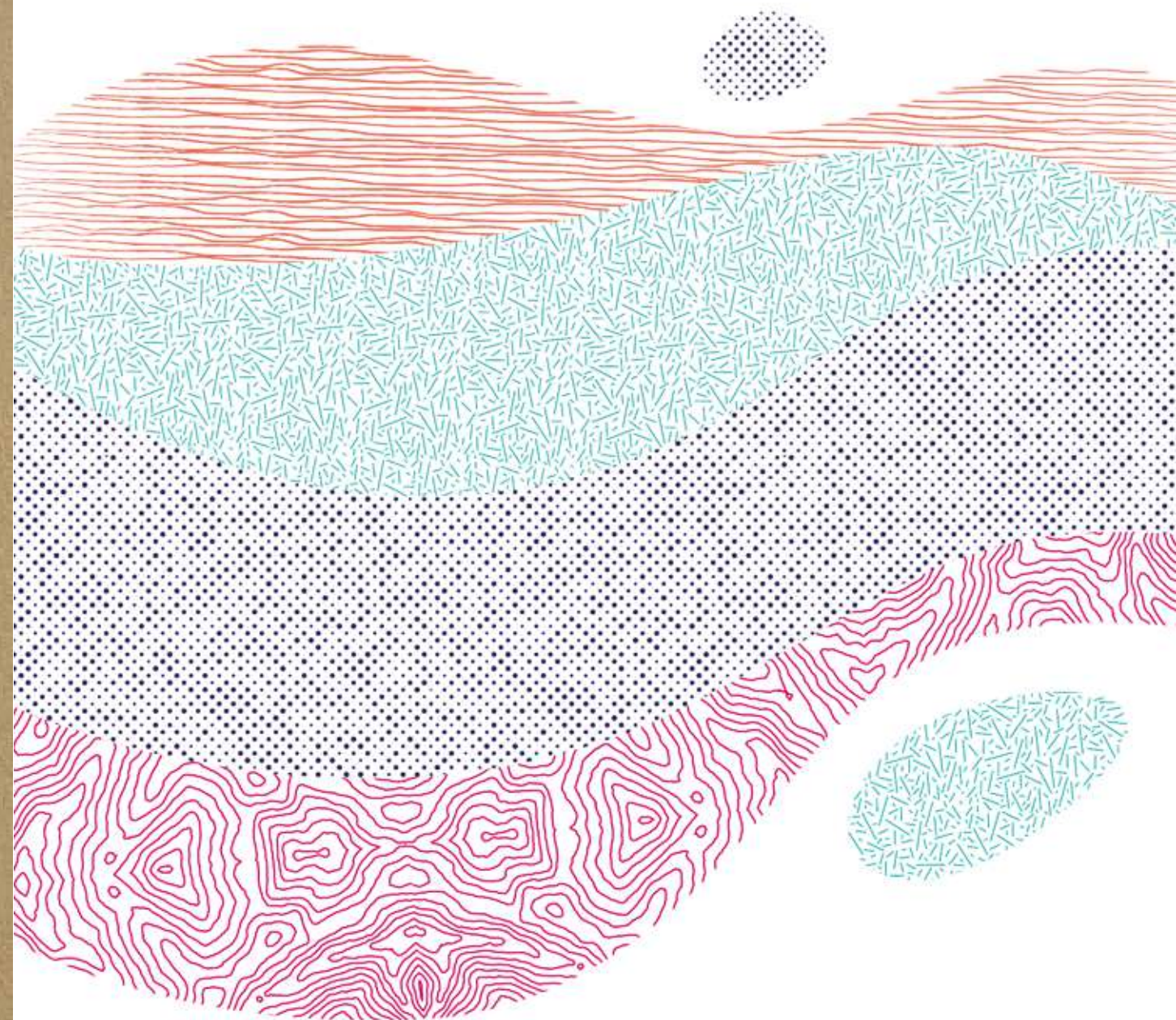
OF RESEARCH

**GOING TO THE HEART OF
VULNERABILITIES**

FONDATION
croix-rouge française



For humanitarian and social research



FONDATION
croix-rouge française

| For humanitarian and social research



Essentiel scientifique

**Ten Years of Research:
Going to the Heart of Vulnerabilities**

French Red Cross Foundation
21 Rue de la Vanne, 92120 Montrouge France
www.fondation-croix-rouge.fr

CONTENTS

A Word from the President	6
Introduction	7
Our Research Vision	8
10 Years of Milestones and Key Figures	12

THEMES :

1 Humanitarian Transition	14
2 Health & Epidemics	44
3 Risks & Disasters	70
4 Migrations & Displacements	92

CROSS-CUTTING APPROACHES:

5 Strengthening Social Bonds	124
6 Maximising the Foundation's Social Utility	144

Our Partners	158
Fellowship-Recipient Researchers and Award Recipients	162
Board of Administrators and Scientific Council	163
Associated Experts and Staff Members	164

© French Red Cross Foundation, 2023
Publication Director: Philippe DA COSTA
Editorial Director: Virginie TROIT
Editorial Committee: Julien ANTOULY, Ilana BRIÉ, Vincent LEGER,
Quynh Nga PHUNG, Camille RAILLON (general coordination), Caroline VITAGLIONE
English version: Steven DUROSE, Alan JOHNSON, Caroline VITAGLIONE
Graphic Design: IZARD CRÉATION (illustrations: Isabelle BLANCHARD)
Photo credits: IFRC, French Red Cross Foundation and mention on each photo

The findings of the research presented by the French Red Cross Foundation in this publication are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Foundation.



A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

L'Essentiel des 10 ans

Philippe DA COSTA

President of the French Red Cross Foundation

In May 2013, convinced that research fosters development, raises awareness, and inspires action, the French Red Cross launched the “French Red Cross Fund”. It was the opportunity to create a scientific platform devoted to humanitarian and social action, to examine in depth our most effective courses of action in aid of the most vulnerable.

Could we ever have imagined the tremendous adventure the Red Cross was embarking on?

Ten years later, today’s organisation known as the “French Red Cross Foundation” has reached its goals — and much more. Recognised as a public utility institution, the Foundation has carved its own path, impressed us with its sheer vitality, and instilled a sense of pride through its scientific accomplishments.

This present publication, compiled by our diverse community of researchers, is a logbook documenting the advancement of this endeavour. It highlights the men and women whose thought-provoking concepts and ideas have punctuated this decade of commitment.

L'Essentiel des 10 ans recounts the beginnings of a fledgling organisation: the initial distribution of grants, the launch of publications, the deployment of research in times of crisis, the strengthening of the relationship between research and society at large. As it unfolds, we discover a burgeoning vision of research that is mindful of local and international operational concerns. We learn about the profound changes we are currently experiencing in the areas of migration, natural disasters, health, and epidemics.

This publication also provides an overview of the social bond, of its function at each stage, from its formation to its dissolution. During a disaster, the reconstruction process, and throughout the recovery phase, this intangible binding affiliation unites all of us and lends a sense of universality to humanitarian action. In summary, these chapters collectively depict the perseverance, the work, and ultimately, the obstacles these individuals have overcome through their research and dedication to the most essential of vocations: protecting people and alleviating suffering.

Lastly, *L'Essentiel des 10 ans* charts a course and unveils many possibilities. Today, the Foundation ushers in the new decade with a reflection on the accessibility and social utility of its accomplishments. Ten years have transpired, and the objective set in May 2013 still stands: to serve as a beacon for a generation of researchers and humanitarians united in their ethical concerns for the most vulnerable.



Françoise FROMAGEAU

Vice-President



Virginie TROIT

Director General

INTRODUCTION

L'Essentiel scientifique chronicles ten years of the life of the Foundation that we wanted to share with you through this publication, which lies midway between a narrative and a scientific synopsis. It seeks to mutually explore and understand various world communities. It is the fruit of an adventure built on an assemblage of collective knowledge and continuous dialogue with those engaged in the field, whether researchers, humanitarian practitioners, first aid workers, or social action volunteers. They have provided insights into their practices and methodologies and their efforts on behalf of those who are most vulnerable.

This compilation of articles also reflects a commitment to cultivating equality and diversity to advance toward a more collaborative research environment that prioritises action, ethical considerations, and inclusivity. Bringing ten years of research to the forefront of discussions serves as a meeting point for people from the social sciences, professional sectors, and the academic world, languages and concepts, experiences, and methodologies to engage with and reach out to people who are vulnerable or have experienced vulnerability, irrespective of our diverse backgrounds. To guide us towards sustainable solutions, the book takes us on a journey through the ideas and debates stimulated by the Foundation and its international community of researchers and practitioners engaged in humanitarian and social action and who form the basis of its social utility.

L'Essentiel Scientifique directly addresses the global challenges posed by the transformations in crises, humanitarian operations, healthcare services and epidemics, migrations, and natural disasters. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has listed these challenges for 2030, and the Foundation has prioritised them as top research topics. Throughout its pages, this volume presents a series of briefs: concept focuses derived from the body of social science literature and researcher focuses, which describe the background and research of a scientist. Additional topics take an interdisciplinary approach to notably examine the notions of commitment and social bonds. The Foundation works hand in hand with volunteers from the Red Cross and the Red Crescent to reinforce the connection between research and society, and, in so doing, the process of generating resilience, from crisis anticipation to recovery, becomes tangible for all concerned in France and abroad.

Throughout these pages, the Foundation’s entire scientific community reveals itself around its commitments, geographical scope, and the bounty of knowledge it generates daily with the collaboration of its governance bodies, partners, and personnel.



Eric DELAPORTE
President of the
Scientific Council



Francis AKINDÈS
Vice-President of the
Scientific Council

OUR RESEARCH VISION

The French Red Cross Foundation is a recognised public utility institution committed to supporting research on humanitarian and social action carried out by researchers close to crises, whose findings, widely disseminated and reviewed, lead to transforming existing practices. The Foundation's vision aligns with that of the French Red Cross: to advance scientific knowledge and social innovation to aid the most vulnerable in France and throughout the world.

Scientific Research

No human enterprise can advance without devoting part of its resources to pursuing research and innovation. Required to grapple with the challenges raised by vulnerable populations, humanitarian and social action cannot escape this reality. However, research investments in this field have remained minimal. Research serves to prepare for the future as it takes a more detached perspective from the immediate demands of the present.

The projects funded by the Foundation are either initiated at the request of the Governance of the Foundation or directly co-constructed with partners from non-profit, institutional, or private sectors. In every instance, they aim to fill a knowledge gap that they have identified within their respective areas of intervention, enhancing the methodologies employed by a broader spectrum of actors. As such, the Foundation promotes authentic scientific research¹, the purpose of which is to respond to issues whose answers are unresolved due to the limitations of our existing knowledge, to impart knowledge offering new insights derived from in-depth literature reviews, and to provide practical recommendations for humanitarian and social actors to enhance the effectiveness of their response.

For this to occur, the Foundation regularly collaborates with researchers in a fully independent manner. Regardless of their status, they remain affiliated with their research organisations, where applicable, and their work is carried out under the auspices of the Foundation's conventions and charters, guaranteeing the independence of researchers and the spirit of public utility through their cooperation. The Foundation grants researchers the freedom to formulate their

investigation and select their methodological techniques in compliance with prevailing deontological and ethical principles. Research projects are assessed and supported by peers, including researchers, members of the scientific council, and associated experts from multiple scientific disciplines and experts representing the Foundation's priority themes. The Foundation also safeguards the freedom of expression of researchers who retain full ownership of their data. By ensuring their independence and adhering to a timeframe commensurate with the requirements of field research in the social sciences, the Foundation gives itself the means to elicit constructive criticism, together with civil society and the people it assists, based on a thought-provoking process unrestricted by the demands of emergency response.

Field Research Close to Human Vulnerabilities

Our mission to alleviate suffering is central to our commitment. Non-profit organisations and NGOs on the front line must continuously update their knowledge of the situations in which they are operationally and symbolically active and analyse their responses to vulnerable communities by working in close contact with them. For this reason, the Foundation has chosen to mobilise the human and social sciences by integrating disciplines that are frequently underfunded but are essential for revitalising efforts to disseminate sound scientific knowledge derived from the contexts in which they provide response.

We primarily support qualitative approaches employing ethnographic methodologies involving field surveys, primary data collection and extended contact with communities. The Foundation has prioritised ensuring field intervention and research are done in close cooperation despite their objectives and timelines being as different as they are complementary.

The Foundation's commitment to research demonstrates a regard for academic, linguistic, and geographical diversity, factors often overlooked in financing and planning projects. Research favouring multidisciplinary approaches, funded by the Foundation, spans various social science disciplines, such as sociology, anthropology, and geography. The Foundation primarily supports French-speaking researchers as part of its commitment to French-speaking communities and diversifying knowledge production, particularly in international aid. Lastly, the Foundation primarily supports researchers from fields of intervention linked to social action practitioners and international solidarity. By advocating for locally based research, the Foundation seeks to combat unequal access to research funding, particularly in Africa, where scientific output constitutes only a tiny fraction of global research².

Action-Centred Research

Using research in the humanities and social sciences to promote humanitarian action reflects the Foundation’s concrete support for humanitarian and social actors in their quest to fulfil their research needs. This includes identifying those needs, issuing recommendations based on scientific studies, and following up on field research close to people’s vulnerabilities.

Reflection on scientific issues enables operational personnel to view their programmes and their fields of intervention from a greater distance. It helps them find ways to improve their practices and implement their actions in accordance with local realities. In this way, the humanitarian and social research we support ultimately benefits operatives. By building bridges between researchers, civil society, public institutions, and the private sector, we help enhance existing actions, strengthen capacities and autonomy, and foster the emergence of innovative and sustainable action models.

The Foundation regularly interacts with the employees and volunteers of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and remains in close contact with their “National Societies”. Numerous research programmes have been undertaken in collaboration with the French Red Cross and Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, specifically addressing operational concerns that volunteers have raised. Membership in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement lends the Foundation legitimacy as a civil society representative seeking to strengthen the link between academic and operational spheres.

Research Serving the Common Good

As a foundation recognised as a public utility institution, the French Red Cross Foundation supports and assists research projects whose findings are published and freely accessible. Designed to serve the general interest, this requirement has led the Foundation to highlight research for the benefit of the common good, freely accessible through a variety of publications and platforms – articles, summaries, reviews, series of publications, seminars, webinars, podcasts, etc. – presenting findings in diverse formats that facilitate wider dissemination of knowledge.

The Foundation funds research that contributes to public discourse by positioning innovation at the centre of dialogue and fostering exchanges between researchers, members of civil society and public institutions, and entities from the private sector. Scientific events are arranged every year in France and abroad to ensure the knowledge generated bears fruit, informs discussion, and encourages collaboration between the scientific community and the operational field.

REFERENCES

¹ OLIVIER DE SARDAN, Jean-Pierre. “Promouvoir la recherche face à la consultance. Autour de l’expérience du Lasdel (Niger-Bénin)”, Cahiers d’études africaines, vol. 202-203, no. 2-3, 2011, pp. 511-528.

² African scientific output, starting from less than 1% of total output in the 1990s, represented only 3% of global research in 2016 (Sarah BOTTON, Linda ZANFINI, Rohen D’AIGLEPIERRE, “L’aide internationale peut-elle participer à l’ancrage de la recherche africaine?”, The Conversation, September 6, 2021). Africa (17% of the world’s population) accounts for only 2.4% of the researchers in the world, 2.6% of scientific publications (Maryline BAUMARD, “Ces femmes qui œuvrent au rayonnement scientifique de l’Afrique”, Le Monde, November 18, 2019), and 1.3% of global research and development spending (Catherine LE BRECH, “Encourager le potentiel de la recherche africaine, l’exemple du Burkina Faso”, Franceinfo, November 27, 2017, https://www.francetvinfo.fr/monde/afrique/societe-africaine/encourage-le-potential-de-la-recherche-africaine-l-exemple-du-burkina-faso_3060055.html). In Africa, the underfunding of the scientific domain and the weakness or absence of national policies has prompted researchers to engage in side activities, and, at times, leave their country. Since its inception, the Foundation has supported researchers representing twenty different nationalities, one third of whom are Africans. They have contributed to the production of knowledge not only in Africa, but also in France.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CHUM	Centre hospitalier de l’Université de Montréal
EHPAD	Établissements d’hébergement pour personnes âgées dépendantes
FLS	Fondation pour le Lien Social
FRC	French Red Cross
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IFRC	The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IHMEC	Institut pour l’histoire et la mémoire des catastrophes
LASDEL	Laboratoire d’Études et de Recherches sur les Dynamiques Sociales et Développement Local
MSH SUD	Maison des Sciences de l’Homme de Montpellier
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs / Bureau des Nations-Unies pour la Coordination Humanitaire
PRSIW	Post-Research and Social Innovation Workshop
SASA	Social Action Support Actors
SESSTIM	Sciences Économiques et Sociales de la Santé et Traitement de l’Information Médicale
SSE	Social and Solidarity Economy
WHO	World Health Organisation

10 YEARS OF MILESTONES

and key figures 2013–2023

2013

MAY

The first Board of Administrators of the French Red Cross Fund is established as the **starting block** of the FRC's **commitment** to research.

2014

FEBRUARY

The Red Cross Fund issues its **first call for applications for postdoctoral research fellowships** in international humanitarian relief.



2016

FEBRUARY

Publication of the **first issue** of the bilingual international journal **Humanitarian Alternatives** co-founded and funded by the Red Cross Fund.

2017

SEPTEMBER

The French Red Cross Foundation is designated as a **public utility institution** by decree of the Ministry of the Interior.

2018

JANUARY

Commencement of the Foundation's activities following those of the two organisations it superseded: Fondation pour le Lien Social (FSL) and the Red Cross Fund.

2018

FEBRUARY

Opening of fellowships in the social sciences and launch of the Foundation's first call for applications for research fellowships in the **humanitarian and social** fields.

2019

DECEMBER

Launch of the **first call for proposals** from FRC volunteers as part of the **Bénévo'Lab** programme to develop the link between research and operations.

Launch of the RC3 Research Consortium, following the General Assembly of the IFRC in Geneva, of which the Foundation is an active member.



2020

JULY

The Foundation, committed to combatting the Covid-19 epidemic, launches a **"flash procedure" for awarding research fellowships** in times of emergency.

2021

DECEMBER

The Foundation begins **measuring the social utility** of its activities.



2022

MARCH

Launch of the "Ukraine Emergency Research" flash to adjust research timelines to the realities on the ground and allow researchers to collect data during the height of the crisis.

2023

MAY

Launch of the **first Post-Research and Social Innovation Workshop (APRIS)**, whose goal is to improve the utilisation of research findings and promote the social innovation that can be derived from them.



€1,629,032

in fellowships awarded to researchers

104

research fellowships awarded

43

prizes awarded

22

countries involved in research

16

humanities and social science disciplines

100%

French-language research

28%

of research with links to the International Movement of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

65%

of international research conducted by native researchers in the countries involved

80

scientific articles published

1

Humanitarian Transition



KEY FIGURES

A full programme

23

funded research
projects

13

geographical
areas

6

international
conferences

5

collective
publications

THE EMERGENCE OF A RESEARCH SUBJECT

Modern humanitarian action, conceived 160 years ago by Henry DUNANT as secular and universal in scope, has undergone crises and disruptions in its responses to the various armed conflicts and major disasters that have transformed how it conducts its mission to protect people. However, beyond the major geopolitical upheavals that have made it what it is today and its marked influence gained since the Cold War era, the humanitarian sector is now confronted with more profound transformations that could threaten its very foundation, disrupt its organisational framework, and call its practices into question.

From this observation, the Foundation has therefore found the need to re-examine the concept of humanitarian transition as a research focus. This should lead to a better comprehension of the dynamics behind “the dominant Western-style paradigm of solidarity between the North and the South transitioning to one that is much more complex”¹, plus its ethical ramifications. The Foundation has made the humanitarian transition the basis of a unique ten-year-long research programme conducted through research grants, conferences, and academic publications. This programme employs various research methodologies to specifically explore the status and the role of “local” humanitarian organisations (“local” as defined by the international aid system). It initially focused on the “profound changes” brought about by introducing new actors and practices into the humanitarian sector. This was accomplished through an initial call for grant applications in 2014 entitled “Realities and prospects of the humanitarian transition in countries receiving international aid”. Researchers first examined the links between humanitarian organisations and public sector providers in crisis-impacted countries, including issues around the sovereignty of States receiving international aid, the conduct and perceptions of long-established humanitarian organisations, the emergence of funding bodies, and the greater involvement of “State humanitarian action.” Researchers then focused on the qualitative and quantitative factors of redefined needs, which call for novel practices, new forms

of funding, plus technological, social, and organisational innovations, as well as the creation of South-based organisations and networks using hybrid business models.

As soon as the Red Cross Foundation was created during the preparations for the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, Jean-François MATTEI and Virginie TROIT expressed the need to support the humanitarian transition initiative through scientific observations and dialogue with humanitarian practitioners. This was to be achieved through applying ethical principles, as distinct from moral principles, deontology, or law, and through the “unavoidable soul-searching arising from new situations that impose new choices”². With this approach, they proposed to examine the relationship between providers of aid and aid recipients and in so doing, transpose bioethical principles to humanitarianism as an additional complement to the known humanitarian principles that guide the conduct of practitioners and give meaning to their actions. While taking note of the unbalanced relationship between North and South, especially in the research sector, they called for a collective response to the “need for an unprecedented research effort in the human and social sciences, naturally associating humanitarian operatives, as well as anthropologists, sociologists, philosophers, and legal experts from various cultural backgrounds. It is a matter of better understanding the conditions required to realise the humanitarian transition.” These considerations have been critical to the research on humanitarian transition and, in 2018 resulted in a new call for research grant applications entitled “Humanitarian transition: the stakes of autonomy,” which aimed as much to develop the process of localisation as to study it. The Foundation has since endeavoured to conduct its research programme as closely as possible with academics in participating countries by awarding research grants and organising conferences in Senegal, Côte d’Ivoire, Madagascar, Lebanon, Cameroon, and Kenya.



“No human enterprise can progress without devoting part of its efforts to research and innovation. Humanitarian action is no exception to the rule, and the challenge should be rewarding.”

Pr Jean-François MATTEI

Honorary President of the French Red Cross

Former President of the French Red Cross Fund

A CONCEPT GRAPPLING WITH THE REALITIES OF THE HUMANITARIAN SECTOR

Over the past ten years, humanitarian crises have undergone significant developments primarily due to shifts in global geopolitics, the impact of natural disasters, and changes in how armed conflicts are waged. The forcible relocation of populations increased significantly on the previous decade, with a record of more than 100 million displacements in 2022³. The COVID-19 pandemic, in the wake of other major epidemics (whether infectious diseases such as Ebola, AIDS, or vector-borne infections), has brought to light deficiencies in health systems, both in the North and South, as well as in the response capacity of humanitarian relief. Finally, one of the major developments in humanitarian crises has been the increased frequency and greater magnitude of natural disasters, particularly those attributable to climate change⁴. Hurricanes, floods, and heat waves have greatly impacted populations.

Humanitarian needs have risen sharply, and according to the most recent estimates, more than 300 million people have been affected, and more than US\$50 billion will be required to provide further aid⁵. While funding has also increased in the past, it has not kept pace with rising demands.

International and local humanitarian organisations have had strained yet fruitful contacts in the past ten years. Their relations were brought to the fore at the first-ever World Humanitarian Summit held in Istanbul in 2016 and convened by the United Nations Secretary-General. The Summit closed with the adoption of a series of measures that included the “Grand Bargain” agreement. It called for responses that would be “as local as possible, as international as necessary”⁶. It presented the essential requirement of “localising humanitarian aid” through increased direct funding allocated to local humanitarian organisations. However, this commitment has been struggling to materialise despite numerous promises, one of which was to commit donors and aid organisations to provide 25% of global humanitarian funding to local and national country providers by 2020. However the humanitarian sector today remains mainly in the hands of multilateral agencies and a few international NGOs. At the other end of the scale, national and local NGOs received only 1.2% of total international humanitarian aid in 2022⁷.

While remaining committed to its original goals, the Humanitarian Transition programme has continuously encouraged discussion on the issues and dynamics in the humanitarian sector. The programme has deviated from the traditional compartmentalisation of emergency and development to give researchers greater flexibility to review the timing, announcement, and representation of their projects. Numerous research studies have examined the work performed by local humanitarians, the introduction of new players, and what the sector has been experiencing behind the scenes in various contexts. Similarly, the Humanitarian Transition programme has been nurtured and inspired by the numerous scientific studies on international aid, both in French-speaking and global contexts. Over the past decade, the Foundation has awarded post-doctoral fellowships to over 25 researchers.

TOWARDS A BETTER UNDERSTANDING: Humanitarians and Their Practices

Over the past ten years, the “Humanitarian Transition” programme has conducted research on humanitarian action, taking into account a greater understanding of its context, key players, and dynamics of power and dependence. In addition, the programme has urged a specific approach to each country receiving international aid to address the challenges and modalities of the humanitarian transition within their national framework and how aid might align with the dynamics of social action and public policies. This requires an examination of both the “public arena” and the “backstage” of humanitarian action.

1. HUMANITARIAN ORGANISATIONS, THE PUBLIC SECTOR AND AID COORDINATION: THE NEW DEAL

As critical players ensuring the protection of their citizens, States maintain ambivalent relations with humanitarian organisations. States offering aid in the name of cooperation and international solidarity must be able to collaborate with the public sector in the countries and territories where they operate. They must be accountable for their actions and adhere to the principles of the organisations with which they work. Humanitarian organisations must understand and anticipate the underlying rationale for how a State may take charge, control or even instrumentalise aid in the name of sovereignty and contend with its geopolitical dynamics. On the other hand, States are reasserting their authority over their response to needs by deploying policies and systems designed to supplement or supplant humanitarian action.

In Madagascar, political scientist **Christiane RAFIDINARIVO** studied the emerging role of the National Office for Risk and Disaster Management of Madagascar in its response to natural disasters. She examined the rationale behind financing this recently created institution, which has been responsible for coordinating all humanitarian interventions in Madagascar and studied its collaboration with international organisations and funding bodies.

Many States are strengthening their role as critical players in humanitarian response to improve their coordination. The Red Cross Foundation has funded several research projects illustrating this point. For example, anthropologist **Jeanne SEMIN** has studied the social assistance provided to talibé children in Saint-Louis, Senegal. She examined the synergies between the public sector and humanitarian organisations that function as mediators between street people and the State through her action research involving the actors in question. Her project, which coincided with the launch of the authorities' plan to rescue children living in the streets, exemplifies collaboration challenges between the State and civil society.

In Niger, as in the whole of the Sahel, conflicts and population shifts have impacted mainly the security response of the States concerned and the international community. These issues have implications for humanitarian activities due to the needs they generate and the impact of security-related responses on humanitarian workers. The work of anthropologist **Tatiana SMIRNOVA** carried out in Niger in 2018, describes how security matters have been assured in response to population shifts caused by conflicts by focusing on inter-actor relationships, emphasising, emphasising implemented methodologies of population governance.

In another region of Niger, formulating national and international regulations has led the country to become an essential player in migration policies. More stringent border controls have further weakened Niger's already fragile socio-economic situation, prompting young people in Niger to emigrate from areas like the Agadez region. In approaching this situation, sociologist **Aissata ISSANE IGODOE** explored the strategies of local and humanitarian actors in response to the migration problem. She examined the role of local NGOs in comprehending migratory flows and explored the underlying socio-economic and cultural issues.

In East Africa, several countries are experiencing armed conflicts, which have intermittently led to contentious relations between States and international NGOs.

The research project of anthropologist **Alice CORBET**, funded in 2017, focuses on the interaction between actors in response to the influx of South Sudanese refugees into the Gambella region since 2013. Her work addresses the realities of refugee management.

In another part of the world, political scientist **Danielle TAN** studied similar dynamics in Laos. To maximise the effectiveness of development projects in a context with limited resources and personnel, the author uses geographic information systems (GIS) to map the organisers, their activities, and their modes of governance.



© Laos - IIRC

RESEARCHER FOCUS

Free Play and Drawings as Devices for Anthropologists

In her research on the vulnerability and care management of street children in Saint-Louis, Senegal, Jeanne SEMIN uses several methodologies, one of which is observing free play and organising drawing classes.

The study of free play as a technique used in childhood anthropology is a window into the reality that children experience. *"Free play is incomparably beneficial for children regarding their personal construct. Free play is ubiquitous and characteristic of childhood. During my observations, I sought to determine the extent to which the street children of Saint-Louis truly play, how they play, and what their games can teach us about their world. They play, in fact, in an open space of freedom represented for them by the street."*

Jeanne Semin also set up drawing workshops for 10 to 15 children provided with assistance by non-profit organisations. The talibé children aged between 6 and 14 were given three instructions: *"1-Draw the person you love most in the world; 2-Draw your daily life; 3-Draw the job you would like to have in the future. For each drawing, including those that were done freely, the child was asked to comment what he or she had wished to draw."* This activity was not intended to be an evaluation but a fun way to better get to know the children attending the organisations. As Françoise Dolto wrote, free drawing is *"an expression, a manifestation of the depths of life"*. From a large number of drawings, Jeanne SEMIN was able to *"discover some shared characteristics that provide insight on the way children position themselves within society and in their relationship with adults, teachers, family, friends, etc."*.



Jeanne SEMIN
Doctor in Anthropology

2. NEW ARRIVALS IN HUMANITARIANISM AND AID COORDINATION

In recent years, the humanitarian sector has seen the arrival of key players and the formulation of new models, especially in the South. Transnational NGOs, coalitions, and networks are all organisational innovations that are part of the humanitarian transition movement and offer new ways of doing things and new modes of governance that can be exemplary for other sectors.

Beyond the paradigm shift between North and South, one of the distinguishing features of the humanitarian transition movement lies in the emergence and development of new organisational forms of humanitarianism, particularly in the South. Wishing to "do a different kind of humanitarian action", the organisation studied is structured, for example, around a new organisational model founded mainly on providing support to local humanitarian organisations. Research by anthropologist **Marion PECHAYRE** in Niger shows how this NGO, which grew out of Médecins sans Frontière's breeding ground of ideas and practices, progressively morphed into a symbiotic collaboration benefiting both local NGOs and ALIMA itself. Her study also shows that this ongoing collaboration has led to the revamping of behaviours and action strategies in such a way as to circumvent the paternalistic approach that is characteristic of partnerships between NGOs of the North and African NGOs.

Alongside these new humanitarian professionals, citizen movements are emerging and making themselves heard in the public arena without necessarily adopting a conventional organisational framework. **Kelly POULET**'s research studies the development of the Federation of Non-Governmental Organizations in Senegal, a rural-based peasant movement and a key player that has emerged in a context where the State's agricultural policies have mixed results. FONGS-action paysanne promotes a less formal form of organisation and is set on upholding the interests of civil society, especially those relative to peasant autonomy.

Likewise, numerous research projects funded by the Foundation have highlighted new humanitarian organisations. Sociologist **Emeline UWIZEYIMANA** in Burundi describes a local NGO and introduces its founder. She demonstrates that the activities of this organisation, created in the 1990s, are designed for the long term and are intended to redefine the relationship with beneficiaries. This NGO has succeeded in collaborating with international organisations and public service providers thanks to its vigorous action in the field. It seeks to diversify its activities beyond emergency humanitarian aid (training, microfinance, etc.). Humanitarian action is increasingly open to non-traditional players from the private and public sectors.

Finally, the Foundation also finances research projects that study the emergence and empowerment of local actors and the localisation of aid from the viewpoint of local organisations. This is the objective of **Jean Emile MBA's** project, which studies "humanitarian transition from below" in Cameroon based on the experience of community-based organisations funded by international NGOs, as well as bilateral and multilateral funding bodies. Taking this same perspective, sociologist **Diane ALALOUF-HALL** examines an international cooperation organisation based in Montreal and operating in Africa, the Americas, and Asia. Her project focuses on the organisation's "country offices", to investigate the organisational change brought about to internationalise its governance and programme management. It should progressively delegate greater autonomy to these country offices, which are considered locally based.



© Pierre Boris NNDE

3. BEHIND THE SCENES OF HUMANITARIANISM

Exploring the international humanitarian system and its relationship with local organisations and societies prompts a shift in focus from the international stage to behind the scenes. What occurs "backstage" is a necessary and stimulating component for observing what is unseen or disregarded by research. It can also help revisit uncomfortable or stimulating situations. It can provide an opportunity to closely re-examine the nature of the relationship with other key players and their underlying mechanisms.

The work of sociologist **Emeline UWIZEYIMANA** carried out in a Burundian refugee camp goes behind the scenes of humanitarian aid and how beneficiaries perceive it. She describes the compatibility issues between the local culture of the beneficiaries and the projects implemented by international NGOs, as well as the lack of participation of local communities. Her study focuses on the actions of a local NGO that offers an alternative mode of management that empowers local people. Her findings are promising. This research clearly shows that the humanitarian transition is a real phenomenon in Burundi but also necessitates a shift in the relationship between NGOs and local populations.

This structurally imbalanced relationship between humanitarian personnel and local populations also manifests itself on a lesser scale. Criminologist **Arnaud DANDOY** studied the unequal and paradoxical nature of domestic relationships developed in Haiti. He describes a more specific social situation: the mutual dependence of humanitarian workers and their housekeepers. The result is a process of otherisation, followed by an essentialisation and devaluation of the other person. The researcher hypothesises that the problems of insecurity of humanitarian personnel could be resolved by eliminating the unequal distribution and recognition that marginalised social groups must endure.

Anthropologist **Amalia DRAGANI** describes the intimate relationships between expatriate staff and local people. This study aims to examine the political, social, and symbolic issues that lie at the heart of mixed marriages between development officers and local representatives. Based on her observations in Niamey, she

explores how the sociability between spouses contributes to “humanitarian transfer”, a fundamental notion and current challenge of humanitarian action which consists of transferring skills to locals to enable them to act as effectively as possible in the field, particularly regarding major humanitarian issues.

Sociologist **Verena RICHARDIER** focused her research on the relations between professionals from the South and North through her study of the rapport between “expatriate” and “local” personnel. Indeed, the newly configured relationships brought about by the humanitarian transition can sometimes be bound by limitations from a professional, geographic, and symbolic perspective, particularly regarding the mobility of humanitarian aid workers. Through her research conducted in Senegal and Niger, she investigates the ethnicisation of skills in an increasingly pluralistic professional environment, taking as an example the case of successful graduates from a renowned training centre.



© Haïti - IFRC

ACTING MORE EFFECTIVELY: Ethics as a Guide for Action

The “Humanitarian Transition” programme encourages research that considers the recognition of dilemmas, applying standards, ethical considerations, and institutionalisation of humanitarian aid. Starting from the biomedical ethical principles of autonomy and those of beneficence, maleficence, and justice⁸, the programme presents novel perspectives for the study of the practices and governance of humanitarians. They should guide the actions and the innovations that serve the most vulnerable. This positioning makes it possible to address the transmutations and transformations of contemporary humanitarian action, both from a descriptive and a normative approach.

1. LOCAL HUMANITARIANISM AND THE CHALLENGES OF AUTONOMY

Originating with the 2016 *Grand Bargain*, the concept of aid localisation has had a significant impact on the humanitarian sector in recent years. However, despite the numerous pledges to increase direct funding to local organisations, these commitments are struggling to emerge. Many researchers have studied the dynamics at play and localisation as a practice or discourse in a more general understanding of local humanitarianism.

A Doctor in International Development, **Stéphanie MALTAIS** studied this localisation process in Guinea in the context of numerous epidemics, including Ebola and COVID-19. She highlights the multiple ongoing barriers to the empowerment of Guinean organisations in relation to their technical partners and international financiers. While the COVID-19 pandemic and associated travel restrictions could have led to a more localised approach in responding to crises, the impacts on technical support and local ownership of the response to epidemics must still be finely reviewed, even if progress has been made in terms of the empowerment of national and local organisations.

The historian **Anicet ZRAN** has closely examined the sustainability of these local developments and competencies. In the north of Côte d'Ivoire, ravaged by a decade-long conflict, he analysed the modes of intervention and the subsequent withdrawal of international humanitarian organisations. He shows that their actions, which were primarily focused on the health sector, required the participation of local actors throughout the conflict and as a result prompted the formation of new NGOs and the mobilisation of existing ones. At the end of the conflict, and due to transitioning to a more development-oriented context, many NGOs withdrew, encouraging local actors to employ resilience strategies to reposition themselves. His work sheds light on the deliberate construction of the health system, the public sector at its core, and local NGOs occupying a strategic role.

In other contexts, researchers present more nuanced findings about the localisation process, underscoring the constraints of local organisations and the preference of beneficiaries for international aid. Anthropologist **Georges DJOHY** in Benin studied the transfer of power from international humanitarians to local actors in the frequently flooded northern region of the country. His work reveals a somewhat conflicting institutional arrangement that reinforces the authority and the sway of local political figures at the expense of the quality of aid, which is meant to be apolitical. His work shows that the perceptions and practices of aid recipients also indicate important issues surrounding the localisation of aid. He demonstrates a preference of locals for Western aid that is perceived as less biased, less partisan, and more respectful of international humanitarian values and principles, in contrast to local assistance that is viewed as more partisan, biased, and subservient to electoral, clan, ideological, and territorial interests.

Reflecting on the emergence of new insurance actors in preparing for and responding to natural disasters, agronomist **Mariama NOUHOU KOUTCHA** in Niger studied the protection of farmers against the risks of drought in the region of Tillabéry. Her work examines how affected populations perceive various forms of emergency assistance after a disaster, including insurance payments. She demonstrates that farmers primarily value aid programmes that are as generous and prompt as possible, and they seem to prefer the aid provided by international organisations over that provided by the local country or national NGOs.



© Luc ALARY - Haiti - Canadian Red Cross

2. TRANSFER OF STANDARDS AND MODELS WITHIN THE HUMANITARIAN SECTOR

Social science researchers frequently highlight the short comings and adverse effects of development aid and humanitarian aid programmes. Socio-anthropologists and political scientists offer a critical perspective and explore concepts around the circulation of standards and the transfer of policies. The intent is to scrutinise the compatibility or incompatibility between the various intervention strategies, commonly regarded as standard models, and their implementation in low-income and crisis-affected countries. Several research projects report on the various inconsistencies, circumventions, and innovations of what Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan has conceptualised as “travelling models”.

Through research conducted in Casamance, Senegal, anthropologist **Alvar JONES SANCHEZ** studied peace-building programmes, particularly the elements that promote “community participation” typically demanded by funding bodies. After examining peace committees and conflict management mechanisms presented as being locally based, he concludes that these programmes result from standardised strategies designed explicitly for peacebuilding. In fact, according to his research, the need for response developed at local level has systematically originated from the top, and objectives are externally defined. As a result, he notes that local populations exhibit a limited sense of ownership of these systems, and even become depoliticised because these models have been imposed.

As part of this same critical approach to community participation, sociologist **Edouard Kouassi KOUADIO** studied the implementation of a Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) programme in Côte d'Ivoire, with the active support of an international organisation. His findings indicate that this programme, which originated in Southeast Asia, encountered significant resistance and limited adoption within the local community. People's perceptions and beliefs associated with hygiene and sanitation remain strong, and they have impeded the implementation of these practices. His study reports on the repercussions of an overly large disparity between the intervention strategies of an imported programme and the reality of local situations.

Similarly, sociologist **Sadio BA GNING** has reported on group dynamics and the paradigm of good practices through a study of a consortium consisting of 178 national and international NGOs in Senegal that upholds the interests of NGOs and other civil society organisations. Her work shows that, despite wanting to move towards empowerment and professionalisation, local actors must still contend with international organisations demanding “good governance”. Such well-meaning intentions, coupled with matters related to financial dependence, can undermine NGO networks and institutions and even encourage competitive relationships between NGOs. Her work shows that standards, principles, and ethical frameworks, which are shared between organisations in the North and South, are not necessarily adapted to meet the needs of the South.

Lastly, the transfer of standards through partnerships between humanitarian organisations from the South and North is a crucial aspect of relationship-building. It provided the starting point for anthropologists **Jacky BOUJU** and **Sylvie AYIMPAM** to examine the disparities in financial resources between partners from the North and local partners in Burkina Faso, which have resulted in imbalances in the contributions and compensations typically exchanged within the humanitarian sector. The authors reflect on the “symbolic violence” of aid, which is inherently asymmetrical in North-South relationships. This violence is now ingrained within the established norms dictated by the managerial culture of the bureaucracies of major international organisations. It has taken the form of a profoundly ethnocentric model that is mainly unsuited to the realities of societies in the South, and this paradoxically restricts opportunities for the localisation of aid.



© Virginie TROIT

Travelling Models

For more than forty years, anthropologist **Jean-Pierre OLIVIER DE SARDAN** has documented, analysed, and conceptualised the different dimensions of social engineering of development in West Africa. As the recipient of an honorary award from the Foundation, his work has strongly influenced generations of social anthropologists. In his most recent publication, *La Revanche des Contextes*⁹, he reiterates the concept of **“travelling models”**, which can be defined as follows :

Developed by international experts and supported and financed by development institutions, travelling models are exported massively to low-income countries as “turnkey” solutions. A travelling model, often derived from an experience from the organisation’s inception, is produced around an inherently efficient system with the operational means required for its implementation. The travelling model is then disseminated via networks of professionals and decision-makers in various contexts. The confrontation with local players, i.e. field operatives, inevitably produces implementation gaps, numerous unforeseen effects, and results that are disappointing or far from hitting their initial targets—as exemplified by the multiple case studies presented in this publication and

based on original empirical data gathered from around the world.

Travelling models:
“Une ingénierie sociale du développement,” Revue internationale des études de développement.

Beyond the issues of community participation, several researchers funded by the Foundation have taken an interest in the response provided by the for-profit sector and the promotion of social entrepreneurship. In Burkina Faso, anthropologist **Roberta RUBINO** studied the effects caused by income-generating activity programmes widely promoted by NGOs. Focusing on the food processing sector, she shows that these activities, designed to strengthen the financial autonomy of beneficiaries, can also tend to lock them into a “survival economy” and keep them ensnared in a web of traditional social relationships.

To establish a new mode of economic action that is grounded in and strengthens the social bond, social entrepreneurship accordingly appears to be a concept applied by development agencies in the North and widely promoted by locally based intermediary organisations. Sociologist **Anastasia-Alithia SEFERIADIS** looked at women’s social entrepreneurship in Ghana. She demonstrates that the prevailing promotion of the entrepreneurship model leads some women to reclassify their NGOs as social enterprises despite the absence of financial results. When this engagement is requalified as such, it generates a reliance on external aid to compensate for shortfalls in a market characterised by unequal competition.



© Virginie TROIT

RESEARCHER FOCUS

The “Dual Perspective” of a Former Humanitarian Turned Anthropologist

Before earning his doctorate in social anthropology, Alvar JONES SANCHEZ worked for nearly ten years in humanitarian aid and development in Africa, where he directed numerous intervention programmes.

“I worked as an international volunteer between 2005 and 2014, mainly for the Spanish Red Cross in Equatorial Guinea, Cape Verde, Senegal, and Tunisia. I initially studied anthropology, believing that this subject would be useful to me as an overseas volunteer. But this was not the case because my volunteer work was rushed, dealt with administrative tasks, required formal posturing, etc. Instead, an anthropologist needs time, fieldwork, and informality. A decade on, I felt the need to go back to basics and resume my research work. I believe it’s important to deconsecrate humanitarian aid to make it more effective, especially since I’ve worn two hats, both as a humanitarian and an anthropologist, which has given me a better understanding of the field.”

His research, funded by the Foundation, deals with “participatory” or “community-based” dynamics, a popularised notion in the development sector. It has allowed him to return to Casamance and gain a greater awareness of his new position concerning the people he had worked with as a volunteer.

“So, I returned to Casamance, where I was a volunteer. I realised that my new status made it hard to schedule interviews and that I was taken less seriously. No one in the field was listening to me. This prompted me to reflect on the necessity to structure meetings between operational staff and researchers and develop new modes of cooperation.”



Alvar JONES SANCHEZ
Doctor in Anthropology



© Virginie TROIT

AND TOMORROW?



Interview with...

Dorothea HILHORST
Professor of Humanitarian Studies

Dorothea HILHORST is Professor of Humanitarian and Reconstruction Studies at the International Institute for Social Studies (ISS) at Erasmus University Rotterdam and Wageningen University (Netherlands). She is also President of the International Humanitarian Studies Association (IHSA) and Honorary Director of the Centre de recherche et d'expertise Genre et Développement (CREGED) in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Her research focuses on the relationship between humanitarian aid and society. She is particularly interested in the interaction between humanitarian aid and development and with peace-building. In 2020, she was awarded a research prize by the Foundation.

How can we address humanitarian organisations' insufficient capacity to adequately meet the growing needs of populations?

Global humanitarian needs are growing ever faster, given the current context of escalating world conflicts, persistent global tensions, and the tangible effects of climate change and its alarming prognosis. At the same time, accessing communities to deliver humanitarian aid is becoming increasingly problematic, thereby driving up the costs of humanitarian interventions in many world regions. This makes our task more complex and more perilous.

In the face of these growing challenges, a new approach is required. There is a need for what I call "resilient humanitarianism". It's an approach that stresses the need for continuous adaptation of humanitarian action to sustain its effectiveness and relevance.

In light of this, greater emphasis should be placed on the role of national authorities and the support of national service providers, whether they operate in humanitarianism or other sectors. This aspect is essential.

Another crucial aspect is our perception of beneficiaries. We are accountable to them. We must hold them in the utmost regard and recognise their autonomy. However, external constraints may occasionally limit their autonomy, even though it may be desirable in certain situations.

The Nexus approach interconnects humanitarianism, development, and peace-building and has many advantages. But it also exposes humanitarian action to a greater risk of being politicised, which raises multiple concerns, including the difficulty of accessing needy populations. At the same time, another Nexus approach exists between humanitarianism, resource security, and the fight against illegal immigration. However, these novel trends must be cautiously treated and critically examined to ascertain their value to populations. Finally, a crucial question that merits consideration concerns the localisation of humanitarian assistance. We must question whether the international humanitarian community is making any real headway in this regard.

Aside from the issues already mentioned, are practitioners and researchers giving sufficient consideration to the challenges anticipated over the next ten to twenty years? Are any essential aspects being overlooked that would necessitate further research and intervention?

The key recommendation for future research in humanitarianism relates to acquiring a deeper understanding of the significance of diversity. It is essential to recognise that humanitarianism takes on different forms depending on the context in which it evolves. Humanitarian action is deeply impacted by the social realities and political economics of the regions in which it intervenes. In-depth investigations must be conducted to determine how these factors affect the evolution of humanitarian action. In pursuing this train of thought, it is crucial to formulate middle-range theories that can explain the plurality of contexts and their commonalities. From this,

models and approaches can be developed that are more suited to meet the needs of people in various environments effectively. I therefore use the term “humanitarianisms” in the plural form to better convey the diversity of systems.

How do you envision the involvement of the social sciences and other disciplines in supporting NGOs and members of civil society as they reflect on their mission and seek to facilitate research and the sharing of information?

I believe that research must be firmly grounded in local realities, and it must also be carried out in close collaboration with local actors and stakeholders. This collaboration is essential. In the context of humanitarian crises, researchers must assume a more proactive role. It is therefore imperative to establish a dialogue between researchers, humanitarian practitioners, journalists, critical observers, and local representatives of civil society. This will enable us to understand local needs better and find appropriate solutions. The initiatives of humanitarian observatories, such as the one promoted by the International Humanitarian Studies Association, are richly dynamic, particularly in Africa.



© Virginie TROIT

REFERENCES

- ¹ MATTEI, Jean-François and TROIT, Virginie, *“La transition humanitaire et le recours à l’éthique”*, *Bulletin de l’Académie nationale de médecine*, 2017.
- ² Ibid.
- ³ IDMC, 2023 Global Report on Internal Displacement, GRID 2023 [online].
- ⁴ IFRC, World Disasters Report, 2022.
- ⁵ OBRECHT, Alice, SWITHERN Sophia and DOHERTY Jennifer, “The State of the Humanitarian System”, ALNAP , 358 p, 2022. <https://sohs.alnap.org/>
- ⁶ European Commission, *“Grand compromis (Grand Bargain)”*, Consulted on [https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/humanitarian-aid/grand-bargain_fr].
- ⁷ URQUHART, Angus, GIRLING-MORRIS, Fran, NELSON-POLLARD, Susanna, MASON, Erica, The Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2022 , Development Initiatives, 2022, 129 p. <https://devinit.org/resources/global-humanitarian-assistance-report-2022/>
- ⁸ BEAUCHAMP, Tom, CHILDRESS, James, Principles of Biomedical Ethics, 7th Edition, New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- ⁹ OLIVIER DE SARDAN, Jean-Pierre, *La revanche des contextes*, Karthala, 2021.

LIST OF THE FOUNDATION'S RESEARCH PAPERS

AYIMPAM Sylvie and **BOUJU Jacky**, *"Ethnocentrisme et partenariat : la violence symbolique de l'aide humanitaire"*, French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°1, December 2015.

BA GNING Sadio and **POULET Kelly**, *"Appréhender les ONG comme espace de gouvernance : de l'ethnographie des pratiques à celle des contraintes à l'autonomie"*, French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°12, February 2017.

CORBET Alice, **AMBROSETTI David**, **BAYLE Gabrielle**, **LABZAE Mehdi**, *"Agents de l'Etat et acteurs humanitaires : enjeux d'une interdépendance négociée – Etude de cas à Gambella"*, French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°8, February 2017.

DANDOY Arnaud, *"Des humanitaires et de leurs femmes de ménage : l'éthique du care contre l'exceptionnalisme humanitaire"*, French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°9, February 2017.

DJOHY Georges, *"Transition humanitaire et localisation de l'aide au Bénin : enjeux des perceptions et pratiques des bénéficiaires"*, French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°23, April 2019.

DRAGANI, Amalia, *"Le transfert humanitaire au prisme des relations intimes : hétérogamies extrêmes et "nouveaux cadets sociaux "au Niger"*, French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°18, May 2018.

IGODOE, Aissata, *"L'emploi des jeunes à Agadez : stratégies des acteurs locaux face aux enjeux migratoires"*, French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°50, December 2022.

JONES SANCHEZ Alvar, *"Les comités de paix pour la résolution de conflits en Casamance : de l'illusion populaire au déni politique"*, French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°13, March 2018.

KOUADIO Kouassi Edouard, *"L'ATPC dans le Bounkani (Côte d'Ivoire) : la difficile appropriation par les acteurs locaux"*, French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°24, July 2019.

NOUHOU KOUTCHA Mariama, *"Évaluation par les populations des dispositifs de gestion des risques climatiques : le cas de la sécheresse au Niger"*, French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°26, September 2019.

MALTAIS Stéphanie, *"Localisation de l'aide internationale en santé : Impacts de la COVID-19 en Guinée"*, French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°54, June 2023.

RAFIDINARIVO Christiane, **RALAMBOSON Hantsa** and **RANAIVOARIVELO Marie-Donna**, *"Transition politique et transition humanitaire : analyse politique comparée de la transition financière"*, French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°10, February 2017.

RUBINO Roberta, *"Les acteurs de la transformation agroalimentaire ouagalaise dans la trappe de l'économie de la survie"*, French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°21, April 2019.

SEFERIADIS Anastasia-Alithia, *"La sociologie de l'acteur-réseau appliquée à l'entrepreneuriat social féminin : le cas des entrepreneures émergentes au Ghana"*, French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°34, March 2020.

SEMIN Jeanne, *"Vers un plan de retrait des enfants des rues de Saint-Louis du Sénégal : transition humanitaire et principe éthique d'autonomie"*, French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°14, March 2018.

SMIRNOVA Tatiana, *"Boko Haram et les déplacés dans la région de Diffa au Niger : penser et construire la réponse humanitaire dans un contexte insurrectionnel (2013-2016)"*, French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°19, May 2018.

TAN Danielle, *"La transition humanitaire au Laos, une cartographie des acteurs, des dynamiques et des modes de gouvernance"*, French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°2, January 2016.

UWIZEYIMANA Émeline, *"La transition humanitaire dans un camp de réfugiés burundais"*, French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°11, February 2017.

ZRAN Toily Anicet, *"Les ONG et la reconstruction du système de santé publique au nord de la Côte d'Ivoire : stratégies de repositionnement et de collaboration"*, French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°20, March 2019.

2

Health & Epidemics



KEY FIGURES

18

funded research projects

13

geographical areas



Humanitarian organisations, particularly the National Societies of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, aim to enhance individuals' health and well-being. Daily and worldwide, they work to improve people's access to care, health prevention, and treatment. In times of emergency, and notably in the context of epidemics, volunteers work on the front lines to support healthcare systems. To support these missions, research in the social sciences is essential to identify the barriers and disparities in access to care and improve the capacity to prepare for and respond to health emergencies.

MEETING HEALTH AND HUMANITARIAN CHALLENGES

Access to healthcare has been a primary focus of operations since the 1960s when modern humanitarian action emerged alongside development aid. In France, the "without borders" phenomenon introduced a new model for a more targeted management of medical services. These organisations emphasise the principles of impartiality and neutrality of aid, the professionalisation of nursing care, the assurance of sanitary conditions, preventive and emergency medicine, the fight against epidemics, and the training of volunteers. This focus has been constant throughout conflict, health crises, and when individuals have been excluded from health systems¹. Humanitarian organisations, as international aid actors, play a growing role in global health, delivery of care, and advocacy concerning malnutrition, infectious and vector-borne diseases, landmine injuries, patents, and access to medication. At the domestic level, humanitarian NGOs and social action organisations are committed to issues involving social cohesion, equality, inclusion, and gender-related concerns.

Although the right to universal access to health services has been acknowledged, it has yet to be realised. According to the WHO, "only 270 million people are predicted to be covered by essential health services and not experience a natural disaster by 2023"². This figure reflects the profound and long-lasting disparities and social divisions that deprive some people of their fundamental rights and access to equitable health services. These inequalities can be superimposed over crisis or post-crisis scenarios, creating a new configuration of needs and disrupting access to care and health services. According to the IFRC, more than 780 million people worldwide are denied access to safe drinking water and 2.5 billion people lack adequate sanitation³.

Given today's challenge of providing equal access to care, understanding its social and political dimensions is crucial to improving multi-provider prevention

services so that the most vulnerable people, often disregarded by health systems, can be protected. The contexts of vulnerability and precarity of affected communities must be considered to reduce the health impacts of emerging diseases, epidemics, and non-communicable diseases. From this standpoint, the French Red Cross Foundation supports field research that seeks to analyse and comprehend the contexts, perceptions, and representations of caregivers according to the specificities of each situation. Through their work, researchers participate in developing more effective health interventions, new models of care, and improved physical and psychological health practices within an ethically grounded framework.

How do social and religious norms influence women's sexual and reproductive health, and what are the endogenous strategies and local initiatives that can improve healthcare delivery?

To what extent have socio-economic, environmental, institutional, and cultural contexts impacted the success of public awareness campaigns in combatting epidemics?

How is the COVID-19 pandemic transforming the work of volunteers and sometimes underpaid and socially discredited professionals?



© Lucas GAUTIER - CRF

CONCEPT FOCUS

"Inequalities of Life"

*"In an absolute sense, physical disparities between individuals are not based solely on a human being's inherent biological essence but are also determined by societal inequalities."*⁴

Didier FASSIN, a physician, anthropologist and sociologist, has devised a morality-based approach to social concerns. His study centres on "the Inequalities of Life". His humanitarian career in various organisations has been complemented by work in the social sciences, for which he received an honorary award from the French Red Cross Foundation in 2019. From the application of ethno-psychiatry to an analysis of the AIDS epidemic in South Africa and a study on the healthcare of humanitarian organisations, he has explored the habits, practices, and relationships that individuals have with their bodies in various national and historical contexts.

Didier FASSIN examines the moral and political aspects relative to the body's functioning in relation to an individual's health. He describes the severe consequences of social and care inequalities for health inequalities and the social, racial, and gender disparities contributing to the evolution of diseases, disabilities, and epidemics. The concept of "life" has become

fundamental to determining public policies and social values. His work on the AIDS epidemic in South Africa is a practical case example demonstrating his approach's actuality.⁵

The concept of "inequalities in life" entails examining the social issues within the health sector. Through the application of ethnography and localised field research, the social sciences provide insights into the social disparities associated with disease and mortality that must be combatted for what they are.⁶

Didier FASSIN
Anthropologist, sociologist,
physician, the Foundation's
research award recipient in 2019

TOWARDS A BETTER UNDERSTANDING

1. OBSTACLES AND UNEQUAL ACCESS TO CARE

When 100 million people fall into extreme poverty each year due to their inability to afford health costs, the issue of obstacles preventing access to care is a social question⁷. Throughout the 20th century, the medical field has significantly advanced globally. However, despite this progress, the medical profession has remained intent on offering ready-made solutions. Furthermore, it must cope with the challenge of disseminating medical services wherever they are needed, and this difficulty hinders local access to healthcare and has led to numerous medical treatment failures.

In 2019, in the context of intra-Africa migrations, geographer **Joséphine LEMOUOGUE** studied the specific factors related to the access or lack of access to healthcare among Central African refugees in Cameroon. She investigated how procedures in reception facilities were designed to improve the provision of basic services and to satisfy the essential needs of refugees, particularly for children under the age of five. Her work highlights how their living conditions, in this case, in emergency shelters, negatively impact their health. Their social precarity restricts their ability to satisfy their basic needs, such as food security, and continuously subjects them to ongoing health risks.

The following year, in 2020, **Daniel Valérie BASKA TOUSSIA**, an academician and researcher in geography at the University of Maroua, Cameroon, pursued this observation by studying the problems of access to care for refugees and displaced people in Cameroon's Minawao Camp and its surrounding vicinity. He shows that the conditions during their journey and their stay in the camps create obstacles to their access to adequate healthcare. These obstacles are worsened by the difficulties they encounter upon their arrival at the reception facilities. These people were compelled to flee and abandon their homes and livelihoods and now live in a camp affected by food and medical insecurity. The researcher also notes that geographical inequalities in access to healthcare also contribute to population shifts.

Anthropologist **Alice SERVY** investigated a developing topic for humanitarians, explicitly concentrating on treating chronic illnesses: the distribution of healthcare management systems in French Polynesia. Her research, conducted in 2020, focuses on medical evacuations known as "medevacs", a medical transfer procedure involving transport to a facility equipped with medical resources to treat a specific illness. Her work revolves around the experience of cancer patients and contributes to a better understanding of the mechanisms that restrict or facilitate access to care.

"If I have lung cancer and have six chemotherapy sessions, I'll refuse to have them all during one hospital stay and ask to travel back to the Marquesas between sessions. Three months is too long for me. I won't let myself be taken like the other time. I plan to go back and forth and take Tahiti rā'au [medicines] simultaneously because the two medications go together. I'm looking to get cured, too."

(Male, 72 years of age, oral cancer, lung and prostate cancers diagnosed. Interviewed by Alice SERVY⁸)

By describing people's way of life, the researcher brings to light the diverse array of individuals, materials, concepts, and practices surrounding medical evacuations. She depicts the personal experiences that motivate patients, from a social perspective, to decide whether to seek treatment. Obstacles to healthcare stem from multiple factors, particularly the anxiety of dying during a medevac. According to this research, improving evacuation quality and public healthcare services is possible. Ethical considerations can also further advance by aligning them with societal cultural values.

2. ACCESS TO SEXUAL, MATERNAL, AND PAEDIATRIC HEALTH



The many facets of inequality make access to quality care particularly difficult. They relate to discriminatory social norms that translate into restraining attitudes, behaviours, policies, and laws against women and children."

Aïssa DIARRA
Physician and Doctor in Anthropology

Globally, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality rate fell by 45%, and the under-5 mortality rate more than halved⁹. However, access to sexual and reproductive health is becoming increasingly unequal, and most pregnancy-related deaths have occurred in developing countries¹⁰. These inequalities are attributable to many factors central to health, cultural, and social concerns.

Aïssa DIARRA, a physician and social anthropologist in the Sahel, has spent many years studying this subject. The sexual and reproductive health indicators pertaining to women and adolescent girls in the Sahel are a matter of concern due to low contraceptive usage and elevated maternal mortality rates, early marriages, and illegally induced abortions. In Niger, Mauritania, and Mali, she studied the disparities between planned health programmes and local realities. She describes the difficulty in expanding access to healthcare and notes pervasive gender-based violence. Her work also discusses the “positive norms” developed by local cultures. In addition, she explores the local and endogenous solutions that communities have come up with based on their standards and the practices health professionals have devised to deliver palliative healthcare services. The author suggests that the contribution of local health practitioners be more thoroughly incorporated into public health policies.

Voahirana Tantely ANDRIANANTOANDRO is a demographer who specialises in studying family structures and organising activities and development in rural Madagascar. She examined the extent to which pregnant women and mothers with children under five utilise healthcare services in regions highly exposed to climatic hazards, particularly in the Androy region. She notes the low use rate of maternal and child health services despite the presence of humanitarian organisations and basic health facilities funded by international NGOs. Her study seeks to explain why people are reluctant to utilise healthcare services and, from this, identify the obstacles they perceive to propose concrete solutions. According to her findings, religious convictions and the distance between the person’s residence and the health centre have a bearing on the utilisation of healthcare services. In addition, childbirth in a medical facility is mentioned as being preferred because of better post-natal care. In contrast, matrons are used for deliveries as a last resort due to anxieties related to travel or financial constraints. Finally, her study emphasises the importance of cooperation between humanitarians, health facilities, community health officials, and traditional healers to ensure the effective delivery of maternal and child healthcare services.

3. EPIDEMIC RISK FACTORS: PERCEPTION AND REPRESENTATION

The research funded by the Foundation considers the specific health needs and circumstances of populations in various settings. It analyses socio-cultural factors when carrying out actions designed to ensure people’s access to care, prevention and healthcare systems. As for risk factors of epidemics, understanding the obstacles that impede access to healthcare services is crucial for developing preventive measures more appropriate for local contexts.

Regarding maternal health and exposure to epidemics, malaria remains a significant public health problem in Mali, especially for pregnant women. The research of sociologist **Samba DIARRA** highlights the significance of people’s perceptions of malaria and prenatal care in Bamako, as well as the obstacles to healthcare and factors related to equipment and financial resources. Her paper emphasises the differences in attitudes among women according to their prior pregnancy history, age, family pressures (especially from husbands and mothers-in-law), country or ethnic origin, and the gender of healthcare providers. In conclusion, research findings suggest implementing participatory strategies for distributing malaria prevention within communities.

Alexandra RAZAFINDRABE, an economist affiliated with the Université de la Réunion, developed a relevant analysis of public policies related to the combat against the plague in Madagascar by considering people’s perceptions and personal experiences. She shows that awareness of the plague epidemic depends on socio-economic, cultural, and institutional circumstances. According to her survey, although well-informed of the appropriate measures against the plague, a population may not necessarily apply preventive measures in everyday routines. The researcher states that investing in education early on and further developing group communication rather than mass communication is essential.

Sociologist **Aude STURMA** studied the relationship between people’s exposure to social vulnerability and their perception of water contamination in Mayotte to build social and institutional response capacities to address the risk of an

epidemic caused by faecal contamination. Her research revolved around the social management of water in a specific municipality. She describes the people exposed to the health threats attributable to contaminated water and, in so doing, calls into question the relevance of public awareness campaigns and suggests the use of a more socio-cultural approach. She also examined health hazards and their link with poverty. In Mayotte, in 2013, over 50% of the population spent 10% of their budget on water. Aude STURMA also identifies the social factors defining water use, which must be considered when planning health prevention. Her study shows that health risks can be effectively mitigated by adopting hygiene practices, epidemiological surveillance, and awareness campaigns tailored to the socio-cultural context.



© Julien GOLDSTEIN - Agadez - Niger - November 2010

RESEARCHER FOCUS

A Health Historian in the Field

Anicet ZRAN is a Doctor in the History of Health and an academic teacher-researcher, affiliated with the research centre on the history of the peoples of the African savannahs at the History Department of the Université Alassane Ouattara in Bouaké, Côte d'Ivoire. As a historian specialising in infectious diseases, he devotes most of his research to his country's current health issues. His work incorporates documentary and field research with methodologies typically employed in other disciplines, such as sociology and anthropology. *"This approach is part of a historian's work, not limited solely to library books. Fernand BRAUDEL expresses it very well in his work, 'Écrits pour l'histoire': a historian must become an economist, a sociologist, an anthropologist, a geographer. Nowadays, these disciplines can no longer be separated. A historian requires methodological input from other social sciences to research his or her subject."*

Anicet ZRAN has adopted this view of the historian, which, far from being a mere theoretical construct, is a practical necessity due to the complex nature of his research topics, such as epidemics and their multidimensional effects. *"Epidemics are not only public health occurrences, but points of time that contest and challenge society. They lie at the heart of a society's existence. They relate to the economy, beliefs, and life-and-death representations. The health historian, in general, understands how society experiences and copes with an epidemic and how it confronts the various changes brought about by epidemics. It is therefore a matter of undertaking the history of what they represent, which necessarily calls upon anthropology, sociology, and other disciplines."*



Anicet ZRAN
Doctor in the History of Health

CRISIS FOCUS THE COVID-19 EPIDEMIC

The COVID-19 epidemic has posed many challenges for healthcare systems as they attempt to contain the disease by assuring the continuity and quality of medical healthcare services. According to the WHO, the pandemic has caused at least 15 million additional deaths since 2020. One of the numerous complications observed has been the mixed results of national vaccination campaigns. Furthermore, particularly vulnerable populations, such as migrants, refugees, displaced people, rural inhabitants, prisoners, the homeless, and undocumented individuals, have suffered from the severe consequences of unequal access to preventive care and health.¹¹

The French Red Cross Foundation has followed the guidelines of the WHO and the GloPID-R network in supporting research in the humanities and social sciences. This research has been undertaken to identify relevant, appropriate, and practical approaches for the physical health and psychosocial needs of those involved in the epidemic response. The Foundation actively presents novel perspectives on front-line volunteer action during health crises. It lends a listening ear to the members of the International Red Cross Movement who have been enlisted in the global fight against the spread of COVID-19. It has developed a programme to fund research in the social and human sciences during emergencies and to assist humanitarian and social actors in responding to this unprecedented crisis to benefit health caregivers and aid recipients.

As one of the ten research projects conducted during health crises, the team from the Maurice Halbwachs Centre examined the new forms of commitment and volunteerism of the “Red Cross at Home” programme. Within the shifting timeframes of the pandemic, the Centre has observed the consequences of lockdowns on the work of volunteers, as well as the exposure of beneficiaries and volunteers to health-related risks. This approach has been supplemented by the work of **Émilie MOSNIER**, physician and Doctor in Epidemiology, Public Health, and Clinical Research at the Université de la Guyane, in the context of French lockdowns (see “RESEARCHER FOCUS” below), and by **Annabelle JACCARD**, clinical psychologist, psychoanalyst, and Doctor in Psychopathology with Red Crescent volunteers in Comoros (see Volunteer action in a time of crisis). In Haiti, sociologist **Lukinson JEAN** has examined the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of volunteers and urban residents concerning COVID-19. He also notes the concerns of volunteers over their exposure to risks. The researcher emphasises the need to better inform volunteers about the reality of the epidemic, the virus, and its modes of transmission to ensure that actions taken are consistently and effectively applied¹². These actions include fighting against false claims, safeguarding the livelihood of individuals, promoting local endeavours, and providing key population groups with pertinent information. The operational findings from this research offer potential ideas on applicable management practices for current and future epidemics.

In addition, the French Red Cross Foundation has initiated contact with the Institut Pasteur (IP), particularly the Anthropology and Ecology of Emerging Diseases Unit, headed by Dr **Tamara GILES-VERNICK**. The purpose is to conduct joint research in Ile-de-France with care and social action support actors (SASA) from the French Red Cross. The main objective of this research has been to determine the factors that motivate individual volunteers and professional staff in Ile-de-France. This should facilitate the formulation of measures that will sustain their motivation and ensure the continuity of their engagement in a crisis context, especially when they are anxious and frustrated about not being permitted to conduct fieldwork if they are over 70 or at risk.

RESEARCHER FOCUS

The Value of Social Sciences in Combatting Epidemics

Émilie MOSNIER, a Doctor in Epidemiology, allocates her time between her activity as a physician specialised in infectious diseases at the Infectious and Tropical Diseases Unit of the Centre Hospitalier Andrée Rosemon de Cayenne in French Guiana and her public health research in the laboratory of the Sciences Economiques et Sociales de la Santé et Traitement de l'Information Médicale (SESSTIM) of the Aix-Marseille University. As a physician trained in the natural sciences, she has specialised in the anthropology of health throughout her career. She has demonstrated the value of social sciences in the study of epidemics. *“Ever since Ebola, the value of the social sciences in improving the crisis response to epidemics is beyond doubt. Changing people’s behaviour is only possible by examining their needs and what epidemics mean. However, as we have seen again with the Covid outbreak, people’s behaviour is the primary lever in the fight against epidemics. After the issue of individual preventive measures against COVID-19 will come the challenge of vaccination and the fight against false claims that fuel people’s mistrust. Epidemiology is a discipline that manipulates data and numbers. However, input from the social sciences is essential to truly understand the issues and unravel the complexity of people’s reactions. The social sciences have a stake in the Foundation’s Scientific Council, which was set up to steer France’s public health decisions. The next step would be to give more space to people’s feelings, listen more attentively to patients, and develop education in therapeutics so that people take responsibility for their health and the strategy being applied. The social sciences have a major role in achieving this goal.”*



Émilie MOSNIER
Doctor in Epidemiology and
Infectiology

ACTING MORE EFFECTIVELY

1. OVERCOMING OBSTACLES TO HEALTHCARE ACCESS

Multiple economic, political, and social factors deny people adequate access to care, guaranteeing their health rights. Research demonstrates the importance of having those affected by inequities and obstacles develop their autonomy through comprehensive and localised approaches.



© John ENGEDAL NISSEN - IFRC

In her work funded by the Foundation in 2022, sociologist **Christelle HOUNSOU**, who was provided funding in 2022, examined health needs and limited access to oral healthcare. This infrequently explored topic brings socio-economic issues, geographical inequalities, and strong social representations to light. The researcher investigates the renunciation of dental care in certain zones qualified as “dental medical deserts”. She points to the need for securing funding and resources to

combat discrimination toward people in exile and those in precarious situations. Her study underscores the importance of local input in promoting access to dental care and preventive health, which are fundamental social rights.

Understanding the obstacles to accessing healthcare can lead to designing new models for health and social interventions. In his research, **Thibault BESOZZI**, Doctor in Sociology, emphasises that this is particularly valid in implementing a participatory approach. He examines the advantages of socio-aesthetics in providing healthcare for the homeless. His study on psycho-corporal healing with aesthetic care reveals the significance of personalised support for people suffering from precarity and vulnerability. He demonstrates that recovery requires improving one’s positive self-image, which extends well beyond providing emergency aid.

According to his research on the homeless, “the struggle for everyday survival in prevailing conditions of discomfort and uncertainty pushes their health concerns to the background, inevitably exposing them to visible physical deterioration and a decline in their relationship with themselves”¹³. However, by considering their needs and wants and establishing relationships of recognition through care and listening, socio-aesthetics serve to therapeutically educate and medically pre-diagnose. This research therefore enables the generation of ideas on the access to physical and psychological care in situations of extreme precarity.

These thought-provoking ideas also reflect the work of **Chiara BROCCO**, Doctor in Anthropology, who explores the difficulties in receiving migrants and families. Having observed that some exiles refuse to be accepted by established institutions and prefer to follow their own unofficial path despite the potential hazards, the researcher seeks the motivations behind their decision. She shows that institutional pathways are rigid, lengthy, and uncertain, which can push exiles to bypass reception systems, even if it means struggling to survive.

By identifying the limitations of reception systems and the difficulties they represent for new arrivals, the researcher proposes “concrete action plans to improve the reception of migrants, to have them more actively integrated, to make their transition less problematic”¹⁴. She emphasises that each individual must be attentively cared for through processes that entail their participation. More concretely, she recommends the organisation of workshops, meetings, and focus groups led by social workers, volunteers, researchers, and even other migrants so that migrants can share their perspectives on their personal experiences and journeys. These are steps that make social support systems more inclusive and less vertical.



© Afghan Red Crescent

2. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Social science research investigates the necessity for enhanced integration and engagement of aid recipients to develop health models that safeguard their rights. This can be achieved by elucidating the various resources available to recipients and considering their views on health. Community participation calls for the active involvement of community members in decision-making, planning, implementation, and evaluation of initiatives, programmes, and policies that affect them.

Geographer **Daniel Valérie BASKA TOUSSIA** discusses “health resilience strategies” in his research on the difficulty refugees and displaced people have accessing healthcare services in and around Minawao Camp in Cameroon. The second part of his work examines the strategies designed at community level to care for the ill and provide for health prevention. It also describes how refugees and displaced people can compensate for deficiencies in health and social services.

The researcher observes that “the inadequate infrastructures and equipment for the healthcare of refugees have resulted in them coming together as a community to deal with certain illnesses”¹⁵. These stratagems underscore the inadequacies in providing them with access to healthcare. The researcher therefore suggests that communities upgrade their facilities to much better enable refugees to access health services.

Samba DIARRA also advocates using participatory strategies in her research on preventing malaria among pregnant women residing in the rural Mali commune of Safo. She demonstrates that the fundamental reason for the absence of follow-up in maternal and child healthcare is the subordinate status of women within the family and society and the lack of community commitment toward maternal care. In a context where health decisions are not individual choices, the researcher underlines the need for collaboration and health prevention at different community levels. Also, to improve the accessibility and acceptability of preventive care, health officials or community health officers must get involved.

Roseline GBOCHO N'DA, an anthropologist at Alassane Ouattara University in Côte d'Ivoire, examined the facilitation of access to healthcare. Her work in Côte d'Ivoire on “volunteerism as a socially acceptable activity in providing end-of-life support to children with cancer” emphasises the importance of relationships between volunteers, caregivers, and relatives of ailing children. Religious volunteers play a crucial role in caring for children with terminal cancer.



© Virginie TROIT

3. PREPARING AND PREVENTING

Health prevention is an essential component of public health. Its purpose is to prevent the transmission of diseases and reduce health threats for individuals and communities by anticipating and implementing proactive measures. In this regard, research has been conducted to explore the factors that hinder or promote the rationale behind prevention.

In her work on the fight against the plague in Madagascar, economist **Alexandra RAZAFINDRABE** recommends broader support and continuing collaboration between those involved in health prevention, health services, and education. In addition, she points to local customs that enable the development of a

preventive culture that notably includes healers or hiragasy—a popular artistic event traditionally combining music and theatre. This comprehensive approach recognises individual actions and collective interventions and pleads for greater coordination between those committed to prevention.

Edouard Kouadio KOUASSI, an agro-economist and rural development specialist, has researched the fight against malnutrition in Côte d'Ivoire. He presents the findings of programmes dedicated to malnutrition and sanitary conditions. He observes how people in the community he studied perceive the link between animal excrement and malnutrition and the impact of this perception on their health. He also suggests that strategies be implemented and adapted to the local context. This should encourage people to take total ownership of the programmes and make enduring behavioural changes. He recommends adapting support to the socio-ecological environment through long-term local projects. This viewpoint is consistent with the findings of the increasingly popular One Health approach.

Céleste FOURNIER, who holds a PhD in Administration, has also investigated the provision of support and health prevention through a study of a first-aid training course given to over 16 million people and conducted annually by the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Her study describes the transfer of knowledge that fosters a better link between learning and interventions:



Céleste FOURNIER
Doctor in Administration

*In first-aid training, you impart knowledge that people absorb, learn, and, hopefully, retain," she has observed. "The curriculum includes practice and role-playing. But, once the course is over, many trainees feel unprepared for handling a real-life emergency that requires them to administer first aid, or cope with distress or a cardiac arrest, for example."*¹⁶

Her research should help improve current teaching practices and spark ideas about training programmes. This includes incorporating identified hands-on experience to manage real-life scenarios. Her research has notably led to the development of methods for monitoring the effectiveness of large-scale first-aid training.

AND TOMORROW?



Interview with...

Khoudia SOW
Doctor in Medicine
and Anthropology

Khoudia SOW is a public health doctor with a PhD in socio-anthropology. She is a researcher affiliated with the Centre régional de recherche et de formation à la prise en charge clinique (CRCF) at the Centre hospitalier national de Fann in Dakar (Senegal) and has supported the development of innovative research in health programmes linked to the fight against emerging epidemics (HIV, then Ebola) and specific areas requiring major transformations (the fight against addiction) and in medical research practices (research ethics in the South). She uses her dual expertise in medicine and anthropology to develop participatory approaches that respect socio-cultural dimensions. She is the 2019 winner of a Foundation research prize.

What, in your opinion, are the merits and achievements of the social science approach to epidemics?

I believe the social sciences have drawn attention to the ineffectiveness of coercive strategies in public health and the need for humanised, more understanding, and more compassionate approaches.

The social sciences have allowed us to understand the constancy of human behaviour during epidemics, guided by anxiety-driven behaviour that triggers the stigmatisation, exclusion, or rejection of any person likely to transmit or be affected by the virus.

Research has also examined caregivers at risk during epidemics and

immediately suspected of being potentially dangerous carriers of the disease themselves. In contrast, others on the front lines wear minimal protective equipment but are socially and financially at risk. The social sciences have also shown the importance of community involvement in humanitarian initiatives that perform a wide range of actions that should be highly valued and receive more financing. The social sciences have also exposed the complex nature of having trust or mistrust in public health measures during epidemics in a context where social networks have become prominent platforms for spreading knowledge, whether scientific or not, that is accessible to a broad audience.

In your opinion, how will epidemics evolve, and what will researchers in social sciences be studying in the coming years?

I believe that epidemics will be more visible and that there will be a heightened awareness of the associated risks, particularly in the countries of the North that have discontinued monitoring them. With improved screening methods, epidemic diseases in Africa are expected to be detected much earlier.

Social sciences researchers must investigate numerous topics:

- Preparing for epidemics; understanding and investigating response mechanisms to epidemics; studying the history of past epidemics to avoid ignoring their impact and foregrounding the memory of past experiences and past actions undertaken against them.
- Explore the health system's response mechanisms to epidemics using an ethnographic approach in evaluating health institutions combating epidemics on behalf of national ministries of health and national and international organisations.
- National and international systems governing epidemics.
- Community dynamics.

How do you envision developments in access to healthcare globally over the next ten to twenty years, considering emerging trends and new phenomena in this field? Where is social science research in this field headed?

I believe that access to healthcare in most African countries should increase because healthcare services have significantly improved. However, in countries plagued by instability due to the ever-growing number of conflicts, access to healthcare services may be compromised. Providing greater financial assistance for access to healthcare is an essential factor to consider.

The social sciences must better define and investigate the strategies and mechanisms for implementing universal health coverage policies. Few studies in the social sciences have explored the pooling of resources and the cost-free delivery of care through public health insurance systems with community support. Colossal amounts of funding have been allocated to these without reaching any tangible results.



© Naomie NOLTÉ

REFERENCES

- ¹ TROIT Virginie, "Entre local et global, es organisations humanitaires face aux crises sanitaires mondiales", *L'Économie politique*, 2020/3 (N° 87), p. 80-90.
- ² Tracking Universal Health Coverage: 2021 Global Monitoring Report, World Health Organization & World Bank.
- ³ IFRC, Accessed at <https://www.ifrc.org/fr/notre-travail/sante-et-soins>
- ⁴ FASSIN, Didier, et al. *Les inégalités sociales de santé*. The Discovery, 2000, p.13.
- ⁵ FASSIN, Didier, *Quand les corps se souviennent. Expériences et politiques du sida en Afrique du Sud*. Discovery, "Recherche", 2006.
- ⁶ FASSIN, Didier, *Faire de la santé publique*. Presses de l'EHESP, "Hors collection", 2008.
- ⁷ WHO, Health and Human Rights, Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/fr/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/human-rights-and-health>
- ⁸ SERVY, Alice, "Medical evacuations in French Polynesia: understanding the mechanisms that constrain or facilitate access to care, based on the experience of patients with cancer", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n° 37, June 2022, p.19.
- ⁹ Edited by Nazneen Damji, "Promoting gender equality in sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health" UN Women 2019, based on United Nations, Report on Millenium Objectives for development. New York: United Nations (2015).
- ¹⁰ World Health Organization (2018). "Maternal mortality", Accessed at <https://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/maternal-mortality>
- ¹¹ Amnesty International rapport 2021/22. *La situation des droits humains dans le monde*, Londres, Amnesty International, p.17.
- ¹² French Red Cross Foundation, presentation by JEAN, Lukinson, consulted on "Connaissances, attitudes et pratiques des bénévoles et des populations urbaines face à la pandémie du nouveau Coronavirus. Le cas de l'Aire métropolitaine de Port-au-Prince" – Red Cross Foundation (fondation-croix-rouge.fr)
- ¹³ BESOZZI, Thibault, "Sans-abris : la socio-esthétique au secours de l'estime de soi", French Red Cross Foundation, *Pratiques & Humanités*, n° 25, March 2023, p.1
- ¹⁴ French Red Cross Foundation, presentation by BROCCO, Chirara, consulted on "Des lieux de vie informels au logement autonome. Difficulté des personnes et des familles migrantes dans le parcours de l'accueil : analyses et propositions de solutions" – French Red Cross Foundation (fondation-croix-rouge.fr)
- ¹⁵ BASKA TOUSSIA Daniel Valérie "Minawao: a space for the care and health resilience of Nigerian refugees in Mayo-Tsanaga (Far North, Cameroon)", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, 2023
- ¹⁶ French Red Cross Foundation, interview with Céleste FOURNIER, available at "Pour porter secours, il faut se sentir légitime, en capacité d'agir et en confiance" – French Red Cross Foundation (fondation-croix-rouge.fr)

References sourced from the French Red Cross Foundation

LIST OF THE FOUNDATION'S RESEARCH PAPERS

- ANDRIANANTOANDRO Voahirana Tantely**, "Recours aux soins des femmes enceintes et des enfants de moins de 5 ans dans les zones fortement soumises aux aléas climatiques", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°22, April 2019.
- BASKA TOUSSIA Daniel Valérie**, "Minawao : un espace de prise en charge et de résilience sanitaire des réfugiés nigériens dans le Mayo-Tsanaga (Extrême-Nord, Cameroun)", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°55, June 2023.
- DIARRA Aïssa**, "Des solutions endogènes pour soutenir les interventions visant à améliorer la santé sexuelle et reproductive féminine au Sahel", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°52, April 2023.
- DIARRA Samba**, "Vers des stratégies participatives de prévention du paludisme chez les femmes enceintes dans la commune rurale de Safo au Mali", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°38, September 2022.
- GARDES Cyrine**, "Travailler à l'extérieur en contexte de pandémie : paroles d'essentielle-s", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°48, December 2022.
- JEAN Lukinson**, "Appropriation et usages d'une entité technologique en contexte humanitaire : le cas de l'application mobile "Premiers secours", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°51, December 2022.
- KOUADIO Kouassi Edouard**, "L'ATPC dans le Bounkani (Côte d'Ivoire) : la difficile appropriation par les acteurs locaux", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°24, July 2019.
- LEMOUOGUE Joséphine**, "Panorama de quelques déterminants géographiques de la santé et de l'accès aux soins dans les sites de Ngam et Gado-Badzéré", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°33, March 2020.
- MOSNIER Émilie and NEVISSAS Olivia**, "Expériences, perceptions et ressources face à l'épidémie de COVID-19 chez les bénévoles de la Croix-Rouge française", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°49, December 2022.
- RAZAFINDRABE Alexandra**, "L'influence des contextes socio-économique, environnemental, institutionnel et culturel dans la lutte contre la peste à Madagascar", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°31, February 2020.
- RAZAKAMANANA Marilys Victoire**, "Analyse socio-économique du recours aux soins communautaires à Madagascar", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°28, February 2020.
- SERVY Alice**, "Les évacuations sanitaires en Polynésie française : comprendre les mécanismes qui contraignent ou facilitent l'accès aux soins, à partir de l'expérience de patients atteints de cancer", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°37, June 2022.
- STURMA Aude**, "Vivre avec le risque à Mayotte : une étude de la vulnérabilité sociale au risque de pollution de l'eau dans un quartier précaire de l'île", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°40, September 2022.

3

Risks & Disasters



KEY FIGURES

13

funded research projects

9

geographical areas



Preventing and responding to disasters is a crucial component of the humanitarian mission of the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, particularly in light of climate change. When reformulating action and response strategies for those impacted by natural disasters, it is essential to recognise that such disasters are social and political phenomena.

HUMANITARIAN ISSUES

Individuals and communities can be devastated by natural disasters. The frequency, complexity, and severity of their consequences will likely worsen due to climate change, migrations, armed conflicts, rapid and unrestrained urbanisation, technological hazards, and public health emergencies. The contexts surrounding these occurrences are becoming increasingly complex, as countries struck by natural disasters may be simultaneously plagued by armed conflict or large-scale migrations¹.

According to the 2022 World Disasters Report², natural disasters are occurring more frequently, mainly because of climate change and extreme weather events, as indicated by an analysis that highlighted the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on many countries already exposed to cyclones, floods, droughts, and heat waves. These are not sporadic occurrences, and communities are becoming increasingly vulnerable as they reappear locally. Consequently, natural disasters and armed conflicts can mutually reinforce one another, mainly because countries already grappling with instability, armed conflict, and violence are often more vulnerable to disasters due to ineffective government action. In addition, the risks of disaster can be worsened by existing tensions, increasing the likelihood of violence³.

Beyond the pure sciences that explain climate-related and meteorological events, humanities and social sciences play a fundamental role in improving our understanding of disaster management and fostering community resilience. In fact, “a climate-related or geological event only becomes a disaster when people are situated in its trajectory and experience its consequences”⁴. While disasters are essentially the outcome of societal vulnerabilities, only technical means can provide relief.

Sociologists have analysed the effects of disasters on social cohesion and individual mental health to understand better and respond to these events. Anthropologists have shed light on the belief systems and cultural practices that shape individuals’ perceptions of risk exposure and subsequent responses to natural disasters. With this in mind, the Foundation has consistently supported

researchers in the humanities and social sciences to offer fresh viewpoints, open the doors for effective action, and spark debate on public policies and the significance of comprehending specific local contexts.

Which actions should be taken to help the residents of Reunion Island better cope with the impact of cyclones? What kind of actions should these be?

What humanitarian flood relief in Niger can help people break free from the cycle of poverty?

How do urban heat islands impact people's health in Côte d'Ivoire?

How do Syrian refugees and the Lebanese host population perceive flood risks?

What do the multitudes of unseen, underprivileged, and neglected people left on the wayside in the aftermath of natural disasters have to tell us?

TOWARDS A BETTER UNDERSTANDING

1. THE SOCIO-POLITICAL DIMENSIONS OF NATURAL DISASTERS

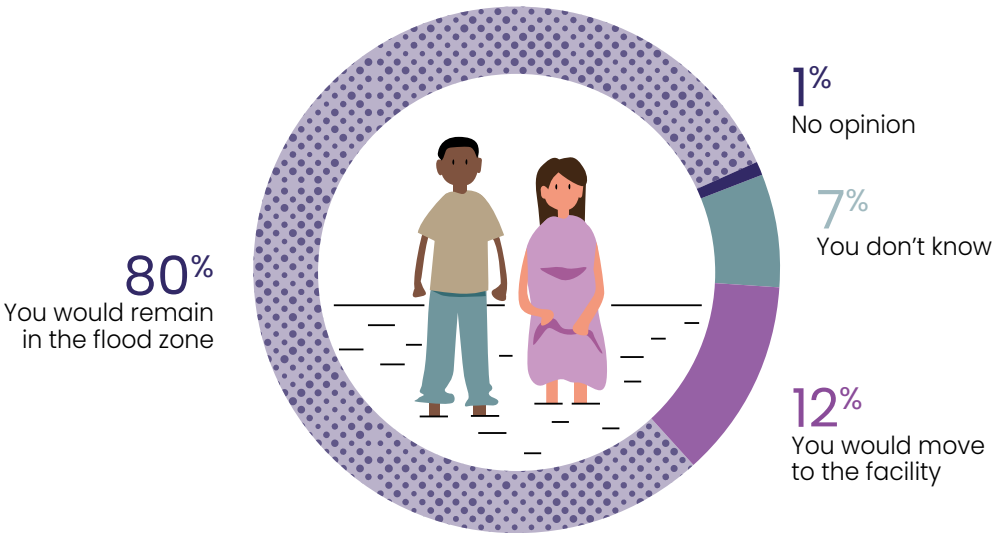
The impact of climate change on our civilisation has become a tangible reality and a global threat. In recent decades, the frequency of natural disasters – cyclones, heat waves, excessive rainfall – has increased. But these natural phenomena are, above all, social processes as well.

To enhance the resilience of communities in the face of disasters, it is imperative to possess a comprehensive understanding of the socio-cultural attributes of the geographical areas in question. From this perspective, in 2021, geographer **Adam ABDOU ALOU** conducted his research in Niger. In this country, floods are

the second-most destructive form of natural disaster after droughts. In Niamey, floodwaters have inundated mainly the fifth arrondissement of the district on the right bank of the Niger River. The researcher's investigation, conducted via interviews and field surveys, has demonstrated that floods, in conjunction with other elements of vulnerability within the population, contribute to entrapping or maintaining people within a cycle of poverty.

His study also focuses on supportive actions public authorities and humanitarian actors have taken since 2012. It underscores the notion that responses not predicated on local knowledge or the community's real needs will not enable people to break free from the vicious cycle of poverty or develop their capacity for greater resilience. His research delves even deeper by pointing to the social risks generated by humanitarian aid, which can make communities socially and economically more vulnerable, particularly relocation programmes aimed at moving people to more secure areas.

“ If the government offered to relocate you to a secure and well-equipped facility with NGO assistance



Results sourced from data gathered by researcher Adam ABDOU ALOU

“



Adam ABDOU ALOU
Doctor in Geography

When the authorities took us to the Sêno site, there was no water, electricity, or schools for our children. They would sell us a 25-litre water container for 125 FCFA (€0.19) and a barrel for 1,000 (€1.53). However, in other city districts, the same 25 litres of water cost 25 FCFA (€0.038), and the same barrel costs 200 FCFA (€0.31). This situation obliged most of us to return to the flood zone even though each family has a 200-square-metre plot at this site”⁶

Statement gathered from interviews by researcher Adam ABDOU ALOU

In 2020, on the other side of the world, **Annabelle MOATTY** examined reconstruction on the island of Saint-Martin following the passage of Hurricane Irma in 2017. Her work explores the imperatives of the “build back better” movement that has taken hold in recent decades. It envisages periods of post-disaster reconstruction as “windows of opportunity” for strengthening societies’ resilience and ability to adapt. Her work questions the “ethical and preventive” aspect of reconstruction, analyses the island’s vulnerabilities and studies the mechanisms of spontaneous solidarity, including from the viewpoint of teenagers.

“



Annabelle MOATTY
Doctor in Geography and Land Use Planning

Following a disaster, it is possible to analyse the factors that lead to the closure of the “window of opportunity” for reconstruction or the actions that can be undertaken to reopen it. The idea is to understand how solidarity mechanisms generate greater resilience, such as the capacity to cope with a disaster, to recover and regroup.”⁶

Statement gathered from an interview by researcher Annabelle MOATTY

According to her research, the aggregation of structural, organisational, and socio-economic vulnerabilities can eventually amplify the impacts of climate-related events. It also indicates that the potential for reconstruction may be limited and that ensuing underlying conflicts stemming from disparities in regional economic development can resurface. The island is currently encountering strong social tension. At the same time, Annabelle MOATTY highlights the spontaneous expressions of solidarity exhibited by many teenagers. Her work calls for developing educational and cooperative programmes with pre-existing non-profit structures so that young people’s social ties and words of solidarity can be better channelled and given greater recognition in the context of risk exposure and disaster management.

Geographer **Maimouna YMBA** explored the socio-political dimension of disasters in her 2022 study on the impact of urban heat islands (UHI) on public health in Côte d’Ivoire. In her epidemiological survey of a sample of 1,066 people in Abidjan, she identified the neighbourhoods most exposed to the risk of this threat and the socio-sanitary impact of UHIs on residents. According to her research, there is a correlation between the high density of buildings, the dangers caused by UHIs, and the health of residents who suffer from severe migraines, extreme fatigue, dry cough, vertigo, loss of consciousness, and chest pain. Maimouna YMBA suggests how residents can become more resilient to urban life by greening spaces, developing early warning systems and applying construction standards. She concludes that managing household waste and improving wastewater treatment must become a priority when discussing operational matters.

The environmental and systemic dimensions of disasters were also explored in 2019 by geographer **Djiby SAMBOU** through his study on the socio-ecological resilience of vulnerable communities in the Senegal River delta. His research points to the inadequate capacity of public authorities and communities to forecast disasters, issue alerts, prepare responses, and provide relief. Moreover, by probing into the concept of socio-ecological resilience, he argues for a systemic approach that can minimise a community’s exposure to hazards and, at the same time, offer support for people to adjust to climate change and foster sustainable environmental practices over the medium and long term.

Beyond Theory: “Resilience” at the Core of Humanitarian Action

The concept of resilience has generated growing enthusiasm within the humanitarian sector over the past decade. Resilience is defined as the capacity for a system, a community, or a society exposed to hazards to resist, mitigate, alleviate, and overcome the impact of a threat in a timely and effective manner, notably by maintaining and rebuilding its essential structures and functions⁷. Similarly, in its report on resilience, the French Red Cross defines this concept as “the capacity of an individual, an organisation, or a society to withstand and cope with adversities and disturbances and to progress in relation to them”⁸. Resilience is a function of a system’s vulnerability and adaptability (Dalziell and McManus 2004).

This notion also possesses the noteworthy advantage of integrating the temporal dimension of emergency relief and development with the idea of recovery and transformation. The integration of the concept of resilience into the policies and strategic plans of various stakeholders is facilitated by this interconnection. However, there exists a constraint in attempting to assess resilience. Resilience of what? Resilience for whom?

Empirical research therefore needs to be carried out to grasp the complexity of disaster governance better and understand the economic, social, political, and cultural factors that contribute to the vulnerability and the resilience of communities.



© MOATTY - 2017

2. PERCEPTIONS, CONCEPTS AND MEMORIES OF DISASTERS

To effectively mitigate the effects of disasters, the efforts of public authorities and civil society must be based not only on a thorough risk analysis but also on how communities perceive and conceive of risk and their capacity to attain and/or restore balance.

In 2023, with this objective in mind, geographer **Modou NDIAYE** explored how climate migrants and the population of the Langue de Barbarie in the Saint-Louis region of Senegal perceive health hazards and adapt to climate change. His research indicates that climate change will have a detrimental impact on their health. Today, several diseases whose prevalence is decreasing are resurfacing and persisting, such as malaria, asthma, diarrheal disorders, acute malnutrition caused by inadequate rainfall, rheumatism, etc. His research further reveals that local inhabitants know the river’s dynamics and the role of wetlands, lakes, and lagoons in wildlife conservation and attracting tourists. However, the Langue de Barbarie has been viewed strictly from an economic perspective, where local people give the systemic interface dynamics between land and water little value.

This researcher also recalls that communities have developed multiple adaptation strategies to survive climate-related hazards, such as socio-professional reorientation and domestic migration, as frequently chosen options. This is an unsettling new humanitarian trend both for these climate migrants and for their families left behind.



Modou NDIAYE
Doctor in Geography

You can see that there are no healthcare facilities in the village, and it’s only recently that we’ve been connected to running water and electricity that we’ve had to pay for ourselves (...). Our place of worship is right where we’re talking, and as you can see, it’s just a makeshift shack.”⁹

Statement gathered from an interview by Modou NDIAYE

Similarly, in 2021, the geologist **Yves MAZABRAUD** studied people's conceptions of risk exposure in the face of crises and gathered their recollections of natural disasters in the Lesser Antilles. A wide range of natural hazards threaten these regions, such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and landslides, droughts, floods, rising sea levels, storms, and hurricanes. This researcher devised a model for his study to identify the optimal educational resources for individuals. According to the study's findings, preventive actions should consider people's perceptions, which may vary according to age and gender. In addition, it is noted that the accounts of past disasters and climatic events have been inadequately transmitted from one generation to the next, thus making it challenging to raise awareness among younger individuals. Moreover, the researcher observes that people in the Lesser Antilles refrain from acknowledging the potential occurrence of cascading climate-related risks.

The perception of climate risks (in a physical sense) and their conceptualisation (in terms of a more abstract relationship with the world) are influenced by the memory formation process. **Francisca ESPINOZA**, a psychologist and sociologist, defines disaster memory as a set of representations of a prior catastrophic event. It consists of memories and fragments of memories of experiences that have been lived through, then transmitted, individually or collectively, as part of an ongoing process of reconstructing the past. This memory contains information on the effects of climate disasters and the means for preventing or mitigating their future impact. The potential actions that memory can bring about depend on whether the memory is passive, active, or traumatic.

“In contrast to external models, the memory of natural disasters has the advantage of contextualising resilience through knowledge of past climate-related events that have afflicted the area. Through this process, the memory process facilitates the coming together of experts and locals, and this mutual recognition serves as the foundation for the co-construction of site-specific resilience.”¹⁰

Researcher Francisca ESPINOZA

The results of her research on the impact of cyclones on the island of Reunion in 2019 have improved our understanding of the complexity of disaster memory: its short-term capacity, its methodology, and, most importantly, the need for it to be maintained so that it can effectively carry out its task of ensuring disaster prevention and proactive resilience.

RESEARCHER FOCUS

Active Memory that Impacts the Present

When managing the effects of a natural disaster, its psychological dimension is sometimes overlooked. The risk is that those who have gone through the harrowing experience of a disaster are burdened with enduring and distressing aftereffects. However, if the memory of these traumatic events is preserved, it can ultimately help develop genuine collective resilience.

One convinced proponent of this view is Francisca ESPINOZA, Doctor in Sociology and member of the Institute for the History and Memory of Disasters (IHMEC). She has succeeded in proving her point through different case examples, such as the transmission of the history of Augusto Pinochet's regime in Chile by individuals who were children during his dictatorship or of the recollection of "natural" disasters by the residents of the island of Reunion.

Sharing past traumatic experiences leads to imparting knowledge stored in each individual's memory that can be used to develop resilience and serve as a lever for anticipating and preparing for future catastrophes. However, to evoke active memory that may impact the present requires it to be kept alive, brought up to date, and activated. Francisca ESPINOZA emphasises the role of artists, stating that **"it is essential that what supports the retention of memory must be expressed through creative and innovative forms that relate to a population, and that precisely affects its sensitivity through art and culture."**



Francisca ESPINOZA
Doctor in Sociology

ACTING MORE EFFECTIVELY

1. INTERSECTING CLIMATE VULNERABILITIES: INSECURITY, POLLUTION, AND CHAIN DISASTERS

When climatic hazards afflict regions already impacted by multiple vulnerability factors, they produce chain disasters triggered by a combination of other disasters. Studying these phenomena is essential for humanitarian and social action professionals who can better prepare for and respond to crisis-related vulnerability factors.

In relation to this, in 2023, geographer **Cassandre REY-THIBAUT** directed a research project that carried out a state-of-the-art and a documentary analysis to determine whether integrated disaster management is currently used or can be used to manage epidemics and pandemics. This in-depth investigation mainly dealt with the feasibility of aligning or combining systems, practices, and concrete management experiences with each other.

Similarly, in 2022, the Foundation funded the research project led by geographer **Cheikh FAYE** on the flood resilience of the population of Ziguinchor, Senegal. This urban area, currently experiencing a population boom, is exposed to extreme hydrological events and unpredictable climate fluctuations. The aggregation of climate-related threats has consequently led to diverse social tensions. This study examines how communities react to recurrent flooding by describing their vulnerabilities and capacity for resilience. As the frequency and severity of natural disasters continue to rise, people will have less time to recover between two events, and should several disasters occur concurrently, a cumulative effect will ensue. Furthermore, the author observes numerous social tensions arising in relation to the availability of natural resources in these regions, as well as a growing sense of uncertainty among households for their future.

Finally, according to research conducted by **Dima EL KHOURY** in 2022 on the perception of risks and social cohesiveness in Lebanon among Syrian refugees and local communities, for both populations, insecurity and pollution are vital concerns that rank ahead of flooding. Insecurity and pollution may exacerbate public health and prevention issues because “communities, unaware of the significance of river conservation, fail to address waste management”.

Her research findings reinforce the idea that disasters are not only the result of natural causes but also of the socio-economic environment in which they occur. A community's greater vulnerability to disasters can be ascribed to various social factors, such as population growth, the composition and distribution of the population, social diversity, etc. This study reminds us that the social and economic fabric of communities in high-risk areas must be considered when attempting to develop a population's capacity for resilience and preparedness in the face of natural disasters. Communities and individuals, especially those most exposed to risk, must be the focus of this comprehensive approach to risk reduction.

2. LOCAL OR INTERNATIONAL, PRIVATE OR PUBLIC SECTORS: WHO ARE RESPONSE ACTORS?

Climate-related disasters present complex, multi-dimensional challenges with no unique or definitive solution. A holistic approach must involve all people and institutions concerned to resolve this.

From this perspective, in 2018, anthropologist **Georges DJOHY** investigated the dynamics of humanitarian aid in the flooded regions of the far north of Benin. His study questions the extent to which the actions of the Beninese government and its partners – development agencies and NGOs – have been limited in providing help to communities threatened by flooding in the agroecological areas of this region. Because despite the deployment of numerous projects and resources, the situation has deteriorated to the point where a growing section of the local population has become marginalised and impoverished.

This research questions whether the localisation of humanitarian aid is pertinent when evaluating the legitimacy of the actors involved. Taking the case of two towns regularly impacted by flooding, this investigator illustrates the extent to which humanitarian aid is structured around decentralised local municipalities, humanitarian NGOs, and beneficiaries.



Aid is viewed here as a resource for afflicted communities to develop resilience, which can also be diverted and channelled towards those in power. In the context of humanitarian transition and following the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit commitments, the author highlights the consequences of blindly localising aid provision, especially whenever “the village’s new powers to be” in rural Benin step in to have their say.

By examining the perceptions of aid recipients impacted by flooding, the author aims to elucidate how certain aid situations can lead to arrangements that give providers greater flexibility in reallocating aid. From the beneficiaries’ point of view, local municipalities are seen as political and partisan entities that cannot safeguard values and freedom of action like “humanitarian professionals” do.

Finally, this research highlights that victims are not necessarily receptive to a definitive resolution of their flooding problems because it would lead to discontinuing aid distribution. Consequently, this leads to acknowledging the significance of coupling emergency interventions with long-term development projects.

RESEARCHER FOCUS

A Pioneer “Agropologist”

Georges DJOHY satisfied his desire to pursue his professional training soon after his agricultural engineering studies ended by turning to his primary interest, the human and social sciences. ***“I first specialised in sociology and rural economics before becoming excited about anthropology, its purpose, approaches, and methods. I had the opportunity to work on a thesis at the Institute of Anthropology, Social and Cultural Studies at the University of Göttingen in Germany.”***

Today, Georges DJOHY advocates the benefits of “stepping beyond the compartmentalisation of disciplines to move forward”. First, from a scientific point of view, to “better understand how climate risks are dealt with in rural areas, where agriculture and livestock farming are the main socio-economic activities, and where climate-related hazards and unpredictable events – floods, droughts, strong winds, fires, etc. – may tend to converge. But also, from the point of view of humanitarian action, “I want to be both an agronomist and an anthropologist,” he says, “to give a human, social dimension to my research on the practices of humanitarian aid and the perception of beneficiaries”. “If this defines me as an “agropologist” or an “anthroponomist”, so be it.”



Georges DJOHY
Doctor in Anthropology

In 2017, **Christiane RAFIDINARIVO**, a political scientist, was interested in studying another local player, the State, this time through a research project of the National Office for Risk and Disaster Management in Madagascar. The results of her research highlight that families, communities, and local organisations are not only the first to respond, but they also play a vital role in adapting to increasing exposure to risks. Understanding local leaders and integrating community perspectives into local and national planning processes, especially those of groups most vulnerable to climate risks, is critical. The acquisition of local knowledge is crucial, but it should not eclipse a more global thought process on the localisation of aid in the context of a worldwide crisis, such as the climate crisis, whose extreme weather patterns are afflicting regions ever more devastatingly than before.

Pursuing the same objective of studying new ways of “doing” humanitarian work, in 2018, **Mariama NOUHOU KOUTCHA** studied an innovative system implemented in West Africa to safeguard communities against climatic hazards. Focusing on the consequences of recurrent droughts in Niger, she reports that, according to the literature, climate risk insurance is the climate management tool that has been the most studied. According to her results, the most significant determinant of emergency aid for farmers is quantitative: amounts of money and quantities of grain. More surprisingly, the speed at which aid is delivered is also a valued factor because however modest a sum of money or food, it is offset by the distribution rate. Furthermore, farmers also seem to prefer international organisations (international NGOs and UN agencies) to the State and national NGOs.

Mariama NOUHOU KOUTCHA’s work also reveals other realities: most of the questioned farmers favour climate risk insurance to protect themselves from drought. They are more sensitive to climate-related hazards as this risk grows, and the higher their level of education, the more likely they are to perceive this risk. However, climate insurance is too costly, as they cannot afford the market rate. Her study also explores the option of allocating targeted humanitarian assistance to help them afford this insurance.

AND TOMORROW?



Interview with...

Sandrine REVET
Doctor in Anthropology

Sandrine REVET was awarded a doctorate in Anthropology at the Institut des Hautes Etudes de l’Amérique Latine. She received a research prize from the Red Cross Foundation in 2019 and is currently a member of its scientific council. She specialises in examining the actors and the social/political dynamics involved in the “natural” disaster process.

How does disaster anthropology differ from other approaches to the study of disasters?

Anthropology has historically called into question the very qualification of what constitutes a disaster. Anthropologists have been interested in how societies qualify certain events as disasters without limiting themselves to purely quantitative criteria, such as the number of victims or the measurable extent of damage. In this way, they have made it possible to move away from purely quantified assessments and consider beneficiaries’ and social groups’ diverse perceptions and interpretations of the events. Anthropology also helps broaden the spectrum of research by including not only the local population and local actors but also the diverse range of humanitarians, the media, businesses, political activists, etc.

How does the anthropology of disasters use cultural perspectives to understand community responses to disasters?

Some anthropologists use a culturalist reading to understand people and communities' responses in the face of disasters. However, this "risk culture" approach must not ignore political, economic, and social issues. It is important not to reduce community responses to their culture, as this may mask problems of choice or non-choice, inequities, or even resources. The State's role is crucial in understanding societies' response to disasters. Available resources and societal organisation have a significant impact on community responses.

It is essential to understand that people can draw on their cultural resources to give meaning to what they are going through while implementing measures that minimise exposure to future risk. For example, one can fully explain a disaster as being the instrument of divine punishment, yet at the same time, take preventive action, build protective infrastructure, or participate in preparedness exercises. This is precisely what anthropologists work on to pinpoint the complexity of local situations.

In your opinion, what are the significant challenges and issues to be addressed by social science researchers to come up with answers in the coming years?

Social scientists, like everyone else, face significant challenges. First, it is essential to look at the materiality of events, particularly with regard to disasters. The social sciences have tended to consider these events only as social phenomena. Still, it is crucial to understand how these phenomena's materiality influences aid providers and people's perceptions.

A disaster's materiality refers to how catastrophic events, such as a natural or technological disaster, have a tangible impact on people, communities, and physical environments. This includes material loss, damage to infrastructure, destruction of natural habitats and changes in environmental conditions. In the face of their challenges, researchers in disaster anthropology can draw inspiration from the current position taken by particular social

sciences by being mindful of this materiality. Considering how water behaves during a flood or lava spreads during a volcanic eruption is essential to understand what is happening on the ground.



© Dominica Red Cross – IFRC

REFERENCES

¹ International Institute of Social Studies, *When disaster meets conflict*, Research project 2015–2020. Retrieved from <https://www.iss.nl/en/research/research-projects/when-disaster-meets-conflict>

² FICR, *World Disasters Report*, 2022 <https://www.ifrc.org/document/world-disasters-report-2022>

³ World Bank, “Disaster Risk Management”, Understanding Poverty. 2023. <https://www.banquemondiale.org/fr/topic/disasterriskmanagement/overview>

⁴ REVET, Sandrine “Resilience should not be used to exonerate public action from its responsibilities”. Interview with the French Red Cross Foundation. December 2021. [<https://www.fondation-croix-rouge.fr/%E2%80%89la-resilience-ne-doit-pas-servir-a-exonerer-l'action-publique-de-ses-responsabilites%E2%80%89/>]

⁵ ABDOU ALOU, Adam, “S’appuyer sur les caractéristiques socioculturelles pour éviter les pièges à pauvreté et renforcer la résilience de la population de la ville de Niamey aux inondations”. Final report. French Red Cross Foundation. 2021, p.21.

⁶ MOATTY, Annabelle, “Reconstruction as an opportunity? Vulnerability and solidarity after Hurricane Irma in Saint-Martin (French West Indies)”. *Paroles de chercheurs* - 2022. French Red Cross Foundation. 2022.

⁷ United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), Terminology for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2009

⁸ French Red Cross and CREDOC, Annual Resilience Report, 2023.

⁹ NDIAYE, Modou “*Perception du risque sanitaire et adaptation au changement climatique des populations de la Langue de Barbarie (Saint-Louis du Sénégal)*”. *Les Papiers de la Fondation*. Currently being published. 2023, p.19

¹⁰ ESPINOZA, Francisca “*La mémoire des catastrophes, un levier pour la résilience collective ? Perspectives psychosociales de la résilience à la Réunion*”. *Paroles de chercheurs* - 2022. French Red Cross Foundation. 2022.

■ References supplied by the French Red Cross Foundation

LIST OF THE FOUNDATION’S RESEARCH PAPERS

DJOHY Georges, “*Transition humanitaire et localisation de l’aide au Bénin : enjeux des perceptions et pratiques des bénéficiaires*”, French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°23, April 2019.

ESPINOZA Francisca, “*La mémoire de catastrophes un levier pour la résilience collective ? Perspectives psychosociales de la résilience à La Réunion*”, French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°45, December 2022.

NOUHO KOUTCHA Mariama, “*Évaluation par les populations des dispositifs de gestion des risques climatiques : le cas de la sécheresse au Niger*”, French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°26, September 2019.

MOATTY Annabelle, “*La reconstruction comme opportunité ? Vulnérabilités et solidarités après le cyclone Irma à Saint-Martin (Antilles françaises)*”, French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°44, December 2022.

RAFIDINARIVO Christiane, RALAMBOSON Hantsa and RANAIVOARIVELO Marie-Donna, “*Transition politique et transition humanitaire : analyse politique comparée de la transition financière*”, French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°10, February 2017.

SAMBOU Djiby, FALL Aïdara Chérif Amadou Lamine, MBAYE Mamadou Lamine and DIALLO Mamadou Aguibou, “*Résilience socio-écologique des communautés vulnérables du delta du fleuve Sénégal face aux changements climatiques*”, French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°29, February 2020.

YMBA Maïmouna, “*Analyse des effets des îlots de chaleur urbains sur la santé des populations de la ville d’Abidjan (Côte d’Ivoire)*”, French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°46, December 2022.

4

Migrations & Displacements



KEY FIGURES

19

funded research projects

6

countries



Migrations and displacements within and between States pose a formidable humanitarian challenge that mobilises numerous solidarity organisations and ad hoc initiatives. The routes taken by exiles and their circumstances have become more complex in recent years due to stricter migration policies and have exposed exiles to a greater range of vulnerabilities. The social sciences are dedicated to better understanding and documenting the experiences of exiles and public and private responses to them.

THE ROUTES OF EXILES: A HUMANITARIAN ISSUE

The media is replete with reports and images covering migration. In recent years, numerous “migration crises” have dominated the news, sometimes fuelling negative perceptions of mass displacements. Situations compelling people to exile occur more frequently in Europe, as evidenced by the 2015 “reception crisis” in sub-Saharan Africa and, more recently, in Ukraine and its bordering countries.

Since the 2000s, around 3% of the world’s population are international migrants, living in a country where they were not born¹. The IDMC (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre) estimates 103 million people were forcibly displaced in 2022, including 60 million within their own country². They have all fled their homes to escape conflict, violence, human rights violations, persecution, or natural disasters.

Migrations and population shifts pose some of our most pressing humanitarian challenges. In response to them, the International Movement of the Red Cross and Red Crescent is mobilised at every moment, striving to prevent suffering and helping people cope with exposure to migration risks. With its network of 191 National Societies, the Movement provides humanitarian aid to millions of migrants, whether in their home country, in transit, or in their destination country.

“Immigrant”, “foreigner”, “refugee”, and “migrant” are among the many terms commonly employed to categorise those who have relocated. “Exile” is the term many researchers use to distance themselves from institutional or legal categories and their associated representations. Addressing the subject of “exile” makes it possible to explore the subjective dimension of those who have left their homeland since the term expresses the experience of being uprooted, of departing from a familiar environment. Migratory routes are many and occur across varying periods and in various forms depending on the context.

In contrast to some discourse that tends to obscure the truth, stigmatise exiles and stifle their voices, the human and social sciences strive to offer insight and conduct analyses from conclusive data. Since 2014, the primary thrust behind the

French Red Cross Foundation's funding for research has been to seek a better understanding of the survival techniques and life trajectories of exiles. The results should lead to more effective action on their behalf. The interaction of sociologists, geographers, and political scientists can help grasp the multifaceted dimensions of the migration phenomenon.

How do asylum procedures and systems for the reception (or non-reception) of migrants generate gender-based forms of violence?

What are the perceptions held by refugees in camps in Rwanda toward the various organisations operating in camps and their practices?

How does dependency affect food relief, and what role does food play in a migratory situation?

How do issues relative to security and insecurity modify and influence the conceptualisation of humanitarian aid by refugees?

What are the underlying justifications, practices, and ethical considerations of those actively engaged in humanitarian action with exiles living in camps?

How have immigrants integrated into the social and solidarity economy, and how have they become "alternative citizens"?

To what extent does transitioning from a camp to an urban setting give rise to new forms of solidarity, and what are their limitations?

TOWARDS A BETTER UNDERSTANDING

1. SURVIVAL TRAJECTORIES

The conditions for receiving migrants are becoming more stringent in many geographical regions, and the journeys undertaken by exiles are often strewn with violence. Humanitarian actors attempt to fulfil their basic needs despite the obstacles and migration policies that are sometimes restrictive or exclusionary.

Numerous researchers supported by the Foundation have queried displaced persons and humanitarian workers to learn more about exiles' life trajectories and survival strategies. Anthropologist **Estelle FOURAT**, in Paris, has accompanied food relief organisations to understand better the exiles' conditions for survival and access to food. **Joséphine LEMOUOGUE**, in Cameroon, has attested to the significant impact of material poverty on the health of Central African refugees. Geographer **Nicole TABET** in the Lebanese municipality of Bar Elias has reported on the living conditions of Syrian exiles who have remained in Lebanon for over a decade due to war and political unrest in their homeland.

The context in which the host country receives exiles often exacerbates their vulnerabilities. Precarity, marginalisation, instability, and difficulty in guaranteeing their security increase the likelihood of being physically or mentally harmed. During her investigations in Calais, **Marjorie GERBIER-AUBLANC** met many people who settled in makeshift camps while waiting to pursue their migratory journey. They persisted in remaining in these places even though the camps had already been demolished or dismantled and cut off from all resources.

“**M**y stomach is gnawing. Leaving “la Jungle” will be good because I will learn proper French. I’m going to a city for vocational training. I am happy. Today, I’m packing my suitcase to go to a city. I’m sad to be leaving my friends behind and not knowing exactly where I’m heading. I regret leaving “la Jungle”, my friends, my teachers.”

Comments gathered by Marjorie GERBIER-AUBLANC in response to the question, “How do you feel?” during a course given by volunteers in Calais³

Documenting the “Migrant Condition”

The “Migrant Condition”⁴ refers to the conditions of an exile’s journey. People embarking on such a journey can be plunged into a situation in which their living, social, financial, and political conditions are transformed into matters of survival. Put in a position where they must endure waiting times, precarity, and uncertainty regarding their options and future, exiles experience the “Migrant Condition” contingent on their reception and the humanitarian and social policies in effect during their journey in very different ways.

“In 2012, I was registered as a refugee at the border, and once I arrived in town, I was taken to the stadium where there were already several refugees. I found my aunt there. We spent eight months in the stadium, and the UNHCR and Social Action took us in. They gave us tents and food. I suffered so much at the stadium under those conditions because it was my first time as a refugee.”

Extract from an interview with a refugee by researcher **Sadio SOUKOUNA**⁵



2. SITES OF THE MIGRANT CONDITION

More than 6.6 million people across the globe live in camps for the displaced, which international organisations and NGOs essentially run. According to researchers, these sites have multiplied. They were initially conceived as a response to crises. But as the settlement of exiles often overextends, these camps have become settings where the migrant condition prevails.

In a research study on refugees in Cameroon published in 2018, anthropologist **Pierre Boris N’NDE** examined survival conditions at a camp. In 2017, Cameroon took in a large part of the Central African population fleeing armed clashes. The Gado-Badzéré camp received more than 10% of those refugees. While the camp can be presumably considered secure ground, Pierre Boris N’NDE’s analysis reveals, on the contrary, that exiles experience a prevailing sense of insecurity inside them.

Even though the camp offers access to food and basic needs, it is also a place of forced waiting and potential violence. The author recalls that, by acquiring greater autonomy, refugees can end this waiting time and overcome the insecurity of their status as migrants. Pierre Boris N’NDE, by shedding light on various experiences of camp life, calls into question the image of the camps intended to be a safe, hospitable environment for people in exile.

Sadio SOUKOUNA also documents this state of waiting in her analysis of the life trajectories and survival techniques among Malian refugees in Burkina Faso. Since 2012, Mali has experienced political turmoil and chronic instability resulting in population shifts in neighbouring countries, particularly in Burkina Faso, where displaced people live primarily in camps..



“As one person I met stated, “You can’t live in the camps, only survive”.”

Interview with researcher Sadio SOUKOUNA reporting on the comments gathered in a Burkina Faso refugee camp.⁶

Sadio SOUKOUNA
Doctor in Political Science

In her article written following a field survey in Ouagadougou, the researcher examined the restrictions on mobility resulting from life in a camp. Despite providing access to resources, these camps impose physical and temporal immobility, leading them to be consequently perceived as places of confinement and dependence. Sadio SOUKOUNA shows how some refugees escape this “forced waiting” by adopting empowerment strategies to transition into city life. They subsequently rely on their social capital, as well as on their know-how and existential skills, to eventually develop a set of social networks and bonds of solidarity on the margins of the humanitarian sector.

The research carried out by the Foundation highlights the significance of the refugee camp environment that a growing number of refugees are experiencing during their periods of migration. Also, according to these studies, camps envisaged initially as emergency refuges in response to crises have evolved into settings that specifically foster exclusion.

Sociologist **Emeline UWIZEYIMANA** conducted her research in the Burundian refugee camps of Rwanda in 2015, focusing on the perceptions of refugee recipients of emergency humanitarian aid. According to her findings, although they acknowledge that this aid is needed to alleviate their precarity, the refugees nevertheless demand that they be granted their autonomy. Due to the asymmetrical nature of humanitarian interventions and cooperation, international NGOs cannot respond to this demand. However, local NGOs, whose staff share a more significant cultural affinity with beneficiaries, are more inclined to respond to refugee demands and are consequently viewed more favourably by them.



© Juozas CERNIUS - IFRC - Rwanda - 2016

Transitioning from Refugee to Researcher in a Refugee Camp

RESEARCHER FOCUS

In her words, it was “the frustration of populations receiving humanitarian aid” that prompted Emeline UWIZEYIMANA to propose her research project to the Foundation on the appreciation of humanitarian aid received by Burundian refugees in the Rwandan camp in Mahama – an observation drawn from personal experience.

“In 1994, I received international aid in a camp for displaced people. I experienced the relationship that exists between humanitarian organisations, as well as the sense of frustration of aid recipients. Later, through my work for an NGO, I was placed in a position where the dynamics were reversed. And there, I once again witnessed the disparity between the good intentions of humanitarians and people’s unmet expectations. Our NGO had chosen to work on a breeding project to provide 18 cows to women in a village in Rwanda. After a long trip, a night in a truck, and a ceremony organised by the village authorities, we could finally draw lots to distribute the cows. Thirteen of the cows were given in this manner, but five women flatly refused to accept them because the colour of the cows was incompatible with that of the clan. A full day of negotiations amounted to nothing. How should we understand this reaction? As a lack of gratitude? A frivolous demand? One of the women was a widow; she was poor and owned nothing. But poverty is a relative concept. Social capital, a source of mutual assistance, and a sense of cultural belonging are stronger than the absence of material goods. When receiving a gift means sacrificing what you perceive is fundamental, it’s a poisoned gift that emphasises your impoverishment and humiliates you.”



Émeline UWIZEYIMANA
Doctor in Sociology

In postulating that the culture and identity of aid providers should closely resemble those of aid recipients, Emeline’s research is entirely aligned with the discourse on humanitarian transition. It demonstrates that local actors are better equipped to optimise the benefits of humanitarian aid for beneficiaries.

Encampment

Formulated by anthropologist **Michel AGIER**⁷, winner of a Foundation research prize in 2022, the notion of encampment serves to contemporise the approach of managing people in exile. Stricter border controls have led to a proliferation of sites where migrants are confined and marginalised. In Calais and Paris, makeshift settlements have sprung up in recent years. In Lesbos and Lampedusa, undocumented migrants have spent several weeks, even months, penned up at Europe's borders. In Lebanon, generations of Palestinians have grown up in camps to accommodate people in exile. These numerous situations exist in different political, historical, and geographical contexts. Research, however, notes the growing importance of the camp environment, experienced by more and more refugees, and determines the shared characteristics of its various forms.

The refugee camp environment is defined by its extraterritoriality and its indefinite state of limbo. The identifying markers of this camp setting are the residents' isolation from the general population and the experience of something provisional. According to Michel AGIER, encampment is an increasingly prevalent political and humanitarian response. Studying encampments and its various forms in various contexts is a substantial scientific endeavour that should lead us to understand better what exiles encounter on their migration journeys.

“Talking about a setting entails discussing the rationale behind encampments and understanding the relationship between the camps, the land, and host communities. It is also a matter of examining the means employed to develop the camps, the resulting changes, and the output at the structural, socio-political, cultural, economic, and strategic levels.”

Pierre-Boris N'NDE, researcher, speaking about his field of research in Cameroon⁸

3. AN EXILE'S EXPERIENCE

Exiled individuals often face precarious economic, administrative, social and emotional circumstances. Situations that can only deteriorate in the absence of reception facilities and worsen when the waiting time, coupled with the lingering uncertainty of the following day and the urgent need for food, shelter, and security, is prolonged.

In a 2020 survey conducted in the Ile-de-France region, **Nina SAHRAOUI** examined the increased risk of sexual and gender-based violence among exiled women. She investigated the role of aid and support provided by non-profit organisations.

In France, many exiled women find themselves in worrying situations, and some 40% cannot find emergency shelter⁹. Their precarious condition increases their vulnerability to violence that they may be exposed to during their migration and after they arrive in the host country. The resulting social abandonment, insecurity, and violence have increased.



Nina SAHRAOUI
Doctor in Sociology

Excerpt from an interview conducted by Nina SAHRAOUI with Inaya, an activist who fled political repression in Conakry, Guinea, and spoke about her condition.

“I had no idea people slept outdoors in France,” she says.

Inaya's first night in Ile-de-France was spent at the Gare du Nord. She dialled 115 (the emergency helpline for the homeless), but no one answered. She had her suitcase stolen. The next day, she reached someone on the helpline, but they told her there was no room. Her street experience in France came as a shock. “Here it's worse because it's unexpected.” Throughout her journey, Inaya struggled to make ends meet with few material resources, yet she hopes her situation will significantly improve after she files her asylum application. [...] She spent weeks on the street for a time that dragged on and waited for a CHUM (emergency housing) that she finally got after six months when she was already in an advanced stage of pregnancy.”¹⁰

The absence of reception policies and social and material support for newly arriving women in Ile-de-France exposes them to precarity. Being extremely vulnerable and dealing with lengthy, rigid procedures ill-adapted to issues pertaining to gender-based and sexual violence, “the women whom Nina SAHRAOUI met profoundly feel the antagonism of the restrictive asylum system”. Institutional violence has further intensified their vulnerability, and social and humanitarian actors must acknowledge this fact. The author’s research reveals that the reception crisis for migrants in France has fed the growing exposure of women in exile to the violence they were trying to avoid by fleeing their home country.

The experience of precariousness and the sensation of isolation is not unique to newcomers. This is demonstrated by anthropologist **Gloria FRISONE**’s research on elderly immigrants in Seine-Saint-Denis. Starting from the observation that immigrants in France suffer from unequal access to health and care despite the opening of health prevention services to the entire senior population regardless of nationality or origin, the researcher studied the factors contributing to the access or lack of access to health prevention programmes.

Her investigation enables us to understand the impact of past migrations on lifestyles, living conditions, and the ageing process in society. She met people whose social and economic disadvantages have affected their physical and psychological well-being.

“ Madame T. is a 63-year-old woman of Congolese origin who moved to France in 2002. She doesn’t eat properly without a kitchen: “I eat biscuits in the evening, and that’s it. If there aren’t any, there aren’t any.” Madame T. must take preventive treatment prescribed by her doctor. She cannot afford it without complementary health insurance and solidarity health protection. “It’s something that I don’t have a good handle on [health]. I struggle, but if I have somewhere to sleep, even if I go without eating, it doesn’t matter.”¹¹

Precarity and social isolation limit access to health prevention and promotion measures, resulting in disparities in the provision of health care services. Considering the specificities of the migratory condition, Gloria FRISONE’s work enables us to recognise the ineffectiveness of health prevention schemes that adopt a territorial approach. Her work advocates an approach tailored to the specific needs of people and their desire to “age better”.



© ERCS - IFRC - Ethiopie

CRISIS FOCUS UKRAINE



Tetiana STOIANOVA
Doctor in Law

My interest in studying refugee issues in Ukraine stems from the fact that I am a Ukrainian refugee myself [...] I have first-hand knowledge of the problems of loneliness, the distress of refugees and the language and cultural barriers they encounter in their host country.”¹²

Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 has had devastating repercussions in Europe, resulting in significant population shifts of civilians and their disturbed living conditions. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the conflict has displaced more than 14 million civilians. In January 2023, 5.4 million people had been internally displaced, 5 million had fled to other European countries, and 2.8 million had relocated to Russia or Belarus.¹³

In the wake of this situation, the Council of the European Union created a temporary protection status allowing Ukrainian nationals and individuals who have a residence permit and are unable to return to their home country or who benefit from a protective order granted by the Ukrainian authorities, to qualify for a temporary residence permit. This measure provides for a stipend, grants the right to conduct a professional activity, and gives access to healthcare, education for minors, and housing assistance.¹⁴ In 2022, French authorities granted this administrative protection to more than 100,000 Ukrainian refugees.¹⁵ These far-reaching measures have been put in place to ensure the transition of Ukrainians to France.

Bearing in mind the specific responses to these issues, social scientists have delved into the multiple facets of the exile experience in relation to the conflict and its consequences. In coordination with its Scientific Council, the Foundation wanted to fund research projects conducted during the crisis and, in March 2022, launched several calls for papers covering three primary topics.

The first topic addressed the reception of Ukrainian exiles in France, given the specific transitory protection order to which they are entitled. The research funded examines the extent to which they are treated differently, such as the study by sociologist **Ludovic JOXE**, which raises concerns about how their reception as migrants can be sustained and evolve. **Tetania STOIANOVA** devotes her attention to resetting Ukrainian refugees in France and reducing psychological violence. Finally, a project directed by geographer **Camille SCHMOLL** examines the development of a migratory project, its trajectories, and issues related to reconstituted families and the settling-in process of Ukrainian men and women in France from a gender-based standpoint.

The second line of inquiry focused on those left on the sidelines: exiled seniors. Research has described their specific needs and the circumstances that expose them to a high degree of vulnerability as forced exiles. Sociologist **Armelle KLEIN**’s project makes it possible to collect their points of view through ethnographic survey techniques. The work of sociologist **Giovanni MATERA** completes this approach by examining the characteristics of hospitality extended to assisted persons. The findings of this study, derived from feedback collected from caregivers and concerned parties regarding their experiences, should enable us to understand better how the migrant reception system in France has accepted the Ukrainian elderly.

Finally, the third topic investigated humanitarian and social actors, like NGOs, non-profit organisations, or diaspora movements committed to the cause of Ukrainian exiles. Historian **Isabelle DELORME** has been observing these various categories of institutions and their evolution since February 2023 in the face of the fluctuating situation of Ukrainian exiles. Similarly, geographer **Jordan PINEL** is researching citizen solidarity for migrants. He analyses the ramifications of the State’s management and media coverage on migrant reception and citizen commitment in several French cities.

Eight projects have been funded to examine and cast light on the crisis at a time when issues are rapidly evolving. Researchers report on exiles’ specificities and evolving characteristics by comparing their viewpoints and formulating inquiries across different timeframes. These research projects complement one another and foster introspection over matters concerning Ukrainian exiles. Despite the urgency, these researchers have the time to examine the practices and the ensuing debate that have emerged in France in response to this crisis.



© Johannes CHINCHILLA - IIRC

ACTING MORE EFFECTIVELY

1. TRAJECTORIES TOWARD INTEGRATION

The trajectories and experiences of people in exile call into question the effectiveness of measures designed to integrate and transition them into society. In their investigation of these pathways, the researchers who have received support from the Foundation reassess current reception strategies and improve operational effectiveness for the benefit of exiles.



Research supported by the Red Cross Foundation should lead us to re-evaluate the concept of reception and the manner of improving the living conditions of migrants. This can be accomplished by examining humanitarian practices so that survival, waiting time, uncertainty, dependence, isolation, and precariousness no longer characterise exiled persons' daily lives and trajectories.

Geographer **Nicole TABET** has a particular interest in the solutions formulated by public institutions. Her investigation in Lebanon on providing housing and shelter assistance to Syrian refugee tenants examines the scope of a programme designed to improve their living conditions and sense of security. It highlights the disparities between short-term humanitarian aid policies and the realities of refugees, who are compelled to endure ever-longer periods of exile.

Further research analyses humanitarian ethical considerations surrounding restrictive migration policies in other contexts. Anthropologist **Chiara BROCCO**'s work questions how foreigners are received in the Paris region, particularly considering their prevailing precarity and instability. She shows that public intervention centred exclusively on housing assistance fails to satisfy these migrants' need for autonomy and stability.

2. RESPONDING TO NEEDS

Shelter, food, and housing are basic needs that cannot always be fully satisfied due to the conditions in which exiles find themselves and are received. Numerous organised and ad hoc solidarity initiatives are responding to this.

In 2019, sociologist **Estelle FOURAT** researched food aid for people exiled in France living in precarious conditions with limited access to food. The absence of reception policies, drawn-out administrative procedures, and prolonged waiting times aggravate their precarity. She observes that, since 2017, migrant populations have had ever-greater nutritional requirements.

How do migrants feed themselves? What role does food play in a migratory situation? And is the food aid adapted to their needs? Estelle FOURAT's research, co-constructed with several humanitarian aid organisations, sheds light on the food practices and experiences of people in exile. Above all else, she advocates the transition of "food aid" to "food reception".



Estelle FOURAT
Doctor in Sociology

An Afghan lady who is alone and speaks very little French despite having a high level of education in her home country visits the same distribution centre every evening. It is far, taking her thirty minutes by metro from where she is housed, and she has to wait nearly one hour before getting any food. This solution has been exhausting for her, but it's the only one she was aware of in the initial months after her arrival.¹¹⁶

Life experience reported by Estelle FOURAT

She proposes alternatives by highlighting the daily struggles of finding accommodation and food and the negative impact of travelling and waiting on their health and relationship with time. For example, she recommends promoting individual choice, voluntary work, including the people concerned, and combining food aid with solidarity and social activities. By looking beyond the nutritional aspect of food, she highlights the many ways in which people can be accommodated in a restrictive framework.

Marjorie GERBIER-AUBLANC has examined reception strategies in encampment contexts. During a prolonged survey conducted in 2017, she visited the regions of Calais and Paris to observe the emergence and prospects for citizen solidarity. Since 2015, these two regions have witnessed the development of camps where people in exile are placed before pursuing their migratory journey and/or getting housing, a fixed administrative status, etc. Faced with this situation, newly created and expanding networks of organisations and activists have emerged due to citizen initiatives. The researcher has examined their practical implementation. She shows that these initiatives, situated at the interval between specialist humanitarian action and public action (or inaction), are typically carried out by "ordinary citizens". Her work cautions about the complex and challenging sustainability of these initiatives characterised by the phenomenon of "collective improvisation". However, they highlight the new forms of humanitarian action and the "ethics of recognition" guiding these initiatives. Through her work, the author prompts us to think about the co-construction of hospitality settings:

“By recognising their capacities to act, they try to restore their social standing and damaged identity. These ethics of recognition, therefore, go well beyond merely ensuring the biological survival of migrants by daily gratifying their need for social and political existence.”¹⁷

In this way, the researchers supported by the Foundation analyse the humanitarian and associative responses to extreme precarity. Their work documents the integration strategies and responses to migrants' needs and offers a perspective on people in exile.

RESEARCHER FOCUS

When the Field Ceases to Exist

Researcher **Marjorie GERBIER-AUBLANC** is accustomed to challenging terrain. During her Master's and doctoral research on the social and health survival conditions of migrant populations, she conducted eight months of fieldwork in one of Bogotá's most dangerous neighbourhoods, Altos de Cazuca, where conditions for investigation can be difficult.

On the strength of these experiences and in the continuity of her initial work, Marjorie proposed a project to the Foundation on the pluralisation of humanitarian aid and social action actors in the migrant camps in northern France, and more specifically in "la Jungle" of Calais. However, she had failed to anticipate one thing: the dismantling of this camp in October 2016 and, therefore, the disappearance of her field of investigation.

"For two months, I was completely immersed in an association in the Calais camp. I worked in the field with the volunteers every day. I observed how this collective functioned from the inside, both day and night and at times, I extracted myself a little bit from this collective to see other non-profits to observe their actions."

"Due to political contingencies and the camp's dismantling, the camp no longer existed, and my on-the-ground site had disappeared. I left Calais. I could have remained, but ... it was complicated. I had never imagined such a situation. I had never anticipated it. So, I had to adapt and rethink everything I had planned. And fairly quickly, I became interested in what was happening in Paris because the La Chapelle humanitarian camp had just opened at that time."



Marjorie GERBIER-AUBLANC
Doctor in Sociology

3. RETHINKING INTEGRATION

Beyond survival strategies, people in exile are encouraged to settle in more permanent locations. While considering reception, it is also necessary to consider how their location can facilitate their social, economic, and administrative transition.



© Ukrainian Red Cross - 2022

Sociologist **Florence IHADDADENE**'s work focuses on the effects of a State-designed means of integration: the civic service "Volont'R.". Developed in 2018 under the impetus of the Civic Service Agency and the Interministerial Delegation for the Reception and Integration of Refugees, this programme was designed to transition juvenile refugees or those with a similar status. The researcher's fieldwork with different parties reports on the effects of this public policy. It shows that the utopian ideal upheld by non-profit organisations runs head-on against real economic stakes and the "urgent" material needs of these youths. She observes that young people are mainly assigned manual tasks and that hospitality is delegated to non-profit organisations participating in the programmes that they "privatise". As a result, the individualised integration policy of the Volont'R programme helps depoliticise the reception issue, resulting in further discrimination and unequal employment opportunities.

Her work leads to an inquiry into integration and citizenship and the discrimination endured by people in exile. Ahmed's trajectory mentioned in her research exemplified the impact of the Volont'R programme described by the author.



Florence IHADDADENE
Doctor in Sociology

Ahmed, on an assignment in a recreation centre, passed the BAFA (Brevet d'aptitude aux fonctions d'animateur) as a youth group leader. However, he has no intention of taking up a career as a leader. He studied Human Rights in Sudan and hopes to resume his studies in France soon. As for income, however, he relies on his extensive experience in the restaurant business. In his case, the desire to structurally integrate requires him to practically abandon his professional goals. Since he must integrate as quickly as possible, he is asked to reconsider his goals to align with his "objective opportunities". Integration into French society is occasionally possible despite the subjectivity of these young refugees.¹⁸

Extract from the article by
Florence IHADDADENE

The work of **Cristèle BERNARD** highlights the contribution that those involved in the social and solidarity economy (SSE) have achieved in the construction of knowledge, and in this way, act more efficiently on behalf of exiles and promote their integration. In analysing their work, she looks into the values they create and the degree to which they diverge from the values developed and promoted by public institutions.

Her survey was conducted in Grenoble and Briançon, two municipalities that are members of the Association of Welcoming Towns and Territories. She examines the knowledge and values built by SSE activists engaged in migrant rights. SSE actors advocate for policies on integration and participation in relation to the unconditionality of aid, empowerment, reciprocity of contributions, and the security and stability of aid.

These claims contradict public policies and the assessments of State institutions. The State's posture on the conditionality of aid, the accountability of beneficiaries, and the primacy of national security "limits mutual aid and reception"¹⁹. In this context, Cristèle BERNARD emphasises the political role of SSE actors and their contribution to bringing the problems they face to the attention of people in exile.



In another context, the work of political scientist **Fanny CHRISTOU** examines the alternative models of integration and the knowledge developed by migration actors. Her investigation concentrates on the participation of Palestinians in Berlin's social and solidarity economy. It points to the two-sided dynamics of this commitment, which, on the one hand, permits these exiles to find support and assistance within numerous SSE organisations and, on the other, deploy practices that will facilitate their successful transition into the host society.

In Berlin in 2015, the author met a Palestinian who arrived from Syria and was involved in artistic and socio-cultural activities in Berlin. He produced the short film, *We Will Not Forget*, which features his family. He intends to strengthen the ties between integration into Berlin society and the memory of the refugee camp, Yarmouk, from which he emerged.²⁰

Specifically, it underscores the great diversity of initiatives set up by Palestinian SSE activists who attempt to redefine the models of European integration and citizenship. By creating settings conducive to solidarity and sociability, migrants are positioned to gain autonomy and cultivate an "alternate citizenship". The author demonstrates the subjective dimension of citizenship and proposes three lines of action to redefine European societies' integration processes.

AND TOMORROW?



Interview with...

Yasmine BOUAGGA
Doctor in Sociology

Yasmine BOUAGGA has a doctorate in social sciences. A researcher at the CNRS, she specialises in the sociology of law, migration and asylum. Her research focuses on the use of law in prisons and on immigration issues. In addition to the social issues she studies, she strives to make the social sciences accessible to a wider audience through comics. In 2020, she won a research prize from the Foundation.

In your opinion, what are the significant challenges and issues related to migration that researchers face and will need to address in the coming years?

Migration is part of humanity's history, and its present forms are taking shape during this phase of economic globalisation. They will continue to evolve with the advancement of transportation, information systems, and, most importantly, communication technologies. The most significant challenges related to migration in the next ten to twenty years will be attributable to climate change: how will it impact why migrants leave or how they are received? The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports predict a rise in population displacements while pointing out that a growing number of interrelated factors complicate analysis and interpretation. Current population displacements resulting from armed conflicts are problematic, as they lead to the demise of communities due to insufficient access to sustenance, the erosion of institutions, and competition for resources.

What are the major evolving trends associated with population displacements?

We are seeing overlapping patterns, such as certain EU countries that close their borders in places that guarantee free movement. At the same time, their border controls or reception procedures for illegal immigrants are delegated to other countries through “subcontracts”, as is the case with the EU and the countries situated on its southern flank along the Mediterranean. These trends amplify the geopolitical implications of migration. At the same time, they have concrete effects on the migratory experience of people, the violence they experience during their journey, the trauma they endure, and the fatalities that occur. This also raises concerns about the conditions for performing research in potentially highly insecure transit zones or restricted areas, such as those in the Sahel.

In addition, we have observed an increase in internal and regional population displacements, which are more challenging to research. Yet, they also raise issues pertaining to humanitarian relief, legal protection, access to public services, and the transformation of societies.

Can we hope that camps will disappear?

Camps are problematical settlements, whether we consider them as safe havens for people in emergencies (refugee camps), as centres to control and confine people (hotspot camps), or as makeshift encampments and shanty towns where vulnerable migrant populations lack access to adequate housing. We must not abandon the utopian ideal of these camps eventually closing. However, we can anticipate that whatever practices led to their development will persist. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has a strategy meant to reabsorb these settlements and bring relief to their occupants without compelling them to regroup. However, States continue using these settlements for border control and population surveillance. Furthermore, with regard to encampments and slums, large metropolitan areas still draw migrants despite the difficulty of gaining access to suitable

accommodation. We cannot foresee population displacements occurring more evenly across the land, but rather concentrating where resources are abundant (with a thriving economy, where migrant communities have already established themselves, or where public services are available) and not where adequate housing can be found.

What will specialist researchers investigate over the next ten to twenty years?

The transformation of legal frameworks pertaining to the protection and reception of displaced populations will undoubtedly be a research topic. We have seen this occur with the response to the Ukrainian crisis, where European countries have adopted streamlined procedures for migrants to qualify for work permits. These changes will be thoroughly scrutinised as they are implemented on a larger scale by international organisations, States, and even local authorities, particularly municipalities, large cities, and rural towns. This raises queries regarding public policies (relating to relief for the homeless, for example) and the rationale used to adapt or tailor them in response to migration issues.

Equally interesting is the matter of general informality that research has already examined, not only in the context of illegal migration and trafficking, but also informality in economic practices and informality in administrative services in which intermediaries who are not necessarily translators or legal experts play an important role. It is important to point out that the presence of informality also contributes to the distribution of aid and the implementation of acts of solidarity. After a period of professionalisation of social work and humanitarian roles, we have seen non-profit organisations, collective groups, and individuals newly engaged in solidarity since 2015 shift to less formalised practices.

In conclusion, I believe that questions relating to integration, particularly the definition of “integration”, will continue to galvanise researchers. How is a society formed through diversity? What resources are necessary to facilitate integration (financial resources, access to education, etc.)? What social policies should host countries

adopt, or what are the obstacles? The scope of inquiry must include not only the humanitarian dimension of migration but should also extend to the family, economic considerations, and the individual's experience and aspirations.

Regarding migrations, how do you envision the profession of researcher and the research landscape evolving over the next ten to twenty years in France and around the world?

Research evolves with adequate instruments, regulations, and funding. As for available tools, we can mention the most recent advancement in digital technology, and this is a new area of study that unveils its advantages and limitations. But it will not be a replacement for learning about the knowledge that migrants have acquired along their journey, including observing how they use this technology: in transit, in their host country, or links with the communities of their home country.

Regarding regulations, those governing data protection impose stricter parameters, but as long as they do not hinder research, they offer a valuable ethical framework.

Finally, with regard to research financing, the intense politicisation of migration has made it an issue for which research has received significant financial backing in recent years. In France, the Institut Convergence Migrations has emerged as a national hub for research on migration that advocates joint projects spearheaded by researchers from various regions of France and abroad. The work of foundations, such as the Red Cross Foundation and others, is also vital to enable this research in a context where publicly funded research must rely less on long-term credits. The subject of migration holds significant appeal to students, and their commitment to it as activists often takes shape as an initial field experience that leads to the development of a research topic. However, some countries receive less attention than others (usually because they are harder to access for security reasons) and establishing strong collaboration with these countries to develop their social science research on migrations represents a formidable challenge.



© Julie ANDRÉ

REFERENCES

¹ MCAULIFFE, Marie, TRIANDAFYLIDOU, Anna (ed.), 2021. World Migration Report 2022. International Organization for Migration (IOM), Geneva. See p. 3

² IDMC, 2023 Global Report on Internal Displacement, GRID 2023 [online]

³ GERBIER-AUBLANC, Marjorie, "L'improvisation humanitaire : potentialités et limites des solidarités citoyennes dans les camps de migrants à Calais et à Paris", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°15, May 2018, p. 18

⁴ The term is notably used by the BABELS collective

⁵ SOUKOUNA, Sadio "De l'assistance à l'autonomisation : les trajectoires de (sur)-vie des réfugiés maliens au Burkina Faso", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°32, February 2020, p. 6

⁶ French Red Cross Foundation, Interview Sadio Soukouna, Consulted on "On ne peut pas vivre dans les camps, juste survivre" – Red Cross Foundation (fondation-croix-rouge.fr)

⁷ AGIER, Michel (dir.), *Un monde de camps. La Découverte*, 2014, 424 p.

⁸ N'NDE, Pierre-Boris, "Environnement sécuritaire et offre humanitaire : l'évolution des représentations des réfugiés du site de Gado Badzeré au Cameroun", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°17, May 2018, p.9

⁹ see . Population censuses and population estimates. Population immigrée et étrangère par sexe et âge | Insee

¹⁰ SAHRAOUI, Nina "Les associations face à une production structurelle de la vulnérabilité : comprendre la construction du risque de violences sexuelles et de genre pour les femmes exilées en Ile-de-France", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n° 36, March 2022, p. 9

¹¹ FRISONE, Gloria "L'isolement des immigrés vieillissants en Seine-Saint-Denis", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n° 43, November 2022, pp. 17-18

¹² Presentation by STOIANOVA Tetiana, French Red Cross Foundation [online]

¹³ International Organization for Migration (IOM), Feb 02 2023. DTM Ukraine – Internal Displacement Report – General Population Survey Round 12 (16 – 23 January 2023). IOM, Ukraine.

¹⁴ Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/382 of 4 March 2022

¹⁵ "Une aide financière pour les familles accueillant des réfugiés ukrainiens", Directorate of legal and administrative information (Prime Minister), published on November 23, 2022. Figures from the French Office for Immigration and Integration (Ofii)

¹⁶ FOURAT, Estelle, "Les dimensions de l'accueil alimentaire : comment mieux nourrir les migrant.e.s", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°27, February 2020, p. 13

¹⁷ GERBIER-AUBLANC, Marjorie, "L'improvisation humanitaire : potentialités et limites des solidarités citoyennes dans les camps de migrants à Calais et à Paris", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°15, May 2018, p. 20

¹⁸ IHADDADENE, Florence "Le service civique par et pour les réfugiés : l'intégration par le volontariat ?", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n° 42, July 2022, p.16

¹⁹ BERNARD, Cristèle "L'accès des migrants aux droits vu par les acteurs de l'ESS", French Red Cross Foundation, *Pratiques & Humanités*, n° 10, October 2022, p.3

²⁰ CHRISTOU, Fanny "L'investissement de l'économie sociale et solidaire par les Palestiniens à Berlin : nouveau regard sur l'intégration et la citoyenneté", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°30, February 2020 , p.13

■ References sourced from the French Red Cross Foundation

LIST OF THE FOUNDATION'S RESEARCH PAPERS

BASKA TOUSSIA Daniel Valérie, "Minawao : un espace de prise en charge et de résilience sanitaire des réfugiés nigériens dans le Mayo-Tsanaga (Extrême-Nord, Cameroun)", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°55, June 2023.

CHRISTOU Fanny, "L'investissement de l'économie sociale et solidaire par les Palestiniens à Berlin : nouveau regard sur l'intégration et la citoyenneté", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°30, February 2020.

FOURAT Estelle, "Les dimensions de l'accueil alimentaire : comment mieux nourrir les migrant.e.s", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°27, February 2020.

FRISONE Gloria, "L'isolement des immigrés vieillissants en Seine-Saint-Denis", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°43, November 2022.

GERBIER-AUBLANC Marjorie, "L'improvisation humanitaire : potentialités et limites des solidarités citoyennes dans les camps de migrants à Calais et à Paris", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°15, May 2018.

IHADDADENE Florence, "Le service civique par et pour les réfugiés : l'intégration par le volontariat ?", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°42, September 2022.

N'NDE Pierre Boris, "Environnement sécuritaire et transition humanitaire : l'évolution des représentations des réfugiés du site de Gado Badzeré au Cameroun", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°17, May 2018.

SAHRAOUI Nina, "Les associations face à une production structurelle de la vulnérabilité : comprendre la construction du risque de violences sexuelles et de genre pour les femmes exilées en Ile-de-France", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°36, March 2022.

SOUKOUNA Sadio, "De l'assistance à l'autonomisation : les trajectoires de (sur)-vie des réfugiés maliens au Burkina Faso", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°32, February 2020.

TABET Nicole, "La sécurité d'occupation des logements de réfugiés syriens au Liban : étude du cas du programme d'aide à l'abri humanitaire Occupancy Free of-Charge dans la localité de Bar Elias (Bekaa)", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°47, December 2022.

UWIZEYIMANA Émeline, "La transition humanitaire dans un camp de réfugiés burundais", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°11, February 2017.

5

Strengthening Social Bonds

Social bonds are fundamental to the core objectives of the Red Cross. They are not a specific focus of research per se for the Foundation but are taken into account in the Foundation's cross-cutting approach to all of its activities. Social bonds are an essential consideration for researchers engaged in social and humanitarian actions when they examine the factors that contribute to disruption, exclusion, isolation, and the mechanisms of cohesion and solidarity.

Social bonds have been at the foundation of sociology since its inception, but their significance has evolved. The term is "used today to designate a desire to live together, to connect dispersed individuals, and to strive for greater social cohesion as a whole".¹ In recent years, however, there has been a greater focus on the crisis or breakdown in social bonds rather than their strengthening. Numerous studies have highlighted loneliness and social isolation, which impact a growing number of people, including up to 20% of the French population.² Such withdrawal mechanisms are strongly associated with precarious situations that can affect anyone (young people, single-parent families, children, the elderly or the infirm). The absence of personal relationships, the difficulty of asserting one's rights, or having to endure inequities can erode the bonds of trust and respect that individuals forge, affecting people's health. These withdrawal mechanisms can lead to situations of complete exclusion, such as homelessness, which is hard to quantify.³

The public health crisis and the recent COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns have highlighted the significance of social bonds. Maintaining them or dealing with the consequences when broken is not always a top priority in the humanitarian and social work sectors. However, social bonds can serve as an adequate safeguard against many social and public health issues and as a lever to alleviate vulnerability. Stronger social bonds are conducive to envisioning new forms of solidarity, commitment, and integration that directly oppose isolation and exclusion. Moreover, as demonstrated by the research of Serge PAUGAM, social bonds provide protection and recognition to individuals.⁴ From this, new questions arise: How can relief be reconceived to recreate social bonds? How can social bonds be made to protect individuals while providing recognition? What practices can be applied to make these ideas a reality?

Finally, beyond the efforts undertaken by social or humanitarian aid associations on behalf of individuals in general, the concept of social bonds also extends to volunteers themselves. Their volunteer work is a catalyst for creating social



ties, and searching for these ties may even be the essence of their dedication. The health crisis caused by the COVID-19 epidemic prompted many people to get involved in non-profit organisations, especially during lockdown, and this underscores, as with other crises, the manifold social benefits that volunteering provides volunteers. But how does this aspect of commitment evolve? How is it experienced in different countries? How do humanitarian organisations account for these issues in times of crisis to effectively address the needs of both beneficiaries and volunteers?

TOWARDS A BETTER UNDERSTANDING: The Breakdown in Social Bonds

1. ISOLATION AND “AGEING WELL”

“I can see that the matahiapo (“seniors”, in Tahitian) are being neglected nowadays. Their families have often abandoned them. When I see this, I wonder... what about me? Who’s going to look after me?”⁵

Asther, 58, a resident of the Austral Islands, interviewed by **Lauriane DOS SANTOS**

In France, the elderly are disproportionately afflicted by social isolation, which became apparent during the COVID-19 crisis. The Foundation has contacted specialised research programmes on this issue on multiple occasions. Researcher **Lauriane DOS SANTOS** contacted public authorities in French Polynesia to inquire about their experience of policies for senior care. This overseas territory’s population has been steadily ageing since 1980, and measures have been taken to encourage the elderly to continue living at home to be cared for by their family. Lauriane Dos Santos identifies three social risks inherent in this type of family care: confining an elderly family member at home exposes the individual to a greater health risk; the family may neglect the elderly person at home; families in precarious situations can become “economic predators” by taking advantage of the individual’s old age social benefits.

The researcher’s study emphasises the significance of the older person as a figure perceived as a social, economic, and symbolic resource within the family. This individual, involved in intergenerational transmission and a participant in the family’s economy and society in general, fulfils a social function by ensuring protection against precarity and sustaining numerous social ties. The findings of this research gathered from feedback from older people, institutional personnel, and family caregivers, therefore argue in favour of the Polynesian concept of ageing well.

Sociologist **Louis BRAVERMAN** is also an advocate of ageing well. Noting the consequences of the absence of social relations among the elderly, the researcher tested the experiment called “EHPAD outside the walls” (Établissement d’hébergement pour personnes âgées dépendantes – the French nursing home) and examined the effectiveness of this home-care support plan in combating isolation. Through his investigation of two medico-social support systems for the elderly cared for at home, he describes the factors for ageing well, particularly that of residing at home, which brings a profound sense of security and well-being. In addition, it secures the beneficiaries in their environment while ensuring a continuum of health services – whether physical or emotional – thereby fostering social ties. To conclude, the researcher emphasises that “ageing well at home” should eventually lead to public policies that more vigorously promote the social participation of the elderly.

Recently, the Red Cross Foundation has funded projects addressing the social isolation of exiles, particularly Ukrainians. In line with the concept of “ageing well”, sociologist **Ludovic JOXE** examined the continuity of care during times of crisis and the specificities of this situation. His objective is to investigate the mechanisms

of health prevention and the relevance of “care pathways” during international displacements. Just as the ageing experience can change according to the context and modes of care, it can also vary according to the population. **Armelle KLEIN**, who also received funding for her research in 2022, described the unique experience of elderly Ukrainian refugees. Her work carried out in a crisis context, centred on the experience of becoming uprooted and vulnerable in later life.



Armelle KLEIN
Doctor in Sociology

A wide range of diverse situations became readily apparent after my first interviews. But the elderly were all disoriented and in a state of confusion. This is why the issue of social bonds appears especially sensitive: how does one maintain existing ties with family members, friends, and fellow citizens? When people arrive as a family, what are the opportunities for forming new social ties? Do people eventually find the resources and the means to keep in touch with their home country?”⁶

Sociologist **Emmanuel NIYONSABA** attempted to answer this final query in his research on the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) by elderly immigrants. By taking into account the specificities of this population, he showed that the daily use of ICT offers many advantages, especially maintaining affective ties, cultural ties, and, more broadly, relations with the home country.

“I call my nephew, who always has a phone, and when I need to, I have him put my mother on the line. She [my mother] often says, “Turn on the TV so that I can see you” (laughing); anyway, it’s the video, and that’s what she calls television.”

Mr. LS, 66, recounting his conversation with his mother residing in Côte d’Ivoire. Account gathered by Emmanuel NIYONSABA

ICT functions as a resource for support and well-being. However, unstable digital access, unaffordability, and other limitations, such as insecure housing conditions, restrict its use. Elderly migrants must devise alternative strategies and employ different tactics to navigate these challenges and avoid becoming socially isolated.

2. SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND HOMELESSNESS

People who find themselves in a state of extreme precarity without any shelter or permanent accommodation are subject to exclusion and are denied the right to meet fundamental needs, such as sanitary living conditions, a balanced diet, and access to medical care. A few studies have examined the processes that contribute to homelessness and the subsequent social and health consequences and have found that changes in one’s capacity to “self-maintain” lead to ever greater social exclusion.

From this observation, sociologist **Thibaut BESOZZI** found it noteworthy to identify the issues associated with homelessness. The homeless must put up with marginalisation and stigmatisation from politicians, the media, healthy members of society, and even social professionals and volunteers, impacting their relationship with their body image and personal health. The investigator observed and documented aesthetic care sessions in a halfway home in Nancy, France, as part of a social support programme. While this type of care responds to requests by the homeless for physical care, it also influences their perception of their own body, outward appearance, and sense of self. This survey thus provides insight into how psycho-corporal care can contribute to greater self-esteem and dignity.

In her study funded by the Foundation in France, **Julie DUFLOS**, a Doctor in the Science and Techniques of Physical and Sports Activities, also seeks to understand the benefits and the limitations of programmes for the homeless. Her interest lies in having young homeless people use physical activities and sports to combat social isolation. Her research examines an innovative socio-sports approach in Arras, France, and evaluates its capacity to help marginalised and homeless people achieve self-realisation and well-being. Developing one’s self-identity is a critical consideration in physical and social survival. **Ayoko Akouavi DOGBE FOLI** investigates the unique experience of unaccompanied minors (UMs) who have immigrated to France without a relative or legal guardian in their new country. Supported by child welfare services (ASE), if they qualify as minors, they can also experience homelessness. This research project explores the construction of the person they have become in this setting by delineating their psychosocial realities and self-representations across several temporal dimensions: past, present, and future.

The final topic concerns helping the homeless find accommodation and reintegrate into society. **Stéphanie ESPEJO ZEBALLOS** studied the effects of their long-term living situations during the COVID-19 lockdowns by considering their specific circumstances and the variety of case patterns. Her ethnographic research at the Centre d'Hébergement et Aide aux Sans-abri (CHAPSA) in Nanterre examined how COVID-19 restrictions altered the centre's operations. The author emphasises the benefits of long-term care, which includes routine medical check-ups and socio-educational activities. This programme, created during the COVID-19 crisis, allowed residents time to consider personal projects and initiate various administrative procedures before the transition. Stéphanie Espejo ZEBALLOS' research emphasises the importance of listening and providing support, which have improved the mutual relationship between CHAPSA staff and residents and accelerated the discharge of some. This promising fieldwork and subsequent analysis offer the opportunity to reflect on the support for the homeless population and on innovative ways of enhancing social ties.

3. IMPLEMENTING THE SOCIAL BOND

Experiencing a situation of precarity or social and territorial inequalities weakens social bonds. Furthermore, relational isolation impacts one's living situation and mental well-being. Solidarity initiatives are implemented to prevent these effects. In addition to providing shelter and meeting essential needs, they offer isolated people recognition by creating social interactions that enable them to surmount stigma and prejudice. They restore dignity and self-esteem, thereby reducing instances of severed social ties, marginalisation, and exclusion.

The Red Cross Foundation has supported numerous research projects that aim to comprehend the characteristics of this experience and its impact on social bonds. **Thibaut BESOZZI**'s work has documented and demonstrated the benefits of socio-aesthetics: the combination of physical care with psychological treatment and support that enables individuals to regain their dignity. The life stories of Caron, Pépette, and Karine, as told to the researcher, exemplify the effects of socio-aesthetics on the body, self-esteem, and ability to integrate socially. Socio-aesthetic approaches act on social bonding by focusing on people's needs and recognising one's identity. This has spawned initiatives like "beauty trucks" and mobile cosmetic care vehicles.

Anthropologist **Emmanuelle DURAND** investigated the processes of restoration and recognition by looking into the utilitarian and practical aspects of apparel worn by people living in precarious conditions, with a specific emphasis on exiles. Through an ethnographical study and workshops held in the Vesti-boutiques of the Red Cross, she examined people's representations of clothing, their image of clothing, and the symbolic rapport and their affective and creative bond with it. This study should help better understand the relationship between the material constraints of these people in relation to their standard of living and the symbolic significance of their desires and preferences. As for the particular case of exiles, her research investigates the value systems, the scope of feelings, and the cultural codes associated with clothing both in the home country of origin and in France, the host country. Regarding survival strategies and situations of precarity, poverty, and/or exile, these findings provide an understanding of the significance of symbols for weaving relationships of recognition, listening, and care. Thus, clothing is a crucial factor in the recreation of social bonds.



This project is designed to explore the symbolic, affective, and creative relationships around clothing while considering the interplay between the material constraints relating to one's standard of living on the one hand, and the symbolic scope of desires and preferences on the other."

Emmanuelle DURAND
Doctor in Anthropology

Along the same line of thought, non-profit organisations have launched other initiatives involving handyperson services or repair activities, as it has been demonstrated that these activities benefit social ties. In 2023, in response to a proposal from the Bénévo'Lab programme, the Foundation issued a call for applications to fund research projects on the "Mobile Humanitarian Repair Lab", a specially converted vehicle that was to be parked in areas where people are informally housed (squats, slums, camps, emergency shelters). The study examined the outcome of handyperson activities and the impact of repair services on an individual's self-esteem and mental health. These issues leave room for thought on how these methods can be improved upon or more greatly delineated from a scientific standpoint while considering local specificities and the needs of the people concerned.

In addition, during the COVID-19 epidemic and the lockdowns, when many people found themselves socially isolated and suffering from loneliness, the “Red Cross at Home” programme was developed in metropolitan France and selected overseas regions not only to deliver food relief but also to foster social ties with isolated individuals. During the first lockdown in the spring of 2020, an investigation team affiliated with the Maurice Halbwachs Centre looked into this programme. In a general context of deteriorating social ties, the authors emphasised the benefits of listening to and recognising people’s needs and real-life circumstances. They described the challenges encountered by volunteers when confronting precarity and social isolation while giving their perspective and expressing their commitment. These volunteers articulated their “sense of being” and the symbolic benefits they gained from their assignment. According to this research, support and care relationships offer reciprocal benefits. As a conduit of social ties, this volunteering is a topical research matter of interest to researchers and humanitarians.



© Georgia Red Cross Society – 2020

ACTING MORE EFFECTIVELY: Working With and Learning About Volunteers

Volunteers commit themselves to serving others while pursuing an ideal of social justice despite the discomforts of their new battlefield. “Only those who possess the audacity to believe they can change the world do so,” said Henry DUNANT, founder of the Red Cross. Many volunteers possess the audacity to act and commit themselves proactively to the transformations of society and devote themselves civically or even politically.⁸

Volunteerism constitutes one of the fundamental principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and millions of volunteers serve as the foundation and the most significant source of inspiration and innovation for these organisations. Every day in France, 70,000 French Red Cross volunteers intervene in various sectors: social action, disaster and rescue operations, risk prevention, psychological support, etc. Whether they are teaching lifesaving techniques, conducting outreach efforts to meet the homeless, giving first aid, acting as youth leaders, or fundraising for even a day, they each, in their own way and in accordance with the Movement’s objective, contribute “to the prevention and alleviation of human suffering,” in accordance with its Principle of Humanity.

Like many other global organisations, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement must address several issues regarding its volunteer policy. Recent emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic or the crisis in Ukraine, have demonstrated the limitations of volunteerism and have brought to the fore specific issues pertaining to the notion of commitment, whether it has to do with the safeguarding of the physical and mental health of volunteers during times of conflict and emergencies, or the management of new forms of volunteerism, particularly by “spontaneous” volunteers.

In a broader sense, these events have accelerated a shift set into motion some years ago, namely the emergence of ever-younger volunteers, applying for assignments

that are often shorter, more diverse, more practical, and increasingly “digital” or remote. Where, how, and why do volunteers get involved today? How do we keep them motivated and committed to our actions? What new forms of volunteering are helpful for the 21st century? These are a few of the many questions the Movement is asking itself.

In response, in close collaboration with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the Foundation has compiled a comprehensive literature review of scientific research on volunteering. Coordinated by sociologist **Dan Ferrand BECHMANN** and **Louise BAUMANN**, a PhD student in human geography, this review highlights the low volume of existing scientific and academic research in France on the subject “despite the large number and the preponderant and vital role of volunteers in our organisations”⁹. In different contexts, at different levels and with various points of view, research is necessary to document and analyse the concept of volunteering and its implications, realities, and determinants of commitment in different contexts. This is the Foundation’s rationale for indirectly or directly supporting the numerous projects on this issue.

1. UNDERSTANDING VOLUNTEER COMMITMENTS

The manners in which volunteers get involved, the prevailing ethical considerations, and the symbolic status of the volunteers themselves are research topics related to the various dynamics of volunteering. In her research, **Benedicte BONZI** examines the drivers of commitment, the priorities of volunteers, and the disruptions that lead to disengagement. Her findings highlight the volunteers’ sense of usefulness, the desire to acquire emergency response skills, and the transcendental dimension at the heart of their dedication. She demonstrates that volunteering is perceived as a means of being, achieving, and participating in a shared endeavour. However, even if this perception mobilises individuals and motivates them to help others, their desire to be useful is not always fulfilled.

“Volunteers disengage themselves when they realise that they have to be satisfied with only helping one person when they are certain that more can be done.”¹⁰

Extract from an article by researcher Bénédicte BONZI

Bénédicte BONZI identifies four causes of disengagement: the duration of the commitment, an emergency related to a social protection system in crisis, a growing sense of discomfort and guilt when confronted with certain situations, and internal disagreements with the mode of governance. The study reveals the underlying tension between volunteerism and utilitarianism: the clash between commitment to others and oneself. This tension is evident in many citizen initiatives.

2. CITIZEN INITIATIVES PROMOTING HOSPITALITY

While hospitality covers both the notions of giving and reciprocity, it also includes the social and political means necessary for its implementation. Among the various definitions of this concept are the acts of receiving and sheltering individuals regardless of nationality. However, the conditions exiles require for survival are contingent on overcoming the difficulties they face in integrating into their host country and coping with unwelcome practices. In response to this, many citizen initiatives have emerged to ensure a more dignified reception of new arrivals, and this has reignited concerns regarding volunteerism and commitment.

Marjorie GERBIER-AUBLANC has reported on her involvement in these citizen initiatives for people in exile in the Calais and Paris camps. Her work examines the different forms of commitment and mechanisms of solidarity. She describes commitment as a make-do organisational process generated from “collective improvisation”. In practical terms, “citizen solidarity” is a matter of flexible grassroots coordination. Those who practice it are not selected formally and are trained based on their experience. The actions undertaken through these commitments are initially guided by “ethics of recognition”, which entails forming bonds with migrants by closely listening to what they have to say and valuing their capacity for action. However, the practical application of this and its associated ethical commitment have implications for the day-to-day lives of volunteers. Their voice is drowned out by the rationales of instrumentalisation and/or stigmatisation. The sense of pressure and the lack of breathing space produces a feeling of physical and mental exhaustion. Moreover, situations in which they have given their total commitment may require them to intervene without the requisite skills to achieve an outcome, which has been criticised.

Jordan PINEL sought to gain insight into citizen solidarity in the case of Ukrainian refugees arriving in France outside metropolitan areas. His observations focus on the accommodation and housing assistance provided to them and examine the viability of this aid, particularly in rural areas. His research sheds light on the relationship between civil society as a provider and an institutional actor to determine how these bonds can be developed to facilitate the reception of migrants and the provision of humanitarian aid, particularly in rural areas and small towns, as well as on the outskirts of medium-sized towns.

The issue of hospitality is also central to **Sadio SOUKOUNA**'s research. She has reported on the empowerment trajectories of Malian refugees in Burkina Faso and the significance of social networks within their communities. Her ethnographic work describes exiles' abilities and active role in their trajectory and hospitality organisation. She also reports on the role of Malian refugees in Burkina Faso as intermediaries of humanitarian action. A role that contributes to their recognition and that they also assume for job training or improving survival conditions. In a context of power dynamics, tension, and inequalities stemming from their participation, her research reports on the practices and strategies employed by exiles to circumvent "migration triage systems, rules, and standards imposed by policies and institutions overseeing the asylum process in Burkina Faso"¹.

Leila DRIF's project reports on the issues of migrants who volunteer. After conducting a field survey on volunteer programmes in Lebanon by and for Syrian refugees², she investigates the specificities of migrants volunteering in the French reception system. She formulates an approach centred on the social aspect of integrating these volunteers/migrants and the relationships they forge within their respective non-profit organisations. From this, several themes emerge, such as the significance and implementation of the power to act, "peer-helping", and the dual role of volunteer/beneficiary. These are the research avenues that she explores in her fieldwork.

3. VOLUNTEER ACTION IN A TIME OF CRISIS

In response to the COVID-19 crisis and its social consequences, many citizens opted to engage in or intensify their participation in volunteer activities. However, the pandemic had a significant impact on the commitment of volunteers and their health and well-being. To comprehend, analyse, and anticipate these impacts affecting volunteers in France and abroad, the Foundation issued a call for applications under the title "Volunteers in an Epidemic Context" in March 2020.

Émilie MOSNIER raises concerns about the psychological impact of this crisis on Red Cross volunteers operating on the front line. Her research describes adaptive strategies and their relationship to social representations, the risk of professional exhaustion, and flagging volunteer commitment. By comparing the consequences and developments of the health and social crises triggered by the COVID-19 epidemic in Marseille and French Guiana, she underscores the significance of the sense of usefulness in a volunteer's dedication. For some volunteers, the sense of usefulness during the crisis has helped justify their commitment. At the same time, she observes a degree of volunteer overinvestment associated with a collective defence process. Health and social emergencies have led to a feeling of powerlessness called "compassion fatigue".

Annabelle JACCARD has also investigated the psychosocial impact of the health crisis on Red Crescent volunteers in the Comoros. She examined the direct repercussions of the COVID-19 epidemic and pointed to the volunteers' need for psychosocial support. Her field survey on the three Comoran islands exposes the existence of acute post-traumatic stress and social and relational malaise due to the general context of precarity. The health crisis had a substantial impact on volunteers. They were required to devise ways to cope with internal conflicts, community rejection, the lack of compensation despite promises, and harsh survival conditions.

Political scientist **Foued NASRI** examined volunteer actions and practices in French suburbs during the lockdowns. He observed and studied the distribution of food relief within and outside the scope of conventional non-profit organisations in

some Lyon suburbs. He wanted to grasp the dynamics of local support networks and their interaction with various humanitarian organisations. As part of his fieldwork, he reviewed the character and scope of these initiatives and the issues surrounding collective action and food relief. His results notably cast light on critical instrumental public figures who embody various organisations. The researcher describes the paradoxical relationship between the many volunteers required for food distributions and their absence from public view.

Considering the consequences of the COVID-19 crisis on non-profit and humanitarian practices, geographer **Anaïs TROUSSELLE** focused specifically on activities designed to help migrants during the lockdowns. She conducted a collaborative survey to determine how support structures for migrant populations in France have adapted to this specific context. Her work describes how these practices have changed due to the pandemic. A more limited scope of action, the more significant burden of emergencies, the sudden emergence of precarity, the deterioration and disruption of social bonds, and the breakdown of dialogue between beneficiaries and non-profit organisations have given rise to multiple adaptation strategies. These organisations then relied on using digital applications and inter-associative networks. Several windfall effects associated with funding were also identified. However, the overload of activities and the prioritisation of emergencies hampered their work. Added to these were difficulties in maintaining connections with outside parties, exacerbated relationships between those in a position of authority and subordinates, and complex relations with administrators.

“Those working for non-profit organisations may have experienced neglect from their supervisors or public authorities while operating in the field. However, before the pandemic, they already had to contend with a rigid migratory policy that limited the scope of their actions.”¹³

Extract from an article by Anaïs TROUSSELLE

According to Anaïs TROUSSELLE's participatory survey, collaboration is beneficial for advancing knowledge and deliberation with volunteers and those affiliated with non-profit organisations. The author argues that the importance of listening, as was demonstrated in the survey, should be used by non-profits to enhance their support activities through greater collaboration with research.

FOCUS

Strengthening the Link Between Research, Society and Volunteer Engagement: Bénévo'Lab

Volunteers and employees work on the front lines daily to alleviate suffering as part of the French Red Cross' mission. They are better placed to inform management of their operational challenges in the field. In 2020, the Foundation and the French Red Cross introduced the Bénévo'Lab programme to respond to their concerns and support them scientifically.

Each year, the Foundation calls all French Red Cross volunteers to solicit their ideas and identify the potential issues that the social sciences could explore. The most relevant proposals are then selected to be compiled into a research project by a researcher engaged by the Foundation to work alongside volunteers and offer insights on case situations for the development of new practices.

“Bénévo'Lab allows you to step back, observe and analyse the experience of the country's Red Cross volunteers and learn from their suggestions. In this manner, you can leverage their experience, which can eventually benefit all volunteers.”

Benoît PRIEUR, French Red Cross volunteer and awardee of the Bénévo'Lab programme

Since 2020, the Red Cross Foundation has launched four editions of its Bénévo'Lab programme and has received dozens of proposals from French Red Cross volunteers and employees on various topics. Seven research projects have received grants and have been conducted in collaboration with volunteers.

Since 2023, the Foundation has been developing a partnership with the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme de Montpellier (MSH-Sud) to address more subjects in collaboration with teacher-researchers and students.

RESEARCHER FOCUS

Feedback
on Bénévo'Lab

Thibaut BESOZZI's research was conducted as part of the Bénévo'Lab programme to determine whether homeless people could benefit from socio-aesthetic care and help them regain their physical health and sense of self.

Following the 2021 call for proposals issued to all French Red Cross volunteers and employees, a project submitted by Ibtissame AZRAIBI, a volunteer from Montauban, investigating the conditions for the successful socio-aesthetic care of homeless people was selected and subsequently presented to the scientific community, calling on them to take part in the project. To ensure, through this volunteer project, that those who carry out day-to-day fieldwork could benefit from the research findings and thus provide better services to those in need, Thibaut BESOZZI, the researcher for this call for proposals, collaborated directly with the volunteer who conceived this initiative.

"It had a novel format that was unfamiliar to me, even though, in the context of my research, I've always wanted to work with operatives, whether institutional staff or volunteer workers. However, I've rarely worked with volunteers."

What initially intrigued me was the possibility of gaining easy access to the field, thanks to Ibtissame, whom I had met in Toulouse and Montauban. A beautician by trade, she had experience providing professional beauty treatments and working as a Red Cross volunteer for many years, where she conducts outreach to the homeless, works in day-care centres, and provides aesthetic treatment care to the homeless who request it while living in shelters. Ibtissame allowed me to watch her. I observed her in practice to determine how her aesthetic care affects the homeless in their relationships and terms of their physical body.

*Research for all

What stands out next is how we co-constructed the research project with this volunteer. When conducting research and practising ethnography, we are aware that there is theoretical knowledge and conceptual knowledge from books and understanding that we call "practical", "indigenous", or even "from experience". Through our conversations, Ibtissame was able to benefit me with her professional knowledge and her experience in structuring the inquiries relating to this research project. Of course, this raised some issues. One must find common ground between theoretical and practical knowledge. One must discover how things connect so that a common path can lead toward mutual understanding. Some things must be decoded in a certain way. But thanks to her, I could understand upstream what prompted her inquiries and what she expected from this research. I could carry out this work without being disconnected from the practical application of her interventions in the field.

Finally, this experience has allowed me to discuss my investigation and review the results with Ibtissame. From the beginning to the results, we co-construct both upstream and downstream."



Thibaut BESOZZI
Doctor in Sociology

REFERENCES

¹ PAUGAM, Serge, "Introduction", in Paugam, Serge (éd.), *Le lien social*. Paris : Presses Universitaires de France, "Que sais-je ?", 2022, p. 3.

² CREDOC, *Fondation de France, Solitudes en France*, 2022.

³ The latest INSEE survey, dating from 2012, counted 81,000 homeless people accompanied to 31,000 children in municipalities with more than 20,000 inhabitants. See: "Enquête auprès des personnes fréquentant les services d'hébergement ou de distribution de repas – 2012" Insee Première no. 1455, "L'hébergement des sans-domicile en 2012", July 2013
In the 2022 annual report of the Fondation Abbé Pierre estimated that 300,000 people do not have a fixed address, including around 27,000 homeless people.

⁴ PAUGAM Serge, *L'Attachement social : Formes et fondements de la solidarité humaine*, Seuil, 2023.

⁵ DOS SANTOS, Lauriane, "Vieillesse : les limites du soutien familial", French Red Cross Foundation, *Pratiques & Humanité*, n° 18, December 2022, p.2

⁶ KLEIN Armelle, "Zoom Recherche", French Red Cross Foundation [online]

⁷ NIYONSABA Emmanuel, "Usages des TIC par les migrants âgés vulnérables : enjeux de soutien du bien-être", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, p.6

⁸ BONZI, Bénédicte "Le meilleur des hommes est le plus utile aux autres, Quand le désir d'être utile se heurte à l'utilitarisme", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n° 41, September 2022, p.15

⁹ FERRAND-BECHMANN, Dan, BAUMANN, Louise "La recherche sur le bénévolat en France et dans le monde", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation. Regard sur la littérature*, n° 1, February 2023, "Avant-propos", p.5

¹⁰ BONZI, Benedicte, Ibid . p.15

¹¹ SOUKOUNA, Sadio, "Politiques d'accueil et travail humanitaire des réfugiés maliens au Burkina Faso", *Migrations Société*, 2022/2 (No. 188), p. 153-168.

¹² DRIF, Leila. "Être réfugié et "volontaire" : les travailleurs invisibles des dispositifs d'aide internationale", *Critique internationale*, vol. 81, no. 4, 2018, p. 21-42.

¹³ TROUSSELLE Anaïs, "Covid-19, associations et migrations", French Red Cross Foundation, *Pratiques & Humanités*, n° 3, March 2022, p.1

References sourced from the French Red Cross Foundation

LIST OF THE FOUNDATION'S RESEARCH PAPERS

BONZI Bénédicte, "Le meilleur des hommes est le plus utile aux autres. Quand le désir d'être utile se heurte à l'utilitarisme", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°41, September 2022.

BRAVERMAN Louis, "Les dispositifs renforcés de soutien à domicile : quels apports à la lutte contre l'isolement ?", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°39, September 2022.

DOS SANTOS Lauriane, "Vieillir en famille. Une sociologie des risques sociaux associés au care familial en Polynésie française", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°53, June 2023.

FERRAND-BECHMAN Dan, "La recherche sur le bénévolat en France et dans le Monde", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°1, February 2023.

GERBIER-AUBLANC Marjorie, "L'improvisation humanitaire : potentialités et limites des solidarités citoyennes dans les camps de migrants à Calais et à Paris", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°15, May 2018.

MOSNIER Émilie and **NEVISSAS Olivia**, "Expériences, perceptions et ressources face à l'épidémie de COVID-19 chez les bénévoles de la Croix-Rouge française", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°49, December 2022.

SOUKOUNA Sadio, "De l'assistance à l'autonomisation : les trajectoires de (sur-) vie des réfugiés maliens au Burkina Faso", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°32, February 2020.

TROUSSELLE Anaïs, **LACRAMPE-CAMUS Itane**, **CORTES Geneviève** and **JOHANNEAU Cécile**, "Pratiques associatives d'aide aux personnes migrantes face à la COVID-19 : adaptations, ruptures et besoins renforcés", French Red Cross Foundation, *Les Papiers de la Fondation*, n°35, March 2022.



© Alex BONNEMAISON

THE FOUNDATION'S SOCIAL UTILITY

Recognised as a public utility institution, the Foundation is required, by definition, to carry out its mission in accordance with the principle of social utility. The Foundation was conceived as a bridge between researchers and practitioners or as a “third place” facilitating knowledge exchange between academia and civil society. It has had to continuously innovate, reinvent itself, and adopt new approaches to achieve its goals and enhance the usefulness of its research that serves as the foundation of its social utility.

1. EVALUATING THE SOCIAL UTILITY OF RESEARCH

The French Red Cross Foundation has evaluated its social utility through the thought-provoking ideas generated over the years. Through its extensive internal and external consultations and documentary research, the Foundation has notably adopted a set of methodological stances and an initial definition of its social utility to be reviewed as part of its regular evaluation procedure. It has defined its social utility as:

The support of high-level social science research, dedicated to addressing humanitarian and social needs and carried out by researchers in close proximity to crises, whose findings, widely disseminated and reviewed, contribute to the transformation of existing practices.

The evaluation of social utility has given rise to several questions and prompted the Foundation to clarify critical aspects of its stance on several essential points. Several of these queries cover more comprehensive deliberations pertaining to the significance of the terms employed and the theories underlying them.

6

Maximising the Foundation's **Social Utility**

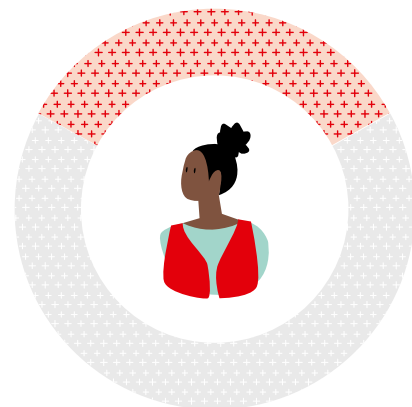


The Foundation is therefore faced with several choices:

- Favour the concept of social utility over social impact because the former is broader and covers a “variety of effects on the economy and society”¹ that pertain to the production processes and the outcomes of its activities.
- Evaluate the usefulness of the research it produces and the findings it disseminates, not only with the classical indicators of the academic world but also with customised indicators developed for humanitarian and social action as provided in its statutes.
- Evaluate the effects of research activities on strategic and operational planning by virtue of the Foundation's membership of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, whose mission is to place vulnerable people and human development at the centre of its commitment.

2. CO-CONSTRUCTING: DEVELOPING TARGETED RESEARCH PROJECTS

To safeguard the utility of research, the Foundation, over the years, has encouraged the collaborative development of research programmes with humanitarian and social actors, such as the French Red Cross. This approach involves engaging with operational personnel to define the issues that will guide researchers from the outset. Using this approach has the advantage of benefiting from their expertise and experience. At the same time, it sustains their commitment to the project and their sense of ownership of the programme's results.



“ Since 2018
1/3
of research
is directly initiated by the
International Red Cross and
Red Crescent Movement

FOCUS RCRC* JOINT PROGRAMME PROJECT

The MIGRALIM Project: Rethinking Food Aid

In 2018, the French Red Cross initiated a deliberation on food aid designated primarily for migrants in Île-de-France. Prior studies had reported on the precarity of migrants and their difficult access to health care that was considered attributable to factors such as cultural and language barriers and substandard living conditions. Under such conditions, ensuring access to nutritionally balanced food has proven to be a genuinely challenging public health concern.

The French Red Cross has decided to allocate funding to research to understand the role of food relief distributed to recently arrived migrants on the French mainland. The objective is to tailor the provision of aid and related volunteer work to their specific circumstances and to understand the cultural practices of migrant communities, and to identify their particular needs. For example, determining whether providing hot meals or food parcels is advantageous and finding the optimal locations and times for food distribution. The matter of the kinds of meals and seasonings to include is also an aspect to be considered.

Estelle FOURAT, an anthropologist specialising in food science, was selected and awarded a grant by the Foundation to conduct action research with migrants in Paris. She actively engaged in numerous food relief programmes and collaborated with regular Red Cross personnel, exercising complete independence during her investigation.

Her findings have led to adjustments in the provision of food relief. She demonstrates, for instance, that the use of seasonings derived from condiments, such as spices or broths, can be used to flavour food in accordance with people's tastes and eating habits to increase the likelihood that they will accept food relief. Furthermore, according to her studies, the concept of relief must be reconsidered within a more global context of social support. This entails transforming existing systems into functional “food reception” centres that consider the nutritional value and the socio-cultural and material dimensions of food to tailor it to people's specific needs.

¹ GADREY, Jean, PERRIN, Christelle, BENZAFARA, Manel, “Réalités et enjeux de l'utilité sociale et des indicateurs d'utilité sociale pour les organisations sociales et solidaires”, Gestion et Management public, vol.5, n° 2, 2016, p.60.

*Red Cross Red Crescent

3. DISSEMINATING: A RANGE OF PUBLICATIONS FOR ALL AUDIENCES

Enhancing the utility of research requires, first and foremost, making its findings freely accessible to as many people as possible. The French Red Cross Foundation has created several publications catering to specific audiences to promote the value of the knowledge generated by researchers.

Sharing Knowledge Generated with the Scientific Community

Les Papiers de la Fondation

Les Papiers is the Foundation's collection of scientific articles written by its award-winning researchers reporting on the results of their investigations. The articles are distributed in open access in accordance with the principle of the common good and translated into English to facilitate international review.

More than
50
issues
of the *Papiers de la Fondation* published

The Devenir humaine collection

This collection, edited by the Foundation in partnership with Karthala Editions, is a compilation of bilingual publications reporting on the deliberations and discussions during the Foundation's seminars and conferences in countries afflicted by one or more humanitarian crises. Karthala's distribution network makes these publications available in France and many bookstores in French-speaking Africa. The majority were written in collaboration with the Research Institute for Development.

5
volumes
published by
Éditions Karthala

Promoting Scholarly Publications

In addition to its own publications, the Foundation encourages grant-winning researchers to publish their findings in peer-reviewed journals. This ensures their results will be more broadly disseminated throughout the academic community and demonstrates their quality and scientific merit.

Over
20
publications
in peer-reviewed
journals

Disseminating Knowledge to Professionals and Decision-Makers

The *Pratiques et Humanités* series

Each issue of the *Pratiques et Humanités* series, formatted as a four-page leaflet, contains summaries of research findings. The intent is to make research results more accessible and clearly expressed by avoiding jargon or overly theoretical terms and with particular attention to the practical applications of the findings for advancing humanitarian and social practitioners.

26
issues
published in
the *Pratiques et Humanités* series

The *Humanitarian Alternatives* review journal

Humanitarian Alternatives is a bilingual journal with an international focus, created jointly by several foundations, including the French Red Cross Foundation. Through its collaboration with an extensive network of partner universities and institutions, its Editorial Committee ensures the independence of the journal's contributors, whose bilingual articles are freely accessible online. This research journal with a debate format is published three times a year.

23
issues
published since
2016

Lending Researchers a Voice in the Public Arena

The *En-Quête d'Humanité* podcast

To commemorate its ten-year milestone, the Foundation launched *En-Quête d'Humanité*. This podcast series is a forum for researchers to share their findings on the causes, prevention and relief of human suffering. This format enables researchers to inform the public of their latest findings, making them more accessible.

9
episodes
produced between
2022 and 2023



4. JOINING THE DEBATE: UNIFYING EVENTS

For the last ten years, the Foundation has fulfilled its commitment to create platforms for discussion and deliberation on the most pressing humanitarian and social issues. Dozens of large-scale events have been held in France and abroad, bringing together researchers, representatives of civil society and public institutions.



© Virginie TROIT

International Conference – Pillar of the Humanitarian Transition Programme

The Foundation organises an international conference each year in one of its priority research regions. This event draws together local and international humanitarian and social aid professionals, researchers, students, government representatives and United Nations agencies from the country in question. These conferences serve as a platform for some one hundred participants who engage in round table sessions to review specific topics and evaluate the practical implications of real-world situations and challenges affecting their region. They also allow attendees to discuss subjects outside of their areas of expertise.

Les Rencontres de la Fondation – A Time for Sharing Among a Class of Researchers

Les Rencontres, an event held in Paris, aims to bring together the Foundation's grant-winning researchers and professionals engaged in humanitarian and social action. The days are devoted to a comprehensive review and deliberations on various subjects that drive the Foundation's activities relative to the work carried out by grant recipients.

L'Instant recherche – the French-Language International Webinar

As part of its ongoing mission of sparking debate between researchers, civil society representatives, and public institutions since the most recent health crisis, the Foundation created the new videoconference event, *L'Instant recherche*, in 2020. It is an opportunity for specialists to meet and engage in free, unrestricted, yet demanding dialogue based essentially on the diversity of knowledge, practices, and guiding principles.

La Pause culture recherche – the Scientific Culture Rendezvous on the Red Cross Campus

In 2022, the French Red Cross Foundation, the French Red Cross and 21 (the Social Innovation Accelerator of the French Red Cross) created a new event titled *La Pause Culture Recherche* to facilitate connections and interactions between humanitarians and researchers. We aim to provide a concrete link between research and society based on feedback and collaboration between researchers, humanitarian and social professionals, and artists.

5. INNOVATING: POST-RESEARCH AND SOCIAL INNOVATION WORKSHOPS (APRIS)

After ten years of supporting research and aware of the obstacles to assimilating scientific evidence, the Foundation sought to investigate further the transmission of knowledge and support for social innovation. The practical application of research findings is not a foregone conclusion but the result of a complex process involving researchers and organisations at their institutional and operational levels.

How can research findings be translated into innovative practices and operational programmes? How can acquired knowledge be conveyed to those able to implement it? How can we support the innovation process of humanitarian and social actors?

To meet these challenges, in 2023, the Foundation launched APRIS (Ateliers post-recherche et d'innovation sociale), a series of post-research and social innovation workshops. This initiative, implemented through two pilot projects in Niger and France, aims to develop a multi-step methodology employing documentary reviews, preparatory interviews, collective intelligence sessions, etc. and for the Foundation, transitioning from a "classic" rationale of support for the production and promotion of research to a more ambitious dynamic of research and social innovation derived from research findings.

The PROGRESS Project and the First APRIS workshop

Between 2020 and 2022, the Foundation conducted a research initiative closely associated with the Programme Régional Genre Santé Sahel (PROGRESS) set up by the French Red Cross in partnership with the Niger Red Cross, the Malian Red Cross, and the Mauritanian Red Crescent. Its purpose is to enhance maternal and child health, sexual and reproductive health, and family planning in three regions of these three countries.

The Foundation has granted funding for the MIRE3S project (Renforcer les micro-réformes endogènes pour améliorer les services de santé sexuelle et reproductive dans trois pays du Sahel), directed by LASDEL (Laboratory for Studies and Research on Social Dynamics and Local Development), to support the PROGRESS programme. The MIRE3S project, which is focused on several scientific domains, seeks to provide National Societies with knowledge about their fields of intervention, thereby enabling them to reconsider existing approaches or construct new operational strategies.

In May 2023, the Foundation, in partnership with the Niger Red Cross and the French Red Cross, hosted the first “post-research and social innovation workshop” (APRIS) in Niamey. It gathered some fifteen representatives from various National Societies (project coordinators, technical specialists, volunteers, etc.) in different regions.

This pilot workshop led to several breakthroughs. In the first place, it revealed the productive collaboration between researchers and humanitarians. Research findings contribute to greater knowledge and comprehension of local norms and dynamics, resulting in a profound reorientation of certain programme activities. For instance, health worker training courses on “respectful and humanising care” have been adapted to account for instances of gender-based violence as documented by researchers.

In addition, this workshop led to the revised PROGRESS community mobilisation strategy in Zinder, Niger. The participants made a detailed review of the input and conclusions of the MIRE3S report. They announced its key messages through various communication channels and activities like radio broadcasts, mobile units, and “fireside chats”. The objective was

to shift the social norms and dynamics that concern women’s health and their ability to decide on matters that affect the right to their health. Following the transmission of these critical messages, the participants voted to determine the most appropriate ones. These will be integrated into the revised version of the community mobilisation strategy..



© Julien ANTOULY

6. COLLECTIVE ACTION: THE RC3 CONSORTIUM

Within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the French Red Cross Foundation actively creates research networks and a collective and collaborative research agenda. In conjunction with the International Federation of Red Cross Societies (IFRC) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), it has supported the development of the RC3 Consortium (Research Consortium of the Red Cross and Red Crescent). The Foundation has also served on the Consortium's Steering Committee since 2019.

The RC3 Consortium: Bringing Together Research Centres and Global Talent

Created in 2019, the RC3 Consortium (Red Cross and Red Crescent Research Consortium) is an open and voluntary network bringing together the Movement's existing research facilities and entities. To qualify, RC3 members must first satisfy the eligibility requirement of being wholly or partly engaged in conducting and promoting research focusing on humanitarianism. RC3 members work together to serve the entire international Movement by integrating research into the development of IFRC and ICRC objectives, missions, and strategic frameworks.

A Willingness to Align Operational Practices with Scientific Principles

Centres, foundations, research departments, academies, research hubs and laboratories are among today's eighteen entities that have joined forces within the RC3. Their methodological, geographical, and thematic diversity are a source of strength in collaborating on the significant challenges of the Movement pertaining to health, migration, climate change, and natural disasters. They offer National Societies a variety of resources and services, including scientific and analytical information, publishing outlets, event planning, and professional training. They also help build a solid scientific culture within the Movement, which is firmly rooted in an approach centred on those who benefit the most from its missions.

A Definition of Research

RC3 members define research as a process of addressing humanitarian issues from a scientific standpoint. Its purpose is to generate novel insights and formulate practical recommendations. Research activities can be conducted in collaboration with university partners, NGOs, or consulting firms. The scientific research reviewed by members and subsequently published must serve the Movement's cause and promote strategic debate relevant to current socio-humanitarian issues.



© Camille RAILLON

The Movement's first "Long Night of Research"



Organised jointly by the Red Cross and Red Crescent Research Consortium (RC3) and the IFRC Global Volunteering Alliance, the first edition of this event held in March 2023 was a resounding success attended by more than 500 salaried staff members and volunteers from around the globe and connected on every continent.

Bringing together the Movement's researchers and volunteers (non-salaried and salaried) for 24 hours – "around the globe and around the clock" – this event was devoted to volunteer practices and the future of volunteering.

Where and how do volunteers commit today?

What factors influence them to join as volunteers?

How can we keep them inspired and committed to the Movement's missions?

How can we safeguard their mental and physical health during conflicts and times of emergencies?

What new forms of volunteering are relevant for the 21st century?

MEMBERS OF THE RC3

Active Members:

- Asia Pacific Disaster Resilience Centre (South Korea)
- Canadian Red Cross – Health in Emergencies (Canada)
- Caribbean Disaster Risk Management Reference Centre
- Centre for Operational Research and Experience of the ICRC (Switzerland)
- Centre PIROI (Saint-Denis de La Réunion)
- French Red Cross Foundation (France)
- German Red Cross
- Global Disaster Preparedness Center (United States)
- Global First Aid Reference Center (France)
- Humanitarian Observatory of the Argentine Red Cross
- Interamerican Centre for Volunteering Development (the Americas)
- International Centre for Humanitarian Affairs – Kenya Red Cross
- International Review of the Red Cross (Geneva)
- Norwegian Red Cross (Norway)
- RCRC Global Migration Lab (Australia)
- Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Center (Netherlands)
- Turkish Red Crescent Academy (Türkiye)
- 510 Initiative of the Netherlands Red Cross

Associate Members:

- IFRC Psychosocial Center (Denmark)
- Livelihoods Resource Center (Spain)

OUR PARTNERS

Since 2013, the Red Cross Fund and the French Red Cross Foundation have forged solid partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders, including endowment funds, foundations, companies, and national and international institutions, among others, with whom they share the goal of rethinking responses to humanitarian and social crises through field experience. All aspire to rethink the responses to humanitarian and social crises using field science.

Whether financial, organisational, or service-oriented, in France or abroad, all forms of support, in their unique ways, contribute to the development of action on behalf of people who are the most vulnerable in the spirit of mutual capacity-building and sharing of talents.

The Foundation would like to thank its network of loyal partners.

Scientific and Educational Partners

- Center for Research and Action for Peace (CERAP)
- School of Advanced Studies in Social Sciences (EHESS)
- School of Advanced Studies in Public Health (EHESP)
- Catholic University of Central Africa (UCAC)
- Université de la Réunion
- Saint Joseph University of Beirut
- Senghor University of Alexandria
- Ben Gurion University of the Negev (Israel)
- Pastor Institute
- Maurice Halbwachs Center (CNRS/EHESS)
- International Humanitarian Studies Association (IHSA)
- Madagascar Institute of Political Studies
- Institute of Political Studies in Paris
- Institute of Research for Development
- ISTEK Business School Paris
- Paris School of International Affairs (PSIA)
- Sup de Création – Groupe INSEEC

International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• French Red Cross• Andorran Red Cross• Cameroonian Red Cross• Canadian Red Cross• Kenyan Red Cross• American Red Cross• Swedish Red Cross• Haitian Red Cross | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• International Federation of Societies of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC)• Global First Aid Reference Centre• IFRC Climate Center• International Center of Humanitarian Affairs (ICHA)• Red Cross Red Crescent Research Consortium (RC3) |
|--|---|

Institutional Partners

- Government of Monaco
- Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs (Crisis and Support Center)
- Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF)
- French Development Agency (AFD)

Funds, Foundations, and Companies

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Axa Research Fund• Compagnie Fruitière Fund• Claire and Francis Endowment Fund for Children• Crédit Coopératif Foundation• Christophe and Rodolphe Mérieux Foundation• Paris-Tech Mines Foundation• Décathlon Foundation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Solimut Foundation• Foundation of the Future for Medical Research• Foundation de France• Nestlé Foundation• AGIRC-ARRCO Group• VvV Group• Sanofi Group (Opella Healthcare France)• Unilever Group (Signal, Unilever France) |
|--|--|

Media and Visuals Partners

- Humanitarian Alternatives
- Karthala Editions
- The Conversation
- Le Monde diplomatique
- Radio France International (RFI)
- William Daniels
- Frédérique Jouval
- Hannah Reyes Morales

Patrons

- Bad Taste Bros
- Sistine Agency
- Hungry and Foolish Agency
- Hého Agency
- Devoteam Foundation
- Devoteam Customer Effectiveness
- Carmignac Foundation

The Foundation would like to thank **all the private donors** who have shown their trust over the years and whose generosity has enabled the emergence of new knowledge that will contribute to improved health and human living conditions.



© Caroline VITAGLIONE

“For the past ten years, the Foundation has been carrying out vital initiatives to promote action research in the fields of humanitarian aid and development through its research. The Government of Monaco is pleased to have awarded postdoctoral fellowships in the field of humanitarian transition to several women researchers. They have performed work that should rapidly improve the quality of humanitarian and development efforts extended to populations. In light of the prevailing politicisation of international aid and the erosion of International Humanitarian Law, the Foundation’s ambition to stimulate young university talent must be encouraged and supported.”

Bénédicte SCHUTZ, Director of International Cooperation of the Prince’s Government of Monaco.

“After more than ten years of experience in medical diagnostics, during which I implemented technological solutions designed for low- and middle-income countries and vulnerable populations in developed countries, the facts are clear. Technology alone cannot solve the challenges we face. For this reason, I support the French Red Cross Foundation, whose humanitarian and social work is fundamental in preparing decision-makers and beneficiary populations to accept necessary reforms.”

Philippe JACON, Regular Donor to the French Red Cross Foundation

“Whatever their field of activity, companies must continually adapt and renew themselves. This priority is achievable through close and constructive collaboration with the research sector, which can devise innovative and viable processes. The same holds for those engaged in philanthropy. Our foundations and associations must take a step back from time to time and utilise the insights and knowledge of the social sciences.”

Marie-Pierre FABRE, President of the Compagnie Fruitière Endowment Fund

“Our collaboration with the Foundation is essential for fostering a research-friendly culture within the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, promoting an evidence-based approach, and reconciling research and practice.”

Dr Halima SAADO, Director of Research and Learning at the International Center for Humanitarian Affairs (ICHA) of the Kenya Red Cross

“The Crédit Coopératif Foundation serves those involved in the social and solidarity economy (SSE) for a more equitable, humane, and environmentally friendly society. By supporting research on “SSE & Migrations” through the Red Cross Foundation, we contribute to producing useful knowledge that will cast light on this significant societal issue for field operatives.”

Christophe VERNIER, General Secretary of the Crédit Coopératif Foundation

FELLOWSHIP-RECIPIENT RESEARCHERS

Adam ABDYOU ALOU, Djane ADOU, Diane ALALOUF-HALL, Voahirana Tantely ANDRIANANTOANDRO, Mauricio ARANDA, Daniel Valérie BASKA TOUSSIA, Cristèle BERNARD, Thibaut BESOZZI, Bénédicte BONZI, Sonia BOUIMA, Jacky BOUJU, Louis BRAVERMAN, Chiara BROCCO, Séverine CARILLON, Fanny CHRISTOU, Alice CORBET, Arnaud DANDOY, Isabelle DELORME, Aïssa DIARRA, Samba DIARRA, Georges DJOHY, Ayoko Akouavi DOGBE FOLI, Lauriane DOS SANTOS, Amalia DRAGANI, Leila DRIF, Julie DUFLOS, Emmanuelle DURAND, Dima EL KHOURI, Alain EPELBOIN, Stéphanie ESPEJO ZEBALLOS, Francisca ESPINOZA, Cheikh FAYE, Dan FERRAND-BECHMANN, Marie FIERENS, Estelle FOURAT, Céleste FOURNIER, Gloria FRISONE, Cyrine GARDES, Roseline GBOCHO N'DA, Marjorie GERBIER-AUBLANC, Tamara GILES-VERNICK, Caterina GIUSA, Sadio BA GNING, Denys GORBACH, Jean-Marc GOUDET, Jérémie GROJNOWSKI, Christelle HOUNSOU, Aissata ASSANE IGODOE, Florence IHADDADENE, Annabelle JACCARD, Lukinson JEAN, Alvar JONES SANCHEZ, Ludovic JOXE, Armelle KLEIN, Jérôme KOUAKOU, Edouard Kouadio KOUASSI, Virginie LE MASSON, Joséphine LEMOUOGUE, Aimé Kouassi MALANHOVA, Stéphanie MALTAIS, Giovanni MATERA, Yves MAZABRAUD, Jean Emile MBA, Annabelle MOATTY, Emilie MOSNIER, Anne MULLER, Pierre Boris N'NDE, Foued NASRI, Modou NDIAYE, Emmanuel NIYONSABA, Léopold NOUFFEUSSE NGUEUTA, Mariama NOUHOU KOUTCHA, Isabelle PARIZOT, Marion PECHAYRE, Pierre-Louis ODONEL, Jordan PINEL, Odile PLATTARD, Kelly POULET, Christiane RAFIDINARIVO, Alexandra RAZAFINDRABE, Marilys Victoire RAZAKAMANANA, Cassandre REY-THIBAUT, Verena RICHARDIER, Laura RONDEAU-PACINDOVA, Roberta RUBINO, Nina SAHRAOUI, Djiby SAMBOU, Camille SCHMOLL, Anastasia-Alithia SEFERIADIS, Jeanne SEMIN, Alice SERVY, Tatiana SMIRNOVA, Sadio SOUKOUNA, Tetiana STOIANOVA, Aude STURMA, José-Carlos SUAREZ-HERRERA, Nicole TABET, Danielle TAN, Anaïs TROUSSELLE, Emeline UWIZEYIMANA, Maimouna YMBA, Toily Anicet ZRAN

AWARD RECIPIENTS*

Michel AGIER, Julienne ANOKO, Caroline ARNAL, Séverine AUTESSERRE, Yasmine BOUAGGA, Baptiste BROSSARD, Arnaud CAMPEON, Gilles CARBONNIER, Ryoa CHUNG, Élodie CONVERGNE, Assaf DAHDAH, Eleanor DAVEY, Alice DESCLAUX, Marie-Luce DESGRANDCHAMPS, Mélanie DUCLOS, Nicolas DUVOUX, Clara EGGER, Didier FASSIN, Thomas FOUQUET, Marion FRESIA, Tegwen GADAIS, Oumarou HAMANI, Dorothea HILHORST, Milena JAKSIC, Carolina KOBELINSKI, Firmin KRA, Annick LACROIX, Lynda LAVITRY, Maryse MARPSAT, Virginie MUNIGLIA, Vinh Kim NGUYEN, Jean-Pierre OLIVIER DE SARDAN, Alula PANKHURST, Serge PAUGAM, Kanto Jude RAMANAMAHEFA, Jocelyn RAUDE, Sandrine REVET, Mamane Sani SOULEY ISSOUFOU, Khoudia SOW, Abdoulaye TOURE, Cécile VAN DE VELDE, Jan VERLIN, Florence WEBER

**Fondation pour le lien social, French Red Cross Fund and French Red Cross Foundation*

BOARD OF ADMINISTRATORS

Cécile APTEL, Marc AUDRIT, Florence BIOT (representative of the IRD), Philippe DA COSTA (president), Françoise FROMAGEAU (vice-president), Philippe GUAY (treasurer), Françoise MALRIEU, Sylvie OLLITRAULT (representative of the EHESP), Hubert PENICAUD (secretary), Anne RASMUSSEN (representative of the EHES), Christine ROBICHON, Philippe RYFMAN, Philippe VIGNES (government commissioner)

Acknowledgements to Former Administrators*

Olivier BERNARD, Jean-Christophe COMBE, Caroline CUSSAC, Pr François BRICAIRE, Régine DUCOS, Johanna DURAND, Wolf-Dieter EBERWEIN, Pr Jean-Jacques ELEDJAM, Eloi FICQUET, Claude-Anne GAUTHIER, Mireille GAUZÈRE, Stéphane GOMPERTZ, Cécile GRIMALDI, Patrick HERMANGE, Danièle HERVIEU-LÉGER, Alessia LEFÉBURE, Guillaume LESAGE, Pr Jean-François MATTEI, Daniel MEYRAN, Judith MUELLER, Anne-France PITEAU, Pierre RICHARD, Robert SEBBAG, Pr Danièle SOMMELET, Jean-François VALETTE, Louis-Charles VIOSSAT

SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL

Malika AÏT-MOHAMED PARENT, Pr Francis AKINDÈS (vice-president), Laetitia ATLANI-DUAULT, Yvan CONOIR, Alain DAOU, Pr Christian de BOISSIEU, Pr Eric DELAPORTE (president), Pr Serge PAUGAM, Pr Gautier PIROTTE, Jocelyn RAUDE, Sandrine REVET, Marc-Henri SOULET, Pr Mahaman TIDJANI ALOU, Isabelle VONECHE-CARDI, Pr François BRICAIRE

Acknowledgements to Former Counsellors*

Pr Francis BONNET, Pr Jacques BRINGER (president), Eleanor DAVEY, Mireille GUIGAZ, Dominique KEROUEDAN, Pr Jean-François MATTEI (président), Isabelle POLISSET-WHITEHOUSE

**French Red Cross Fund (2013-2017) and French Red Cross Foundation (2018-2023)*

ASSOCIATED EXPERTS

François AUDET, Catherine BARON, Francis BONNET, Ghislaine DOUCET, Jean-Pierre DOZON, Alain EPELBOIN, Dan FERRAND-BECHMANN, Eloi FICQUET, Thomas FOUQUET, Marion FRESIA, Pr Jean-Philippe GALAN, Tamara GILES-VERNICK, Pr Meglena JELEVA, Cheikh KANE, Alessia LEFEBURE, Annabelle MOATTY, Isabelle PARIZOT, Dolorès POURETTE, Nina SAHRAOUI, Danièle SONDAG, Laurent VIDAL, Anicet Toily ZRAN

2023 TEAM

Julien ANTOULY, Louise BAUMANN, Badreddine EL MAROUDI, Vincent LEGER, Laurine MARTINOU, Maïta PALLU, Quynh-Nga PHUNG, Camille RAILLON, Virginie TROIT (director general), Caroline VITAGLIONE

Acknowledgements to Former Staff Members and Students*

Nesrine AOUINTI, Manon ARNAUD, Margaux BARBIER, Marina BATISTA, Louise BERTHON, Cécile BICHOT, Anna BLOUET, Marion BOILLOT, Camille BOUDOIRE, Ilana BRIE, Nicolas CADIOT, Aglaë CAPERAN, Shiana CROSBY, Amine DJOUADI, Marine DONDAINE, Marc-William DORLYS, Sébastien DORMOIS, Lila DUBREUIL, Mariama GANGUE, Sarah GHOUNDALE-PERROUD, Julie JARNO, Gwendoline PELTIER, Anastasia PORRET, Rémi REBOUX, Marco SACCHI, Diane SAUVAGNAC, Clémence SCHWEITZER, Amélia VIGUIER

Acknowledgements to Experts Who Contributed Voluntarily

Ronald BOUCHER, Tristan CHAFFORT, Bénédicte CHARPENTIER, Soon GODARD, Anne LE CORRE, François MACQUET, Louis PLATIAU, Laurent THONG VANH

**French Red Cross Fund (2013-2017) and French Red Cross Foundation (2018-2023)*



Contact

French Red Cross Foundation
21 Rue de la Vanne
CS 90070
92120 Montrouge Cedex
+33 1 40 71 16 34

Head Office:
95 Rue Michel-Ange
75016 Paris
www.fondation-croix-rouge.fr



Essentiel scientifique

10 Years of Research: Going to the Heart of Vulnerabilities

L'*Essentiel scientifique* chronicles ten years of the life of the Foundation that we wanted to share with you through this publication, which lies midway between a narrative and a scientific synopsis. It seeks to mutually explore and understand various world communities. It is the fruit of an adventure built on an assemblage of collective knowledge and continuous dialogue with those engaged in the field, whether researchers, humanitarian practitioners, first aid workers, or social action volunteers. They have provided insights into their practices and methodologies and their efforts on behalf of those who are most vulnerable.

This compilation of articles also reflects a commitment to cultivating equality and diversity to advance toward a more collaborative research environment that prioritises action, ethical considerations, and inclusivity. Bringing ten years of research to the forefront of discussions serves as a meeting point for people from the social sciences, professional sectors, and the academic world, languages and concepts, experiences, and methodologies to engage with and reach out to people who are vulnerable or have experienced vulnerability, irrespective of our diverse backgrounds. To guide us towards sustainable solutions, the book takes us through the ideas and debates stimulated by the Foundation and its international community of researchers and practitioners engaged in humanitarian and social action and who form the basis of its social utility.

The French Red Cross Foundation is a recognised public utility institution committed to supporting humanitarian and social action research. Its vision aligns with that of the French Red Cross: to promote scientific knowledge, ethical reflection and social innovation to aid the most vulnerable in France and worldwide.

www.fondation-croix-rouge.fr

978-2-9590302-2-2



9 782959 030222