



Media and aid organisations: a relationship at stake

Credits	2 credits ECTS
Dates	22 April – 3 May 2024
Format	Online (combination of self-study time and live sessions). Live sessions are mandatory and take place 2-3 times a week, usually in early afternoon CET <i>Online course requires 20-25 hours of dedicated work per week. We recommend that participants allow at least 50% of their time for the course and adapt their professional activity accordingly.</i>
Language	English
Fees	CHF 1'700
Coordinator	Dr Valerie Gorin – valerie.gorin@unige.ch

Course overview

Short description

The relationship between aid agencies and international/local media is often ambivalent yet vital for public and operational outcomes. This course explores the theoretical and practical implications of this challenging relationship. The programme focusses on the two sides of the interaction: the impact of media attention in a changing media environment, as well as public communications by aid agencies. It offers key insights of the role of local and international media in reporting humanitarian contexts, the visual politics of aid framed by ethical codes of conduct, and how to use audience and media landscapes for operational outcomes. Overall, the course questions the collaboration between aid and media organisations by adopting a cross-professional dialogue and a more ethical approach in a media landscape influenced by digital networks.



Objectives of the course

At the end of the course, you will be able to:

- characterize the specificities of humanitarian communications
- assess the concept of “media power” and the logics of media attention and coverage
- evaluate the challenges of media relations and the opportunities for humanitarian reporting
- understand the international, regional and local media landscapes, including digital media
- execute basic media training (media interviews)
- examine humanitarian representations and the visual politics of aid
- analyse the ethical and deontological outcomes of media relations and messaging

Workload

Around 20-25 hours of work each week, including:

1. Asynchronous self-study activities (such as case studies, videos, recorded slideshows, readings, etc.)
2. Synchronous live sessions

Thematic structure of the course

- Days 1-2: Introduction to humanitarian communications and the vital relationship between media and aid organisations
- Day 3. Media-driven humanitarian assistance, humanitarian journalism and crisis reporting
- Days 4-5: The new media ecology in the age of digital networks
- Day 6: Media mapping and audience analysis
- Day 7: media training
- Days 8-9: Ethical challenges in humanitarian communications
- Day 10: New challenges: fake news and disinformation



Prerequisites

Audience

- Professionals in the humanitarian, development or social sector looking to develop their competencies in media and public relations
- Professionals from other sectors (journalism, marketing, PR, policy-making, philanthropy) who wish to increase their understanding of humanitarian communications and crisis reporting
- Graduate students with relevant volunteer or intern experience (2-3 years), looking to undertake a postgraduate course to explore the specificities of media and humanitarian collaborations

Distance Learning

- Broadband/high speed connection - 2.5 Mbps minimum.
- Please note that most weekly content and activities is accessible via phone, but a PC/laptop/tablet is preferred
- microphone and webcam

Admission requirements

1. a university qualification (Bachelor's degree or equivalent)
2. at least three years of relevant professional experience
3. excellent command of English
4. motivation working in the humanitarian sector