



The CCHN World Summit on Frontline Humanitarian Negotiation 2022

Geneva, Switzerland
1-3 November 2022

2022
CCHN World Summit
on Frontline Humanitarian Negotiation

Co-sponsored by:



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
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Département fédéral des affaires étrangères DFAE
Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA



Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
PART 1	5
The road to the CCHN World Summit 2022	5
1.1 Shaping the agenda through humanitarian negotiators' real-life challenges	6
PART 2	8
"Humanitarian Negotiations in 2040". Three days of reflecting, learning and sharing	8
2.1 Opening panel: "Frontline Humanitarian Negotiations in 2040: Finding our way together"	9
2.2 Roundtables and other thematic sessions	11
Roundtable 1: Collaboration between humanitarian agencies and negotiating common positions	11
Roundtable 2: The impact of misinformation and disinformation when building trust and gaining acceptance	11
Roundtable 3: At the intersection of diplomacy and frontline negotiations in protracted crises	12
Roundtable 4: Technology, humanitarian action and negotiations	12
2.3 "Human library" sessions	13
2.4 Workshops and simulations	13
2.5 Shared reflections	14
2.6 Donor Forum	14
2.7 Exhibition and networking	15
PART 3	16
"Finding our way together": Outcomes and next steps	16
3.1 Identifying key negotiation trends for 2040	17
PART 4	19
Annex	19
The World Summit 2022 agenda	20
Figures	
The Summit in numbers	4
The CCHN community of practice at the World Summit	7
Participants' feedback	22

Credits

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Executive Summary

In twenty years' time, the humanitarian sector will face different challenges from those we witness today. The COVID-19 pandemic has recently shone a light on the fragility and interdependence of global humanitarian structures; major challenges linked to climate change, protracted conflicts, new technologies, or financial crises will put additional strain on those structures and test the resilience of governance institutions worldwide.

Despite this constantly evolving scenario, it is quite likely that twenty years from now humanitarians will still be required to build trust with a range of counterparts to gain access to communities in crisis and provide humanitarian assistance. They will be expected to negotiate a response to these crises and be prepared to find compromises between their organisations' mandates and operational needs. What other emerging trends will impact their negotiation efforts? How will they acquire the skills, knowledge and tools to prepare for the challenges lying ahead?

Co-sponsored by the governments of Switzerland and Germany, the CCHN World Summit on Frontline Humanitarian Negotiation 2022 was a unique opportunity to come together and reflect – as a

community of practice and beyond - on how to effectively respond to future crises. The hybrid format, with sessions in Geneva being live streamed on an interactive platform, allowed to bring together more than 700 participants coming from 100 countries and over 300 organisations; half of the people in attendance were field practitioners connecting or flying in from some of today's most complex humanitarian contexts. This diversity resulted in an enriching variety of perspectives and approaches.

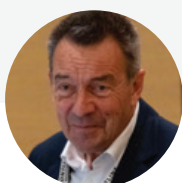
The event design benefitted from the contribution of hundreds of members of the CCHN's frontline negotiators community of practice, who were consulted over the course of the year about their experiences, concerns, practices and forthcoming skills development needs. The outcome of this co-creation process was a well-rounded agenda featuring not only thematic discussions around the community members' main topics of interest, but also practical workshops, negotiation simulations, storytelling, a private session for donor representatives, brainstorming sessions on scenario planning, networking opportunities and an exhibition.

The CCHN World Summit brought together individuals willing to share their perspectives and to celebrate their differences as a source of value; a clear indication that the remedy for complex challenges can be found in the diversity of practices and the ability to learn from each other rather than the promotion of single policy models and common principles.

A small step in a much broader cycle of shared reflections, the 2022 Summit will nurture continued conversations on the role of humanitarian negotiation – and of the CCHN community of practice – in contributing to humanitarian efforts worldwide.

"I see a big transformation of warfare ongoing. The spaces in which war is fought are no longer just air, land and sea; but also cyberspace, perception space, and public narrative space. Frontlines will be everywhere. (...) And in these complex and evolving environments, frontline negotiators play a critical role as incubators for peace."

Peter Maurer,
former ICRC President and Chair
of the CCHN Governing Board



Joëlle Germanier – Director,
Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiation

The 2022 Summit

in numbers

1,750 APPLICATIONS
TO PARTICIPATE



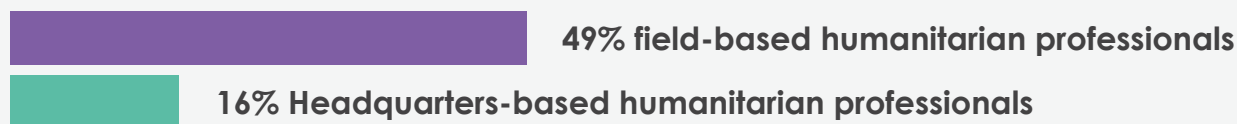
220 ATTENDEES
IN GENEVA



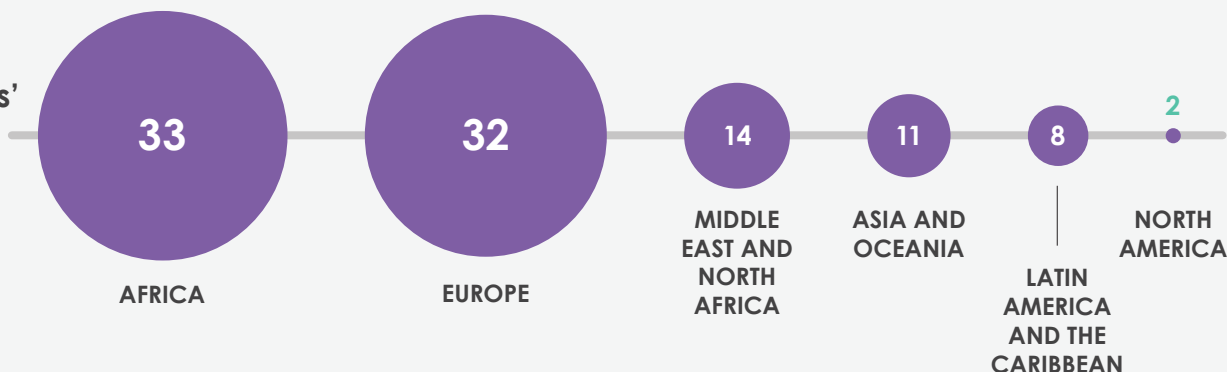
530 ATTENDEES
ONLINE

45% MEMBERS OF THE CCHN
COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

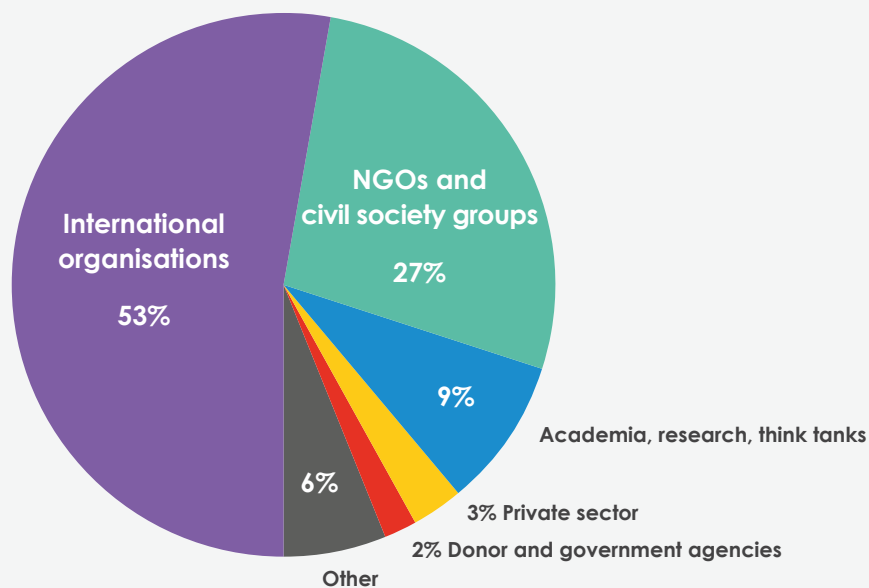
PARTICIPANTS
CAME FROM... 100 COUNTRIES 300+ ORGANISATIONS



Participants'
region of
origin in %



Participants' sector



The road to the CCHN World Summit 2022





Shaping the agenda through humanitarian negotiators' real-life challenges

As the driving force of the CCHN, its community of practice plays a central role in developing negotiation tools, methods and frameworks that can help practitioners across the sector prepare for tomorrow's negotiations. It was therefore essential for the CCHN World Summit agenda to be shaped around the community's current negotiation practices and outlooks on future trends.

Between March and October 2022, the CCHN team travelled across 25 countries and organised virtual or hybrid meetings for community members to connect, exchange, and discuss any operational issues impacting their work. The members provided input on the challenges they saw lying ahead, as well as on the skills and tools they felt they would need to face them; they brought forth a collective voice from the field, to discuss the terms and objectives of their yearly assembly, and to guide the forthcoming work of the CCHN.

Event locations were selected based on the number of engaged community members in a certain humanitarian context and all gatherings took place under the leadership of the local members. The Facilitators' Annual Meeting also contributed to the reflection, bringing several of the most active CCHN members to Geneva in April 2022.

These 'Community Meetings' saw the participation of hundreds of practitioners, whose unique insights and local expertise nurtured a rich three-day agenda reflecting the state-of-the-art of the humanitarian negotiations domain. The CCHN World Summit also represented a celebration of the CCHN community of practice and its members in their ability to share with each other, respect their differences, and explore new learning opportunities.

The CCHN community of practice in 2022



5,000

HUMANITARIAN
PROFESSIONALS



130+

COUNTRIES



400+

ORGANISATIONS

6-10

AVERAGE YEARS
OF EXPERIENCE

85%

ARE BASED IN
FIELD OFFICES

Some key themes identified by members during the 2022 Community Meetings:

- Negotiating with people on the move
- Negotiating with armed groups and criminal gangs
- Misinformation, disinformation and hate speech
- Impact of technology on humanitarian negotiations
- Evaluating access and the impact of compromises
- Diversity and legitimacy within negotiation teams
- Managing adversarial negotiations
- Negotiating under pressure and in high-stakes contexts

During 2022, CCHN community members provided input on the challenges they saw lying ahead and on the skills needed to face them. Their input helped shape the World Summit agenda.



PART 2

“Humanitarian Negotiations in 2040”. Three days of reflecting, learning and sharing

Hybrid sessions were translated in real-time into English, French, Spanish, Arabic and Portuguese. By connecting online and in-person users, the platform provided another opportunity to extend the debate beyond each session's duration.

2.1 Opening panel: “Frontline Humanitarian Negotiations in 2040: Finding our way together”

Anastasia Kahala Atassi,
CCHN community member and
Public Information Officer - UNOCHA



The 2022 edition of the CCHN World Summit was a forward-looking, collective reflection exercise setting the foundations for effective humanitarian negotiations in the coming years. The event's and opening panel's theme - "Humanitarian negotiations 2040: Finding our way together" - symbolised an effort to broaden and further develop on those reflections, inviting practitioners from across the sector to contribute to the conversation through diverse experiences and viewpoints.

When you think of Frontline Humanitarian Negotiation in 2040, what words come to your mind?

During the first day of the Summit, participants (both online and in-person) were invited to share their thoughts as to the future of humanitarian negotiation through an interactive exercise.





Local and global outlooks came together during the Summit's many thematic sessions, thanks to the contribution of CCHN community members from different world regions.

The opening session saw the participation of a diverse panel of speakers, bringing their expertise as agency leaders, grassroots practitioners or donor representatives in identifying some of the transformations that are to impact the current traditional humanitarian model.

Opening panel speakers:

- Welcome speech: **Joëlle Germanier**, Director – CCHN
- **Annalisa Conte**, Director of the WFP Geneva Global Office – UN World Food Programme (WFP)
- **Stephen Cornish**, Director General – Médecins Sans Frontières Switzerland
- **John Ede**, President and Humanitarian Coordinator – Ohaha Family Foundation, Abuja
- **Anastasia Kahala Atassi**, Public Information Officer – UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), Gaziantep
- **Peter Maurer**, former ICRC President and Chair of the CCHN Governing Board
- **H.E. Ambassador Deike Potzel**, Director General for Crisis Prevention, Stabilisation, Peace Building and Humanitarian Assistance – German Federal Foreign Office

- **Gillian Triggs**, Assistant High Commissioner for Protection – UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- **Aśka Warchał-Beneschi**, Advisor – Internationaler Bund Polska, Warsaw
- Moderator: **Manisha Thomas**, Geneva Representative – Women's Refugee Commission



“We are stronger together. We need to learn from our experience with COVID, from civil society, from the private sector; and we need the voices of displaced people at the table.”

Gillian Triggs,
Assistant High Commissioner for Protection
– UNHCR



2.2 Roundtables and other thematic sessions

Collaboration across agencies, the impact of mis- and disinformation in humanitarian contexts, the intersection of negotiation and diplomacy, but also dealing with criminal gangs, healthcare in crises, migration and much more: Summit participants had their pick among four roundtables and nine thematic sessions over three days, mirroring today's most crucial challenges for frontline negotiators on the ground. Agency leaders and senior humanitarian managers were joined on stage by negotiation experts, academics and field professionals during insightful conversations that combined both high-level and grassroots perspectives.



Roundtable 1:

Collaboration between humanitarian agencies and negotiating common positions



How can humanitarians collaborate with each other and with professionals from agencies? How do they shape joint strategies and positions to the benefit of the negotiation process? The session provided guidance in managing high-level collective negotiations on behalf of humanitarian communities, from both agency and inter-agency perspectives.

Roundtable 2:

The impact of misinformation and disinformation when building trust and gaining acceptance

In an era where mis- and disinformation have become one of the major threats to humanitarian operations worldwide, the session explored their impact on shaping the context of humanitarian negotiation, in cyberspace and at community level. It also provided some practical tools to monitor and counter the negative effect of this phenomenon on aid work.



Roundtable 4:

Technology, humanitarian action and negotiations

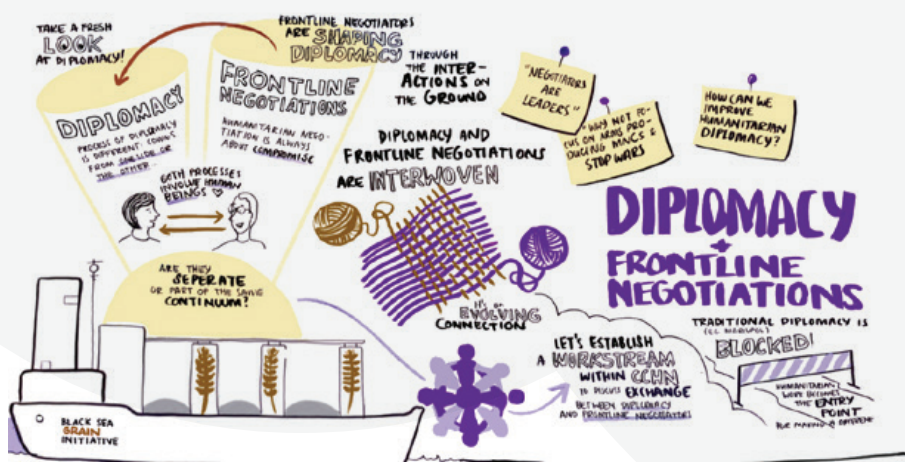


The use of increasingly complex technology in humanitarian work has become the norm, expanding opportunities in negotiations but also resulting in additional challenges and dilemmas for professionals on the ground. The session explored these dilemmas as they create new, more abstract “frontlines”.

Roundtable 3:

At the intersection of diplomacy and frontline negotiations in protracted crises

How can diplomacy support frontline humanitarian negotiations? This roundtable session explored the tensions and opportunities between the two areas and the complex diplomatic architecture of humanitarian aid. The conversation was led by both diplomats and frontline humanitarian negotiators.





The Summit was an opportunity to gain practical skills or exchange knowledge through workshops, simulations, and “human library” sessions.

2.3 “Human library” sessions

Immersing oneself in personal stories, as if flipping the pages of a book: this was the purpose of the two “human library” sessions which took place on the first day of the Summit. Participants listened to real-life experiences shared in three languages by field negotiators from different professional backgrounds and regions; they could ask questions and delve deeper into the everyday work of humanitarian negotiators negotiating access and protection for people in crisis.



2.4 Workshops and simulations

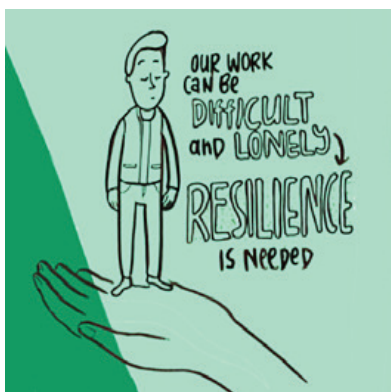
The Summit was also an opportunity to gain new practical skills or put existing ones to the test. Attendees did so during a series of workshops focused on the importance of language in a negotiation, managing the pressure of high-stakes negotiations, or releasing it through artistic expression. Two in-person simulations allowed humanitarian professionals to discover and try out good practices on dealing with difficult counterparts or facing dilemmas on the frontlines.

“It was helpful to learn more about strategising, because high-pressure situations are improvised. Simulations are helpful to put theory and practice into a specific context.”

Anne Boomsma,
CCHN community member



2.5 Shared reflections



The CCHN World Summit agenda provided room each day to take stock of the conversations had, share personal input, identify upcoming trends, or propose additional themes for discussion. This culminated during the third and last day of the Summit, when participants animated a day-long series of joint reflections and “sense-making” exercises (learn more in Part 3 of the report).

skills in the humanitarian sector by creating a privileged space for institutional donors to redefine their roles and become further involved in the CCHN community of practice.

Participants discussed current trends and patterns impacting frontline negotiations, explored practical ways to support skills development among humanitarian workers through long-term partnership and resource mobilisation, and reflected on the actions needed to advance the domain of frontline humanitarian negotiations.

“Humanitarian negotiators are one of the best tools to gain access to those in need. (...) Let me thank you for the essential work you are doing: humanitarian assistance depends on the work you are doing.”

H.E. Ambassador Deike Potzel,
Director General for Crisis Prevention,
Stabilisation, Peace Building and
Humanitarian Assistance – German
Federal Foreign Office



2.6 Donor Forum



Hosted by World Summit co-sponsors Switzerland and Germany, the Donor Forum welcomed representatives of ten governments and humanitarian donor agencies during a closed session. The Forum aimed to mobilise resources and efforts around the development of negotiation

2.7 Exhibition and networking

Summit participants could engage with various CCHN partner organisations from the private sector and academia and professional trainers working around the negotiation and humanitarian domains during the lively networking fair. An installation in the same space presented the evolution of the CCHN community of practice since its inception. Two table stands allowed attendees to discover the newly released podcast “Frontline Negotiators: Stories from the Field” (a collection of personal stories shared by members of the CCHN community) as well as artwork created in the context of the “Art and Negotiation” project initiated by the CCHN community in Latin America.

List of exhibiting organisations

- Agence des Négociateurs (ADN) – France
- Anthropos Deep Security – Switzerland
- Center for Experiential Negotiation and Applied Diplomacy (CENAD) – Belgium
- Clingendael Institute – The Netherlands
- Geneva Centre for Humanitarian Studies – Switzerland
- Initiatives of Change – Switzerland
- International Committee of the Red Cross / Virtual Reality Project – Switzerland
- Network on Humanitarian Action (NOHA) / Ruhr-Universität Bochum – Germany
- Norwegian Refugee Council – Switzerland
- Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) – Norway
- University of Hamburg – Germany.



Listen to the CCHN podcast “Frontline Negotiators: Stories from the Field”:

frontline-negotiations.org/podcast

Learn more about the community-led “Art and Negotiation” project:

bit.ly/CCHN-art-negotiation





Graphic harvesting is the real-time recording of complex information through drawings that are easier to understand and elaborate. During the Summit, graphic harvester Anna-Lena Schiller produced a six-meter-wide mural that visually narrates key conversations among participants, important thoughts shared by speakers, and other meaningful moments during the event.

PART 3

“Finding our way together”: Outcomes and next steps

3.1 Identifying key negotiation trends for 2040

The third and final day of the Summit was dedicated to making sense of the main learnings of the Summit and identifying ways forward as a community of practice. Humanitarian negotiators were at the very centre of the conversations, offering them a space to delve into topics which matter to their own work – or to propose additional themes which had not been discussed during the previous days – with a view to painting a portrait of current needs as well as future trends and patterns.

Through the horizontal sharing of experiences, Day Three truly offered a glimpse of what the humanitarian community will look like in the future: a more connected, more collaborative network of professionals anchored in local practices, sharing a joint passion and thirsty to explore new approaches.

Among the many reflections, community members took part in a “sensemaking” exercise (a process by which people give meaning to their collective experiences to guide decision-making). Participants were invited to mention in writing some of the humanitarian trends they’re witnessing in the sector and for which we should get ready as a community of frontline negotiators.

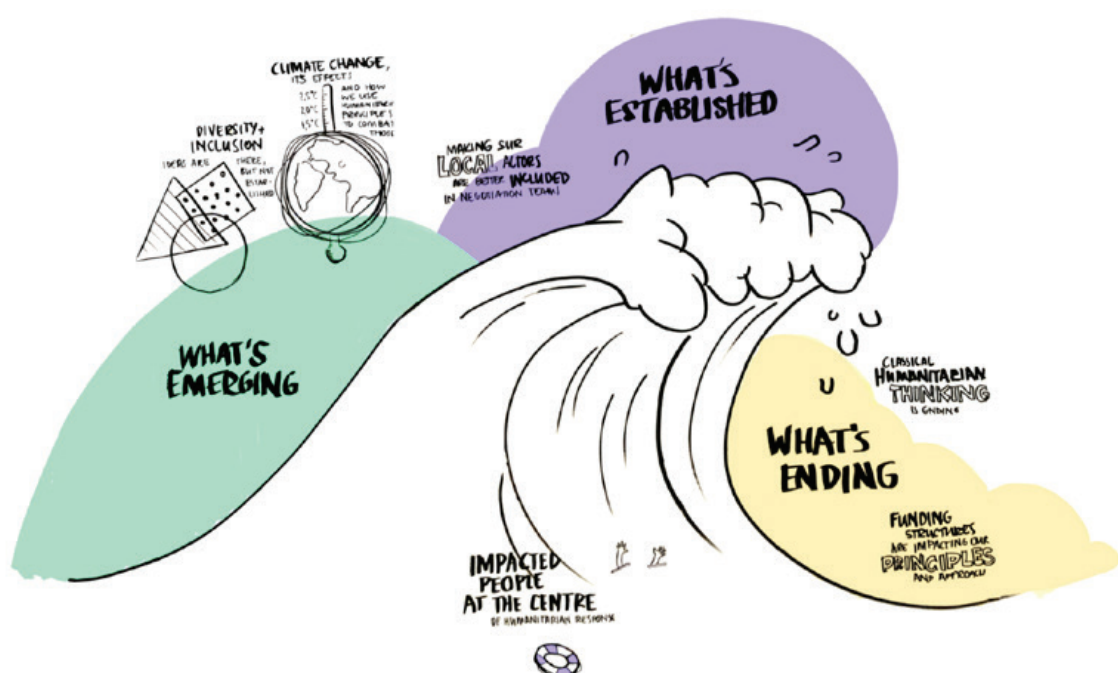
“We should adapt the mechanisms and systems we are using now so that we can use them in a world that is completely different than even 10 years ago.”

Annalisa Conte,
Director of the WFP Geneva Global Office
– UN World Food Programme (WFP)



Some of the emerging or newly established trends identified:

- Multiplication of actors sharing the humanitarian space
- Shifting humanitarian frontlines
- Moving away from silos
- Diversity and inclusion in negotiation teams



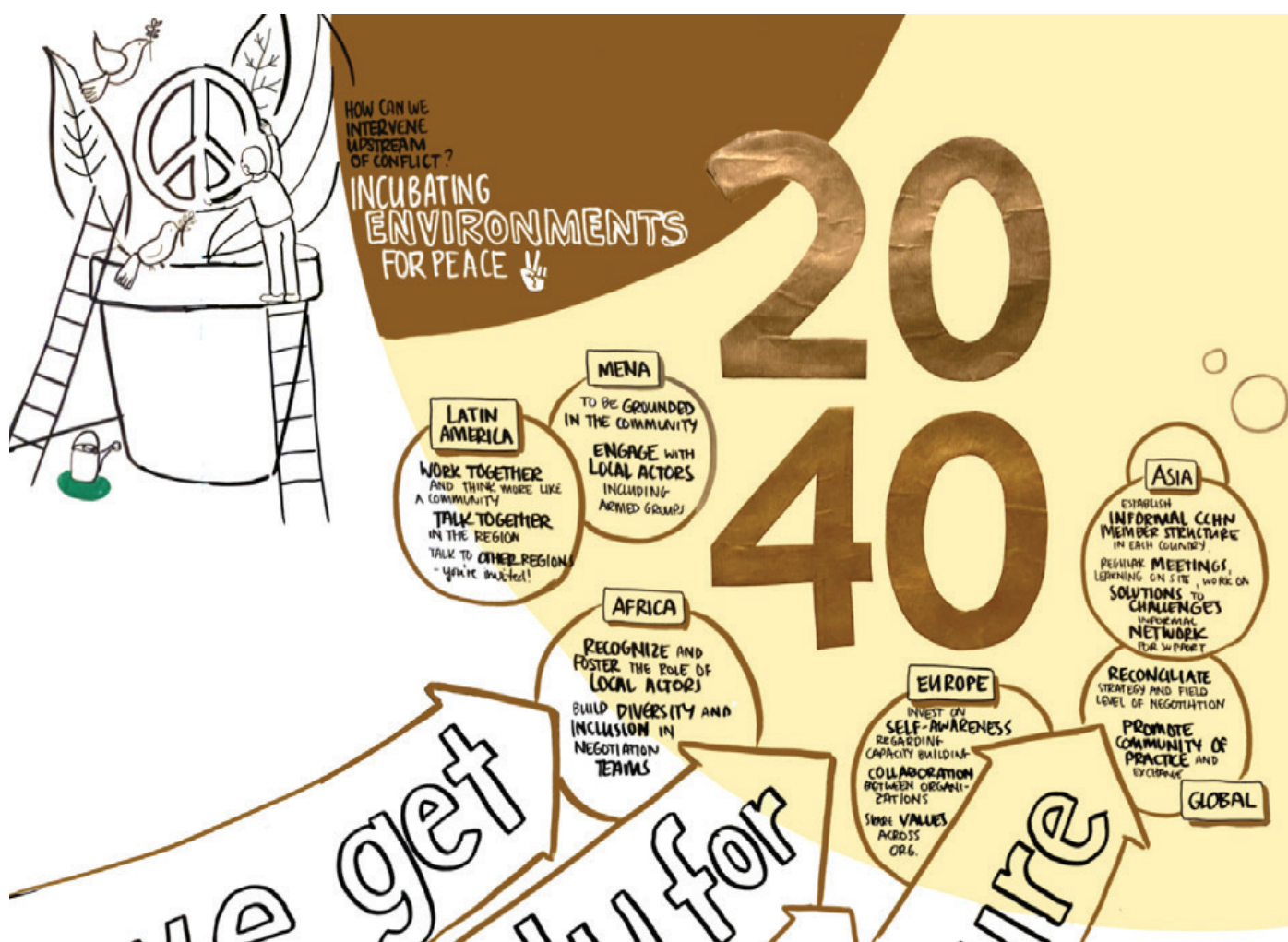
Some of the established trends identified:

- Cyberspace, technologies, mis-/disinformation and artificial intelligence
- Increased and mixed movements of people
- Climate change
- The perceived hierarchy in assistance and protection needs
- New forms of collaboration and partnerships across the sector
- Putting the voice of affected communities at the center
- New sources of funding and mechanisms

Some of the weakening or ending trends identified:

- The future of humanitarian principles
- Dominance of international actors over first responders
- Programs that do not consider the voices of affected communities
- “Political humanitarianism”
- From reactive to proactive humanitarian response

Reflecting on how to best prepare for some of these developing trends, members of the community of practice in each world region identified one or two collective actions they aim to take in 2023 (find them mentioned in the drawing). The results of these rich conversations will inform the community’s priorities starting in 2023.



PART 4

Annex





Event agenda – OVERVIEW

The full agenda, including session descriptions and speaker information, is available online.
Scan the QR code above or download the app [CCHN World Summit 2022](#) (iOS, Android).






















Private session, upon invitation only






Hybrid session – also livestreamed on the interactive platform / on the app

TIMEZONE: All times indicated are CET (GMT+1)

DAY ONE Tuesday 1 November				
09:00-11:00	<div> OPENING OF THE WORLD SUMMIT</div> <div>Frontline Humanitarian Negotiations in 2040: Finding our way together</div> <div>Room: Ballroom A</div>			
11:00-11:30	<div>COFFEE BREAK</div> <div>Live exhibition and networking</div> <div>Foyer D/E</div>		<div>NEGOTIATION SIMULATION</div> <div>Facing the challenges and dilemmas on the frontlines</div> <div>Foyer D/E</div>	
11:30-13:00	<div> ROUNDTABLE 1</div> <div>Collaboration between humanitarian agencies and negotiating common positions</div> <div>Room: Ballroom A</div>	<div> ROUNDTABLE 2</div> <div>The impact of misinformation and disinformation when building trust and gaining acceptance in communities</div> <div>Room: Paris</div>	<div>HUMAN LIBRARY</div> <div>Meet frontline negotiators and hear their personal stories from the field</div> <div>Rooms: Rome + Madrid</div>	<div> DONOR FORUM</div> <div>Closed session upon invitation</div> <div>Room: Lisbonne</div>
13:00-14:30	<div>LUNCH BREAK</div> <div>Live exhibition and networking</div> <div>Foyer D/E</div>			
14:30-16:00	<div> ROUNDTABLE 3</div> <div>At the intersection of diplomacy and frontline negotiations in protracted crises</div> <div>Room: Ballroom A</div>	<div> ROUNDTABLE 4</div> <div>Technology, humanitarian action and negotiations</div> <div>Room: Paris</div>	<div>HUMAN LIBRARY</div> <div>Meet frontline negotiators and hear their personal stories from the field.</div> <div>Rooms: Rome + Madrid</div>	<div> WORKSHOP</div> <div>Pressure management</div> <div>Room: Lisbonne</div>
16:00-16:30	<div>COFFEE BREAK</div> <div>Live exhibition and networking</div> <div>Foyer D/E</div>		<div>NEGOTIATION SIMULATION</div> <div>Facing the challenges and dilemmas on the frontlines</div> <div>Foyer D/E</div>	
16:30-17:30	<div> REFLECTIONS ON DAY ONE</div> <div>Room: Ballroom A</div>			
17:30-19:30	<div>COCKTAIL RECEPTION</div> <div>Café Mezzo</div>			

DAY TWO Wednesday 2 November					
09:00-09:30	 OVERVIEW OF THE DAY Room: Ballroom A				
09:30-11:00	 DISCUSSION The future of negotiating health care in crises Room: Ballroom A	 DISCUSSION Negotiating protection outcomes around the world Room: Paris	WORKSHOP The importance of language in a negotiation Room: Lisbonne	 CLOSED SESSION Negotiating with listed groups Rooms: Rome + Madrid	
11:00-11:30	COFFEE BREAK Foyer D/E				
11:30-13:00	 DISCUSSION Building trust in virtual and remote negotiations and the negotiator-mandator relationship Room: Ballroom A	 DISCUSSION Negotiating protection in the context of migration Room: Paris	SIMULATION Finding common ground: How working together advances our humanitarian negotiations Room: Lisbonne	 DISCUSSION Discussion on diversity: a non-negotiable requirement in humanitarian negotiation teams Rooms: Rome + Madrid	
13:00-14:30	LUNCH BREAK Foyer D/E				
14:30-16:00	 DISCUSSION Impact of compromises and the power of alternatives Room: Ballroom A	 DISCUSSION Humanitarian negotiation with gangs Room: Paris	 WORKSHOP The Art of Negotiation. How to navigate uncertainty Room: Lisbonne	 DISCUSSION Negotiating with private military companies Rooms: Rome + Madrid	WORKSHOP Negotiation clinic: how to engage with difficult counterparts Ends at 16:30 La Pastorale (OFFSITE)
16:00-16:30	COFFEE BREAK Foyer D/E				
16:30-17:30	REFLECTIONS ON DAY TWO Room: Ballroom A				

DAY THREE Thursday 3 November					
09:00-11:00	 HUMANITARIAN NEGOTIATION 2040: WHAT ELSE DO WE NEED TO DISCUSS TOGETHER? Room: Ballroom A				
11:00-11:30	COFFEE BREAK Foyer D/E				
11:30-13:00	HUMANITARIAN NEGOTIATION 2040: WHAT ARE WE LEARNING ABOUT THE FUTURE? Room: Ballroom A				
13:00-14:30	LUNCH BREAK Foyer D/E				
14:30-16:00	 CLOSING OF THE WORLD SUMMIT Room: Ballroom A				
16:00-17:30	CLOSING COCKTAIL Café Mezzo				
18:30-onwards	 PRIVATE DINNER – CCHN COMMUNITY MEMBERS ONLY ICRC Cafeteria (OFFSITE)				

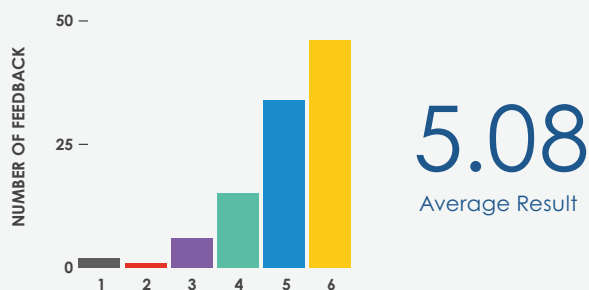
Participants' feedback

The feedback provided by Summit attendees – both online and in-person – was overwhelmingly positive. According to an anonymous survey, more than 80% of the responding participants found the Summit had met or exceeded their expectations. All aspects in the event design totalled an average rating of 5 out of 6 or higher, including the venue, the quality of discussions and session facilitation.

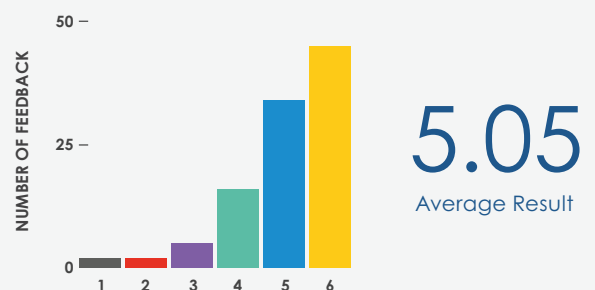
Participants' feedback on the Summit

Average rating based on the responses of 105 Summit participants (both online and in person)

Did the 2022 World Summit meet your expectations?

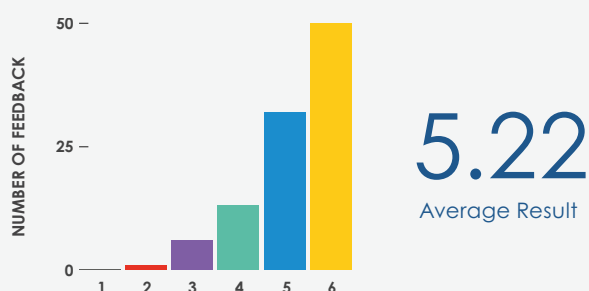


...the quality of discussions

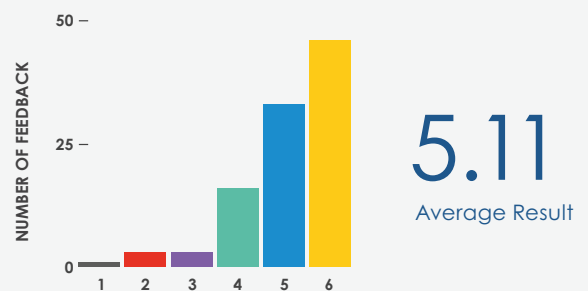


Overall, how satisfied were you with the following aspects of the Summit:

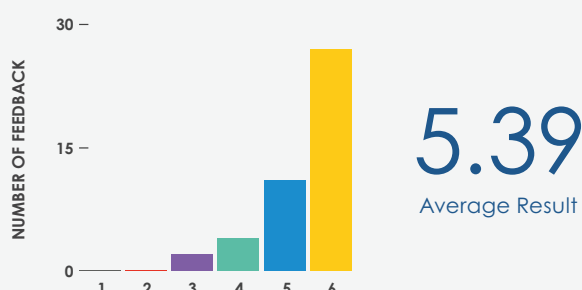
...the selection of topics



...facilitation of sessions



...the composition and diversity of the audience (individuals, institutions, etc.)



- The application process: 5.3 / 6
- The interactive platform: 5.2 / 6
- The CCHN's support and communication: 5.5 / 6
- The opportunity to name and discuss the community's own topics: 5.4 / 6
- The Summit's suitability for the participants' background and experience: 5.6 / 6
- The impact on participants' motivation to contribute to the community: 5.6 / 6

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ABOUT

The Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiation (CCHN) was founded in 2016 as a joint initiative of five humanitarian agencies: the International Committee of the Red Cross, Médecins Sans Frontières Switzerland, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations World Food Programme and the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue.

Our aim is to facilitate the capture, analysis, and sharing of experiences and practices around humanitarian negotiation and to provide a space for dialogue across organizations. At the core of our activities is the CCHN community of practice, a global community of humanitarian professionals working at the frontlines of humanitarian action.



CONTACT

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Shape a Global **Community.**

FRONTLINE
NEGOTIATIONS

CENTRE OF COMPETENCE ON
HUMANITARIAN NEGOTIATION