

2024

WORLD SUMMIT
ON HUMANITARIAN NEGOTIATION

COMMUNITY DAYS
Geneva, 25-26 June 2024

CO-ORGANISED BY



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The Community Days 2024

The annual gathering of the
CCHN community of practice

Geneva, 25-26 June 2024



“ We need spaces like CCHN; we need horizontal learning.”

— Joanna “Aśka” Warchał-Beneschi, NGO Forum Coordinator at the NGO Forum “Razem”, Poland



Credits

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Wednesday, 26 June 2024

1. Exploring initiatives
2. Closing reflections
3. Informal networking activities



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JOËLLE GERMANIER,
CCHN DIRECTOR

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Once again in 2024, the community of practice of the Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiation (CCHN) gathered for its annual meeting on 25-26 June 2024 in Geneva, Switzerland. Setting the stage for broader discussions to come two days later at the World Summit on Humanitarian Negotiation, this event provided a unique opportunity for some 80 engaged frontline negotiators to come together as a community of practice and reflect on the current state of humanitarian negotiation, envision its future, and identify necessary changes.

Just like the World Summit, the 2024 Community Days took place in the context of a complex geopolitical landscape marked by escalating conflicts, political instability, and unprecedented humanitarian needs. As the international community faces a shrinking operational space for humanitarian actors, community participants felt an impending need for effective humanitarian negotiation as these skills become increasingly critical to ensure assistance and protection reach those who most need them.

The Community Days emphasised the importance of community engagement, continuous learning, and adapting practices to local contexts. Collective reflections and sense-making exercises allowed participants to explore current challenges, transitional changes, and future goals in humanitarian negotiations.

Key insights from the event highlighted the importance of localised and inclusive negotiations, capacity strengthening and peer learning, the recognition of negotiation as a critical competence of humanitarian staff, and strong leadership. The Community Days also underscored the need for a roadmap for more effective, adaptable, and impactful humanitarian interventions.

Representing the 8th global meeting of the CCHN Community, this 2024 edition also celebrated the 10th anniversary of the CCHN methodology, known as the Naivasha Grid, which plays a pivotal role in guiding humanitarian actors through complex negotiation landscapes.

The success of the Community Days was made possible by the support of the Government of Germany and the State of Geneva, as well as contributions from strategic partners such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, Médecins Sans Frontières, UNHCR, and the World Food Programme.

This critical gathering provided a platform for the global community of humanitarian negotiators to reflect on shared challenges, exchange innovative practices, and collectively inform the future direction of the CCHN's work. I would like to warmly thank all our community members who once again shared their precious time and experience, and demonstrated their continuous commitment to further develop together the domain of humanitarian negotiations.

Joëlle Germanier

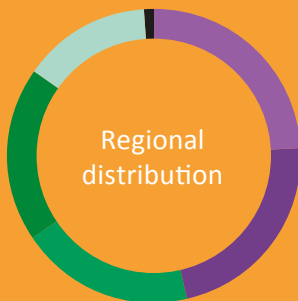
Director, Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiation

THE COMMUNITY DAYS IN NUMBERS

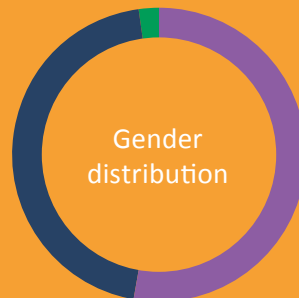


79 Humanitarian practitioners in attendance

Joining from **39** countries



- Europe **24%**
- Africa **22%**
- Latin America **19%**
- Middle East and North Africa **19%**
- Asia **14%**
- North America **1%**



- Female **53%**
- Male **45%**
- Other **2%**

45 organisations represented

63% of participants were national staff in their country of work

Key negotiation challenges faced by community members

Creating accessible opportunities for capacity building and training, including at local level

Ensuring stable and safe access and the provision of protection services

Negotiating with armed and criminal groups

Engaging with communities and authoritarian governments

Reaffirming principled humanitarian action

Caring for humanitarian personnel's safety and mental health

OVERVIEW



As a prelude to the World Summit on Humanitarian Negotiation, the CCHN community of practice held their annual meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, on 25-26 June 2024.

79 of the most engaged members of the CCHN community of practice joined from 39 countries, some of which are facing today's most complex humanitarian crises, to collectively reflect on shared challenges, identify emerging trends, and formulate practical solutions.

The Community Days included a series of interactive sessions designed to foster peer learning, critical discussions and knowledge exchange to further develop the domain of humanitarian negotiations. Following an opening session aimed at highlighting the significance of the community of practice, participants explored trends in humanitarian negotiation practice through a dynamic group exercise looking at the future.

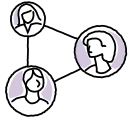
Subsequent sessions focused on improving humanitarian negotiation practice through group reflections and peer-to-peer learning methodologies. Participants considered past shortcomings, current cases and ideas for future action, fostering a culture of collective learning and continuous improvement.

The second day of the event featured sessions on exploring community-led initiatives, allowing participants to share their experiences and thoughts regarding their role within this thriving community of practice. Informal networking activities provided additional opportunities for participants to connect and exchange as a global network of negotiators.

“The most important aspect of the Community Days was the opportunity for deep, meaningful engagement and exchange among frontline negotiators. This event provided a unique platform for open discussions, collaboration, and the sharing of experiences, which are critical for advancing our collective understanding and practices in humanitarian negotiation.”

– Community member – Anonymous survey feedback

About the CCHN community of practice



8,000

PRACTITIONERS
COMPOSE
THE CCHN
COMMUNITY
(2024)



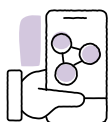
FROM **150+**
COUNTRIES



400+
ORGANISATIONS
REPRESENTED



6-10 AVERAGE
YEARS OF
EXPERIENCE



85% WORK IN A
FIELD OFFICE

A community of practice is a group of individuals who share a concern or passion for something in which they engage, and learn how to do it better through regular interaction. Communities of practice are beneficial not only for advancing the skills of their members, but also for the development and professionalisation of the domain, adding value to the sector as a whole.

The CCHN community of practice (CoP) of humanitarian negotiators is the biggest and first one of its kind in the humanitarian sector, bringing together professionals from more than 400 different organisations. You can find more details on the [CCHN website](#) where you can where you can read the story of the creation of the CCHN communities of practice.

Humanitarian professionals who complete a CCHN first-level humanitarian negotiation training, called Peer Workshop, gain access to the CCHN community of practice and to an additional range of learning and exchanging opportunities. As of 2024, the CCHN community is composed of some 8,000 practitioners spanning the globe, who contribute their own time and expertise to the development of the humanitarian negotiation domain. Over a 1000 of them have been trained as CCHN facilitators and are organising negotiation learning opportunities for their peers throughout the year in their regions.

Beside facilitating negotiation workshops, this community is also actively engaged with the CCHN in further developing the domain of humanitarian negotiation by 1) critically reviewing current negotiation approaches; 2) capturing new innovative negotiation methods; 3) conducting thematic operational research; and 4) developing new negotiation tools to improve the skills of colleagues on the ground.

Every year, this active community of practice of frontline negotiators meet in person at the global level to exchange knowledge, experience and continue to craft collectively the domain of humanitarian negotiations. In 2024, this community assembly represented the 8th global gathering of this community of practice.



“Graphic harvesting” as a sense-making technique

The Community Days saw the participation of a graphic facilitator, Alessandra Zaffiro, who captured key points and insights from the many discussions and turned them into drawings and illustrations. This technique, called “graphic harvesting”, helps to enhance understanding, retention, and engagement among participants by providing a visual summary of complex discussions and ideas.

DAY 1:

Tuesday, 25 June 2024



“Happy to participate in the World Summit on Humanitarian Negotiation and Community Days [...]. It was a great opportunity for contributing as well as learning from diplomats and frontline negotiators about the humanitarian negotiation context, challenges and way forward for better humanitarian response and access throughout the world.”

– Abdul Mannan, Deputy Director, Society for Health Extension and Development (SHED) – Bangladesh



1. Opening: the CCHN community of frontline negotiators

An opening session aimed to welcome participants and share the significance of the community of practice. The session also celebrated the story and achievements of CCHN over the past ten years – with particular reference to the anniversary of the CCHN methodology, the Naivasha grid – while highlighting the value of the community.

A panel of community members shared their personal stories, emphasising the reasons which led them to become part of the community.



Jhozman Camacho (Venezuela) expressed gratitude to CCHN for creating a genuine community that fosters deep connections among its members, transcending mere teamwork to form a family of humanitarian spirits. He emphasized the community's ability to blend global and specific dynamics, combining long-term conversations with innovative technology to create a supportive environment



Jordi Casafont Torra (Spain) highlighted the impressive, transversal nature of CCHN's learning models and tools, which have been useful across various contexts. He appreciated the ongoing connection and looked forward to further collaboration, especially emphasizing the importance of learning from each other regardless of experience levels.



Balsam Elatrash (Occupied Palestinian Territories) shared how engagement with CCHN has been meaningful, providing a sense of connection and shared experience that combats isolation and supports both personal and professional well-being. She highlighted the mutual benefits of the community, where members can both give and receive valuable support.



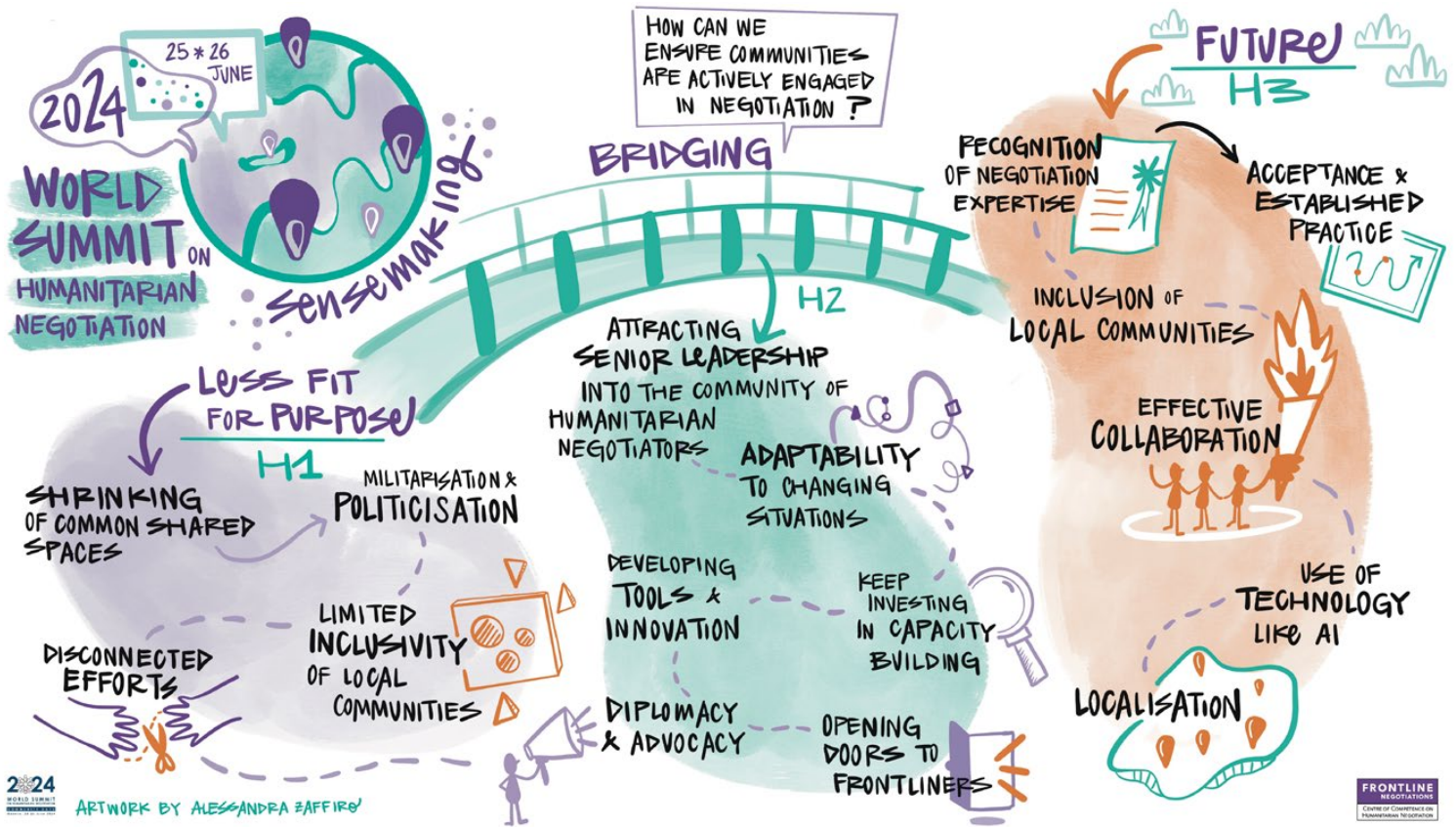
Makram Soua (Tunisia) reflected on his journey from cautious beginner to committed collaborator, highlighting the mutual benefits of sharing and learning within the community. He emphasized the importance of working together to influence and serve others.



Abdul Mannan (Bangladesh) spoke about the privilege of being part of the negotiation community, which provides support, combats frustration, and emphasizes the importance of building long-term relationships. He shared how the community has helped shift his perspective towards long-term relationship building and collaborative planning.



Ghadeer Jubeh (Jordan) likened joining the CCHN community to joining a family, valuing the safe space provided by CCHN to discuss feelings, challenges, and negotiations openly. She appreciated the mutual experiences and concerns that unite the community, enriching knowledge and building confidence.



2. Exploring trends in humanitarian negotiation practice

This session aimed to map the present and future of humanitarian negotiation using the “Three Horizons” framework, which focuses on the experiences of practitioners.

Participants were divided into groups to discuss three key questions: what is worth keeping in the current humanitarian system and what is not working as well (Horizon 1); what the future of the domain could look like and what seeds of the future exist in the present (Horizon 3); and what elements could be leveraged to bridge the present to the future (Horizon 2). Participants worked on different Horizons to ensure diverse input, then reflected collectively on possible ways forward.

The following emerged as key insights from the exercise.

- Localised and inclusive negotiations.** Discussions highlighted the importance of involving local actors and communities in decision-making processes to build trust, legitimacy, and sustainability of negotiated agreements.
- Capacity strengthening.** Emphasis was placed on empowering negotiators through targeted training and resources to improve their effectiveness and engagement.
- Improving coordination and cooperation.** The transitional phase analysis underscored the need for structured frameworks to streamline negotiation efforts and align strategies among humanitarian actors.
- Flexibility and adaptability.** Participants stressed the importance of flexible negotiation approaches to respond effectively to dynamic and complex situations.
- Role of senior leadership.** Critical for setting strategic priorities, providing support, and ensuring the successful implementation of negotiation frameworks. This leadership enhances the authority and credibility of negotiators on the ground.
- Operational acceptance and effective implementation.** These elements were seen as essential for achieving tangible benefits for affected populations.



4. Learning from our humanitarian negotiation practice

This session provided an opportunity to members of the community of practice to get insights and advice on their negotiation approach through different peer learning methods.

More specifically, community members engaged into sharing their negotiation practices by:

1. **Learning from past failures.** Community members shared shortcomings in their negotiation efforts, analysing drawbacks and reflecting on how to avoid them in the future.
2. **Peer reviewing current negotiation cases.** Members discussed ongoing negotiation processes, receiving support and new perspectives from their peers to address current challenges.
3. **Presenting actionable plans to improve negotiation practice.** Members developed actionable ideas for future implementation, focusing on innovative approaches and strategic planning.

Using a diversity of peer learning methods, participants were divided into groups, each sharing their experiences, receiving feedback, and developing insights and strategies for improvement. This space provided an opportunity for participants to learn from their colleagues and foster exchange across regions and contexts.

Participants discussed negotiation cases related to bureaucratic impediments, negotiating with de facto authorities, negotiating access for camp management, negotiating with ministry of health to open an emergency health clinic, negotiating the lack of acceptance, empowering female negotiators, or the integration of internally displaced persons into host communities. The session then wrapped up with a plenary session reflecting on key learnings and ways forward.



“A lot of frontline discussions, a moment of sharing experience and storytelling. It was a great week and I am happy to meet all colleagues who got the opportunity to interact in person – thanks to the CCHN team.”

– Liban Mukhtar, Area Coordinator and Head of Office, ACTED Somalia



“The diversity, the conviviality, but above all the cohesion existing between the members of the community of practice impressed me. It was a beautiful, instructive and enriching experience alongside our Haitian colleagues and the Latin American and Caribbean community.”

– Marie Renée Jean, Facilitator, GRET Haiti



5. Evening reflection

The evening reflection provided a space for participants to sit as a whole group and share their experiences and thoughts from the day.

The session featured “open mic” reflections, focusing on observations, feelings, insights, and possible ways forward. Participants shared meaningful experiences, expressed gratitude, and discussed the future of the CCHN.

Among the key themes discussed:

- **Sense of belonging.** Participants consistently highlighted the sense of family and safe space provided by the CCHN, which encourages sharing ideas, challenges, and vulnerabilities.
- **Community negotiation.** Emphasis on people-centred responses and the importance of community engagement in negotiation practices.
- **The future of the CCHN.** Discussions on building upon the first ten years of CCHN and planning for impactful changes in the next decade.
- **Gratitude.** Participants were thankful for the support and learning opportunities provided by the community.



“As a member of the CCHN community of practitioners, I found the summit to be a platform for re-evaluating our strategies and exchanging valuable insights on humanitarian negotiations. It has provided a unique opportunity to learn from each other and to explore new ways to address the complex challenges we face. Thank you CCHN for the huge work done!”

– Malak Khiami, Healthcare Project Manager, Amel Association International – Lebanon

DAY 2:

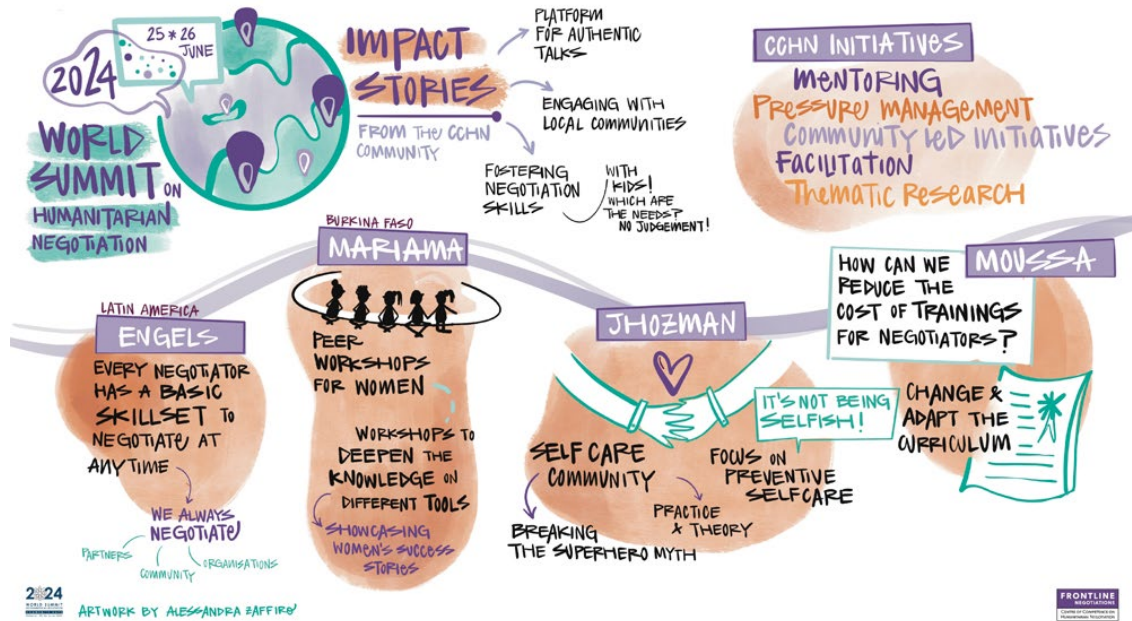
Wednesday, 26 June 2024



“I am delighted to have had the opportunity to take part in two important events organised by the CCHN, of which I have been an active member as a facilitator since 2022 and became a mentor in 2024. (...) I invite you to realise that every small contribution can lead to extraordinary results for the benefit of families, communities and in particular the most vulnerable children facing the many crises the world is going through.”

– Wadson Joseph, Child Protection Advisor, World Vision International – Haiti





1. Exploring community initiatives

Since the inception of the CCHN in 2016, the Community has drastically been growing with an impressive number of initiatives led by community members flourishing around the globe. By bringing together a core group of community members who are the drivers of these negotiation learning opportunities in their regions, this session provided a space to give visibility to some of these great initiatives, invite new ideas and co-identify priorities for future developments of this community of practice.

Members from different regions shared their own community-led initiatives. The second round featured a carousel session where participants exchanged with CCHN staff involved in programs including diversity and inclusion, mentoring, pressure management, and self-care.

The community-led initiatives highlighted include the following.



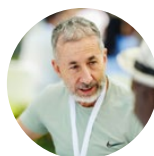
Jhozman Camacho (Venezuela) highlighted the importance of self-care and community support in high-stake negotiations. He discussed the value of pressure management retreats and sharing practical techniques in boosting confidence and resilience among frontline negotiators.



Moussa Dicko (Burkina Faso) independently delivered negotiation workshops in his country, focusing on reducing training costs for local staff and adapting the programs to the challenges of junior negotiators. He shared his vision of making humanitarian training more accessible to those with fewer skills-building opportunities.



Mariama Sawadogo (Burkina Faso) organised a humanitarian negotiation workshop targeted to female negotiators with the aim of catering to their peculiar challenges and inviting additional female participation within the CCHN community. She emphasised the importance of creating spaces for women to engage and develop their skills.



Engels Germán Cortés Trujillo (Colombia) emphasised that humanitarian access negotiations are an essential component of humanitarian work. He believes every field worker should receive at least basic humanitarian negotiation training, while specialised teams require advanced skills building for complex negotiations.



2. Way forward and closing reflections

Participants had a chance to also reflect on what actions they would like to take as a collective group and identify priorities for their region as way forward.

Based on the reflections that came out during this week of exchange, the regions selected the following priorities they would like to work on as a community of practice:

Africa

- Create reflection and exchange spaces by organising local Summits in Africa.
- Promote women's participation in frontline negotiations by organising more negotiation workshops for women and developing learning modules.
- Develop the topic of bridging humanitarian diplomacy with frontline negotiations focused on Africa.

Asia

- Develop the domain of humanitarian negotiations by focusing on building local actors' negotiation skills.
- Further support women's access to negotiation capacity-building opportunities.
- Create more in-person exchange opportunities in Asia, for instance, by mobilising CCHN facilitators in the region.

Europe

- Delve into the topic of humanitarian diplomacy and how it complements humanitarian negotiations in the field, particularly when it comes to negotiating with authorities on migration.
- Improving women's representation in negotiations at leadership and decision-making levels.
- Organise regional meetings for humanitarians based in Europe.

Latin America and the Caribbean

- Improve humanitarian negotiations' positioning within organisations, particularly at strategic institutional levels.
- Increase the visibility of the Latin America and the Caribbean region within the CCHN community of practice.
- Better coordinate the local CCHN community of practice by organising regional meetings.



Middle East and North Africa

- Strengthen the engagement with the CCHN community of practice and continue to learn from peers.
- Open the space to exchange around humanitarian diplomacy and build practical negotiation tools around this topic.
- Continue exploring how members can stay involved and contribute to shaping the CCHN's future.

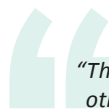
To close this insightful gathering, a space was provided for participants to share their experiences and thoughts from the two days, discuss preparations for the World Summit on Humanitarian Negotiation – which would start in Geneva on the following day – and celebrate the community of practice.

Key takeaways include the importance of community engagement, continuous learning, and adapting practices to local contexts. By focusing on localized and inclusive negotiations, capacity strengthening, improved coordination, flexibility, and strong leadership, the community aims

to create more effective, adaptable, and impactful interventions. Moving forward, the community is committed to continue building on these insights to enhance their impact and support each other more effectively.

3. Informal networking activities

During the afternoon of Day 2, community members were offered the opportunity to network, exchange and get to know each other in a less structured environment. On top of enjoying an independent activity, they could choose between joining a guided walking tour highlighting Geneva's humanitarian history or visiting the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum. Participants warmly welcomed this friendly and informative time, fostering further connections among participants and nurturing the CCHN community spirit.



“Thank you to the CCHN for the invitation. It was wonderful to see each other and share experiences with other members of the community.”

– Lud Magdy Chavarro, Inter-programme Health Liaison, IOM Colombia



“The most important aspect of these Community Days was the meeting itself, being able to plan together (the exercise and methodology in this regard were perfect), as well as establishing formal and informal channels of collaboration”

– Community member – Anonymous survey feedback



“I am still processing the avalanche of experiences, ideas and emotions of these intense days. As a Latin American humanitarian negotiator, I feel that I am returning with a suitcase full of tools and reflections that can greatly enrich our practice in the region.”

– Jhozman Camacho, Information Management Associate, UNOCHA - Venezuela



COMMUNITY DAYS agenda



WORLD SUMMIT
ON HUMANITARIAN NEGOTIATION

COMMUNITY DAYS
Geneva, 25-26 June 2024

Auditorium de La Pastorale
Route de Ferney 106
Geneva – Switzerland



Share your Community
Days on Instagram!

@frontline_negotiations
#CCHNsummit24

FRONTLINE
NEGOTIATIONS

DAY 1 Tuesday 25 June

09:00-10:00

Opening and welcome

COFFEE BREAK

10:30-12:30

Exploring trends in humanitarian negotiation practice

What is the present and future of humanitarian negotiation?
What are the ways forward to the future?

LUNCH BREAK

13:30-15:00

Improving humanitarian negotiation practice

How can we improve our humanitarian negotiation practice?
What do you feel is most important to discuss with your
colleagues today?

COFFEE BREAK

15:30-17:00

Learning from our humanitarian negotiation practice

Share a past failure from which we can learn.
Share a present case to receive support from your peers.
Share a future actionable idea that you want to develop.

17:15-18:00

Evening reflection

What has been meaningful for you today?

From 18:30

Community dinner

Meet us at the ICRC restaurant for a moment of conviviality.

COMMUNITY DAYS agenda

2024

WORLD SUMMIT
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COMMUNITY DAYS
Geneva, 25-26 June 2024

Auditorium de La Pastorale
Route de Ferney 106
Geneva – Switzerland



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FRONTLINE
NEGOTIATIONS

DAY 2 Wednesday 26 June

09:00-09:30

Morning check-in

09:30-12:00

Exploring initiatives

Discover more about community-led and CCHN-led initiatives.

12:00-13:00

Closing

Reflections.
Preparing for the World Summit.
Celebrating our community of practice.

LUNCH BREAK

14:00-18:00

Pick your afternoon activity

Choose one of the following. If you decide to attend the walking tour or the museum visit, we will cover the cost of the activity.

1. A walking tour of humanitarian Geneva

With the help of an experienced tour guide, discover the origins of the Geneva Conventions and the humanitarian roots of international Geneva while exploring the city on foot. The tour is only available in English and lasts about two hours. Bring good shoes, a water bottle and a sun hat!

2. Visit the Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum

The museum's exhibition offers a unique insight into the history and challenges of humanitarian action throughout the past decades. You will be provided with an audioguide (available in Chinese, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Russian and Spanish). Take your time and start the visit whenever you like; just remember the museum closes at 6 pm.

3. Enjoy a free afternoon

Sit back, rest and enjoy your free time!

ABOUT THE CENTRE OF COMPETENCE ON HUMANITARIAN NEGOTIATION

Founded in 2016, the Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiation (CCHN) is a joint initiative of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Médecins Sans Frontières Switzerland, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and the United Nations World Food Programme.

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 organisations. At the core of our activities is the CCHN community of practice, a global community of humanitarian practitioners working at the frontlines of humanitarian action.



FRONTLINE NEGOTIATIONS

CENTRE OF COMPETENCE ON HUMANITARIAN NEGOTIATION

Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiation

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