

HumAct

Humanitarian Action



HANDBOOK ON HUMANITARIAN ACTION TEACHING IN CAPE VERDE AND MOZAMBIQUE: PROCEEDINGS AND LEARNINGS

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**Handbook on Humanitarian Action Teaching in Cape Verde and Mozambique:
Proceedings and Learnings**

Humanitarian Action: Climate Change and Displacements (HumAct) project

HumAct was a European-African collaborative project between Portugal, Greece, Mozambique and Cape Verde in Humanitarian Action (HA) (2019-2024)¹. It responded to two main sets of challenges:

- (a) The enhancement of humanitarian action capacities in the field of higher education in African partner countries and
- (b) Professionalization in the humanitarian sector of the countries where conflict and climate disasters occur.

It provided integrative solutions to the above challenges through curriculum and skills development.

Humanitarian Action is taught at the universities of Cape Verde and Mozambique for the first time due to the HumAct project. Considering that Mozambique is one of the top 10 countries in the world with the most internally displaced population (IDP) ([UNHCR, 2024](#)), and Cape Verde, a Small Island Developing State (SIDS), ranks 77 in the Climate Vulnerability Index with the danger of internal displacements ([Ministry of Agriculture and Environment, 2021](#)) qualifying people at the respective universities was an important step.

The Handbook provides the proceedings and learnings from the experience of proposing a new vision for training in Humanitarian Action, focused on preparing humanitarians from countries affected by conflict and natural disasters. The first part focuses on the needs in the training of humanitarians. The second part focuses on the development of the HumAct project. The third part presents the teaching of the adapted and new modules of Humanitarian Action.

¹ <https://www.humact.ecd.uoa.gr/pt/o-projeto/>

1. Setting the scene

1.1 The professionalisation of Humanitarian Action

Although the last three decades have shown a variety of concerted efforts to professionalise humanitarian intervention, it seems that they are still structuring elements lagging in terms of concrete professionalisation. Such components are, among others, the need for public recognition of occupations as humanitarian professions based on specific criteria; and the bolstering of staff competence with the right skills and behaviours, enabling them thus to provide HA effectively and accountably. This implies processes of simultaneous specialisation and diversification.

The acquisition of the necessary competencies and skills of the individual humanitarian has been the objective of several initiatives and research studies, dating back as far as 1997 when the *Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action* (ALNAP) was established; to the *Humanitarian Competency Framework* (CHCF) developed in 2011, and revised in 2024 ([CHS Alliance](#), 2024); to the identification of professional profiles working in HA made by the European Humanitarian Action Partnership in 2020 ([ECHO](#), 2021); and to the relatively recent study *The State of Humanitarian Response* (SOHP) in 2020 ([Bioforce](#), 2020; [Downham](#), 2021). The latter, seeking to understand the state of the humanitarian sector in relation to professionalisation through the prism of the workforce, indicated a broad consensus regarding the existence of specific competencies for humanitarian practice in terms of knowledge, skills and behaviours for all areas of activity. All the above initiatives have explicitly pointed out that competent and well-managed staff is at the heart of accountable and effective HA, and have called for the improvement of the quality and efficiency of education and training to boost skills and competencies, increase employability of and advance opportunities for young people in the HA field.

However, despite the significant training offered on humanitarian topics provided by universities, specialised training organisations, and humanitarian organisations, there seems to be an absence of known and recognised reference training for future humanitarian workers. This observation, together with the lack of structure and visibility at the career path level, illustrates that the humanitarian sector needs to invest more in its professionalisation.

1.2 The need for a shift towards localisation

In the more extensive process of professionalisation, the universal is emphasised over the contextual (Lewis and Mosse, 2006). Thus, in addition to further developing the professionalisation of the humanitarian sector, there is a pressing need to advance the process of localisation. One of the outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 was the Grand Bargain which entailed a commitment of funders, among them the European Union, to "making principled humanitarian action as local as possible and as international as necessary" and counter the existing discrepancy of funding towards international organisations in HA. Looking at data for the past six years, in 2017, out of the \$603 million of global humanitarian funding, only 8% flowed directly to local actors, while in 2021, total funding dropped to \$302 million, and only 1.2% went to local actors. Increasing the volume of direct, quality funding to local actors and access to information, decision-making and coordination mechanisms are critical in ensuring that crisis preparedness and response capacity lies with those most affected. While the high profile of localisation was a central priority of the Grand Bargain of 2016, signed in 2023, there was no substantive progress against these commitments.²

There is no doubt that local institutions have better knowledge of the context and are often better positioned to provide the first emergency response. Yet, tensions between the different levels of intervention and between standardised technocratic knowledge and contextual value-driven commitment remain at the heart of processes of professionalisation. However, the problem is that few or no local professionals with specific humanitarian response training are often available. Suppose funding to the local level is due to increase to 25%, according to the commitments made in the Grand Bargain. In that case, it is necessary to promote local expertise by giving greater importance to contextual knowledge and skills that enable work in different environments. For this trend to change, national humanitarian organisations must be recognised and seen as a resource beyond the capability of in-country mobilisation. Universities of the countries where conflicts and climate disasters occur play an essential role in ensuring the continuity of training and professionalisation of such national organisations and their staff.

² <https://devinit.org/resources/global-humanitarian-assistance-report-2022/recipients-and-delivery-of-humanitarian-funding/>

1.3 National ownership

The professionalisation and localisation of the HA sector adds pressure to the need for 'national ownership' of humanitarian interventions and development. Qualitative data suggests that international staff generally occupy management positions in the country missions of international humanitarian organisations, and local staff carries out roles such as implementation, administration, finance, accounting and working with direct beneficiaries. This may be because international humanitarian workers may have had access to more relevant training, education, and opportunities to work in the headquarters of organisations that are usually based in European countries. A recommendation advanced by Bioforce (2020) focused on the professions traditionally dominated by international or expatriate personnel to improve access to these positions for local and national personnel, that is, professionalisation at the service of localisation. Equally important was the recognition that contextual knowledge is vital in recruitment and remuneration.

As national ownership is as vital as it may be, it cannot occur without a competent and professionalised HA workforce. While higher education institutions are key players in engaging in innovative research, teaching and outreach to address socio-economic, political, cultural and environmental issues, many African higher education institutions are not equipped to meet the challenges of humanitarian disasters. In countries like Mozambique and Cape Verde, partners in the HumAct project, there are a few graduates, outside of the national ministries, well positioned to own the national humanitarian action narratives and to provide a professional response in the humanitarian system and at the local and national levels.

The nurturing of HA experts is also limited due to the few resources available in these countries for curriculum development in HA in higher education institutions. Thus, there are several challenges: (a) lack of resources to develop necessary curricula, (b) lack of availability of existing curricula for this sector, (c) high costs and difficulties in obtaining access for nationals from these countries to Western universities offering such curricula. These challenges result in only a few nationals being able to obtain positions in international organisations, often the ones who have experience abroad already. Therefore, marginalised groups of society, who would have experienced emergencies first-hand, do not participate

and are not included in high-level positions of international NGOs. This in turn, reduces national ownership of the development and humanitarian processes.

HumAct's mission was to address this need by building capacities in national curricula development on Humanitarian Action through engaging with staff in three universities across Mozambique, the Pedagogical University in Maputo, the University of Pungue in Manica, and University of Rovuma in Nampula; and in Cape Verde at the island of Santiago, the University of Cape Verde and the University of Santiago. These universities collaborated with two European institutions, ISCTE, University of Lisbon, in Portugal and the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. These European institutions have been addressing the need of professionalisation in the humanitarian sector through inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary approaches, thus enhancing academic and non-academic staff, students, and community capacities; promoting curricula development; increasing accreditation, modernisation and internalisation; allowing for cross-learning and mutual exchange; advancing professionalisation of the HA sector at local and national levels; and enhancing research capacities.

1. 4 Humanitarian needs in the context of Mozambique and Cape Verde

1.4.1 Professionalisation needs in the humanitarian sector

Document review and meetings with representatives of the partner institutions revealed that no specific courses on HA were available in the partner countries. This was especially striking, as Mozambique and Cape Verde receive large development and humanitarian aid. Moreover, while emergencies or disasters, such as floods, droughts and earthquakes, occur regularly, international NGO staff are often internationals/expats who move from one disaster to the next. Thus, institutional knowledge was lacking or hidden amongst the local staff, who tend to fill lower positions, which is not part of decision-making.

1.4.2 Climate-related needs in Cape Verde

Cabo Verde is a Small Island Developing State, a member of the SIDS (Small Island Developing States), with a population of around 491,233 inhabitants. It is located in the central Atlantic Ocean, consisting of ten volcanic islands with a combined land area of approximately 4,033 km. The country is highly susceptible to the effects of climate change - a

key medium-term risk- as evidenced by the recent years of drought. Given that Cape Verde does not currently have any cases of internally displaced people or climate refugees, the importance of Humanitarian Action is preventive if the country faces more extreme weather events due to its status as a volcanic island in the insular Sahel. In this sense, it is deemed necessary to consolidate and deepen the agenda for climate action, food insecurity and renewable energies. To lay the foundations for more inclusive and resilient growth, it is considered necessary to include integrating climate-related considerations into macroeconomic policy formulation and mobilising climate financing to help achieve Cabo Verde's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) commitments to advance reforms to attract private funding to help meet the Sustainable Development Goals, and to continue efforts in promoting the climate change agenda. To achieve these goals, the State needs to have a well-defined strategy for climate action. It is essential to establish or operationalise an integrated strategy that increases the capacity to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change; promote climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions in a way that does not threaten food production. This demands the inclusion of a national adaptation plan, a nationally determined contribution, communication, and an annual update report to avoid food insecurity.

1.4.3 Forced displacement needs in Mozambique

Mozambique, located in the southeast of Africa, has an estimated population of 31.26 million. It is one of Africa's most disaster-prone countries, with high levels of poverty. It experiences floods, tropical cyclones, droughts, epidemics and earthquakes. Severe damage and flooding impact, as is the case in Cape Verde, the poor and most vulnerable groups in society. Mozambique is an integral part of global and regional migration networks and, with its relative political and social stability, has received migrants from the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa regions, Malawi, South Africa and Zimbabwe, Europe and Asia. In addition, due to its geographical location, the inland countries with which it shares borders depend on it for access to global markets. Mozambique has a long history of forced migration in both directions: as a "sending" and "receiving" country, as well as forced internal displacement resulting from natural (floods, cyclones, droughts and landslides), political (wars), economic (development projects including communal villages, production operations and re-education camps) and social (accusations of witchcraft) causes. Almost 850.000 internal refugees are the result of conflict, while approximately 42.000 are the

result of climate disaster. These large numbers of internal and external refugees need not only humanitarian assistance but also reintegration. Thus, there is a growing need for Humanitarian Action. However, Mozambique does not have the professionals to respond to these needs, specifically to work in the humanitarian sector.

On the other hand, NGOs and international agencies require specific employee profiles to perform certain functions in the humanitarian sector. This professionalisation of the Humanitarian Action sector increases pressure in Mozambique for "national ownership" of humanitarian interventions. As Mozambique is a post-colonial country, education is crucial for social transformation and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The challenges in African higher education are to set strategic objectives for improving curricula and learning, academic and non-academic staff, valuing students, and promoting external relations and recognition, including national and international accreditations. Although higher education institutions in Mozambique are key players in developing innovative research, teaching and dissemination to address socio-economic, political, cultural and environmental issues, they are not equipped to face the challenges of humanitarian crises.

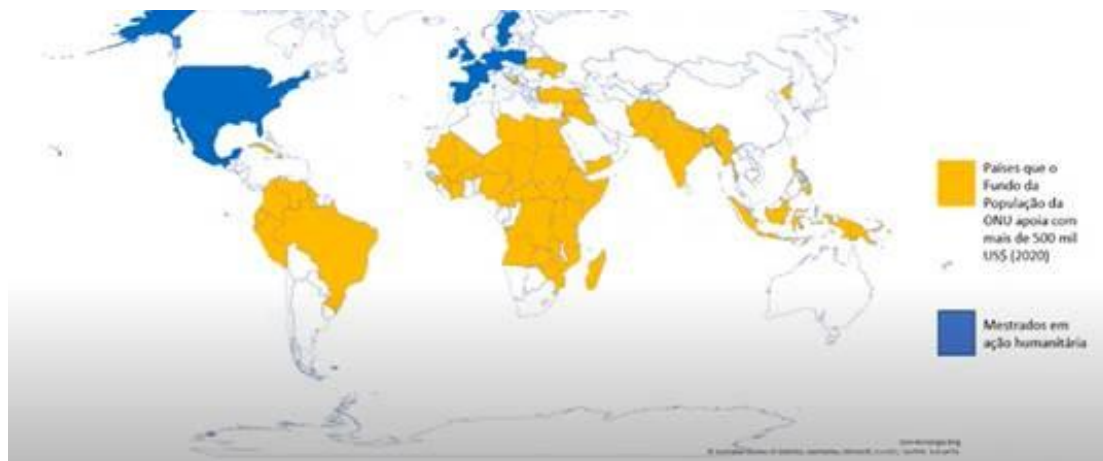
1.5 Teaching HA at the tertiary level in the Global North

The majority of master programs in HA are situated in Global North countries. Simultaneously, most funding for humanitarian assistance is directed towards countries grappling with humanitarian crises. Notably, this funding is predominantly allocated to regions in the Global South, encompassing Africa, South America, and Middle East and SouthEast Asia. To better clarify our overall aims, the map below (Fig. 1)³ shows that most Master programs in Humanitarian Action (HA) are taught in the Global North countries (in blue), and the funding for humanitarian assistance goes, nearly all, to the Global South countries (in yellow). That is, funding from the United Nations Fund for Population (annually, half a million dollars or more) is directed to countries with humanitarian crises mainly in Africa, South America and South and South East Asia. In other words, outside Europe and North America where training for HA is offered.

³ A database was built based on the webpage "Find a Master" and a complimentary online search, comprising of 86 master programs including in their title the keywords: "Humanitarian Action, "Assistance" and "Disaster Response", "Emergency".

This signifies a geographical misalignment, with the areas most affected by crises receiving substantial aid, while HA training programs primarily exist in Europe and North America. HumAct project contributed to the re-orientation of this misalignment.

Figure 1. Areas affected by crisis vs training in humanitarian action



Source: Pedroso, in print.

2. The HumAct project

The main aim of HumAct was to build capacities in higher education institutions in the area of humanitarian action in the partner countries of Cape Verde and Mozambique, in collaboration with institutions in the programme countries of Portugal and Greece. Such a collaborative endeavour was in line with the EU's strategic goals for the Africa-Europe partnership underlying the importance of investment in education and skills, reciprocity, egalitarianism, and mutual exchanges, departing from the outdated "aid" approach. HumAct challenged the taken-for-granted assumption of the Global North's superiority and the Global South's presumed inferiority in a firm belief that financial and resource limitations do not translate into constraints of capacities. It brought together people from two regions and four countries across seven universities in a spirit of international collaboration in the academia, building human capital and capacity and furthering internationalisation and modernisation.

2.1 The partner institutions

2.1.1 Cape Verde

2.1.1.1 University of Cape Verde (Uni-CV)

Uni-CV is a recent university that was established in 2006 by merging three colleges. Under the auspices of four faculties and two schools, it offers 41 Bachelor's degrees, four Doctoral degrees, and nine vocational courses. In 2019, when HumAct was launched 29% of the academic staff had PhDs, and 58% had MA qualifications. Uni-CV has four research centres and seven research units, including Earth Science, Rural Sustainable Development, and Health and Biomedical Sciences. Its mission is to foster the creation and dissemination of culture, science, and technology, as well as articulate teaching, research, and extension to enhance the education of citizens by promoting human and sustainable development. The goals set according to the needs assessment were the development of a transdisciplinary approach to academic knowledge, curricula improvement, inter-university development of joint programmes to promote sustainable development and global peace, research capacity building concerning natural disaster risks, and promotion of an ecological and solidary economy.

2.1.1.2 University of Santiago (US)

US is also a recent university, established in 2008. It consists of four departments that offer 17 Bachelor's degrees and seven Master degrees. In addition, US offers vocational degrees such as multimedia development, electromechanical studies, solar power systems, rural tourism and ecology. The Master's programmes include Public Policy and Local Development, Communication Sciences, Human Resource Management, and Pedagogy. Identified institutional needs were the improvement and modernisation of curricula and internationalisation. US has two innovative community projects: "US Comunidades", which allows students and teachers to be in the field every month, interacting with the communities through research, training and solidarity, and "Rotas do Archipelago", which allows students and teachers to visit one or two islands every year with community interventions in various areas such as health, environment, education, solidarity assistance and sport. The institute "Sustainable Development Agency of Santiago Norte" works with local communities (farmers, fishermen, youth, rural communities, women and single

mothers) on training, environment, promotion of social economy, awareness raising and poverty alleviation.

2.1.2 Mozambique

2.1.2.1 The Pedagogical University of Maputo (UPM)

UPM was established in Maputo in 1985 and was restructured into five separate universities. It offers in-class and distance, multi-modal teaching and learning opportunities from short-course specialist offerings to Ph.D. level through six established faculties. UPM has extensive international collaboration across the African continent, Europe, the Americas, and Asia, and it accommodates five research centres, including the Centre for Ethnomathematics and Ethnoscience Studies and the Centre for Innovation and Technology Transfer. Identified needs are lack of capacity to engage in humanitarian action-specific projects, funding applications, community engagement and outreach.

2.1.2.2 University of Púnguè (UniPungue)

As part of the restructuring of higher education UniPungue was established in 2019. It offers 26 Bachelor degrees and three Masters degrees. There exist three research centres: the Centre for Psychological Assistance; the Centre for Extension and Innovation; and the Centre for Socio-Environmental Studies. UniPungue's mission is to train professionals capable of contributing to sustainable economic and sociocultural development. Its objectives include promoting cultural, scientific and technical exchange with national and international institutions, encouraging academic mobility in scientific production at national and international levels, and contributing to community development.

2.1.2.3 University of Rovuma (UniRovuma)

UniRovuma was established as an independent institution in 2019. It offers 32 Bachelor's degrees, 11 Masters degrees, and one PhD degree. There exist four Centres for technical professional training; extension, innovation and knowledge transfer; humanitarian, environmental and developmental studies; and science, technology and mathematics studies. UniRovuma strives to achieve excellence at national and international levels, to train professional staff capable of contributing to sustainable economic and sociocultural advancement, and to fully contribute to community development.

2.2 Programme institutions

2.2.1 Portugal

ISCTE is a high-quality public university established in 1972, being among the world's best 150 young universities and one of the most dynamic and innovative in Portugal in the areas of Management and Economics, Humanities, Social Sciences and Public Policy, ICT and Architecture. It has established international cooperation with many universities, research institutes and public, private and third-sector organisations. It offers a MSc degree in Humanitarian Action (HA), providing students with solid and interdisciplinary education for prevention, preparedness, response and recovery in HA, including the link with development; capacity for critical analysis and development of responses/solutions for disaster; emergency or continuing HA; creative and autonomous reflection on the impacts of interventions, supported by rigorous analysis tools and research techniques adapted to the academic aspect, but also adjusted to the specific needs of the professional area.

2.2.2 Greece

The National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (UoA) is the oldest in Greece, founded in 1837. It is the leading academic institution in the country, offering quality education and covering extensive research activity in broad academic fields. Research and innovation are enhanced through creative collaborations with leading research institutes, government agencies and consortia worldwide. Interdisciplinary and socially impacting research is very much encouraged in graduate programmes. As regards Humanitarian Action, the Faculty of Geology and Geoenvironment runs an MSc program in Environmental Disasters and Crises Management Strategies. It also offers an interdisciplinary MA in Education and Human Rights. The Department of Early Childhood Education, Faculty of Education, representing UoA in the HumAct project, has extensive theoretical and experiential knowledge in the areas of social and educational inequalities, capacity building and social integration of displaced people; students are involved in experiential learning and field practice, and are involved in direct community engagements training in people-centred skills such as active listening, dialoguing, empathy, effective communication, and relationship building, critical for HA work.

2.3 Needs assessment

Each partner institution brought to the table an overview of what they identified as (i) institutional challenges, (ii) gaps in academic and non-academic staff capacities, and (iii) what is lacking in programme offerings to respond to the main HA challenges for their country/region, namely the enhancement of humanitarian action capacities and the advancement of professionalisation through curriculum development in the field of higher education. This overview was then matched with a second survey of the existing modules of each partner institution that would be relevant for adaptation to provide training that would be adjusted to the local context. The key areas that were identified were, as anticipated:

- (a) response to climate-change-induced disasters, with a focus on prevention, preparedness and response, both by Mozambique and Cape Verde, and
- (b) response to forced displacement, owing to natural and human-made disasters, particularly for Mozambique.

2.4 Key targets

The target groups identified in each partner country were educators, students, and non-teaching staff from various disciplines, policy-makers, NGOs, traditional leaders and community members, particularly those directly affected by humanitarian disasters.

2.4 Activities

The specific objectives of HumAct project are listed below.

- Build capacity concerning content in the substantive aspects of HA.
- Build the research capacity of educators and students about HA.
- Enhance the pedagogical strategies of educators.
- Strengthen community outreach and engagement.

Activities were designed to tackle each of the above objectives.

- New contextually relevant curricula were developed by (a) adapting existing modules to include content on HA, and (b) creating new modules focusing exclusively on HA.
- Two workshops were held: (a) at ISCTE in Lisbon in the fall of 2021 and (b) at the UoA in Athens in the spring of 2022, focusing on the enhancement of the teaching and

research capacities of educators. They both included visits to humanitarian action organisations.

- Four seasonal schools were hosted by (a) the Pedagogical University in Maputo, Mozambique in the fall of 2022; (c) the University of Cape Verde and University of Santiago in Cape Verde in the summer of 2023; (c) ISCTE in Lisbon in the fall of 2023, and (d) the Pedagogical University in Maputo and the University of Rovuma in the summer of 2024. Each seasonal school brought together educators and students and focused on Humanitarian Action in the context of displacement, climate change and armed conflict; disaster prevention and the potential of innovative and sustainable technological solutions to increase capacity; the development of curricula on HA; accreditation, modernisation and internationalisation, allowing joint learning, knowledge sharing and the professionalisation of the HA sector at local and national level. It included field visits to HA actors in the country.
- Nine webinars with speakers from partner and programme partners covering topics such as Humanitarian Action in respect to war displacement, integration, natural disaster risk management, child protection, nutrition, human trafficking, and the role of media.
- An academic and scientific writing workshop held at the University of Santiago in the fall of 2023.

These activities are described in detail in the following chapter.

3. Development and teaching of adapted and new modules

3.1 Adaptation of existing modules and development of new ones

Before the launch of HumAct, no modules existed in HA in six of the seven partner universities. The only exception was two modules taught at the University of Cape Verde, one in the context of "International Humanitarian Law" at an undergraduate level and a second one at a graduate level "Regional Security Governance and Conflict Resolution-Humanitarian Intervention" as part of the MA degree in "African Regional Integration".

Six new modules were developed, while 25 existing modules were adapted to include HA in their content. The challenges universities faced at the development and

teaching phases were more or less similar across all partners. The most prominent challenge that stood out was the lack of appropriate educational materials impacting teaching and learning and the need to either locate existing bibliographical sources or develop tailor-made materials. Resistances towards a new and unknown academic topic such as HA and insufficient previous knowledge were also mentioned as an essential challenge, pointing, thus, to the necessity for further training of instructors on the new modules.

3.1.1 University of Cape Verde

3.1.1.1 Areas of new and adapted modules

Five modules have been adapted: three for postgraduate courses and two for undergraduate courses.

Adapted modules are in public health, nursing, management and environmental policies, geography and land-use planning.

In teaching the adapted and new modules, many challenges arose, especially in the adapted curricular units, as they were already accredited by the course study plans by the regulatory body and hence did not allow much change in the contents and the credit hours. Moreover, there was already an instructor responsible for each module, which made it more difficult to find available hours to teach the intended Humanitarian Action content. It was noted that there was a lack of mastery of the basic concepts of HA on the part of the instructors responsible for the module, and as a way of overcoming this difficulty, the project members had to take over the content taught.

Teaching materials presented an additional difficulty since the majority were in English, a language barrier for some students, and very few materials existed in Portuguese.

Because students had no previous contact with HA content units, adopting basic HA concepts in all adapted courses was necessary. However, some curricular units already had some content on Humanitarian Action, which helped the re-organisation towards HA. All adapted modules had between four and eight hours of content on HA.

Table 1. New and Adapted Modules at the University of Cape Verde

Type	Name of Module	Level of Education	Title of Bachelor/Master
New	Legal Dimensions of Humanitarian Action	Master	International Relations and Economic Diplomacy
New	Humanitarian Action fundamentals, principles and solutions	Master and Bachelor	Free course
Adapted Module	Public Health and Global Health	Master	Public Health
Adapted Module	Sociology and Health Economics	Master	Public Health
Adapted Module	Climate Change and Natural Disasters - integrated in the thematic seminars	Master	Management and Environmental Policy
Adapted Module	Land-use planning	Bachelor	Geography and Spatial Planning (3rd year)
Adapted Module	Population Geography	Bachelor	Geography and Spatial Planning (1st year)

3.1.2 University of Santiago

3.1.2.1 Areas of new and adapted modules

The University of Santiago adapted five existing modules, three at the undergraduate and two at the graduate level, and created a new one for undergraduates. The new module was in the area of Legal Studies, while the adapted ones covered the areas of Nursing, Pedagogy, Public Policies and Local Development (see Table 2). In both new and adapted modules, there was a cross-fertilisation between the theory of humanitarian action and prevention and intervention strategies.

The development and teaching of the modules created an opportunity for sharing on many levels. It stirred up discussions between colleagues, created new group dynamics among students, and mobilized the planning of team activities for the exchange of teaching and learning experiences, and study visits. Module development brought the importance of transdisciplinarity and the richness of group work. Most importantly, it opened up a new research agenda on HA, highlighting the inseparability between teaching, research and key social institutions outside the University, such as the Red Cross, Civil Protection, Non-Governmental Organizations and Organizational Citizenship Behavior.

Besides the development of the content of the modules per se, a big challenge was the location of existing bibliographical sources and the development of new teaching and learning materials, training manuals, and fieldwork packages. Exchange of bibliography between working teams proved a fruitful exercise. Teaching and learning were equally challenged by the responsibilities of advising, grading and assessing students' performance regarding the adapted and new modules.

However, as mentioned by the University of Santiago, the biggest challenge in developing and including HA in the curricula was collaboration with the partner and program institutions.

Table 2. New and Adapted Modules at the University of Santiago

Type	Name of Module	Level of Education	Title of Bachelor/Master
New	Legal Foundations for Humanitarian Action	Bachelor	Law
Adapted Module	Elaboration and Evaluation of Public Policy	Master	Public Policies and Local Development
Adapted Module	Design Management and Evaluation of Educational Projects	Master	Pedagogy Masters
Adapted Module	Community Health Nursing	Bachelor	Nursing
Adapted Module	Ethics and Deontology in Nursing	Bachelor	Nursing
Adapted Module	Nutrition	Bachelor	Nursing

3.1.3 Pedagogical University of Maputo

3.1.3.1 Areas of new and adapted modules

Five modules were adapted at the undergraduate level in Organisational Change, Law and Humanitarian Action, Environmental Education and Public Health, and Hygiene and Safety at Work. Of the five, one was built on cross-cutting themes in HA (levels I and II) and included in all degree-leading courses: Human Resources Management and Business Management (see table below).

Several challenges arose along the way in the development and delivery of adapted and new modules. One difficulty was the fact that the development of modules was a much more laborious process than anticipated. The academia was not ready to accept that

humanitarian action is a broad topic that touches upon many fields, not only geography, as initially thought. Changing preconceived ideas was not an easy task. An unintended consequence of this attitude was the delay in getting the modules approved by the Scientific Council.

Table 3. New and Adapted Modules at the Pedagogical University of Maputo

Type	Name of Module	Level of Education	Title of Bachelor/Master
New	Law and Humanitarian Action	Bachelor	Human Resources Management, Business Management
Adapted Module	Cross-cutting theme II	Bachelor	Transversal to different courses
Adapted Module	Hygiene and Safety in Workplace	Bachelor	Electronic Engineering
Adapted Module	Organisational behaviour	Bachelor	Human Resources Management
Adapted Module	Cross-cutting theme in Humanitarian Action	Bachelor	Transversal to different courses
Adapted Module	Environmental Education and Public Health	Bachelor	Biology

3.1.4 University of Púnguè

3.1.4.1 Areas of new and adapted modules

While HA cuts across almost all academic fields, the University of Pungue decided to place the HumAct project within the Faculty of Geosciences and Environment due to the current debate on pressing environmental issues. Hence, the adapted and new modules, all at the undergraduate level, covered the areas of Cartography, Climatology, Environmental Risk Management, Hydrology and Geomorphology, emphasizing the mapping of areas susceptible to flooding using geoprocessing and remote sensing techniques, meteorological and climatic phenomena analysed in studies on mitigation and adaptation to the impacts of climate change and, on action in areas affected by natural disasters of the geomorphological type. The new module, in particular, focused on the socio-political dimension of HA as regards natural disasters, such as the role of government and NGOs; the logistics and the processes in humanitarian assistance during and after disasters; management of resettlement,

territorial occupation and organisation of health care pre-, during and after natural disasters; and conflict management in terms of distribution of aid, corruption and ethics.

The approach to adopting, developing, and teaching the modules intertwined theory and practice. The theory was complemented with curiosity-raising activities such as hands-on applications, interactive exercises in small groups, and field trips.

The above endeavour faced several challenges, such as the scarcity of educational materials, especially in Portuguese, and the lack of or poor internet connection quality, rendering students' access to materials very difficult. There were, however, additional challenges regarding human resources. That is, at the local level, not many experts on Humanitarian Action were available, and some colleagues at the University resisted teaching module content that they were not at ease with.

Table 4. New and Adapted Modules at the University of Púnguè

Type	Name of Module	Level of Education	Title of Bachelor/Master
New	Management Fundamentals in Humanitarian Action	Bachelor	Geography Training
Adapted Module	Applied Cartography	Bachelor	Geography Training
Adapted Module	Climatology	Bachelor	Geography
Adapted Module	Environmental Risk Management	Bachelor	Environmental Management and Community Development
Adapted Module	Hydrology	Bachelor	Environmental Management and Community Development
Adapted Module	Geomorphology	Bachelor	Geography

3.1.5 University of Rovuma

3.1.5.1 Areas of new and adapted modules

The project brought a new curriculum dimension, as mentioned by the University of Rovuma. Two modules were adapted at the undergraduate level and three at the graduate level, targeting scientific areas such as Psychology, Human Management and Environmental Management. The modules are Intervention Techniques in Organisations, Hygiene and Safety in the Workplace, Applied Cartography, Human

Resource Management and Land Use Planning. A new module covering diverse topics of HA was developed for use at the Bachelor level.

The challenges encountered during the development and teaching phases were the realisation that the adapted content requires longer teaching sessions, that there is a need for continuous training of the teaching staff as well as for students' practical application in the field, complementing what takes place within the University.

Table 5. New and Adapted Modules at the University of Rovuma

Type	Name of Module	Level of Education	Title of Bachelor/Master
New	Humanitarian Action	Bachelor	Transversal
Adapted Module	Diagnostics and Intervention Techniques in Organisations	Bachelor	Social and Organisational Psychology
Adapted Module	Applied Cartography in Environmental Management	Master	Environmental management
Adapted Module	Introduction in Human Resource Management	Bachelor	Human Resource Management
Adapted Module	Land Use Planning	Master	Environmental Management
Adapted Module	Hygiene and Safety in the Workplace	Bachelor	Human Resource Management

4. Conclusions and lessons learned

The main asset of HumAct is its **sustainability**. The partners will continue teaching and researching together in a **Joint Master's degree** just awarded through the **Erasmus Mundus** application: *Coordinated Human Response, Health and Displacement* (ERASMUS-EDU-2024-PEX-EMJM-MOB, ref. 101180512). Moreover, through the project, **Humanitarian Action was taught in 2021/2022, for the first time in two African countries at the tertiary level—at universities in Cape Verde and Mozambique**. Since then, the courses have been offered in several Bachelor's and Master's programmes, e.g., "Fundamentals of Humanitarian Action". The curriculum was co-designed and co-created jointly with the partners, a mutually enriching experience for the University of Athens and ISCTE at the University of Athens and Iscte. The institutions adapted and created modules to include

humanitarian action content: the University of Cape Verde adapted, e.g. "Introduction to Global Health" and created "Humanitarian Action: Fundamentals, Principles and Answers". The University of Santiago adapted, e.g. "Elaboration and Evaluation of Public Policies" and developed "Legal Foundations of Humanitarian Action". The University of Rovuma adapted, e.g. "Land Use Planning" and "Basic Fundamentals in Humanitarian Action".

Other important outputs of HumAct relate to (i) sustainability through research and scientific papers, (ii) the widening of perspectives offered by the challenges and practices between African and European partners working together at equal footing, (iii) capitalizing on local knowledge in African countries contributing thus to people overcoming the experience of forced displacement, and, lastly, (iv) the multidisciplinary that provided mutual learning between partners. in developing curricula in HA.

The lessons learned were diverse and broad, from the awareness of the need to teach humanitarian action by the Cape Verdean and Mozambican universities to the recognition of professionalism in intervention. Furthermore, methodologies were developed on how to teach, how to network between partners and how to transmit knowledge to international, national and local organisations.

4.1. Conclusions

4.1.1. Sustainability: teaching and research

a. Teaching

There were **25 adapted modules and six new modules of Humanitarian Action** in the five Cape Verdean and Mozambican universities. Furthermore, unintended initiatives concerning teaching emerged:

- i. University of Rovumasubmitted one new **Master of Humanitarian Action**, and two new ones are in preparation by Púnguè University and Pedagogical University of Maputo;
- ii. the University of Cape Verde created a **free course** in Humanitarian Action;
- iii. Púnguè University launched a **website for students** learning Humanitarian Action – <https://desastresnaturaism.wixsite.com/fgah> ;

- iv. A **Joint Master was** funded by Erasmus Mundus in 2024, coordinated by Iscte, having as full partners the University of Cape Verde, the University of Santiago, the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, and the University of Rovuma, and as associated partners the Pedagogical University of Maputio and the University of Púnguè.

Citing one of the Professors at the University of Púnguè: “more than just a one-off project, it has left its mark on adapted curricula, modules and courses and closer ties with the main stakeholders working in Humanitarian Action!”.

- b. Research

The writing of scientific papers was relatively new for the professors from Cape Verdean and Mozambican universities, where collaborative research among the partners was developed.

- i. One **paper was published** – “Mapeamento da Susceptibilidade à Inundação na Bacia Hidrográfica do rio Zambeze, Moçambique” [Mapping Flood Susceptibility in the Zambezi River Basin, Mozambique], 2023, in *Boletim GeoÁfrica* 2(7), Doi 10.59508/geoafrica.v2i7.61556.
- ii. **Nine papers are in preparation**, and draft versions are to be submitted.
- iii. Students have recognised the agenda of Humanitarian Action, which has now become a topic chosen for training and research.

4.1.2. Widening of perspectives

The meetings of the project and the co-design and co-creation of the curriculum brought challenges and mutual learning. It impacted how “Africans” perceive “Europeans” and vice versa. This widening of perspectives took place at the Summer Schools of Humanitarian Action, which allowed the teams to be physically together. The students from Mozambican and Cape Verdean universities also brought new perspectives from the local experiences and cumulative knowledge from the teaching.

4.1.3. Local knowledge

The project paved the way for specific localised contextual knowledge to overcome the challenges of forced displacement. Among other examples, a professor at the University

of Púnguè, investigated the reason why displaced people keep coming back to their former houses in Licongo River, province of Zambezia, in Mozambique, knowing that the houses will be flooded again – the ancestor’s tombs are there. People are afraid something will happen to them if they don’t come back. This local, traditional knowledge complements standardised strategies in attempting to help those displaced.

4.1.4. Multidisciplinarity

During the Summer School exchange the participants started bridging the gap between natural sciences and social sciences in humanitarian action. Up to that time natural scientists used to analyze the prevention and damages related to humanitarian action, exclusively from the point of view of “natural sciences”. This was also the case with the social scientists. As the project was taking roots, natural scientists from fields such as biology and health, started considering the social impact, and the social scientists, such as sociologists, combined the perspectives of natural causes and health treatment with the social support dimension.

4.2. Lessons learned

4.2.1. Awareness of the need for humanitarian action training and research

Previously, the humanitarian action area was not a priority for the Cape Verdean and Mozambican universities. The first lesson from the project is that it contributed to the African partner universities' awareness of the need for humanitarian action training due to climate disasters and conflicts. Moreover, there was no recognition that humanitarian action is a research area. Overall, it contributed to the acknowledgment that university training is essential for humanitarian interventions.

4.2.2. Methodology

Teaching in humanitarian action requires specific methods, including the participation between humanitarian workers and displaced persons. To fulfill this need, the Summer Schools offered training on methodology. Such an example is the storytelling technique that provides students with practical examples from the refugee and internally displaced camps.

4.2.3. Networking

HumAct project promoted networking through staff mobility for teaching and systematic review of curriculum development between European and African universities. Additionally, networking offered the opportunity of scientific co-creation between professors from different partner universities. The Summer Schools on Humanitarian Action played a key role in solidifying collaboration internal cooperation among the partners. Additionally, ~~the~~ networking strongly impacted the co-writing of the application for the Joint Master Erasmus Mundus, successfully approved and funded by the European Commission.

4.2.4. Field knowledge from international, national and local organisations

In the Summer Schools, the contribution from international organisations, such as the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), was particularly relevant for providing a perspective of the challenges, strategies and articulation with local institutions. It was beneficial both for professors and students. The local organisations, such as Christian ones, provided insights into the logistics and activities. National organisations, such as the Institute for Disaster Management and Reduction (INGD), offered insights for national coordination and field visits to camps of forcibly displaced and to accommodation in dire circumstances.

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Annexes

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Em uma enchente a função da água é selecionar classe sociais. *Murillo Leal*

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