

SOCIAL INNOVATION

# 3 humanitarian organizations championing resilience you should know about

Aug 18, 2023

**Christa Odinga-Svanteson**

Impact Communications Manager, World  
Economic Forum

- **World Humanitarian Day, marked each year on 19 August, recognizes the work and sacrifice of humanitarian workers worldwide.**
- **This year's theme, #NoMatterWhat, reiterates their commitment to those they serve despite the difficulties involved.**
- **Three social innovators described here demonstrate how empowering humanitarian workers improve lives in concrete ways.**

---

This year's commemoration of World Humanitarian Day carries an added significance: it marks two decades since the [tragic bombing](#) of the UN Headquarters in Baghdad, Iraq, that claimed the lives of 22 staff members. We honour the memory of these victims, killed on 19 August 2003, every year on World Humanitarian Day.

On 19 August, humanitarian organizations and individuals also reaffirm their unwavering commitment to the core values of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence; of standing in unwavering support of those in need, no matter the circumstances. The principles are echoed in this year's World Humanitarian Day theme: **#NoMatterWhat**.

# Recognizing 3 leading humanitarian organizations

The need for humanitarian workers is immense. The impact of war and conflict has uprooted over [100 million individuals](#), approximately one in every 74 people, from their homes. Often, it takes two decades before those who have crossed borders ever return to their homelands.

As new crises emerge, and existing ones persist, the perils faced by humanitarian workers and victims of crises have escalated. According to the United Nations, in 2021, 460 aid workers were attacked: 140 killed, 203 wounded and 117 kidnapped. The danger is compounded by a disregard for international humanitarian law, deliberate attacks targeting aid workers and the spread of misinformation.

This World Humanitarian Day, we reflect on the journey of humanitarians who persistently stand with communities amidst a shifting landscape.

The following three organizations, where are [Schwab Social Innovators](#), serve as catalysts for collaboration in the regions they operate. They exemplify resilience, unity and the dedication to overcome challenges, all while echoing the mantra: #NoMatterWhat.

The organizations convene governments, non-profit entities, local communities, businesses and individuals to formulate comprehensive responses to crises. Their approach leads to holistic solutions that tackle multifaceted challenges. Furthermore, these organizations are actively amplifying the voices of displaced marginalized people, ensuring their insights shape policies, advocacy efforts and actions. This approach results in interventions that are contextually relevant and sustainable.

## **Fondation Orient-Occident: Bridging communities**

In the realm of humanitarian endeavours, the [Fondation Orient-Occident \(FOO\)](#), a Moroccan non-profit organization, stands as a leading example. Their humanitarian programming extends to both Moroccans and non-Moroccans, particularly migrants and refugees.

Since February 2020, following an initial survey among local populations, the FOO embarked on a partnership with La Fiermontina Ocean, a luxury eco-retreat situated near three Moroccan rural villages. Their holistic interventions are designed to enhance access to vital resources, healthcare, education and employment. Their initiatives also encourage the establishment of local cooperatives, promote sustainable agricultural practices and foster a tourism economy grounded in social solidarity.

Notably, FOO has trained dozens of men and women in tourism and hospitality, offering them opportunities to work at the La Fiermontina Ocean resort. These initiatives not only address recurring migration challenges but also contribute to revitalizing the region and strengthening bonds between neighbouring villages.

A critical aspect of their strategy involves empowering local stakeholders. FOO has supported the creation of the first village association and, through a partnership with the Fundacion Paraguaya, is introducing the "Poverty Stoplight." This innovative tool empowers families to eliminate multidimensional poverty by unlocking their entrepreneurial potential.



Fondation Orient-Occident works with the vulnerable to connect them with meaningful work and enighbouring communities. Image: Fondation Orient-Occident

## World Humanitarian Day: a chance to reflect

As we mark World Humanitarian Day, let's recognize and honour the pivotal role of humanitarian organizations in forging connections between diverse communities and fostering inclusivity.

As the world evolves, humanitarians remain unwavering in their commitment to communities in need. Through stories like those of REFUNITE, RefugePoint, and Fondation Orient-Occident, the unwavering commitment of humanitarians to stand with the communities they serve shines bright.

Through their efforts, they are shaping a more compassionate and resilient world for all, where the voices of those in need are heard and solutions are rooted in the collective strength of communities. Their actions exemplify a powerful promise that transcends challenges and boundaries, echoing with the resounding message of #NoMatterWhat.

Full article: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/08/3-humanitarian-organizations-championing-resilience-that-you-should-know-about/>