2026

From Compliance to Care:
Integrating accountability in organisations

🎓	**Credits**	3 ECTS
📅	**Dates**	**12 January – 13 February 2026**
📍	**Format**	Online (combination of self-study and live sessions). Live sessions are scheduled once a week. All live sessions are in group and mandatory – Usually in early afternoon CEST. *Online course requires app. 15 hours of dedicated work per week. We recommend that participants allow at least 25 of their time for the course and adapt their professional activity accordingly and with flexibility on working hours.*
💬	**Language**	English
💵	**Fees**	• **Full price:** CHF 1'700 • **Partner rate (MSF, ICRC, UNICEF, IOM):** CHF 1'360 (20% discount) • **Special Rate for Government and NGO/CBO Staff:** CHF 850. Available exclusively to staff from local and national NGOs, CBOs, and government employees in low/middle-income countries. Proof of local employment and salary required.
🧑‍🏫	**Lecturer**	Dr Erna Burai – erna.burai@unige.ch
📋	**Short description**	How can organisations move from compliance-driven accountability to relationships of trust, dialogue, and co-creation with affected communities? What are the concrete steps through which this commitment can be realised? This executive course explores accountability as a shared responsibility across humanitarian, development and peacebuilding actors. Drawing on real-world cases, it examines how leadership, funding structures, and organisational cultures (developing standards, auditing) can either enable or hinder people-centred and locally led action. Participants will learn to design adaptive strategies and advocacy tools that promote ethical, inclusive and sustainable accountability.

This is a 5-week online course that can be taken as a stand-alone or as part of the Certificate of Advanced Studies in Accountability to Affected People (CAS AAP).

Learning outcomes of the course

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

- Explain the evolution of accountability, from technocratic standards to relational and decolonial approaches
- Understand power dynamics within humanitarian and development ecosystems that shape accountability
- Analyse the main barriers that impact accountability mechanisms internally and externally
- Apply practical tools to strengthen trust, participation, and downward accountability in their organisations
- Develop an advocacy or organisational strategy to embed ethical accountability and people-centred approaches across programmes

Workload

Around 75 hours of work overall, including:

1. Synchronous live sessions (once per week)
2. Asynchronous self-study activities (individual or group work activities such as readings, interviews, podcasts, videos, in-class presentations, self-tests, case studies and simulation exercises, reflexive analysis, forum discussions etc.)

Structure of the course

- **Week 1**: Accountability as ethics and practice (origins and challenges of AAP)
- **Week 2**: From standards to power: Rethinking relationships with communities (AAP frameworks)
- **Week 3**: Leadership and organisational culture (listening, reflexivity, gender and diversity)
- **Week 4**: Donor perspectives and systemic constraints (funding, reporting, risk management and advocacy)
- **Week 5**: Designing transformative accountability (evaluations and strategies)

Audience

- Professionals in the humanitarian, development or social sector looking to improve the provision of humanitarian assistance through accountability lenses
- Professionals from any other sectors (donors, policy-makers, decision-makers) who wish to make accountability a driver of trust and transparency

Admission requirements

1. A university qualification (Bachelor's degree or equivalent)
2. At least three years of relevant professional experience
3. Excellent command of English

Application deadline and registration: