Strengthening the humanity and dignity of people in crisis through knowledge and practice

Three Year Plan:
January 2012 to December 2015
Our research has directly led to major advances in the way humanitarian crises are managed.
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1. Introduction

The Feinstein International Center was founded in 1997 to study the nature of famine and famine relief. Since then the Center has broadened into a multidisciplinary institution focused on providing the understanding, teaching, and evidence needed to drive positive change in policies and practices affecting crisis-affected communities. The Center’s research and action focus on people affected by conflict, disasters, economic chaos, and gross violations of human rights. Many of our researchers live, or spend significant periods of time, in the countries where they conduct research. The students who take our graduate courses at Tufts University go on to work for United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations, and government bodies. Most stay in close touch with the Center as part of a growing alumni network around the world.

Over the next three years we will build on the success of the past and will focus our efforts on seven critical areas of enquiry:

1. Changing Nature of Crises and Crisis Response: The Promotion of Evidence-Based Practice
2. Humanitarianism and Politics
3. Livelihoods, Vulnerability, and Resilience
4. Nutrition and Food Security
5. People on the Move: Migration, Displacement, Refugees, and Urbanization
6. The Future of Pastoralism
7. Upholding Human Rights in the Face of Violence

2. Mission Statement

Our mission is to contribute to knowledge, policy, and practice that protects and strengthens the lives and livelihoods of people in crisis-affected and marginalized communities.
3. Approaches to Research and Impact

We are a multidisciplinary team of academics and practitioners from the North and South, with decades of experience working in some of the world’s most difficult and intractable crises. We are committed to a field-based research approach. Being present in crisis regions is an essential part of how we work. We have direct links with national and local networks and a strong commitment to working closely with local partners through participatory research. Our research is demand-driven. We build partnerships from the concept stage on, taking time to understand the context and dynamics of the communities in which we work, thus ensuring we focus on the priority areas where research, leading to change, is needed. Our findings and outputs are shared with all our stakeholders and are published globally and in the academic press.

Key partners in our work include local community groups, research institutions, government ministries, humanitarian and human rights agencies, the United Nations, and other intergovernmental groupings.

Principles and Approach
Six key principles govern our work:

1. We are people-focused—putting people affected by crises at the center of our work.
2. Our approach is ethical, respectful, and based on informed consent.
3. We value partnerships and actively involve crisis-affected communities in our research.
4. We are committed to supporting and developing local research capacities.
5. We are committed to widespread dissemination of our research findings.
6. We seek to work within the framework of national law and to have open and transparent relationships with national and local authorities in the environments where we carry out research.
Cross-cutting Concerns
Three cross-cutting concerns underpin our research, institutional change, and education agendas:

Lives and Livelihoods
Conflict and crises affect people’s lives and livelihoods. The immediate concern in an acute crisis is to ensure that people’s basic needs are met. Field-based research has made a significant difference to the effectiveness and efficiency with which emergency aid is provided. Challenges remain in sustaining an adequate humanitarian response in protracted crises, where that response needs to support and protect livelihoods as well as save lives. We strive to understand the vulnerability and resilience of local livelihood systems and how people successfully adapt to crisis without damaging the lives and livelihoods of others. Our work on Lives and Livelihoods directly supports evidence-based, innovative aid interventions.

Protection and Rights
Armed conflicts bring a broad range of threats and/or violations to people’s human rights and physical security. Our research teams investigate, document, and analyze grave violations and crimes and seek to understand who is responsible for these harms and who is at continued risk. We examine the factors that contribute to possible threats and violations; the long-term impacts of the violations on affected groups; and the priorities of survivors for accountability, justice, and redress. We seek to strengthen the capacity of the affected communities to protect and promote human rights, particularly the rights of women and children. We aim to influence policy and practice such that protection, accountability, and reparation are provided more effectively to conflict and crisis-affected communities.

Politics and Policy
Activities geared to alleviating suffering, and protecting the rights of marginalized and vulnerable people, are both the subject and object of intense political interest. Thus politics influence policy formation and implementation, and the consequences of policy feedback in turn to shape politics. We research the way politics and practice interact and seek to inform policymakers through research and field-based evidence, recognizing that this process is in itself inherently political.
4. Critical Areas of Enquiry

For the period 2011 to 2014 we will build on existing research in line with the principles and concerns outlined above and will focus our work around seven areas of enquiry. We believe these areas are critical to understanding the changing nature of crises and to developing evidence-driven interventions to significantly improve the lives and livelihoods of affected communities. The seven areas are:

1. Changing Nature of Crises and Crisis Response: The Promotion of Evidence-Based Practice
2. Humanitarianism and Politics
3. Livelihoods, Vulnerability, and Resilience
4. Nutrition and Food Security
5. People on the Move: Migration, Displacement, Refugees, and Urbanization
6. The Future of Pastoralism
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Changing Nature of Crises and Crisis Response: The Promotion of Evidence-Based Practice

The challenge

The nature of crises affecting people in extremis is changing. Conflict remains an important source of vulnerability, but other hazards and risks are gaining prominence. Increasingly we will see climate change, urbanization, migration, access to food, and technological disasters all acting at once and further compounding risks and vulnerabilities. Complex, multi-causal crises will become more common. Aid programming will also become increasingly complex. Agencies and donors are under pressure to show that their aid is effective, yet many of the basic systems needed to drive effectiveness are lacking in the humanitarian world. There remains a significant knowledge gap in understanding the true impact of humanitarian programs and in creating effective feedback and accountability mechanisms from beneficiaries and host populations. Universal standards of individual professional competence for humanitarian workers need to be created and applied. Aid policy and response must be evidence-driven—from needs assessments through response to rehabilitation and exit.

What we will do

Over the next three years we will pursue three critical lines of applied research. First, we will seek to understand the role of empirical evidence in driving humanitarian assistance programming. How are needs assessments actually connected to response choices? How do we measure the impact of humanitarian action? What are the consequences of the increasing longevity of humanitarian programs? Second, we will continue to research how institutions evolve and adapt and how to
promote better accountability and professional competency in the humanitarian field. Third, we will research the way key global processes such as climate change and globalization affect community risk and vulnerability, and the subsequent consequences this has for the evolving humanitarian system.

**What we have achieved to date**

Working with a coalition of NGOs and an independent funding foundation, the Center helped develop a key set of participatory methods for assessing the true impact of aid programs. The resulting Participatory Impact Assessment Guidelines, available in English, French, and Spanish, are now widely used by aid agencies. The Center also led a three-year effort to develop and promote the “LEGS” evidence-based standards for livestock interventions in crises. Groundbreaking research has also been completed to map out the core competencies for humanitarian workers and opportunities for creating a global professional certification system.

“Field-based research in close collaboration with crisis-affected communities is the hallmark of our work.”

**What we will do**

Research on the fraught humanitarian-political relationship has been a core activity at the Center since its inception. We will continue to document how politics influence humanitarian practice through case studies and ethnographic research in ongoing humanitarian crises. Coming from an objective academic perspective, we will use the research to inform policy at the global level—targeting donor governments, NGOs, the UN, and partner research institutions—through policy dialogue around our findings, dissemination, and advocacy. During the next three years we will continue to track global policy developments and conduct research on emerging issues such as the impact of sovereignty/nationalism-based critiques on the future of humanitarian action and in particular on the humanitarian system’s ability to reach the most vulnerable. Through case studies in Sri Lanka, Nepal, Afghanistan, and elsewhere, we will analyze the relevance of the humanitarian principles of neutrality,
impartiality, and independence in a more complex, globalized but also potentially more polarized world.

**What we have achieved to date**

Our research on humanitarianism and politics spans the past two decades. Our work constitutes a unique compilation on the functioning of the humanitarian enterprise. Over the past five years we have researched local perceptions of the work of humanitarian agencies in 13 country studies, the findings of which provided material for policy papers, reports, and academic outputs on humanitarianism in the age of globalization and counter-terrorism. Innovative research was conducted on the effectiveness of “hearts and minds” agendas in Afghanistan and on perceptions of change and social transformation in Nepal.

**Livelihoods, Vulnerability, and Resilience**

**The challenge**

More than a decade of research and experience at the Center points strongly to the importance of understanding the vulnerability of people’s livelihoods, the risks they face, and their adaptive strategies. Such analysis is crucial to designing effective policy and response strategies. Livelihoods are often caught up in the dynamics of conflict; a common feature of armed conflict is the direct targeting of livelihood assets through looting, destruction, or forced displacement. Destructive livelihood strategies may involve intimidation, coercion, and violence, and can further fuel conflict among livelihood groups. By understanding the root causes of vulnerability and the complexity of livelihood adaptations, agencies are better able to support, protect, and promote successful local livelihood strategies and to take steps to ensure that policies and programs do not undermine or threaten these strategies.
What we will do
Our work focuses on further developing our understanding and analysis of livelihood vulnerability and resilience in the context of armed conflict (Darfur), protracted and repeated crises (northern Ethiopia) and disaster risk reduction (Nepal and Kenya). We will also research the emerging role of cash and financial resilience in counteracting vulnerability (Haiti and Egypt).

What we have achieved to date
Over the past eight years researchers from the Center have worked closely with local researchers in Darfur to better understand the links between livelihoods and conflict, including how conflict has affected livelihoods and in turn how livelihood adaptations have fueled recovery or, alternatively, further conflict. Studies have also taken into account the role of trade and markets in promoting wider economic recovery and the opportunities for promoting peace-building through trade. Research on the vulnerability and risk of the camel nomads, who are often associated with the armed militia (Janjaweed), revealed a complex pattern of vulnerability that directly influenced their decision to support the government’s counterinsurgency efforts. This research has shown that the vulnerability of their livelihoods is very different from the vulnerability of displaced farmers. The Center’s research has contributed much of the knowledge base that has influenced the design of livelihood program strategies for Darfur as well as the thinking and actions of major aid donors. More recently, the Center’s research reviewed the challenges facing the international humanitarian system. Our research in Darfur continues to evolve with a policy and programming focus on pastoralist livelihoods, which is now expanding to cover both North and South Sudan.
Nutrition and Food Security

The challenge
The number of people who die in famines and food security crises has declined in recent years with improvements in response modalities and information systems. However, nutritional risk remains evident in almost every crisis-affected or marginalized community. The number of people reduced to a state of chronic food and livelihood insecurity in the aftermath of crises or in protracted crises has grown. Although hunger and malnutrition are back on the global agenda, as witnessed by the L’Aquila G-8 Summit and the Feed the Future program of USAID, this new emphasis fails to focus on hunger and malnutrition among marginalized or crisis-affected populations.

What we will do
Our work in this area will continue to focus on understanding the nutrition and food security needs of people affected by acute crises and will expand to take into account the changing nature of protracted crises and the longer-term marginalization of particular groups and livelihood systems. The increasingly complex nature of food insecurity and undernutrition demands broader analysis of causal factors, including the impact of food price volatility, climate change, natural disasters, and the increasingly protracted nature of crises. These factors require a better understanding of the dynamics of food insecurity and undernutrition to support the action needed to effectively address these problems. Research will also focus on the options for response and the way in which analysis informs these choices. While global in nature, our research is likely to focus on the Greater Horn of Africa and South Asia. The Center has already developed good working relations with the UN Global Nutrition Cluster, and efforts will be made to both support and conduct research collaboratively with the newly-formed Global Food Security Cluster.

What we have achieved to date
This research builds on previous Center work, including the development of tools and indicators for emergency food security programming in a variety of contexts, longitudinal research on livelihoods change over time, and research examining the potential linkages between livelihoods programming among Somali pastoralists and childhood undernutrition. Recently our work on the delivery of treatment of acute malnutrition by community-based volunteers in Bangladesh has seen unprecedented levels of improved access to treatment and coverage. As a result, the Bangladeshi government has started a process of policy change in this area. In addition, ongoing Center research on livelihoods in Darfur and elsewhere in the Greater Horn of Africa is improving our understanding of the nutritional challenges of pastoralism, and is helping scale up approaches to addressing malnutrition amongst HIV/AIDS sufferers.

People on the Move: Migration, Displacement, Refugees, and Urbanization

The challenge
People displaced by armed conflict and other disasters are increasingly moving to urban areas, joining groups whose traditional livelihoods may no longer be viable. Migrants of all kinds—refugees, internally displaced people, and those seeking new livelihoods—now face increasingly difficult and dangerous journeys, and in urban areas they face multiple protection threats. There is a
need for more research to explore how urban migrants survive, what factors structure their journeys, including their return movements, and how wider policy and political shifts influence their experience.

Urban areas are themselves becoming zones of humanitarian need. Armed conflict and disasters such as earthquakes create huge humanitarian needs, as the populations and the geographical scope of urban areas expand. Thus, many of the trends the Center explores are manifest in urban settings.

What we will do
Our research will continue to document and analyze the experience of urban migrants of all kinds, but especially refugees and internally displaced people. We will focus on:

- Migrants’ journeys, including the growing role of smugglers and organized crime in moving people, and how this creates protection threats, indebtedness and exploitation.
- Migrants’ survival in urban areas, what they contribute, and how their livelihood experience differs from that of their non-migrant neighbors. Given the rising consumerism in urban settings, access to cash is very important, and we are particularly interested in the financial practices of migrants and how their financial resilience can be supported.
- Migrants’ interface with government authorities and how their rights can be protected. Here we will continue to work with UNHCR and other aid agencies as well as advocacy organizations in urban areas.
- How urban areas are affected by disasters, such as the Haiti earthquake, and the ways in which such disasters create new patterns of mobility and residence, with ensuing new threats to livelihoods and protection.

What we have achieved to date
Over the past five years we have worked with a range of organizations to promote understanding of urban migration. We have worked with the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (Geneva) to conduct four “profiling” surveys comparing the experience of IDPs and other populations in Khartoum (Sudan), Abidjan (Cote d’Ivoire), Santa Marta (Colombia), and Nairobi (Kenya). We have worked with various departments of UNHCR, including the Urban Livelihoods Unit and their IDP Unit. We are conducting a study of three secondary cities in three refugee-hosting countries for the US State Department (BPRM) that compares the experience of refugees and other migrants with their urban non-migrant counterparts. Our work has been used to support urban refugee programs and policies, and we have created a set of profiling tools and training that can be used by humanitarian agencies. In an ongoing study in collaboration with the American University of Cairo, we have been exploring the livelihoods of Sudanese refugees in Cairo. Based on information we gained through this study, we recently turned our attention to the cities of Israel, where a growing number of African migrants are headed. In addition, as one study in the Center’s Disaster Risk Reduction project, we are exploring the consequences of the urban-based earthquake in Haiti.
The Future of Pastoralism

The challenge
Countries in the Horn of Africa often fall at the bottom of the Human Development Index. Within these countries, pastoralist areas have even lower levels of development and are characterized by chronic food insecurity and protracted conflict. Yet in some areas, business is booming. Growing livestock exports and domestic meat markets seem to offer a bright future for some, while at the same time, levels of destitution are rising. Complex mixes of market drivers, formal and informal policies, and deep-rooted misunderstandings around the economics of pastoralism continue to confuse the policy environment, with outdated thinking on settlement and land use dominating national policies. At the same time, more progressive pan-African and regional policies are emerging that recognize the economic and ecological logic of pastoralist mobility within cross-border ecosystems.

“Understanding the economics and politics of pastoralism is key to generating new options for the future.”

What we will do
Our long-term program on the Future of Pastoralism in Africa will continue to engage senior policy makers in regional organizations to support the implementation of new regional policies within countries. The aim is to align national policies to the regional frameworks. We will also continue to track and explain livelihood trends in pastoralist areas and channel analysis and evidence directly into policy forums. At a more local level, our work on coordinating large-scale programs will continue, as will the use of impact assessments to improve the development strategies of donors and NGOs.

What we have achieved to date
Within the last three years the Center has worked with the African Union (AU), the Intergovernmental Agency for Development, and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, to support evidence-based policy development on pastoralism. The new AU Policy Framework for Pastoralism in Africa was endorsed in late 2010 and combines clear recognition of the rights of pastoralists with the need to further develop the economic potential of these areas by better enabling extensive and mobile livestock production. Our research on livelihoods trends in pastoralist areas has explained the apparent contradiction between growing export markets and increasing poverty, leading to questions over the relevance of large-scale safety net programs. This type of analysis is providing a reality check on safety net approaches in pastoralist areas and has influenced donor strategies.
Upholding Human Rights in the Face of Violence

The challenge
All women, men, girls, and boys are entitled to protection and rights as laid out in international covenants and conventions. Protection of human rights and protection from grave crimes is a primary obligation of the state. However, during armed conflict, mass flight across borders, or transitions from conflict to post-conflict, the state may be unwilling or unable to fulfill its protective obligations, with devastating consequences for the most vulnerable. Through its research, the Center works to draw attention to the obligations of governments and non-state armed groups to respect, protect, and uphold people’s fundamental rights. We work to shape policies and programs that support key actors in meeting these responsibilities. We also work closely with victims, survivors, and at-risk populations to inform and develop strategies that uphold their rights.

What we will do
The Center will continue to carry out research to promote the rights of populations affected by armed conflict and gross violations of human rights. The Center will continue its research on rights violations, grave crimes, protection, and access to justice for conflict-affected and at-risk marginalized communities. We aim to strengthen local, national, and international networks committed to justice and accountability for these communities. We seek to strengthen the capacity of the community to protect and promote human rights, particularly the rights of women and children. Our work aims to inform national and international processes of protection, accountability, justice, remedy, and reparation. Over the next three years, the Center will carry out such work in Afghanistan, Egypt, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Sudan, and Uganda.

What we have achieved to date
Previous Center research on children and youth’s access to remedy and reparation in eight countries has helped fuel international attention to their rights within transitional justice. Center researchers are also working in conjunction with the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the national Uganda Human Rights Commission, and Ugandan victims groups to develop strategies around an upcoming national truth and reconciliation body. We are developing frameworks for remedy and reparation for victims of the most serious rights violations committed during the hostilities between the government of Uganda and the Lord’s Resistance Army.
5. Education and Communication

Graduate Education at Tufts University
Tufts University is one of America’s foremost research and learning institutions. Tufts is deeply committed to promoting interdisciplinary education and to fostering a commitment to global citizenship on the part of students and faculty. The Center spans three of Tufts’ graduate schools (The Friedman School of Nutrition, The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, and the Cummings Veterinary School). The graduate student body is comprised of a diverse mix of national and international students who are already well on the way towards developing their professional careers.

At the Center, our teaching and mentoring focuses on these graduate students. We believe that through shaping knowledge and attitudes at this critical juncture in their lives, we have a lasting effect upon their careers and how they conduct themselves in those careers. Through our teaching and mentoring, we strive to prepare students for leadership in government and international agencies. We believe that this is one of the most important ways we can influence the humanitarian, human rights, and development fields.

“Global citizenship is a central pillar of all education at Tufts.”

Teaching
Our faculty members teach a range of courses within their areas of expertise in the graduate programs, all drawing on their field research and engagement in humanitarian, human rights, and development issues.

MAHA
We offer a one-year Master of Arts in Humanitarian Assistance (MAHA) degree, open to mid-career humanitarian practitioners. Students are mentored by Center faculty and take courses taught by Center faculty, in addition to a recommended series of courses offered at the Fletcher School and the Friedman School. The degree, entering its thirteenth year in 2011, is internationally recognized as one of the preeminent Master’s degrees for mid-career humanitarian professionals.

Over the next three years we seek to increase the scholarship support for our students and further strengthen the courses offered as part of the degree. We will also increase the marketing of the degree, with the intent to raise both application numbers and the quality of applicants.

MALD
Students in the Fletcher School who are awarded the Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy (MALD) go on to occupy key career positions in international diplomacy, humanitarian assistance, the military, and business. Feinstein faculty teach courses in the fields of Human Security and Humanitarian Assistance, providing us with an opportunity to shape students’ understanding of and
appreciation for humanitarian and human rights issues. Over the next three years, we will continue to teach and mentor MALD students, involve them in our research, and maintain contact with them after they leave the university.

**FPAN**

The Master of Food Policy and Applied Nutrition (FPAN) degree offered by the Friedman School is one of the premier Master’s degree programs in nutrition in the country. FPAN students go on to work with the major food and nutrition aid agencies, the US Department of Agriculture, and the food industry. We provide courses for a specific concentration in humanitarian aid. Over the next three years we will continue to teach these courses and will also work with the School to significantly increase the number of students coming to Friedman specifically to access the humanitarian concentration and courses.

**Graduate Certificate**

For many people working in the aid business, taking time off to attend a graduate school is impossible due to loss of income and break in career continuity. Many of these professionals have expressed interest in a form of further education that does not require stepping out of their career. To satisfy this demand, the Center is developing a new one-year distance learning Graduate Certificate in Evidence-Based Humanitarian Programming. The Graduate Certificate is a skills-focused collection of three courses, taught in sequence, which add to an existing Master’s qualification. Credits earned in Graduate Certificates are transferable into Master’s and PhD programs. Pedagogical research suggests that where people are learning skills online and practicing them in their daily work, the educational value of the courses is significantly higher than in the residential model. Over the three-year period we will develop, market, and begin teaching this new online Graduate Certificate in Evidence-Based Humanitarian Programming.

**Mentoring**

One of the key reasons students come to a world-class institution like Tufts is to have direct access to its renowned researchers and faculty. Advising and mentoring Master’s and PhD students is an important way to promote the Center’s mission. Students come to us for help with their dissertations and Master’s theses, for summer research internships, and to have Center faculty serve as advisors on their PhD research. We see the Center’s mentoring function as an essential link between an emerging researcher’s life as a student and making the transition to a professional researcher. Several students we have mentored have joined the Center in a more formal capacity.

Over the next three years we seek to increase both the number of summer research internships we can sponsor and the number of PhD students being supported by the Center faculty.
6. Center Support Structures

Advisory Board
The Center is administratively part of the Friedman School of Nutrition and as such comes under the School’s Board of Overseers. Over the next three years, we plan to establish a separate Advisory Board for the Center. The Advisory Board’s mission will be to promote the standing and financial wellbeing of the Center by the active engagement of its members in supporting the Center’s mission and goals. Board members will be drawn from a diverse group of people of national and international stature from a wide range of fields and experiences.

Active Network Management

Core Network
The 24 faculty researchers who currently form the core of the Center are dispersed across four continents, often living in close proximity to where they conduct their research and traveling to Tufts University to teach.

Nurturing this network requires careful management and attention to communications. The Center holds annual retreats for its faculty and promotes modern communications that make it possible for dispersed groups of researchers to come together around specific projects. We believe this dispersed model enables our faculty to carry out their best work, whilst staying grounded in the field realities of the countries in which they work.

Partnership
The networked nature of the Center’s faculty and staff makes it far easier for us to work in partnership with local researchers, research institutions, and government and international agencies. In addition, we partner with Center Visiting Fellows who are leaders in the fields of human rights, peace negotiations, disarming and demobilizing fighting forces, civil/military relations, and enhancing the financial resilience of crisis-affected communities. This commitment to partnership is a central part of how we work. Over the next three years we will further develop these partnerships and work to strengthen and promote local research capacity.

Grant and Finance Management
The Center has its own financial management support staff. We will continue to use the Tufts University Research Administration facilities to negotiate the terms of all grant contracts while retaining with faculty the responsibility for negotiating the substance of grants supporting their research and the Center in general.

“Many of our programs partner with local research institutions, building research capacity in crisis affected countries.”
Budget
The budget below projects the core costs of the Center over the next three years and includes an estimation of the project funds needed to effectively implement this three-year strategy.

<table>
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<th>July 2012 to June 2013</th>
<th>July 2013 to June 2014</th>
<th>July 2014 to June 2015</th>
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<td>Total Projected Budget</td>
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<td><strong>$6,290,217</strong></td>
<td><strong>$6,478,924</strong></td>
</tr>
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Personnel

Faculty and Researchers
The Center employs 24 faculty members and researchers. They are based on the Tufts campus in Medford and in Ethiopia, Sudan, Uganda, Nepal, Switzerland, and the UK. A full listing of current Center researchers can be found on our website.

Support Staff
The Center employs its own finance manager, and accountants, based in Medford, Addis Ababa, and Khartoum, to manage its grants. A full listing of current support staff can be found on our website.

Visiting Fellows
Individuals, researchers, faculty from other universities, and aid practitioners who frequently partner with us in our work are welcomed into the Center as Visiting Fellows. These honorary, non-salaried appointments allow our partners around the world to more easily access Tufts University’s academic resources, to visit the Tufts campus, and to interact with our student body.