



FXB Center
for Health & Human Rights
at Harvard University

François-Xavier Bagnoud (FXB) Center for Health and Human Rights at Harvard



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WHO WE ARE

The François-Xavier Bagnoud (FXB) Center for Health and Human Rights at Harvard University is founded on the inextricable link between health and human rights. It champions the rights and dignity of every individual, with special attention to children—among the most vulnerable.

At FXB, we believe that health is a human right—and that upholding that right requires confronting the structural violence that renders it inaccessible to so many. Since its founding over 30 years ago, the FXB Center has focused deliberately **on urgent and overlooked priorities**, beginning with children orphaned by AIDS—an area largely absent from academic discourse at the time.

As global and national landscapes evolve, so too have our academic priorities – ensuring that research and advocacy target the most pressing voids in scholarship and policy. The Center intentionally selects focus areas where its impact is greatest, addressing not only gaps in evidence but also the absence of legal frameworks and institutional attention.

Today, this approach continues to define FXB's work, positioning the Center as a leading interdisciplinary academic voice on critical issues that demand both rigorous scholarship and a deep commitment to justice. Whether studying Palestinian or Roma health, exposing racial and ethnic disparities in premature mortality in the U.S., or confronting the legal and policy failures surrounding distress migration, immigration and climate justice, FXB delivers the rigorous, evidence-based scholarship needed to inform both policy and practice. Our faculty and staff have a range of disciplinary backgrounds, from medicine and public health, to law, to social science and experimental science, a breadth of expertise that is reflected in the scholarship the Center produces. Child protection remains a central thread—an area long overlooked in academia.

For over three decades, FXB has served as a dynamic ecosystem for thought leaders and scholar-practitioners committed to research, teaching, and policy rooted in lived experience. It has trained generations of impactful scholars, policy makers and advocates and produced a substantial body of widely referenced scholarship.

In sum, the Center commands a unique combination of hands-on public health experience and expertise in international human rights law, reflected in its leadership. Through interdisciplinary inquiry and evidence-based advocacy, the Center generates transformative knowledge that bridges scholarship and practice, amplifies marginalized voices, strengthens policy responses, and advances a more just and humane world.



OUR APPROACH

What sets FXB apart is **its commitment to filling critical gaps in mainstream academic scholarship**. It is the only university-wide center in the United States dedicated to the health and human rights of Palestinian and Roma people, advancing rigorous research and shaping policy conversations too often ignored. This also includes pioneering work on unaccompanied migrant children and more generally child protection, a field long neglected in academia precisely because children cannot advocate for themselves. Building on this foundation, and as one of the few global centers for health and human rights that directly engages with U.S. structural inequality, FXB underscores the deep connection between marginalization and poor health outcomes—affirming that human rights are universal and must be upheld not only abroad, but also in the United States.

