

Humanitarian Evidence and Discourse Summary

May 2023
Luke Kelly, University of Manchester




Monthly Humanitarian Evidence and Discourse Summaries aim to signpost FCDO and others to the latest relevant evidence and discourse on humanitarian action. It is structured around [FCDO humanitarian framework](#) themes:








- **Protect:** Protect civilians, IDPs, refugees, marginalised groups including women and girls, and humanitarian access.
- **Prioritise:** Prioritise effective humanitarian assistance to people in greatest need
- **Prevent:** Prevent and anticipate future shocks and rebuild resilience in protracted and recurring crises

Further detail on methodology and scope at the end. Click on the hyperlinks to bring you to the relevant literature.


We hope this is a useful resource and you can read all the articles produced by brilliant authors and organisations(!), but each month we also invite a guest to identify their five “star reads” from the wider HCRI list. This does not represent an organisational position or assessment of rigour, but rather a personal choice of published evidence, guidance or discourse that are of special interest or impact. This month Luke Kelly (Lecturer in Humanitarian Studies at the Humanitarianism and Conflict Response Institute [HCRI] and compiler of this report) lists his five star reads.







Protect

Publication date	Title/URL	Author(s)/publication/publication type (evidence, discourse or policy/guidance)	Summary	Top reads
April 2023	Reducing civilian harm in urban warfare: a handbook for armed groups	ICRC Policy/guidance 	Guidance on how armed groups can reduce civilian harm throughout their operations.	
April 2023	Detention by non-State armed groups: translating law to practice	Tilman Rodenhäuser and Eloïse Lefebvre; ICRC Law & Policy Discourse 	Presents four key issues on the protection of detainees in the hands of non-State armed groups.	
April 2023	Ukraine wants recognition and reparations for Russian 'ecocide'	Jean-Philippe Lefief; Le Monde Discourse 	Discusses the prospects of reparations for environmental damage in Ukraine. Outlines the current state of assessment of the environmental damage by the Ukrainian government and NGOs, and the legal and political outlook.	






April 2023	When the lights go out: the protection of energy infrastructure in armed conflict	Eirini Giorgou and Abby Zeith; ICRC Law & Policy Discourse 	Outlines the harms to civilians caused by damage to energy infrastructure, and the protection offered by IHL.	
April 2023	Guidance note on the implications of cyber threats for humanitarians	Centre for Humanitarian Data Policy/guidance 	Outlines the key cyber threats and their potential effect on humanitarian action.	
April 2023	Humanitarian Notification Systems: unpacking the complexities and possibilities	GISF Evolving NGO Security Risk Management podcast Discourse 	Rob Grace discusses how the sharing of humanitarian locations with conflict parties can be used to enable humanitarian access and safety.	
April 2023	Fighting with words: humanitarian security and the changing role of law in contemporary armed conflict	Lida-Maria Tammi; Disasters Evidence 	Analysis of the effect of the use of legal principles for military or political purposes, 'lawfare', on humanitarian security, in Syria. Focusing on debates around UN Security Council meetings, the paper 'illustrates how legal arguments can be used strategically to create a permissive environment for violence against humanitarians'.	
April 2023	Humanitarian Access SCORE Report: Myanmar Survey on the Coverage, Operational Reach, and Effectiveness of Humanitarian Aid	Paul Harvey et al.; Humanitarian Outcomes Evidence 	Report assessing humanitarian access constraints in Myanmar, based on surveys conducted in December 2022.	










Prioritise





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March 2023	Durable Solutions for Children: Checklist for child-sensitive national and local durable solutions strategies to address internal displacement	Save the Children Policy/guidance 	Check list of measures to protect the rights of internally displaced children.	

April 2023	Operational guidance data responsibility in humanitarian action	Inter-Agency Standing Committee Policy/guidance 	Guidance on the principles of and actions for data responsibility in humanitarian action.	
April 2023	Cash and voucher assistance in humanitarian contexts: supply chain determinants for feasibility and operability	Russel Harpring; Hanken School of Economics Evidence 	PhD thesis on how supply chain factors affect the feasibility of cash transfers.	
April 2023	Programming guidance: embedding localisation in social protection	Courtenay Cabot Venton; Social Protection Technical Assistance, Advice and Resources (STAAR) Policy/guidance 	Guidance on integrating local actors in social protection programming led by governments or international humanitarian organisations.	
April 2023	Letting go of control Empowering locally led action in Ukraine	Simone Di Vicenz and Elizabeth Hallinan; Christian Aid Evidence 	Review of Christian Aid's work with community led approaches in Ukraine, such as survivor- and community-led response (sclr) and flexible small grants.	
April 2023	A pathway to localisation impact: laying the foundations	Kate Sutton et al; Humanitarian Advisory Group; GLOW Consultants; CoLAB Evidence 	Research on the impact of localisation. Noting there is no consistent framework for doing so, the paper interviews humanitarian workers and uses the Pakistan floods as a case study to identify barriers to measurement. Section 3 proposes a model for measuring the impact.	
March 2023	Opportunity cost of covid-19 budget reallocations: cross-country synthesis	Stephanie Allan and Eleanor Bayley; Centre for Disaster Protection Evidence 	Analysis of the costs and benefits of budget reallocations for covid-19 and disaster response more generally, based on studies of Albania, Ethiopia, Pakistan and South Africa.	

Prevent

Publication date	Title/URL	Author(s)/Publication/Publication type (evidence, discourse or policy/guidance)	Summary	Top reads
March 2023	How could artificial intelligence help (and hinder) our humanitarian work?	Matthew Gwynfryn Thomas; Medium Discourse 	Proposed uses, and risks, of ChatGPT for humanitarian organisations, based on thoughts from 30 staff in the British Red Cross.	
April 2023	Participation for humanitarian innovation	Elrha and MIT Policy/guidance 	Toolkit setting out a 'robust approach to setting expectations for and monitoring the degree of participation within research and innovation projects for, with, and by people affected by crisis.'	
April 2023	The Global Transboundary Climate Risk Report	Ariadne Anisimov and Alexandre K. Mangan; The Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations & Adaption without Borders Evidence 	Report on climate risks, identifying 10 globally significant risks and discussing potential policy responses.	
April 2023	Improving famine early warning systems: a conflict-sensitive approach	Alba Linares Queroa, Karlos Pérez de Armiñob and Manuel Sánchez Montero; Conflict, Security & Development Evidence 	Outlines ways to incorporate the causal link between conflict and food insecurity into early warning systems, using an adapted model and new indicators. Discusses difficulties in collecting the necessary data.	
April 2023	Pre-positioned funding as an approach to advance localisation and locally-led humanitarian action	Anne-Lise Dewulf; Trócaire Evidence 	Lessons from a pilot of Trocaire's new pre-positioned funding model in Sierra Leone, Malawi, Rwanda, Myanmar and Nicaragua	

April 2023	Anticipatory action in advance of 'wicked crises': Insights from a real-time study of people's lives in Somalia 2020–2022	Simon Levine et al.; SPARC Evidence 	Research on the anticipatory actions taken by farmers and pastoralists in Somalia in 2020. It highlights a lack of viable strategies in the local economy, a need for better weather forecasting, and the need to support a wide variety of strategies.	
March 2023	Leaving no crisis behind with assistance for the triple nexus: Humanitarian, development and peace funding in crisis contexts	Development Initiatives Evidence 	Analysis of development, humanitarian and peace funding in humanitarian response plans in 2021, to assess whether they are implementing triple nexus priorities.	
April 2023	Aid strategies in 'politically estranged' settings: How donors can stay and deliver in fragile and conflict-affected states	Sarah Cliffe et al.; Chatham House Evidence 	Many fragile and conflict-affected states are politically estranged from donor states, because of disputed elections, sanctions or similar situations. The report explores ways that humanitarian and development donors can stay engaged in a politically sensitive way, through different delivery and oversight modalities.	
April 2023	How the earthquakes could spark progress for disaster risk reduction in Syria	Haley Schuler-McCoin; The New Humanitarian Evidence 	Report that outlines opportunities for disaster risk reduction, early recovery and development in post-earthquake Syria, despite sanctions and 'red lines' from donor countries. It notes promising rhetoric from donors, and the possibility of small-scale DRR.	
April 2023	Jeremy Konyndyk, President of Refugees International	Humanitarian Fault Lines Discourse 	A discussion of current humanitarian issues and the future of Refugees International.	
April 2023	World Development Report 2023: Migrants, Refugees, and Societies	World Bank Evidence 	Uses the 'match and motive matrix' to analyse global migration in terms of migrants' skills and the needs of destination countries; and motives behind migration. Includes a chapter on refugees, highlighting the importance of host country policy and burden sharing.	
April 2023	Living with climate change, conflict and displacement: Recognising agency, voice, mobility, language and linkages	Caitlin Sturridge; Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) at ODI Evidence 	Analysis of the simultaneous effects of climate change, conflict and displacement, based on studies of western Afghanistan and northern Mozambique, with a focus on how host and displaced communities adapt and respond.	

April 2023	The realities of self-reliance within the Ugandan refugee context	U-Learn Evidence 	Analysis of livelihood strategies and barriers to self-reliance among refugee and host communities in refugee settlements and urban centres in Uganda.	
April 2023	Humanitarian systemic learning framework toolkit	Ben Ramalingam; ALNAP Policy/guidance 	Step-by-step framework to analyse learning and changes in the humanitarian sector.	
April 2023	The role of developmental 'buzzwords' in the international refugee regime: Self-reliance, resilience, and economic inclusion	Naohiko Omata; World Development Evidence 	Critical analysis of the use of the three concepts in development approaches to refugees, arguing that they 'are employed to reframe the lack of solutions for displacement crisis as a "development opportunity".'	

Methodology

Given the wide range of topics covered, this monthly summary includes guidelines, blogs, news articles, dashboards, data, and editorials, in addition to policy and academic literature. Resources are selected based on their relevance to the themes of protect, prioritise and prevent. Entries are categorised as **evidence** (academic peer-reviewed articles or reports that have gone through a quality assurance process); **discourse** (opinion and discussion of key issues in the humanitarian sector); and **policies and guidelines** (newly published policies and guidelines on humanitarian response).

The sources included are found through searches of academic literature, humanitarian think tanks, resource hubs and NGO websites. The searches are restricted to articles published in the previous month, in English. This is complemented by email recommendations from FCDO advisors and leading experts. It is the result of 1 day of work per month and is not intended to be a comprehensive summary of available evidence on humanitarian action but aims to make original documents easily accessible to decision-makers. This is trial and error approach, which will be refined over time. If you have literature to include in the weekly summary, please email – luke.kelly@manchester.ac.uk

About this report

The monthly humanitarian evidence and discourse summaries (HEDS) are produced by the Humanitarianism and Conflict Response Institute (HCRI) at the University of Manchester. They are a continuation of a series published by the Knowledge for Development (K4D) consortium from 2020 to 2022. The monthly HEDS are not intended to replace professional advice and the researcher or HCRI cannot be held responsible for any decisions made on the basis of the summaries alone.



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The Humanitarian and Conflict Response Institute (HCRI) is a leading global centre that is part of the University of Manchester. HCRI combines multiple disciplines from medicine to the humanities for the study and research of humanitarianism and conflict response, global health, international disaster management and peacebuilding.

Room C1.49, Ellen Wilkinson Building

Oxford Road

Manchester

M13 9PL

Email: hcric@manchester.ac.uk

Tel: +44 (0)161 275 3718