

Humanitarian Evidence and Discourse Summary

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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 Sorcha O’Callaghan (Head of the Humanitarian Policy Group at ODI) lists her five star reads.








Protect








Publication date	Title/URL	Author(s)/publication/publication type (evidence, discourse or policy/guidance)	Summary	Top reads
May 2023	Humanitarian Carve Outs for UN Sanctions Regimes: The Impact and Implementation of Resolution 2664	UN Web TV Discourse 	Recording of a discussion on the impact of recent humanitarian carve-outs in UN sanctions.	
May 2023	Harnessing the power of artificial intelligence to uncover patterns of violence	Fiona Terry and Fabien Dany; ICRC Law & Policy Evidence 	Blog outlining the aims and capabilities of the ICRC’s new AI tool to improve the classification of armed group violence in ACLED data and to discern patterns in violence and restraint more clearly.	

May 2023	Feed the Future and Conflict Integration	Jessie Anderson and Jack Daly; USAID Policy/guidance Policy/guidance 	Toolkit to integrate conflict sensitivity, social cohesion and peacebuilding considerations with food security interventions.	
May 2023	No matter who's fighting, hunger always wins: how violent action drives food insecurity	Action Against Hunger Evidence 	Report outlining the links between violence and food insecurity; IHL protection; and peace building options.	






Prioritise








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May 2023	The humanitarian connectivity, needs and usage assessments (CONUA) toolkit	GSMA Policy/guidance Policy/guidance 	Guidance on toolkit comprising eight tools on measuring use of mobile technologies and related issues.	
May 2023	Humanitarian Fault Lines: David Rieff	Humanitarian Faultlines Discourse 	Discussion with David Rieff on humanitarian space, the UN, and memory in the Russia-Ukraine war.	David Rieff's seminal book, 'A bed for the night', was a searing critique of the expansion of humanitarian action beyond relief into rights-based approaches. 20 years on, it is interesting to hear his personal insights into the decline of the moral authority of the UN, flailing global cooperation and ethical dilemmas in Afghanistan, Myanmar, and Ukraine. 
May 2023	Shelter Severity Classification System	Global Shelter Cluster Policy/guidance Policy/guidance 	Toolkit comprising implementation guidelines, a calculation tool and an indicator bank for assessing shelter needs.	







May 2023	Project success yet strategic failure? Local leadership & localisation in relation to governmental actors	Global Mentoring Initiative Discourse 	Discussion of localisation centred on the role of local government actors, who have formal responsibility for service provision and who may see their roles substituted by aid agencies. Notes the sustainability of foreign-funded projects is seldom tested for long after projects are over, and suggests ways aid agencies should ensure they do not undermine government responsibility.	A timely reminder of the limited focus in the 'localisation' agenda on the central role of local government. The report shows the limited, and often counter-productive, engagement with affected governments and the implications for the sustainability of services. 
April 2023	Adaptive innovation in the Ukraine humanitarian response: how context, leadership and partnerships matter: a case study from Ukraine for the global prioritisation exercise for humanitarian research and innovation	Nigel Timmins and Anton Shevchenko; ELHRA Evidence 	Lessons learned on adaptive innovation in Ukraine, including new digital tools, highlighting the role of established partnerships in facilitating adaptation.	A fascinating insight into adaptive programming in Ukraine – what was tried, by who, and what were the barriers to more innovative approaches. Unsurprisingly, some of the most exciting innovations came about as a result of risk-taking by well-informed and experienced senior leaders in large organisations, as well as more flexible Ukrainian civil society. 
May 2023	Cash Working Group de-activation in Iraq	Norwegian Refugee Council Evidence 	Case study of the phasing out of the cash working group in Iraq, and lessons learned.	
May 2023	Expanding the evidence base on cash, protection, GBV and health in humanitarian settings	Johns Hopkins Centre for Humanitarian Health Evidence 	Evaluation of a maternal health cash intervention in the Philippines.	
May 2023	Digital cash transfers and transitioning from humanitarian cash to social protection	Rosa Akbari, Alexa Swift-Reeves, Ric Goodman, and Valentina Barca; STAAR Evidence 	Outlines risks, benefits and pre-requisites for transitioning humanitarian cash and voucher assistance to digital payments while strengthening social protection systems.	


March 2023	The Grand Bargain 2.0 explained: an ICVA briefing paper	International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) Discourse 	Outlines the history of the Grand Bargain agreements between aid actors and their main areas of focus.	
May 2023	Broke or broken? A necessary discussion about the humanitarian funding gap	Thierry-Mehdi Benlahsen & Edouard Rodier; Egmont Institute Evidence 	Explores budgetary targets, global pooled funds, and a better engagement with the private sector, as ways to fill the humanitarian sector's funding gap.	As the gap between humanitarian needs and financing widens further, this paper revisits potential options including increasing contributions from non-OECD donors, reinvigorating GNI-based targets and establishing a global mechanism to administer contribution-based approaches, similar to the peacekeeping approach. 
May 2023	Access to health products: which priorities and what role for MSF?	Michaël Neuman and Natalie Roberts; MSF Crash Discourse 	Workshop on the best ways to address barriers to access to medicine	
May 2023	Forgotten Crises – to go	Eddo Westland; Centre for Humanitarian Action Evidence 	Outlines the different definitions and examples of the concept of 'forgotten crises' by different humanitarian actors, and considers the implications for humanitarian media coverage and funding.	
May 2023	The first year of the COVID-19 pandemic in humanitarian settings: epidemiology, health service utilization, and health care seeking behavior in Bangui and surrounding areas, Central African Republic	Chiara Altare et al.; Conflict and Health Evidence 	Study of epidemiology, health service use and health seeking in Bangui during the covid-19 pandemic. Findings include an underestimation of cases and fear of seeking health care because of covid-19 restrictions.	
May 2023	Direct and Indirect Benefits of Food and Cash Assistance in Uganda, May 2023	Cristobal Mingo et al.; World Food Programme Evidence 	Study of effects of WFP cash and food assistance in 4 settlements in Uganda.	

Prevent

Publication date	Title/URL	Author(s)/Publication/Publication type (evidence, discourse or policy/guidance)	Summary	Top reads
May 2023	Climate change and migration an omnibus overview for policymakers and development practitioners	Sam Huckstep and Michael Clemens; Center for Global Development Evidence 	Outlines the state of knowledge and predictions on the climate-migration nexus and its policy implications.	
May 2023	Changing climate, changing realities: migration in the Sahel	Karen Hargrave et al.; ODI and British Red Cross Evidence 	Report on links between climate change and migration in the Sahel, including a focus on slow onset changes and future patterns of movement.	
May 2023	Local early warning systems: predicting the future when things are so uncertain	Tahira Mohamed and Ian Scoones; PASTRES Discourse 	Noting the gap between the accurate warnings produced by Kenya's National Drought Management Authority (NDMA), and responses, the blog highlights the 'Community-Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) approach based on a participatory diagnosis of problems and joint construction of solutions' as a way to better shape local responses.	
May 2023	Acting in Advance of Flooding: Early action in South Sudan	Evan Easton-Calabria; Feinstein International Center Evidence 	Evidence from an early action pilot in South Sudan, with lessons on the outcomes and management of the project.	
May 2023	Designing inclusive, accessible early warning systems: good practices and entry points	GFDRR Evidence 	Examples, lessons and recommendations on inclusive, accessible early warning systems	

May 2023	Technical Standards on Anticipatory Action in Asia and the Pacific	Asia-Pacific Technical Working Group on Anticipatory Action Policy/guidance 	Technical standards developed by the Asia-Pacific Technical Working Group, for the three building blocks of anticipatory action.	
May 2023	Rethinking food crisis responses	International Food Policy Research Institute. Evidence 	Report on policy responses to food crisis. Chapters discuss: early warning, humanitarian response and anticipatory action, food systems, social protection, gender and forced migration. Includes overviews of regional developments.	
May 2023	Making adaption work: Addressing the compounding impacts of climate change, environmental degradation and conflict in the Near and Middle East	International Committee of the Red Cross and Norwegian Red Cross Evidence 	Evidence on the humanitarian effects of environmental degradation and armed conflict, and adaption strategies. Based on research in the Near and Middle East.	
March 2023	Four ways to rethink 'resilience' and its links to social protection	Carolina Szyp; Institute of Development Studies Discourse 	Blog on rethinking resilience in protracted crises.	Resilience has been challenged as a neo-liberal buzzword that emphasises the role of the individual or community in overcoming crises while downplaying structural barriers. Szyp calls for a focus on root causes, trade-offs, collective approaches and local support systems. 
May 2023	Is it right to prioritise fragile states in the climate crisis?	Hugo Slim; Centre for Humanitarian Action Discourse 	Argues that it is right to direct climate funding to states affected by fragility, conflict and violence (FCV), despite the difficulties.	
May 2023	Addressing loss and damage: Insights from the humanitarian sector	Paul Knox Clarke and Debbie Hillier; Flood Resilience Alliance Evidence 	Report on lessons learned in the humanitarian sector on providing funding for climate disasters, to inform the 'loss and damage' provisions of COP27.	

May 2023	Proposals for a safety net in Afghanistan: Developing humanitarian transfers for resilience	Martin Evans and Seema Ghani; Overseas Development Institute Discourse 	Policy brief on how humanitarian actors should plan for the medium- to long-term in Afghanistan.	
May 2023	Leaving No One Behind: Inclusion of forcibly displaced people in national statistics	World Bank – UNHCR Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement (JDC) and the Expert Group on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness Statistics (EGRIS) Discourse 	Discussion among senior representatives and survey experts from national statistical offices and international organisations on ways to include displaced people in national statistics.	
May 2023	UNHCR Resettlement Handbook	UNHCR Policy/guidance 	Website outlining UNHCR guidance on resettlement.	
May 2023	2023 Global Report on Internal Displacement	IDMC Evidence 	Figures and trends in internal displacement globally in the past year.	
May 2023	Can redistribution change policy views? aid and attitudes toward refugees in Uganda	Travis Baseler et al.; Center for Global Development Evidence 	Analysis of the effect of foreign aid connected to refugees in Uganda, finding a link between aid being labelled as refugee aid and support for pro-refugee policies.	
May 2023	Most east African refugees are hosted close to borders – it's a deliberate war strategy	Kara Ross Camarena; The Conversation Evidence 	Blog summarising evidence on African states' decisions on the placement of refugee camps. Findings include that aid agencies are more likely to be able to influence decisions on location and issues such as crowding when states are more interested in domestic policy than foreign policy.	

April 2023	Forced Displacement Literature Review Statelessness	Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement Evidence 	Review of recent literature on statelessness.	
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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.

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