

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 Jeannie Annan, Chief Research and Innovation Officer for the International Rescue Committee, highlights her five star reads.







Protect









Publication date	Title/URL	Author(s)/publication/publication type (evidence, discourse or policy/guidance)	Summary	Top reads
January 2024	Gaza's famine warning in perspective	Alex De Waal; World Peace Foundation Discourse 	Discusses the IPC Famine Review Committee's warning of famine in Gaza , including the legal implications, and comparisons with other recent famine declarations.	 De Waal describes not only the severity of the current and projected state in Gaza but provides an important comparative and historical sense of how rare these levels are.
January 2024	Unblocking aid: the EU's 2023 shift in sanctions policy to safeguard humanitarian efforts	Sophie Huvé, Tristan Ferrero and Guillemette Moulin; ICRC Law & Policy Discourse 	Blog on how the EU has adapted its sanctions regime to UNSCR 2664, noting that now 27 of 39 EU regimes include a humanitarian exemption, and highlighting four continued challenges.	


January 2024	Online violence: real life impacts on women and girls in humanitarian settings	Megan O'Brien; ICRC Law & Policy Discourse 	Outlines the evidence on online violence and technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV) on women and girls in emergency and conflict settings. Argues TFGBV needs to be integrated into anti-GBV measures.	
January 2024	Connectivity in crisis: the humanitarian implications of connectivity for crisis-affected communities	GSMA Evidence 	Outlines the issues surrounding access to communications technologies, data on connectivity gaps, and the humanitarian implications.	
January 2024	Victim/survivor-centeredness, data protection and open-source collection in accountability: lessons from IIIM-Syria	Rayyan Ghuma and Birhane Wossen Reta; ICRC Law & Policy Discourse 	Issues related to protecting the rights of, and minimising risks to, victims, when collecting open-source data. Based on experiences of the UN's investigation into crimes in Syria (IIIM).	
January 2024	How-to note: What to consider when implementing the safeguarding cycle	GISF Policy/guidance 	A framework for implementing the safeguarding cycle in humanitarian and peacebuilding programming.	
January 2024	122% rise in global civilian fatalities from explosive weapons in 2023: a year of harm reviewed and Projections for 2024	AOAV Evidence 	Data on explosive weapon use and civilian fatalities in 2023 and projections for 2024, highlighting significant increases, and broken down by weapon type, use, geography.	
January 2024	Humanitarian security in an age of uncertainty: the intersection of digital and physical risks	GISF Evidence 	Discussion the different digital risks in humanitarian action, and how to apply appropriate risk management practices.	
January 2024	Protecting the environment in armed conflict	International Review of the Red Cross Evidence 	Articles on international law regarding environmental protection in armed conflict.	

January 2024	The environmental health impacts of Russia's war on Ukraine	Daniel Hryhorczuk et al.; Journal of Occupational Medicine and Toxicology Evidence 	Review of available literature on the environmental effects of the war in Ukraine, including landmines, chemicals, air and water pollution, as well as relevant international standards.	
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Prioritise





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January 2024	Aid in 2022: Key facts about official development assistance	Development Initiatives Evidence 	Key facts about official development assistance in 2022, including expenditure by sector and context.	 This is a great overview of ODA spending with clear takeaways and figures. Many aren't surprising—like comparative spending on Ukraine—but still quite striking to see the actual figures.
January 2024	What's shaping aid policy in 2024	Irwin Loy and Will Worley; The New Humanitarian Discourse 	Identifies six policy trends affecting aid in the coming year.	
January 2024	Why humanitarians should tell a more hopeful story	Elias Sagmeister; GPPI Discourse 	Blog highlighting advances in disaster warning systems, reductions in famine and increased humanitarian funding as a counterpoint to negative headlines about the humanitarian sector.	 I liked reading this helpful reminder of historic humanitarian gains—that despite the funding gaps, humanitarian funding doubled over a decade. It made me reflect on how best to tell a more nuanced story that holds both positive and negative trends at the same time.
January 2024	Breaking the silence: the 10 most under-reported humanitarian crises of 2023	CARE International Evidence 	Identifies the humanitarian crises that were reported least in Arabic, English, French, German and Spanish online articles.	

January 2024	Prioritisation is driving a lower funding requirement	Mike Pearson; Humanitarian Funding Forecast Discourse 	Discusses recent reductions in the global humanitarian overview funding requests, which is finds is driven by reductions in the percentages of populations targeted (among other factors).	
January 2024	Painful choices: how humanitarian can prioritize in a world of rising need a conversation starter for the climate emergency	Hugo Slim; GPPI Discourse 	Advances potential new ways to prioritise aid in the face of expanding need. Proposes seven new criteria, and discusses changing ways of sharing responsibility globally.	
January 2024	Trumanitarian: The Midwife and Hugeness	Trumanitarian podcast Discourse 	Conversations with the president of Refugees International on humanitarian reform (the midwife) and Brendan Lawson on humanitarian numbers (hugeness).	
January 2024	Humanitarian leadership: learning from the past and directions for the future	John Mitchell; ODI Evidence 	Outlines the literature on humanitarian leadership, data from the sector, including experiences of leaders, and a systems thinking approach.	
January 2024	International humanitarian law violations in northern Uganda: victims' health, policy, and programming implications	Anastasia Marshak et al.; Journal of Public Health Policy Evidence 	Study of the health effects of a 2004 massacre in Uganda, showing worse health, economic and wellbeing outcomes for victims and their children, and discusses implications for provision of appropriate care.	
January 2024	Better humanitarian responses to SRHR in crises: mapping the architecture for change	Megan Daigle; ODI HPG Evidence 	Roundtable mapping the evidence, initiatives and frameworks in sexual and reproductive health in crises.	
January 2024	Ten traps to avoid if aid programming is serious about engaging with context	Simon Levine and Adam Pain; SPARC Discourse 	Using Afghanistan since 2001, the brief identifies 10 lessons for engaging with 'context'.	
January 2024	Engaging women in the humanitarian response in Afghanistan	Ground Truth Solutions Evidence 	Survey findings on engaging women in aid in Afghanistan since the Taliban's restrictions were put in place.	

January 2024	Localisation in practice II Implementing Risk Sharing in humanitarian action: findings from Bangladesh	Darina Pellowska and Johanna Fipp; CHA Berlin Evidence 	Uses the case of Bangladesh to explore the practice of risk sharing.	
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Prevent

Publication date	Title/URL	Author(s)/Publication/Publication type (evidence, discourse or policy/guidance)	Summary	Top reads
January 2024	There's no such thing as social cohesion! What aid actors need to understand about the social relations of displaced people	Simon Levine; ODI Discourse 	Based on findings from Afghan refugees, argues that social cohesion is multi-faceted, and aid agencies' use of the concept can be simplistic and unhelpful.	
January 2024	IOM Strategic Plan 2024–2028	IOM Policy/guidance 	IOM's priorities for the period 2024 to 2028.	
January 2024	Data gaps in microdata in the context of forced displacement	Takaaki Masakia and B. Madson; World Bank Working Papers Evidence 	Finds richer data in Sub-Saharan Africa, and the gaps often in fragile and conflict-affected countries.	 This is an impressive and comprehensive review of the gaps on forced displacement, including both geographic and content gaps
January 2024	Pooled funding models: governance systems a comparative study	ICVA Evidence 	Study of governance models for pooled funds, highlighting different features and approaches, good practices and recommendations.	
January 2024	Disability, displacement and disaster resilience: Ensuring the rights of persons with disabilities in situations of forced displacement and statelessness	UNDRR/UNHCR Evidence 	Estimates of the differences in preparedness and participation levels of forcibly displaced and stateless persons with disabilities in disaster risk reduction (DRR) compared with host communities, and recommendations.	

January 2024	2023 Stocktake for the Risk-informed Early Action Partnership	Alexander Gaus and Julia Steets; GPPI Evidence 	Mid-term assessment of REAP's model and outcomes on early warning action.	
January 2024	Global risks report 2024	World Economics Forum Discourse 	The WEF's ranking of risks for 2024.	
January 2024	Humanitarian aid?: considerations for the future of AI-use in humanitarian action	Sarah Spencer; ELHRA Discourse 	Identifies priorities and principles for integrating AI into humanitarian action safely and effectively.	 This blog provides a good high level reminder of some of the key things organizations should be thinking about as they use AI in humanitarian response—both to mitigate risks and increase impact.

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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