K4D | Knowledge, evidence and learning for development

Humanitarian evidence summary No.15

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This is the 15th monthly Humanitarian Evidence Summary (HUMES) to signpost FCDO and other UK government departments to the latest relevant evidence and discourse on humanitarian action to inform and support their response. 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 that, if relevant to them, they could refer to before making decisions.

Enhancing protection and humanitarian access

Publication date	Title/URL	Author(s)/Journal/Publication type	Summary	HoP Top reads
21 May 2021	Pandemic of Hunger Symposium: Starvation and Sanctions– Careful What You Ask For Other Symposium articles on UNSC 2417; and crises in Ethiopia, Nigeria, South Sudan, Syria and Yemen	Emanuela Chiara Gillard; Opinio Juris; opinion article	Sanctions can be an important cause of food insecurity. Shows how even targeted sanctions can make it harder for humanitarian organisations to work. This is particularly the case for financial sanctions. Argues that exceptions for humanitarian action should be included in sanctions, and that leaders rather than whole groups were designated to have less effect on humanitarian work.	X
May, 2021	Transactional politics and humanitarian crisis: lessons for policy from the political	Alex de Waal, Aditya Sarkar, Chris Newton. Conflict Research Programme, LSE. Policy brief drawing on country case study research in DRC, Nigeria, Somalia,	Conclusions from research on the political marketplace framework and humanitarian crises. It finds that the political marketplace (PM) tends to raise the risks and in some cases deliberately cause extreme food insecurity/	X

		South Sudan, Sudan, Syria and Yemen	displacement. With the implication that better understanding the PM can help humanitarian agencies with both their conflict sensitivity analysis and also early warning, planning and preparedness.	
marketplace framework				
7 May 2021	Violence against healthcare in conflict: a systematic review of the literature and agenda for future research	Rohini J. Haar et al; Conflict and Health; journal article	Reviews papers on violence against healthcare in conflict in terms of geopolitical focus, date range, definitions of conflict and attack, types of attack, as well as discussion of causes, prevention and impact. There are gaps in geographical focus, with no studies on several African conflicts. Findings suggest that documentation of attacks on health must be enhanced to make the data more consistent, more thorough, more accessible, include diverse perspectives, and clarify taxonomy'.	**X**
May 2021	Ineffective Past, Uncertain Future The UN Security Council's Resolution on the Protection of Health Care: A Five-year Review of Ongoing Violence and Inaction to Stop It	Insecurity Insight; report	Summarises findings on violence against health care in situations of conflict between 2016 and 2020. It finds 4,094 reported incidents overall, and limited action by UN member states to implement UN Security Council Resolution 2286 on preventing such attacks.	
6 May 2021	Decentralised digital identity: what is it, and what does it mean for marginalised populations?	Margie Cheeseman; Digital Inequality Group; blog	Discusses the risks and opportunities of decentralised self-sovereign identity (SSI) schemes for individuals such as refugees. These can help refugees access financial services and political rights, but can also enable surveillance or profiteering. Based on research on SSI in aid, it argues that this technology does not remove political struggles over identity and status; that high levels of digital literacy are needed to	

Date	Title	Author; Source	Summary	
			safely use SSI; that SSI is not separate from existing authorities (e.g. UNHCR) and cannot provide the rights and protections of citizenship; and many providers of the technology use it for profit.	
June 2021	Special issue: Politics, humanitarianism and migration to Europe	Susanne Jaspars and Dorothea Hilhorst, eds.; International Migration; journal issue	Articles look at the humanitarian effects of European states' and NGOs' migration policy and practices. Noting that aims to reduce migration often trump refugee rights, it shows how practices have developed to deter migration 'less visibly', alongside high profile rhetoric and wall building.	
25 May 2021	Fighting without a Planet B: how IHL protects the natural environment in armed conflict	Vanessa Murphy and Helen Obregon Gieseken; ICRC Law and Policy blog	The first in a series of blogs on war, law and the environment, produced alongside the Conflict and Environment Observatory. Outlines the ICRC's updated Guidelines on the Protection of the Natural Environment in Armed Conflict, including the protections under IHL and obligations for state and non-state parties to conflict.	
26 May 2021	Six ways to mainstream the environment in peace and security	Doug Weir; Conflict and Environment Observatory; blog	Blog outlining progress and gaps in efforts to mainstream the environment, peace and security agenda with reference to existing initiatives, policies and evidence of the effects of conflict and environmental damage.	
2 June 2021	From State Petitions to Protection Space UNHCR's Promotion of the 1951 Refugee Convention	Maja Janmyr; Volkerrechscblog/Forced Migration Studies; blog	Blog on why 44 states have not party to the 1951 Refugee Convention or 1967 Protocol. UNHCR promotes accession, but also works as a 'norm entrepreneur' in non-signatory states where it supervises refugees as it seeks to create 'protection space' as a pragmatic option. Part of the BEYOND project on non-signatory states and refugee law.	

Needs assessment and analysis

Publication date	Title/URL	Author(s)/Journal/Publication type	Summary	Top reads
14 May 2021	Inclusion in crisis response, recovery and resilience	Becky Carter; K4D literature review	Analysis of what has worked to include people in humanitarian assistance who experience heightened vulnerability during crises, due to several types of social inequality and discrimination.	
May 2021	Field Exchange: issue 65	Field Exchange; journal issue	Articles, research summaries and a special section on COVID-19 nutrition programming adaptations across Asia and Africa. **Includes** piece on **c**alculating wasting caseloads and prioritisation of nutrition services in the context of limited data in Afghanista**n**	

Accountability to affected populations

Publication date	Title/URL	Author(s)/Journal/Publication type	Summary	Top reads
May 2021	Localisation and local humanitarian action	Humanitarian Exchange; Journal issue.	Articles discuss capacity strengthening, partnerships, locally owned responses, long-term engagement with community volunteers, survivor-led crisis response, locally designed and managed pooled funds for quick response, data on types of funding for local response, language provision, the effects of covid, and other issues.	**X**
5 May 2021	Why technocratic understandings of humanitarian accountability undermine local communities	Omer Aijazi; Development in Practice; journal article	Examines an accountability system used after 2010 floods in Pakistan. Argues that accountability mechanisms were narrow and technocratic, and did not allow consideration of the broader inequality or effects of aid on societies. Argues accountability needs to	

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			allow for meaningful power sharing	
May 2021	For Rohingya, trust begins with who is asking the questions	Ground Truth Solutions; survey	Survey of Rohingya refugees on humanitarian aid found that responses varied considerably based on the identity of the interviewer, attributed to a social desirability bias. Rohingya reported much lower levels of satisfaction with aid to Rohingya interviewers than to Bangladeshis.	

Cash programming

Publication date	Title/URL	Author(s)/Journal/Publication type	Summary	Top reads
May 2021	Drivers of Timely and Large-Scale Cash Responses to COVID-19: what does the data say?	Rodolfo Beazley, Marta Marzi, and Rachael Steller; SPACE report	Comparison of 53 low- and middle-income countries' covid-19 cash responses and analysing the timeliness of responses. It concludes in identifying the importance of investing in preparing for a system to respond to shocks (e.g. contingency protocols etc), but the best place to start is by investing in the foundations of the social protection system itself.	

Managing risk better, preparedness and anticipation

Publication date	Title/URL	Author(s)/Journal/Publication type	Summary	Top reads
May 2021	2021 Global report on food crises	Food Security Information Network and Global Network Against Food Crises; report	This global report finds that the number of people in food crisis or worse is at a five-year high in 2020, partly due to Covid-19. It uses the Integrated Phase Classification and Cadre Harmonise classifications for 55 countries. Provides data on people facing food insecurity, split by region, country, region, severity. It also includes data on IDPs, nutrition and health, and discussion of drivers.	
21 May 2021	Standing together: the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organizations and the Climate and environment charter for humanitarian organisations	Tessa Kelly, Catherine-Lune Grayson and Amir Khouzam; ICRC Law and Policy blog and charter	The ICRC/IFRC's charter outlines a framework for humanitarians responding to climate crisis.	
May 2021	Forecast-based financing: lessons learned on early action with cash transfers	Celia Gonzales Otalora; CashCap; report	Analyses the use of forecast-based financing by WFP in the Dominican Republic, drawing lessons on the pilot.	
1 June 2021	Data-driven environmental decision-making and action in armed conflict	Wim Zwijnenburg; ICRC Law & Policy blog.	Outlines how environmental damage can be foreseen using satellites and other digital tools. Data can also be used to show the effects of conflict's environmental damage on food and water security and other effects. This can help improve humanitarian response, improve the behaviour of conflict parties,	

			and mainstream environment, peace and security at the UN and elsewhere.	

Resilience and protracted crisis

Publication date	Title/URL	Author(s)/Journal/Publication type	Summary	Top reads
April 2021	Monthly Update of Forced Displacement Literature Review	Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement; literature review	Review of recent articles including on targeting aid with administrative data; amnesties for undocumented refugees; and refugee-led organisations responding to Covid-19 (among others)	**X**
18 May 2021	Protecting and Promoting Systems for Essential Health Services During Rollout of COVID-19 Tools	Kerry Millington; K4D literature review	Surveys evidence on health system adaptation during covid, and opportunities for strengthening during vaccine rollout. Finds evidence of adaptations mitigating some of the impact of covid, but limited improvement during vaccine roll out due to a focus on speed.	
May 2021	Protecting refugees from Covid-19: Identifying Barriers to Safer Practices During Humanitarian Assistance in Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon	Stephanie J. Nawyn et al., ELHRA report	The report analyses the use of covid-19 safety protocols in refugee settings. Its finds varied levels of adherence, with contexts where staff and refugees felt safer seeing lower adherence. Lack of resources could also be a reason for reduced adherence, as was scepticism about covid-19.	
May 2021	Improving diabetes control for Syrian refugees in Jordan: a longitudinal cohort	Emily Lyles et al.; Conflict and Health; journal article	The study was conducted between October 2018 and January 2020. Finds that 'Combined conditional cash and health education were effective in improving expenditures, health service utilization, medication adherence, blood pressure, and diabetes control. The lower cost health education intervention was	

| | study comparing the effects of cash transfers and health education Interventions | | similarly effective in improving diabetes control, whereas unconditional cash transfers alone were least effective.' | |

Other

Publication date	Title/URL	Author(s)/Journal/Publication type	Summary	Top reads
24 May 2021	Five years on from the World Humanitarian Summit: lots of talk, no revolution	Oliver Lough and Sorcha O'Callaghan; ODI; blog	Reports on the upcoming findings of the HPG's review of the Grand Bargain showing that there is no evidence of humanitarian action becoming more demand driven. This is due to a lack of incentives and political interest in significant change. It recommends changes including area-based coordination, new approaches to needs assessment, independent scrutiny, more meaningful engagement with affected people, and linking participation in aid to wider political participation.	
May 2021	Humanitarian procurement: challenges and opportunities in the adoption of WASH product innovations	I. Gray, H. Purchas and G. Fenton; ELRHA report.	The reports identifies challenges on the demand side for the adoption of innovations in WASH. This include performance requirements, different standards between agencies, and a focus on supply. It also considers procurement challenges.	
May 2021	Shining a spotlight on country-based humanitarian reform: have we been looking in	Eleanor Davey, Jesse McCommon and Puji Pujiono; Humanitarian Advisory Group; blog and report	Noting the limited reforms in the international humanitarian system since the Grand Bargain, the blog highlights research on reforms in Indonesia following the chaotic 2004 tsunami response which restricted foreign NGOs' access and encouraged local leadership.	

	the wrong places? [blog] and Shifting the system: the journey towards humanitarian reform in Indonesia [report]		Suggests that such approaches can provide an evidence base for reforms.	
May 2021	Time for a reset? the World Humanitarian Summit and the Grand Bargain, 5 Years On	Ralf Südhoff and Goda Milasiute; Centre for Humanitarian Action; report	Review of progress on the Grand Bargain Commitments, with a focus on German engagement. While it identifies important projects at the micro-level, it identifies little change at the macro level.	
4 May 2021	Not a priority: the lack of contextual understanding in humanitarian missions	Dominic Naish; ODI HPG; blog	Argues, based on personal experience, that many humanitarian agencies focus on implementing projects and often do not undertake necessary the contextual analysis that may reduce negative unintended consequences.	
May 2021	Evolving Evaluation Practice Past, present and future challenges	Scott Chaplowe; Ann Marie Castleman and Minji Cho; ALNAP; report	Overview of the history and challenges of humanitarian evaluation, including challenges raised by covid-19.	

Resource Hubs

Title/URL	Author/Organisation	Summary
COVID-19 Data Explorer: Global Humanitarian Operations	Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX)	World map of covid cases and various vulnerability and socio-economic risk factors (including vaccine rollout, food security, school closures, CERF allocations etc.).
Covid-19 and Humanitarian Crises	Johns Hopkins Center for Humanitarian Health, Health in Humanitarian Crises Centre, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and Geneva Centre of Humanitarian Studies, The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies and the University of Geneva	Website for the exchange of field-based COVID-19 programme adaptations and innovations.
Covid-19 Mobility Impact Reports	UN IOM	Frequently updated reports on migration restrictions.
IDMC Internal Displacement Updates	Internal displacement monitoring centre	Global data on internal displacement
ACAPS Crisis in Sight	ACAPS	Global overview of crisis, including covid and conflict; as well as access constraints.
CVA and COVID-19: resources, guidance, events and questions	CaLP	Guidance and resources on covid and cash transfers
IASC: COVID-19 Outbreak Readiness and Response guidance	Inter-Agency Standing Committee	IASC principles and protocols adapted to covid-19

OCHA COVID19 Resource Material	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	A wide range of guidance and resources from WHO, IASC, the EU, IFRF and others, as well as country-specific information.
Humanitarian Data Exchange: COVID-19 Pandemic in Locations with a Humanitarian Response	Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX)	Global data on infections and deaths; a list of data sets on cases and prevention/mitigation measures.
Humanitarian Data Exchange: Government Measures Dataset	Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX)	Global data on government covid-19 measures under 5 categories: Social distancing; Movement restrictions; Public health measures; Social and economic measures; Lockdowns.
IEG Lesson Library: Evaluative Resources and Evidence to inform the COVID-19 Response	World Bank Independent Evaluation Group	A library of Evaluative Resources and Evidence to inform the COVID-19 Response
Relief Web: regional topic pages for Covid-19 and global topic pages	Relief Web	Regional and global reports and resources on humanitarian needs and response.
IASC Accountability and Inclusion Resources Portal	Inter-Agency Standing Committee	A library of resources on accountability and inclusion.
Attacked and Threatened: Health care targeted in conflict and COVID-19	Insecurity Insight	Map of violence and threats against health care across the world.
Conflict and Health	Conflict and Health	Open-access journal on the health impacts of conflict.

International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction	International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction	An interdisciplinary journal of DRR.
Journal of Refugee Studies	Journal of Refugee Studies	Research on forced migration and responses to it.
Disasters	Disasters	Focuses on disaster management and policy from academic and field perspectives.

Suggested citation

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. 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. This is trial and error approach, which will be refined and changed over the coming weeks. If you have literature to include in the weekly summary, please email – luke.kelly@manchester.ac.uk.

About this report