

Humanitarian evidence summary

No.9

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This is the 9th of a monthly Humanitarian Evidence Summary to signpost the FCDO and other UK government departments to the latest relevant evidence and discourse on humanitarian response to inform and support their response. It is a result of 1 day of work per month and is not intended to be a comprehensive summary of available evidence but aims to make original documents easily accessible to decision-makers, which, 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
7 October 2020	The UK's Overseas Operations Bill: Good Questions, Wrong Answers	Michael Clarke; RUSI; opinion piece	Argues that although fraudulent claims against UK troops are a problem, the Bill has flaws that may 'put the UK at odds with the Geneva Conventions and the International Criminal Court (ICC)'. It highlights the Bill's provision for a 'presumption against prosecution' after five years, which is 'in effect' a statute of limitations. This would contradict IHL, which states there can be no statute of limitations against war crimes and crimes against humanity. This could lead the ICC to claim jurisdiction over	

The K4D helpdesk service provides brief summaries of current research, evidence, and lessons learned. Helpdesk reports are not rigorous or systematic reviews; they are intended to provide an introduction to the most important evidence related to a research question. They draw on a rapid desk-based review of published literature and consultation with subject specialists.

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			<p>British soldiers. The Bill also creates a time limit for British soldiers' claims against the UK government, which would require derogation from the ECHR.</p> <p>The Bill could have the effect of weakening the rules-based international order and encourage autocratic governments to take similar measures.</p>	
November 2020	Survey on the Coverage, Operational Reach, and Effectiveness of Humanitarian Aid	Humanitarian Outcomes' CORE research; report	<p>Provides research on access challenges in northeast Nigeria, Afghanistan and the Central African Republic. It finds access constraints leading to aid agencies clustering in relatively safer areas and consequently lower coverage per head in more dangerous areas.</p> <p>Using data from aid agencies, affected populations and context-specific data, it provides analysis of access constraints and gaps, and offers suggestions for improvements.</p> <p>It finds some humanitarian organisations are developing access strategies, but more are needed. Solutions include more negotiation capacity for access in conflict; and a broader conception of 'access' focusing on how to support communities in protracted conflicts.</p>	★
November 2020	Humanitarian diplomacy and protection advocacy in an age of caution	Mark Bowden and Victoria Metcalfe-Hough; ODI HPG	<p>Discusses the role of the UN in promoting respect for IHL and IHRL in conflicts. It finds several factors inhibiting UN protection advocacy: a lack of clarity on the roles of UN entities and leaders; a lack of political support for those who undertake 'protection advocacy'; a fragmented UN system; a</p>	

			technocratic approach.	
November 2020	Advocating for humanity? Securing better protection of civilians affected by armed conflict	Victoria Metcalfe-Hough; ODI HPG; Briefing note	Finds that protection of civilians (POC) efforts are current 'ad hoc, unstrategic and largely ineffective'. It finds that humanitarian actors are not engaging with conflict parties, and cooperation, particularly beyond the humanitarian system, is limited. Broader barriers to POC include the geopolitical climate and state policies; waning UN influence; capacity gaps and risk aversion.	★
30 November 2020	Aftershock: Abuse, Exploitation & Human Trafficking in the Wake of COVID-19	Global Protection Cluster; update	The update covers 28 of 35 countries where Protection Clusters are active. Includes a focus on abuse and trafficking amplified by conflict and covid-19.	
29 November 2020	Breaking the Glass Ceiling: A Smarter Approach to Protection Financing	Norwegian Refugee Council/ Global Protection Cluster; report	Shows that the protection sector is underfunded, partly because it is not seen as a priority. The sector is reliant on a few donors. The report provides specific recommendations for the relevant actors.	
23 November 2020	Stop War Crimes in Ethiopia Today	Alex de Waal; World Peace Foundation; Blog	Argues that the government's threat to attack the city of Mekelle would be a war crime if carried out, and that the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) may also have committed war crimes.	
19 November 2020	IHL in action: seven patterns of respect	Juliane Garcia Ravel and Madalena Vasconcelos Rosa; ICRC Law and Policy Blog	The blog identifies 'patterns leading to compliance with IHL': military interests; legitimacy or recognition; public opinion; the role of neutral third parties; peace processes; local culture or religion/ethics; positive reciprocity. They provide case studies from the IHL in Action	

			database.	
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Needs assessment and analysis

Publication date	Title/URL	Author(s)/Journal/ Publication type	Summary	Top reads
November 2020	Research Methodologies in Humanitarian Crises	ELRHA; report	The report is based on a review of the literature, studies funded by the research for health in humanitarian crises programme, and interviews. Issues discussed include practical and ethical challenges of research in unstable contexts; training of researchers and local partnerships, among others.	
November 2020	Understanding Women's and Girls' Vulnerabilities to the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Gender Analysis and Data Dashboard of Low- and Lower-Middle Income Countries	Mayra Buvinic, Lorenz Noe, Eric Swanson; Data2x; Report	The report assesses women's vulnerability to covid-19 to find the 26 most vulnerable lower and lower-middle income countries.	
November 2020	Disability and sexual violence in the COVID-19 era	NG'AA Michael Mwendwa; ICRC Law and Policy blog	Covid-19 has worsened sexual violence against people with disabilities (PWD), because of a range of attitudinal, institutional and environmental factors (e.g. isolation with assistants). Measures against sexual and gender-based violence should therefore make efforts to include PWD.	

November 2020	If not now, when?	Damian Lilly; HelpAge; Report	The proportion of the population in fragile contexts over 50 years old will increase in the coming decades. The report based on 8,883 interviews of 50-80 year olds affected by disasters shows unmet needs and overlooking of older people. Findings include that they find it harder to access services, and damaging assumptions held by aid workers in some cases.	
November 2020	Inclusion and exclusion in humanitarian action: the state of play	Veronique Barbelet and Caitlin Wake; ODI HPG	The literature review argues that humanitarian responses often fail to be inclusive. It points to a fragmentation of inclusion analysis between different factors (e.g. disability, gender) based on a 'vulnerability' analysis, which impedes effective measures to include. Discusses definitions; measurement and evidence of implementation; obstacles and challenges; and concludes that the issue cannot be solved with technical guides, but needs a discussion of values, priorities, and the political drivers of exclusion.	★
n.d.	Joint Guidance: Targeting of Assistance to Meet Basic Needs	United Nations High Commission for Refugees and World Food Programme	Updated guidelines, including principles underlying the guidelines, a step-by-step guide to targeting, and case studies.	

Accountability to affected populations

Publication date	Title/URL	Author(s)/Journal/ Publication type	Summary	Top reads
17 December 2020	High-Level Event on Data Responsibility in Humanitarian Action	UNOCHA/ECHO; Webinar	A webinar to share lessons.	
November 2020	Downward accountability in humanitarian aid The example of UNHCR Uganda	Sophie Komujuni and Saul Mullard; U4A Anti-Corruption Resource Centre	Analysis of UNHCR Uganda's Feedback, Referral and Response Mechanism (FRRM), a call centre that allows, among other things, reporting of corruption. Although it is too early to fully assess effectiveness, the brief emphasises the need for resources and commitment.	
November 2020	Bridging humanitarian digital divides during Covid-19	John Bryand et al.; ODI HPG; briefing note	Emerging evidence does not yet show a radical shift to digital technology because of covid-19. Existing technologies such as mobile money have been the most effective tools so far. The report warns that digital tools are less effective at reaching the most marginalised. The report recommends working with governments, but warns that data could compromise the interests of recipients.	

Cash programming

Publication date	Title/URL	Author(s)/Journal /Publication type	Summary	Top reads
3 December 2020	Do Cash Transfers Foster Resilience? Evidence from Rural Niger	Patrick Premand and Quentin Stoeffler; World Bank working papers	A study of the effect of cash transfers. Using a randomised control trial of household data, and satellite data, it shows the transfers increase consumption by 10% on average, with more effect among those affected by drought. The transfers help households save to protect against shocks.	
November 2020	The environmental impact of cash and voucher assistance	Samantha Brangeon and Valerie Leon; Groupe UR; Report	The study argues that contrary to popular belief, CVA does have environmental impacts. It highlights areas where CVA's impact on the environment can be measured, and argues this should be undertaken systematically in programmes. It also suggests donors should think about ways to create positive environmental impacts of CVA.	

Managing risk better, preparedness and anticipation

Publication date	Title/URL	Author(s)/Journal /Publication type	Summary	Top reads
16 November 2020	Towards an international architecture for managing global hazards	Humanitarian Futures; compilation of expert interviews	<p>Expert views on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -future global hazards (including the belief that some drivers will increase exponentially - violent displacement, climate change and ecological collapse; the convergence of crises; new technologies) -probability and plausibility (most rejected the use of probability calculations, and noted that tended to focus on single events rather than systemic problems) -lessons from existing systems -new potential structures 	
November 2020	Early warning for early action: towards more behaviourally informed early warning systems	Supriya Akerkar et al., USAID; literature review	The literature review focuses on how to persuade vulnerable populations to take the most effective preparation, prevention and mitigation activities. It is based on social and behavioural change theory, and the concept of people-centred early warning systems (PC-EWS).	
November 2020	Assessment of humanitarian crises and disaster risk exposure using data-driven Bayesian Networks	Abrron Qazi and Mercit Can Emre Simsekler, International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction	Conceptualises a risk model to assess the relative importance of multi-dimensional factors underlying humanitarian crises. The study uses Bayesian Belief Networks (BBNs).	
6 December	World Disasters	IFRC; report	The report documents rising	



2020	Report 2020: 'Come Heat or High Water' - Tackling the Humanitarian Impacts of the Climate Crisis Together		numbers of disasters globally because of climate change, and estimates money and measures needed to adapt to climate risks.	
November 2020	Seasonality matters: how cyclical changes trigger drivers of acute malnutrition in Chad's Sila Province and Seasonality, sex, and acute malnutrition in Chad's Sila Province	Anastasia Marshak; Feinstein International Center; Brief	Discusses the seasonal drivers of malnutrition in Sila province, Chad. It argues that closer attention is needed to seasonal changes, and their relationship to human activities such as hygiene practices, sex and water sharing, which contribute to food security and disease prevalence. Emphasises the importance of contextual analysis and rigorous data collection. Programming should seek to address the appropriate driver at the right time - e.g. focusing WASH messaging in times when water is scarce. The second paper emphasises sex differences in seasonal wasting patterns.	

Resilience and protracted crisis

Publication date	Title/URL	Author(s)/Journal /Publication type	Summary	Top reads
November 2020	Resilience Measurement Practical Guidance Note Series 7: Cost-Benefit Analysis	Kristen Schubert; Mercy Corps; guidance note	A guidance note on using cost-benefit analysis for resilience programmes. It provides examples of how CBA might be applied to specific resilience interventions, discusses data sources and	

	(CBA) in Resilience Programming		limitations.	
November 2020	Populations at risk: Implications of COVID-19 for hunger, migration and displacement	International Organization of Migration and World Food Programme; report	<p>The report 'explores the impacts of COVID-19 and related containment measures on migrant workers, remittance-dependent households and the forcibly displaced'.</p> <p>It highlights restrictions to migrants, but also notes that migration to some areas has increased. It provides data on job losses affecting migrant workers (often informal), and estimates of falls in remittances. It also provides data on food insecurity.</p>	
7 December 2020	<i>"Ten years of war! You expect people to fear a 'germ'?"</i> : A qualitative study of initial perceptions and responses to the COVID-19 pandemic among displaced communities in opposition-controlled northwest Syria	Yazan Doudari et al.; Journal of Migration and Health	A study of covid-19 perceptions based on 20 interviews with displaced Syrians in opposition-controlled camps in Northwest Syria between April-May 2020. It found that while most participants had sufficient knowledge about COVID-19, they lacked practical tools to prevent transmission.	
November 2020	Mixed Migration Review 2020: Mixed migration and cities Urban frontlines for displacement and	Mixed Migration Centre; annual report	Annual report based on the Centre's quantitative data on urban refugees and interviews.	

	mobility			
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Other

Publication date	Title/URL	Author(s)/Journal /Publication type	Summary	Top reads
November 2020	Humanitarian Learning Resources Guide	Brigitte Rohwerder; K4D; guide	A guide to free online courses and materials on humanitarian technical competencies.	
November 2020	Humanitarian Action	Hugo Slim; K4D; Reading pack	A short guide to humanitarian action, outlining international humanitarian law, humanitarian principles, the humanitarian systems, humanitarian standards and policies, and key reform issues.	
November 2020	Principled Aid Index 2020	ODI	Index ranking bilateral DAC donors. Findings include a decline in scores since Covid-19.	
December 2020	The future of aid	The New Humanitarian	Ideas on the future of aid from a variety of stakeholders in the humanitarian sector. Grouped under the headings: Mutual and activist aid; Decolonising aid; Shrinking the scope of the aid sector; Preventing conflict; Anticipating crises.	
November 2020	COVID-19 in humanitarian settings: documenting and sharing context-specific programmatic	Neha Singh et al.; <i>Conflict and Health</i> ; commentary article	Discusses the covid19humanitarian.com platform, a web platform where humanitarians can share field experiences and guidance documents on challenges and solutions to problems arising from	

	experiences		covid-19 in humanitarian settings.	
27 November 2020	Is Covid a window of opportunity for localizing aid? Learning from a natural experiment in the Pacific	Chris Roche, Josie Flint and Fiona Tarpey; Oxfam; Blog	The blog summarises recent findings on increased local leadership in the Pacific when international aid workers left during covid-19. Women became more involved, the culture of work changed (e.g. language, prayer), while remote support from international organisations was valued.	

Resource Hubs

Title/URL	Author/Organisation	Summary
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 Platform: Temporary Measures and Impact on Protection	UNHCR	Global overview of covid-related restrictions to access for asylum seekers.

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	Relief Web	Regional and global reports and resources on humanitarian needs and response.

and global topic pages		
IASC Accountability and Inclusion Resources Portal	Inter-Agency Standing Committee	A library of resources on accountability and inclusion.

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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. 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 DFID 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

This monthly humanitarian evidence summary is based on one day of desk-based research. The K4D research helpdesk provides rapid syntheses of a selection of recent relevant literature and international expert thinking in response to specific questions relating to international development. For any enquiries, contact helpdesk@k4d.info.

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