



Humanitarian evidence summary

No.12

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This is the 12th 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
Feb 2021	The Last Straw: How Chemical Weapons Impact Women and Break Communities	Inju El Bakry and Tobias Schneider; GPPI; web page.	Research on the effects of chemical weapons on women and children in Syria. Based on data on chemical attacks, gender-disaggregated casualties, and interviews, the report provides data and shows the physical and mental effects, as well as the effects on women's roles, forced migration and community resilience.	
Feb 2021	Speaking Out Srebrenica Podcast	MSF; podcast	Discusses the dilemmas faced by MSF around the Srebrenica massacres.	
4 March	From 'It Rarely Happens' to 'It's	Helen Touquet et al.; Journal of Humanitarian Affairs;	Discusses ten misconceptions on sexual	

2021	Worse for Men': Dispelling Misconceptions about Sexual Violence against Men and Boys in Conflict and Displacement	article	violence against men and boys in conflict and displacement, and implications for policymakers.	
March 2021	ICRC Engagement with Non-State Armed Groups Why, how, for what purpose, and other salient issues	ICRC; position paper	The paper outlines reasons for engaging with non-state armed groups (NSAGs), the legal basis for engagement, the role of NSAGs in humanitarian contexts and their features, and ways that the ICRC can engage NASGs with international humanitarian law (IHL).	
22 Feb 2021	The Effectiveness of Women and Girls Safe Spaces: A Systematic Review of Evidence to Address Violence Against Women and Girls in Humanitarian Contexts	Lindsay Starck et al; Trauma, Violence & Abuse; article	The article found only 7 studies of women and girls safe spaces (WGSS) programmes. It found that 'while none of the studies reported reductions in exposure to or incidence of VAWG among program participants, three evaluations demonstrated moderate improvements in psychosocial well-being, social support, and attitudes toward rites of passage'. It emphasises the need for more rigorous evidence.	
Feb 2021	Gap Analysis Of Gender- Based Violence In Humanitarian Settings: A Global	ELRHA; literature review	Analyses humanitarian guidelines and activities to identify gaps in gender-based violence work. It finds a lack of prioritisation, commitment and	

	Consultation		accountability; a lack of specialist staff and funding. The growth of GBV during covid and reduced funding are likely to make things worse, although the report points to important training initiatives and models.	
March 2021	Breaking the silence: Lessons from humanitarian access negotiations under counter-terrorism legislation in north-western Syria	Lena Schellhammer; Centre for Humanitarian Action; article	The article is based on interviews with NGO staff in Turkey/Syria. It focuses on humanitarian access negotiations with Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) and its local governance institution, the Syrian Salvation Government (SSG), in north-western Syria. It argues counter-terrorism measures lead to a culture of silence and reduced bargaining power; and problematic strategies such as using intermediaries and threats to suspend aid.	

Needs assessment and analysis

Publication date	Title/URL	Author(s)/Journal/Publication type	Summary	Top reads
March 2021	Economics, social status and gender relations: what makes households 'female-	Simon Levine and Irina Mosel; ODI HPG; briefing note	Asks aid agencies to question whether the category of 'female-headed households' (FHH) is always useful or accurate. It is based on research in Somalia. Findings include that many FHH are married,	

	headed' in Somalia?		contrary to assumptions; many women headed households on the basis of economic power; Somalia women do not fit the presumed 'vulnerability' profile of FHH. It suggests needs assessments should carefully justify their targeting criteria.	
March 2020	Nutrition Exchange 13	Nutrition Exchange; journal issue	Reports from the 2019 Scaling Up Nutrition conference.	
Feb 2020	Review And Assessment Of MHPSS Intervention Research In Humanitarian Settings		A review of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) research generated since 2010. It finds an increase in research overall, but gaps in evidence on outcomes for children and family based interventions, or long-term impacts. It found some evidence of increased uptake, but limited changes in national government policy.	

Accountability to affected populations

Publication date	Title/URL	Author(s)/Journal/Publication type	Summary	Top reads
24 Feb 2021	New Ebola outbreaks: putting context and community first	Kerrie Holloway and Marc DuBois; ODI HPG; blog	Emphasises that international responses to the new Ebola outbreaks should be owned by the host states and grounded in local health structures. Interventions should be grounded in context-specific	

			<p>understandings of 'culture', the effects of previous interventions, strengthen local health structures, pay adequate attention to other diseases and needs, and engage with communities.</p>	
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Cash programming

Publication date	Title/URL	Author(s)/Journal/Publication type	Summary	Top reads
23 Feb 2021	Covid-19 and the future of digital humanitarianism	Overseas Development Institute; webinar	Discusses the potential of digital tools based on evidence from covid-19, and the possibility of overcoming digital divides, new risks, and engaging with other actors.	
2 March 2021	Cashless cash: financial inclusion or surveillance humanitarianism?	Pierrick Devidal; ICRC Law & Policy; blog	Argues that digital cash has the same benefits as physical cash, but brings distinct risks. Digital payment mechanisms are not provided by humanitarian actors, and may not be neutral in conflict situations, which may jeopardise the neutrality of any cash delivered through them. They may also threaten humanitarian independence by controlling the parameters of payments. They will work under different legal frameworks not always	

			congruent with impartiality.	
18 Feb 2021	The social meaning of money: Multidimensional implications of humanitarian cash and voucher assistance	Birte Vogel, Kristina Tschunkert and Isabelle Schläpfer; Disasters; journal article	Argues that organisations implementing cash transfers should consider the 'multidimensional socio-economic, political, and socio-cultural dimensions of money' - it points to perceptions of relative deprivation; changes in local markets; informal beliefs about what aid should be spent on in communities; disputes over targeting	

Managing risk better, preparedness and anticipation

Publication date	Title/URL	Author(s)/Journal/Publication type	Summary	Top reads
Feb 2021	Findings from the second research wave of the Independent Evaluation of the FCDO Development Impact Bonds Pilot Programme	Kay Lau, James Ronicle, Sara Rizzo, Alma Agusti Strid, Daniel Silver, Jennifer Armitage and Zachary Levey; FCDO; evaluation.	Evaluation of the FCDO's Development Impact Bonds (DIBs) pilot programme (2017-2023). Includes the ICRC Humanitarian Impact Bond for Physical Rehabilitation to fund rehabilitation centres. A DIB is a mechanism for drawing external finance into payment-by-results (PbR) projects. It suggests that DIBs are effective because of factors including: a stronger focus on outcomes, heightened	

			performance management, external perspectives and expertise in project implementation and better performance because of the reputational and financial risks for stakeholders.	
Feb 2021	The State of Open Humanitarian Data 2021	Centre for Humanitarian Data; report	The report outlines how HDX has expanded its data, but finds data gaps in countries experiencing humanitarian crises. Quantifies completeness of data for 27 countries with a humanitarian response plan, divided into several categories. It estimates the total percentage of complete data at 51%.	
5 March 2021	How the integration of health and disaster risk reduction can set Asia-Pacific on a path towards resilience; and webinar.	UNDRR; blog	Describes recent discussions on the need for disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategies to integrate health more, following covid-19. It notes global frameworks and guidelines on their integration, as well as examples of good practice from ASEAN.	
24 Feb 2021	Rethinking disease preparedness: incertitude and the politics of knowledge	Melissa Leach et al.; Critical Public Health; journal article	Academic article suggesting approaches to disease preparedness should be rethought. It is based on analysis of responses to Ebola, Nipah, cholera and covid-19. Findings include that expert knowledge is often privileged above local knowledge, and that models fail to take into account uncertainty. Preparedness should take into account the	

			<p>politics of knowledge, the constructions of</p> <p>time and space, the requirements for institutions and administrations and the challenges of ethics and justice.</p>	
March 2021	Post-Covid-19 Scenarios	ACAPs; report	<p>Three scenarios for the humanitarian operating environment in 2021:</p> <p>Continuing adaptation of response mechanisms; existing power dynamics unchanged (medium probability); Increased national influence; reframed international support (low probability); Increased national control and severely reduced international influence and support (negligible)</p>	
March 2021	The global financial burden of humanitarian disasters: Leveraging GDP variation in the age of climate change	Topher L McDougal and John H Patterson; International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction	<p>Estimates the global spending burden of humanitarian response, including domestic spending on which there is little data, at \$367bn per year. Also finds that 'each 1° C rise in 5-year temperature anomalies would require an annual 3.1% (95% CI: 0.18%–6.01%) rise in humanitarian spending'.</p>	

Resilience and protracted crisis

Publication date	Title/URL	Author(s)/Journal/Publication type	Summary	Top reads
8 March 2021	Lancet Series: Maternal and Child Undernutrition Progress	Various authors, Lancet Journal	Follow up to 2008/13 Series concluding that undernutrition remains a major global health concern, particularly as gains may be offset by COVID-19. It finds previously highlighted interventions continue to be effective at reducing stunting, micronutrient deficiencies, and child deaths and emphasizes the importance of delivering nutrition interventions within the first 1,000 days. However, delivery has lagged behind the evidence and further financing is needed.	
March 2021	Forced Migration Review 66: Mental health and psychosocial support, Data and displacement, Missing migrants	Forced Migration Review; journal issue	Articles discuss mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) in various contexts of displacement. Also includes features on data and displacement and missing migrants.	
11 Feb 2021	Humanitarian engagement in social protection: implications for principled humanitarian action	Cristina Quijano Carrasco; ICRC Law & policy; blog	Considers the challenges arising when humanitarian actors engage with social protection systems. In particular, collaboration with national governments and others, and the sharing of data, create risks. These include the possibility that	

			governments may use data to vet recipients or financial institutions may sell personal data.	
5 March 2021	Joining Forces to Combat Protracted Crises: Humanitarian and Development Support for Water and Sanitation Providers in the Middle East and North Africa	World Bank; ICRC; UNICEF; report.	Explores problems relating to water and sanitation in protracted crises in the region, and how humanitarian and development actors can cooperate to address them.	
25 Feb 2021	Inter-Agency Toolkit Preventing and Responding To Child Labour In Humanitarian Action	Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action; Toolkit	A toolkit on ways to prevent and respond to child labour in humanitarian interventions.	
25 Feb 2021	The Global Cost of Inclusive Refugee Education	World Bank; UNHCR	Provides estimates on what it would cost to provide refugee education for host countries.	
25 Feb 2021	The grand scheme: power and politics in the climate crisis	Malvika Verma; ICRC Law & Policy blog	Argues that disaster reduction and resilience interventions in contexts where climate change has exacerbated risks should consider broader power dynamics underlying these	

			risks. This requires long-term engagement with states and other actors.	
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Other

Publication date	Title/URL	Author(s)/Journal/Publication type	Summary	Top reads
3 Mar 2021	Handbook for the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator	Interagency Standing Committee Guidance	A reference for RCHCs and others on the normative framework for humanitarian action and the operational approaches, coordination structures, and available tools and services that facilitate humanitarian assistance.	
13 Feb 2021	Foreign Aid Is Having a Reckoning	New York Times; editorial opinion	The article discusses criticism of aid to Africa, noting limited 'localisation' of aid, 'white saviour mentalities' in aid, and the persistence of trade barriers and debt. It argues that Black Lives Matter has prompted many to reevaluate how they give aid, but that so far this effect has been greater among private philanthropists than governments.	
25 Feb 2021	When throwing evidence and facts is not enough. How Change	Oxfam blogs	Argues that evidence is not always the best way to effect changes in the humanitarian system. Discusses where	

	Happens in the Humanitarian System		evidence is and is not effective.	
Feb 2021	Trumanitarian: Great Leap Sideways	Lars Peter Nissen, Fergus Thomas; Podcast	Explores the vision, evolution and value of the H2H network	
19 Feb 2021	Rethinking Humanitarianism podcast	Heba Aly and Jeremy Konyndyk	On 'blue sky thinking' in the sector.	

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 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	Inter-Agency Standing	A library of resources on

Portal	Committee	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.

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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

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