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MISSION STATEMENT

The Harvard Humanitarian Initiative’s (HHI) mission is to:

1. Improve the effectiveness of humanitarian strategies for relief, protection, and prevention through evidence-based research;

2. Instill human rights principles and practices in these strategies; and,

3. Educate and train the next generation of humanitarian leaders.

As the educational arm of HHI, the Humanitarian Academy at Harvard is dedicated to educating and training current and future generations of humanitarian leaders in the many dimensions of providing aid in acute settings. The Academy aims to create a professional pathway for students and practitioners of all levels in the humanitarian space.
Dear Friends of the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative,

It is with both admiration and humility that we look back upon this year and celebrate the vision, innovation and commitment of our faculty, staff, and collaborators in the pursuit of developing better strategies for assisting communities in crisis. 2014 - 15 signified a year of tremendous challenges in the humanitarian sector and tremendous accomplishments of our team.

The recent outbreak of the Ebola virus, the worst in history, tested the limits, resources and approaches of local health systems, international responders and the international aid community. The Syrian refugee crisis currently stands as the largest migration of people since World War II and the implications of this displacement and how best to address are yet to be understood. The conflict in South Sudan, Africa’s longest running civil war, and developments in neighboring Central African Republic and Democratic Republic of Congo, remind us that protracted crises pose particularly complex questions for humanitarian response, reconstruction, and development. Natural disasters in southeast Asia (and in particular Typhoon Haiyan and the Nepal earthquake), are a stark reminder of the importance of coordination and preparedness in disaster-prone regions.

The response to these global humanitarian challenges is also growing in scale and complexity. In the past five years, the number of estimated humanitarian responders has increased to ~450,000, with over 17 million volunteers. The types of responders continue to proliferate, with increasing involvement of national, local and community-based organizations, a positive trend that emphasizes the importance of effective coordination. As well, contributions for international humanitarian assistance have reached a record high of US$24.5 billion this year.

2015 is an important milestone for HHI as we celebrate our 10-year anniversary. Building upon a nascent program in humanitarian crisis and human rights developed at Harvard University in 1999, the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative was formally established in 2005 as a university-wide academic and research interfaculty initiative. By 2012, HHI would launch the Humanitarian Academy at Harvard as the first multi-disciplinary humanitarian education program in a major university. Looking back over this past decade and the important work that has laid the foundation for our programs today, HHI researchers continue to engage in the questions of greatest relevance to the sector: How can we better understand the needs of communities affected by war and natural disasters? What lessons have been learned from the past and how can we learn better from each other? What evidence do we have of how well programs have worked and can this information be applied to making crisis planning and management better going forward? What is the role of technology and what is society’s ethical obligation in the application of technology in crisis contexts? How can we, as academics, contribute to developing the next generation of leaders in this field? The programs described in the pages that follow attempt to address these questions and provide a window into the future of humanitarian innovation.

The accomplishments of HHI over the past decade have only been possible through our network of supporters and the incredibly valuable collaborators and researchers over the years who have contributed to making HHI what it is today. We are deeply appreciative of your support and commitment to HHI. We hope you enjoy learning more about our work.

Michael VanRooyen, MD, MPH
Director
Negeen Darani, MPP
Executive Director
Global Impact

- Nathaniel Raymond presented tukul research at TedX Fulton Street Conference [pg. 15]
- Phuong Pham presented her research on reparations programs to President of Colombia [pg. 10]
- Over 1,000 students and professionals have participated in in-person trainings at Harvard [pg. 35]
- Peace and Human Rights Data Program has conducted over 22,000 interviews worldwide [pg. 9]
ATHA Humanitarian Podcast has over 68,000 downloads [pg. 28]

Over 12,000 users worldwide registered for Building a Better Response online course [pg. 38]

KoBoToolbox team provided on-the-ground needs assessment directly after Nepal Earthquake [pg. 17]

Women In War Program surveyed over 1,000 people about human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo [pg. 8]

Vincenzo Ballettina launches DisasterNet Philippines [pg. 21]
Hong Kong Institute for Disaster Preparedness and Response launched [pg. 22]
Year in Photos

Parveen Parmar with students from her WinterSession course accepting James H. Ware award from Harvard Chan School

Michael VanRooyen speaks at roundtable discussion on Ebola

Patrick Vinck

Vincenzo Bollettino

Nathaniel Raymond, TedX Fulton Street Conference
In Focus

Bartel Van De Walle, Tina Comes, and Anaide Nahikian

Stephanie Kayden leading Humanitarian Response Simulation Exercise

Kai Hsiao and Jennifer Leaning at panel on Nepal Earthquake

Recording of ATHA podcast

Jocelyn Kelly and Will Cragin in Central African Republic

Phuong Pham presents results of an evaluation of the Colombian National Reparation Program to Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos
HHI’s research has generally aligned with four key research themes:

- Populations in Crisis
- Humanitarian Data and Technology
- Disaster Resilience
- Humanitarian Policy and Evaluation

Through these themes, HHI researchers are exploring issues of critical relevance in the humanitarian space with interdisciplinary methodologies, frameworks and approaches.
Putting people and communities at the center of humanitarian action through empirical and mixed methods research to give voice to survivors of mass atrocities and disaster.
In the past year, the Women in War program completed two major projects aimed at understanding the vulnerabilities and resilience of women living in conflict-affected regions in central Africa. In collaboration with the World Bank, Women in War undertook one of the first investigations of human rights violations in mining towns in eastern Congo. The project used a rights-based approach combining qualitative methods with a population-based survey to look at issues of economic and sexual exploitation of women in these areas. The findings of this work were highlighted at a special event at the World Bank. Project results are informing the debate on “conflict minerals” as the U.S. Congress revisits this issue on the 5-year anniversary of key legislation on traceability of minerals. HHI’s work with women in mining towns helped inform the World Bank’s recent inauguration of the Democratic Republic of the Congo’s first national women’s mining cooperative. The inaugural conference for this cooperative was held in September and represented the first time women working in this sector had a chance to come together to discuss their unique challenges and experiences.
A second major project examines vulnerabilities and resilience within communities affected by the Lord’s Resistance Army in Uganda, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Central African Republic. This project is among the first to look at the impact of the LRA across the many countries that it affects. Last year, Women in War team members traveled to communities in all four countries that participated in this work to share Lord’s Resistance Army study findings. Results of this work were highlighted at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health Forum on November 10, and were shared by PRI’s The World in their social media coverage of the event.

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

- ‘This mine has become our farmland’: Critical perspectives on the coevolution of artisanal mining and conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in *Resources Policy*
- Resources and resourcefulness: Roles, opportunities and risks for women working at artisanal mines in South Kivu, Democratic Republic of the Congo, in *Futures*
- ‘They have embraced a different behaviour’: transactional sex and family dynamics in eastern Congo’s conflict, in *Culture, Health and Sexuality*
- Stigmatization and Rejection of Survivors of Sexual Violence in Eastern DRC, in *Disasters*

PEACE AND HUMAN RIGHTS DATA

The year 2014 – 2015 was a period of growth and high impact research for the Program on Peace and Human Rights Data. Over this period, the program conducted interviews with over 22,000 victims of conflict and mass violence in 6 countries (Burundi, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), East Timor, and Uganda). The program also finalized research reports on Côte d’Ivoire and DRC. Each study had the common aim of gathering scientifically valid data on themes related to resilience, security, justice, and peace and reconstruction processes. This research is being made widely available through reports and presentations to governments, as well as national and international agencies, which in turn informs policies and practices, and draws national and international media attention.
Key research projects this year include:

Uganda: **2,079** interviews

Burundi: **2,991** interviews

In Uganda and Burundi, the program assessed resilience, social cohesion, and security as elements of peacebuilding, and the interaction of education with those factors. In total, 5,070 randomly selected youth and adults above the age of 14 were interviewed. The results highlight the role that schools and informal education play in strengthening social ties and enhancing resilience to conflict and violence. Conducted in collaboration with the United Nations Children’s Fund, the research directly informs their program on peacebuilding, education and advocacy.

**Peace and Human Rights Data**

**BY THE NUMBERS**

Interviewed **22,061** randomly selected survivors of violence

DRC: **10,591** interviews

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, after conducting a baseline assessment of attitudes about peace and reconstruction among over 5,000 randomly selected adults, the program conducted polls about news events, security and access to justice every three months, with an average of 4,000 randomly selected adults. The results provide a timely and micro-level snapshot to monitor changes over time. The collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Stabilization Mission to the Congo ensures that results directly inform response and interventions. The work in DRC also heavily focuses on developing local research capacities.

Timor-Leste: **2,964** interviews

Guatemala: **3,712** interviews*

*ongoing

In East Timor and Guatemala, the program worked with Interpeace and local collaborators to engage in a wide consultation followed by surveys with randomly selected adults to advance the understanding of resilience in the context of violence. The results will be used to develop an assessment framework of resilience and advance our understanding of fragility and the complex role of social networks to prevent violence.

Colombia: **3,136** interviews

In Colombia, HHI collaborated with the Carr Center for Human Rights at the Harvard Kennedy School to evaluate the country’s reparation program. Providing comprehensive reparations to victims of violence in Colombia, the reparation program is the most ambitious to date, with over 6 million registered victims. HHI researchers conducted a comprehensive assessment comparing the program with similar programs around the world, examining the institutional arrangements, and assessing perception among the population, registered victims,
and victims having received compensation under the reparation program. The study informed on-going peace negotiations with Colombia’s largest rebel group, and HHI and HKS lead researchers traveled to Colombia in June 2015 to present the study findings to Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos.

Looking ahead, the Peace and Human Rights Data Program will continue its work in DRC, conducting regular polls to inform government and United Nations agencies and the civil society about progress toward peace. The program is collecting data in Guatemala as part of the project with Interpeace to build an assessment framework on resilience. A new collaboration with UNICEF will focus research on the role of education and trans-generational transmission of violence and trauma in Cote d’Ivoire, the DRC, and Palestine.

The cover image for the report, “Fragile Peace, Elusive Justice: Population-Based Survey on Perceptions and Attitudes about Security and Justice in Abidjan, Cote d’Ivoire”

The cover image for the report, “Fragile Peace, Elusive Justice: Population-Based Survey on Perceptions and Attitudes about Security and Justice in Abidjan, Cote d’Ivoire”

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

• Localizing Peace, Reconstruction, and the Effects of Mass Violence, in Peace and Conflict (Paradigm Publisher)
• Consulting Survivors, in The Human Rights Paradox: Universality and Its Discontents (University of Wisconsin Press)
• GIS and Human Rights, in Ethics, Science, Technology, and Engineering (Macmillan Reference USA)
• Technology in Humanitarian Action, in China Journal of Emergency Resuscitation and Disaster Medicine
• Drought and food security—Improving decision-support via new technologies and innovative collaboration, in Global Food Security
• An assessment of antenatal care among Syrian refugees in Lebanon, in Conflict and Health

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

• Fragile Peace, Elusive Justice: Population-Based Survey on Perceptions and Attitudes about Security and Justice in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire, HHI
• Searching for Lasting Peace: Population-Based Survey on Perceptions and Attitudes about Peace, Security and Justice in Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, HHI, United Nations Development Programme
• Population-Based Survey on Peace and Education: Burundi, UNICEF, Learning for Peace, HHI
• Population-Based Survey on Peace and Education: Uganda, UNICEF, Learning for Peace, HHI
• Peacebuilding and Reconstruction Polls # 1, Polls #2, and Polls #3, HHI, United Nations Development Programme
YOUTH IN CRISIS

Opportunities for youth can be severely limited among many communities in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region that are disrupted by conflict or impoverishment. Recent political and economic factors, as well as a rapidly growing youth population, have greatly increased the vulnerability of at-risk youth in the MENA region.

In January 2015, HHI released “Examining the needs of at-risk youth in the Middle East and North Africa: A multi-method landscape analysis and systematic literature review.”

This HHI study utilized a multi-method approach -- including systematic reviews of the peer-reviewed and gray literatures, stakeholder analyses, and in-region discussions with youth and stakeholders -- to identify the current needs, activities, stakeholders, and opportunities related to at-risk youth in the MENA region.

The study found that there exist many opportunities in supporting, advising, and collaborating with local organizations; helping coordinate between different stakeholders; and working with educational and governmental authorities to improve education access, professional accreditation, and potentially employment opportunities for youth in the MENA region.
HUMANITARIAN DATA & TECHNOLOGY

Tools, methodologies, applications and development of standards for data collection, analysis and visualization in crisis-affected communities
The Signal Program focused in the past year on the development of methodologies, professional standards, and tools for the analysis of geospatial data and the use of information communication technologies in disaster response. Signal Program researchers sought to develop and test standard-based approaches to analyzing and interpreting remote sensing data of phenomena documented in complex humanitarian disasters, like mass civilian displacement and attacks on civilian communities. These activities focused primarily on the following:

Tukul Detector

The Signal Program worked with 2014 HHI fellow Michael Hughes last year to develop a prototype feature extraction algorithm, called “Tukul Detector”. The Tukul Detector identifies and counts traditional African huts, known as “tukuls”, that are routinely present in satellite imagery of rural regions in Africa. The Tukul Detector has the potential to significantly speed identification and analysis of rapid changes to the number of these structures and rural population movement trends. The destruction of tukuls and other civilian structures is a well-documented phenomenon occurring during attacks on civilian populations.

In initial tests, the Tukul Detector was ~90% successful in identifying tukuls

Satellite Imagery Guides

The Signal Program released its first satellite imagery interpretation guide, *Satellite Imagery Guide: Displaced Population Camps*, in April 2015. This guide helps address the lack of public and standardized training resources for using high resolution satellite imagery in support of refugee/internally displaced populations.
population assistance operations. Google’s Skybox Imaging and SpaceUnited provided the imagery for the guide, much of which can be explored online. In its first month online, the guide’s webpage was visited over 800 times.

In September 2015, the program released a second guide, entitled *Satellite Imagery Interpretation Guide: Intentional Burning of Tukuls*. The release of this guide coincided with a discussion of tukuls by program director Nathaniel Raymond at the TedX Fulton Street Conference in New York.

**Ethics**

A major part of the Signal Program’s research involves helping develop ethical and technical standards related to the use of data about vulnerable populations. As part of this work, the Signal Program worked with the Center for Philanthropy and Civil Society at Stanford University, Columbia University, and others from HHI to plan the Ethics of Data Conference.

**Publications**

Data-Pop Alliance

KEY PUBLICATIONS

- Big Data and Development: An Overview, Data-Pop Alliance White Paper
- The Law, Politics, and Ethics of Cell Phone Data Analytics, Data-Pop Alliance White Paper
- Official Statistics, Big Data and Human Development, Data-Pop Alliance White Paper
- Big Data and Mobility: Migration and Transportation, Data-Pop Alliance Primer
- Beyond Data Literacy: Reinventing Community Engagement and Empowerment in the Age of Data, Data-Pop Alliance White Paper
- Big Data for Climate Change & Disaster Resilience: Realising the Benefits for Developing Countries
- Big data & SDGs: note for Global Sustainable Development Report

KEY EVENTS

Big Data and Official Statistics, London Royal Statistical Society
- London, England -

Build Peace 2015 Data Workshop
- Cyprus -

CARTAGENA DATA FESTIVAL
- APRIL 2015 | CARTAGENA, COLOMBIA -

Data-Pop Alliance was among the 7 co-organizers and 22 partnering organizations of the Cartagena Data Festival 2015 held on April 20-22. With over 450 participants over 3 days packed with stimulating sessions, discussions, art installations, an innovation fair and a “Data Capsule” as a high point, the Festival was a huge success.

Data-Pop Alliance

Launched in November 2014, the Data-Pop Alliance is a unique collaboration among HHI, the MIT Media Lab and the Overseas Development Institute. The Data-Pop Alliance was created to promote a people-centered Big Data revolution. It seeks to advance knowledge and promote innovations with Big Data, to build capacities and connections, and to craft ethical and equitable systems. In its first year of activities, the Data-Pop Alliance has established partnerships with over 20 major research and practitioner organizations. Its core team of 11 faculty and staff and 18 affiliate researchers have written 13 publications, organized 14 events and workshops, and participated in over 20 events, presenting research and findings on the use of Big Data for social good.
KoBoToolbox

KoBoToolbox is an open source suite of tools for data collection, analysis, and visualization in humanitarian emergencies and other challenging environments. Most users are people working in humanitarian crises, as well as aid professionals and researchers working in low-resource settings.

With support from UNOCHA, the Hilton Foundation, CISCO and others, a completely redesigned version of KoBoToolbox was launched in September 2014 to respond to the needs of a growing number of humanitarian actors. The updated tools were designed to address critical requests and feedback from field experts—specifically targeting professionals in humanitarian emergencies. The tools are currently being used for data collection in ongoing humanitarian crises, including those in Ukraine, South Sudan, Syria, Iraq, and all countries affected by the Ebola outbreak.

A major update to KoBoToolbox was implemented in October 2015 with significant expansion of key features identified in collaboration with leading humanitarian NGOs and UN agencies. Updates include support for multi-user management, improved management of question libraries, sharing features, as well as enhanced analysis and visualization.

TechRepublic has named KoBoToolbox as one of “10 awesome technolog[ies] ... you should know about.”

To accompany the release of the new update, KoBoToolbox will launch training videos as well as two online modules on Humanitarian Assessment, Data Analysis, and Reporting. The program will also be hosting three workshops in 2015 to further develop the new uses and ensure that upcoming features cater to the needs of our users.
KoBoToolbox is an open source suite of tools for data collection, analysis, and visualization in humanitarian emergencies and other challenging environments. Key humanitarian organizations, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the International Rescue Committee, selected KoBoToolbox as their primary platform for data collection, analysis and visualization.

KoBoToolbox has experienced rapid adoption just over the past year, especially during humanitarian responses such as the Ebola outbreak and the Nepal earthquake - a clear indicator of the need for such technology in the current humanitarian context.
In Focus 2015

Top 10 Countries (users)

1. Turkey
2. USA
3. Iraq
4. Kenya
5. Indonesia
6. Switzerland
7. Philippines
8. Nepal
9. United Kingdom
10. Jordan

6,500 users
380,000 submissions
8,000 projects
DISASTER RESILIENCE

Developing a community-centric disaster resilience network through regional collaboration
Resilient Communities

The Program on Resilient Communities harnesses research and engagement with local communities to learn from their practices on disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction. The program utilizes empirical research, engagement with local communities, partnership with academia, local government and civil society to support community based resilience through research-informed disaster risk reduction and preparedness policy. Collaborations with academic institutions and training centers bring the latest in research disaster knowledge to practitioners, government officials, private sector actors and civil society organizations, as well as other disaster responders.

The DisasterNet Philippines project launched in the fall of 2015 with a scoping study examining current practices in disaster risk reduction and preparedness in the Philippines. The DisasterNet project focuses on supporting community-based resilience in the Philippines by understanding successful practices (through research) and how to bring current good practices to scale (through case studies and education and training). Empirical research, educational tools and resources are used to provide greater understanding and capacity to local government units and civil society actors. Collaborations with academia, government, and the private sector are used to improve communications and learning on disaster preparedness and to enhance community resilience.

Disaster response meetings in Nepal (L) and the Philippines (R)
HHI is collaborating with the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, the University of Hong Kong, and the FXB Center on Health and Human Rights to establish Hong Kong as a regional and international leader in disaster preparedness and response training and to promote community resilience in Hong Kong. The project’s newly launched Institute for Disaster Preparedness and Response (IDPR) will work to adapt international norms and lessons learned to local needs and to create a community of leaders in disaster preparedness and response in the region.

In its first year, HHI has contributed to the drafting of a scoping study focused on inter-agency coordination, communication across agencies and within the community, and public attitudes toward preparedness. In addition, HHI faculty and staff are leading the development and design of the monitoring and evaluation framework for the offerings of IDPR and contributing to a body of case studies that will be integrated into the broader graduate curriculum and IDPR trainings.
When natural disasters and complex emergencies overwhelm the capacity of the affected state/s to adequately respond to the immediate needs of their people, militaries and/or civil defense forces from the United States and other nations have increasingly become an essential provider of humanitarian relief.

With the anticipation of increased military involvement in the provision of humanitarian relief, it is important to consider the consequences of increasing levels of civil-military engagement for humanitarian agencies. Engagement between military and humanitarian actors is circumscribed within the Oslo Agreement and has obvious implications for humanitarian agencies’ need to abide by humanitarian principles, as well as on the security of humanitarian aid workers. Despite this and the potential benefits of improved coordination amongst military and humanitarian actors serving disaster-affected populations, there is exceptionally little empirical evidence on just what impact civil-military engagement actually has on the delivery of relief. Thus, there is a clear need for studies that systematically examine the effectiveness of civil-military engagement in response to disaster. This program seeks to build a sustainable research and educational program to meet this need.
October 25th marked the six-month anniversary of the devastating earthquake that struck Nepal, leaving thousands dead, many tens of thousands in need of support, and hundreds of thousands of homes destroyed.

Despite an immediate outpouring of humanitarian aid from the international community and the commitment of billions of dollars to help Nepal rebuild, not to mention the incredible resourcefulness of youth groups, local non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and the Nepal military to save lives and deliver aid to survivors, too little has been done to address the longer term needs for shelter and rehabilitation of livelihoods. Instead, legislation mandating the creation of a National Reconstruction Authority was allowed to lapse and little action has been taken to act on the government’s National Reconstruction Plan.
Immediately following the earthquake, HHI’s Vincenzo Bollettino and Tino Kreutzer travelled to the Kathmandu region of Nepal. HHI supported the government’s effort to collect important field data needed to inform its reconstruction plan and studied civil-military coordination during the relief phase. In the months following, HHI worked closely with Kathmandu Living Labs to examine that civil society organization’s effort to collect, verify, and provide life saving information to first responders during relief efforts, by holding a multi-stakeholder workshop on the role of crisis informatics. The Signal Program’s imagery analysis manager, Isaac Baker, also provided technical support to the Pacific Disaster Center in identifying communities damaged by the earthquake through the analysis of satellite imagery.

HHI also participated in a Harvard Kennedy School-led initiative to evaluate the Nepal government’s reconstruction plans, which were presented back to the Nepal government. HHI is committed to further working to enhance disaster resiliency in Nepal by supporting reconstruction and development efforts through research and through convening key stakeholders that are vested in seeing that Nepal build back better.
HUMANITARIAN POLICY
AND EVALUATION

Developing communities of practice and policy inputs to translate research into practice
During the past year, HHI’s Program on Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research (HPCR) brought to fruition its multi-year research and policy project on monitoring, reporting, and fact-finding. In November 2014 in Istanbul, Turkey, HPCR convened the final meeting of the HPCR Group of Professionals on Monitoring, Reporting, and Fact-finding, a collection of high-level practitioners that includes Judge Philippe Kirsch (First President of the International Criminal Court) and Paulo Sergio Pinheiro (Chairman, UN Commission of Inquiry on Syria). At this meeting, the group finalized the text of a practical, field-based handbook for practitioners working on commissions of inquiry.

The Advanced Training Program on Humanitarian Action (ATHA) fosters innovative responses to current challenges to humanitarian protection by capturing new approaches and insights of practitioners through informal, professional exchange, research on practitioner questions, interactive briefings on the ATHA portal, closed, online workshops and open podcast exchanges. ATHA aims to address growing challenges to the protection of civilians and the implementation of international humanitarian and human rights standards; strengthening relationships among professionals engaged in humanitarian action, especially at the local level, and fostering regional communities of practice around specific contexts.

In the past year, ATHA experienced enhanced engagement with humanitarian professionals at the field level, and a strategic orientation of the Program toward: developing practitioner exchange and peer-learning at local, regional, and headquarters levels, facilitating a practical understanding of international humanitarian law, and enhancing the capacity of professionals engaged in humanitarian protection in armed conflict.

ATHA "Briefing Papers" or "policy briefs" focus on current legal and policy dilemmas of humanitarian action faced by practitioners in the field.

**PAPERS FROM 2015**

Humanitarian Action and the Politics of Transition: The Context of Colombia  
*September 2015*

Humanitarians Under Attack: Tensions, Disparities, and Legal Gaps in Protection  
*June 2015*

Humanitarian Negotiation: Key Challenges and Lessons Learned in an Emerging Field  
*April 2015*

The ATHA blog provides a forum for weekly analysis of current trends and challenges in the humanitarian sector.

**POPULAR BLOG POSTS**

- Humanitarianism without Humanitarians: Refugee Relief in Lesvos, Greece  
  *September 2015*

- U.S. Denies War Crime Allegations in Kunduz MSF Hospital Bombing: Could the Label Fit?  
  *October 2015*

- Violence Against Women in ISIS’s ‘Islamic State’: An International Crime  
  *October 2014*
ATHA has established a field-based initiative to provide local workshops for selected humanitarian professionals working in capacity building activities within humanitarian organizations, with a view to fostering a system of institutional learning that can be transferred and disseminated to a greater number of staff in the region. Over this year, ATHA has been developing a community of practice around humanitarian protection, specifically focusing on the challenges and dilemmas of negotiation, through a dedicated space for informal exchanges among front-line professionals, particularly at the local and regional levels, to foster knowledge-sharing and collaborating within and across agencies. ATHA is also a program of HHI’s Humanitarian Academy at Harvard.
HUMANITARIAN ACADEMY AT HARVARD

Launched in 2012, the Humanitarian Academy at Harvard serves as the educational arm of HHI, dedicated to educating and training current and future generations of humanitarian leaders and serving as a prototype for other academic centers of excellence.
### Humanitarian Academy Education and Training Programs

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#### Online

Over **12,500** users have registered for the **Building a Better Response (BBR)** online course.

**BBR** is available in **3** languages: English, Arabic, and French.

**ATHA** offers a library of **48** humanitarian podcasts, free to download on iTunes.

#### Field-based

Over the last ten years, nearly **1,000** students and professionals have taken part in the annual **Humanitarian Response Simulation**.

In the last year, **ATHA** has hosted **5** field workshops across the globe.

#### Classroom

In its first three years, over **75** Harvard graduate students have been involved in the **HuSEHR concentration**.

Since 2011, **320** professionals have participated in live **HSI workshops** at Harvard University.

In the last two years, over **40** Harvard graduate students have studied abroad in humanitarian **Winter Session Courses**.

These professionals represent **63** different countries and over **140** organizations.
The Humanitarian Studies, Ethics and Human Rights (HuSEHR) concentration at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health is a Humanitarian Academy at Harvard graduate level offering for master and doctoral students based in the Chan School’s Department of Global Health and Population. This coursework provides an in-depth program of study that focuses on the normative underpinnings and practice of humanitarian response.

In 2015, 15 students completed the program and received their certificate upon graduating from the Harvard Chan School. At the launch of the 2015-2016 academic year, nearly 40 graduate students expressed interest in pursuing the HuSEHR track to complement their primary degree program studies.

In just two years, HuSEHR has become one of HSPH’s secondary concentrations in highest demand.

In addition to core-required classes, the Academy organizes numerous humanitarian themed seminars and special events for the student community including journal clubs, a student-driven seminar series and special guest presentations, panels and lectures including career-planning sessions with humanitarian organizations.

The HuSEHR curriculum covers a broad range of areas including:

- Protection
- Disaster Response
- Sectors-Based Assistance
- Dynamic Social and Cultural Methods
- Crisis and Human Rights
- International Humanitarian Law
- Leadership
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Ethics
WinterSession Courses

As part of the Harvard Chan School’s January Term, graduate students are encouraged to participate in field-based courses that provide them with a unique opportunity for immersive, experiential learning under the guidance and leadership of Academy faculty. Recent offerings include:

Field Research Methods in Humanitarian Crisis - Refugee Health at the Thai-Burma Border
Thailand - Burma border (Umpiem Mai)

In January 2014, Parveen Parmar led eight Harvard Chan School students to the Umpiem Mai camp at the Thai-Burma Border for a practical, field-focused experience in research and program assessment with the broader goal of solving public health problems in a challenging setting. Partnering with the Public Health Institute (PHI) based in the refugee camp, this course paired Harvard students with PHI students to develop public health assessment projects of direct relevance to the camp.

Students from this class received the prestigious James H. Ware Award from the Harvard Chan School in 2014.

Rehabilitation and Response to the Syria Refugee Crisis
Amman, Jordan

The Winter Field Study Course in the Middle East brings graduate students to examine strategic approaches for navigating the long-term challenges and dilemmas of some of the most complex political and humanitarian issues. The January 2015 course in Amman, Jordan explored issues surrounding the policy and operational challenges associated with the Syrian refugee crisis in Jordan. The course approached the case of refugees from Syria in Jordan as a means to further professional dialogue and to build exchanges between Harvard University graduate students and practitioners and students in the region.

Students were required to prepare a final project, a strategic communication plan to obtain financial support for refugee programs. Projects were presented to a high-level panel, which included representatives from UNICEF, Save the Children, government, and local organizations.

Core HuSEHR Courses

ID205: Societal Response to Disaster and War
Faculty: Jennifer Leaning and Hilarie Cranmer

GHP515/518: International Humanitarian Response Course and Simulation
Faculty: Stephanie Kayden

GHP537: Field Methods in Humanitarian Crises
Faculty: Gregg Greenough and Phuong Pham
Kai Hsiao, MPH ’15
Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health
HuSEHR Concentrator

What do you feel are the strengths of humanitarian education at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health?

The School and the wider University offers a broad range of courses and experiences to build a comprehensive humanitarian education. These courses range from the didactic, covering the fundamental principles and field research methods, to the experiential, such as the Field Study Course to the Middle East and the 3-day Humanitarian Simulation. This coverage ensures that students come out not only with a good baseline understanding of the humanitarian system but also exposure to field practicalities.

How did humanitarian studies at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health affect your career trajectory in the humanitarian sector?

The studies have provided a solid foundation in terms of understanding the humanitarian system and principles, which is fundamental to any work or career within the system. The broad coverage of the courses has also provided expanded exposure to differing career opportunities within the humanitarian sector, including those relating to field research or applied epidemiology in crisis settings. However, most importantly, the humanitarian education has expanded my skill sets and perspectives beyond that of a mere clinician to become a more well-rounded, and hopefully more effective humanitarian aid worker.

What are some positive aspects of the Humanitarian Studies, Ethics and Human Rights Concentration that you would like to share with prospective students?

The Concentration provides a clear, professional practice-oriented focus for the MPH studies within the very broad and expansive field of Global Health where a clear career direction can be difficult to find. Despite its focus, the Concentration still offers a broad range of exposure in the areas relating to humanitarian studies and human rights, drawing on the deep experiences of its faculty and associate faculty and on the various relevant opportunities from other Schools at Harvard as well as Fletcher and MIT.
The Academy’s Professional Education Program has trained ~1,000 graduate and professional education students in focused areas designed to enhance their knowledge, skills and leadership abilities in humanitarian contexts. In the classroom, in the field, and now increasingly through online learning, education designed to meet the needs of the next generation of humanitarian leaders is being developed and delivered through the Academy. In the past year, the Lavine Family Humanitarian Studies Initiative (HSI) offered its three core workshops:

Humanitarian Response Intensive Course (April 2015)

The Humanitarian Response Intensive Course (HRIC) has become the flagship public offering for the Humanitarian Academy at Harvard. This eleven-day long training attracts an annual cohort of 60 students from around the world and has now been delivered publicly for ten years. The course serves professionals who are either in the early stages of their careers in the humanitarian sector or those who are seeking to enter the humanitarian field from other disciplines (public health, development, etc.). The course provides an introduction to some of the primary considerations and frameworks involved in humanitarian relief work while preparing students to become effective leaders during complex humanitarian emergencies.
Urban Humanitarian Emergencies Course (July 2015)

Offered for three consecutive years, the Urban Humanitarian Emergencies Workshop brings professionals together to learn from experts and discuss the unique challenges that are faced in urban crises around the world. The course offers insights identifying key stakeholders, planning responses through various emergency phases and leveraging technologies for assessment in emergency situations.

Humanitarian Response Simulation Exercise (April 2015)

The Humanitarian Response Intensive Course culminates in a three day (rain or shine), two night field-based simulation exercise, which has been offered every year for over ten years. The simulation has grown in scope and scale to include over 300 students and volunteer facilitators and role players in 2015. Professional students from the HRIC cohort join graduate students who have completed the International Humanitarian Response course (Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health) and participate, in role, as international NGO actors who are deployed to provide aid to a population that has been affected by a complex humanitarian emergency. Throughout the simulation, students are faced with numerous challenges, including assessing the needs of a rapidly changing population, operating in an insecure environment and coordinating aid delivery across multiple NGO, UN and local government agencies.

Monitoring and Evaluation for Humanitarian Programs (June 2015)

This course provides concrete conceptual frameworks for mixed methods approaches (both qualitative and quantitative) to program monitoring and evaluation. In addition, the course provides an introduction to new digital tools, methods and research resources for increasing quality and efficiency of data collection, analysis, and visualization.
Beginning in December 2013 and continuing in some countries to today, the recent epidemic of the Ebola virus disease affected 10 countries across the globe, primarily the West African nations of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea. The outbreak expanded over the course of 2014, with the World Health Organization (WHO) officially declaring it a public health emergency of international concern that August.

As of October 2015, the World Health Organization has reported 28,575 cases of Ebola and 11,313 deaths. Despite the low frequency of new cases, an active outbreak situation continues in Guinea.

HHI Director Michael VanRooyen convened a special meeting of West African diplomats in the earlier days of the outbreak along with a multi-disciplinary panel of experts from across Harvard University. He also participated in a Harvard Kennedy School forum event, “Ebola: Can We Avoid a Global Pandemic?” with Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.
The Building a Better Response project aims to enhance the capacity of national and international NGO workers and other humanitarian actors to engage with the international humanitarian architecture. Funded by USAID, and in collaboration with International Medical Corps and Concern International, the project provides online and in person trainings to improve coordination among actors responding to humanitarian emergencies. The project curriculum was created in consultation with over 400 national and international NGO staff from around the world.

A year into the course, over 3,400 users have completed all five modules

The e-learning component of the project was launched in 2014, and uses a fictional scenario to walk users through the process of humanitarian coordination. The course is interactive, self-paced and free to access. Interest in the course is evident in the strong and consistent registration numbers, showing the need for this type of foundational training among humanitarian actors. By October of 2015, the course surpassed 12,500 registered users and continues to grow steadily. These users represent 172 countries, from a variety of positions within the humanitarian sector, as well as the academic and private sectors.
While the e-learning course modules are designed to be stand-alone, there is a steadily increasing number of users who chose to complete the entire course. Users who complete all five modules receive a certificate from HHI’s Humanitarian Academy at Harvard. A year into the course, over 3,400 users have completed all five modules. In June 2015, French and Arabic versions of the e-learning course were launched. The translated versions of the course expand the reach of BBR, making the e-learning tool even more accessible to humanitarian workers.

In July 2015, BBR launched a webcast series called Field Perspectives. These videos complement the e-learning curriculum by providing insight into real-life experiences of humanitarian workers. Topics have included the Role of Communication in Humanitarian Leadership, the Importance of Humanitarian Coordination, and the Responsibilities of Humanitarian Country Directors. New webcast episodes are available on the BBR website every three weeks, and feature a diverse group of practitioners from a variety of organizations.

In its first year, the Building a Better Response e-learning course has made a significant impact by filling a critical training gap for humanitarian workers all over the world. In the coming year, the BBR consortium is looking to further expand the reach of the course, while maintaining and updating the content to reflect the ever-changing humanitarian landscape.
HHI’s Humanitarian Academy at Harvard is committed to case-based learning and the tremendous value to be derived from teaching tools focused on response to past crises and lessons learned through the benefit of hindsight.

In 2013, the Weintz Family Humanitarian edX Seed Fund enabled the Humanitarian Academy at Harvard to create the Curricular Innovation Program.

The goal of this program is to build an interactive case library that serves as a repository of teaching tools that are:

- **Highly Immersive**
- **Multimedia Driven**
- **Curated with Primary Source Text and Media**
- **Designed to Strengthen Data Analysis and Executive Decision Making**

During the 2015 spring semester students enrolled in the Harvard Chan School course *ID 205: Societal Response to Disaster* were able to experience two different types of case based learning.

Through the rollout of *The Siege of 6221 Osage Avenue: Decision-Making Under Stress*, students were able to engage with a multimedia case designed to show first-hand how stress can create leadership failures during complex emergencies. They were also able to directly engage in their own case-based decision making within the platform, directly informing the faculty instruction and peer-to-peer learning.

Students in ID205 also engaged in *MSF in Srebrenica: Situational Awareness*, a self-paced online case study and flipped classroom role-play exercise designed to improve situational awareness and prioritization by humanitarians in conflict zones by analyzing the experience of Médecins Sans Frontières workers during the Srebrenica siege.

Both of these interactive case-based student experiences were assessed though a detailed survey instrument to better understand the effectiveness of these tools.

Students enrolled in 2016 Academy courses will be presented with a new case, *Cyclones of Bangladesh: Preparedness, Population and Climate Change*. 
In the coming year the Curricular Innovation Program at the Humanitarian Academy will roll out the following interactive cases:

- Operation Lifeline: Sudan and the Limits of Humanitarian Action;
- Response to Haiti: The Coordination Question;
- Media and Mission: Responding to the Crisis in Biafra

The seed fund has also launched the production of the HarvardX course to be led by Dr. Michael VanRooyen and Dr. Jennifer Lean- ing and entitled, *Humanitarian Response: Principles and Challenges*. This is expected to be a multi-module course designed to engage thousands of global learners and practitioners in difficult discussions concerning humanitarian principles and practice. The first module of this course will be released by summer 2016.

“Material was engaging, informative, and interesting while leaving the majority of interpretation and analysis to the user.”

- From 2015 survey of case participants

Several screenshots from the upcoming “Cyclones of Bangladesh: Preparedness, Population and Climate Change”
Anne Bennett

The unprecedented Ebola epidemic in West Africa has demonstrated that the dissemination of vital public health information and the adoption of safe behaviors is affected by local social, political, environmental and cultural factors. During the 2014-15 epidemic the urgent need for both empirical evidence and multidisciplinary expertise to inform communications strategies across multiple countries and diverse settings resulted in studies that were used internally but not shared with the wider research community.

Anne Bennett is currently collecting completed studies in the area of communication to the public in the three most affected countries, reviewing the literature and identifying knowledge gaps for subsequent study. Preliminary findings show that there are as of yet few rigorous evaluations of the public health communications strategies deployed in Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia. In addition, one would expect that comparisons between country strategies and outcomes could provide addition texture to our understanding of socio-cultural factors in the uptake of health information.

Frederick M. Burkle, Jr.

This year, Frederick M. Burkle, Jr.’s research and teaching focused on professionalization and competency issues in specialties that contribute to global health. He serves as co-Editor of the Special Issue on Ebola for the journal Disaster Medicine & Public Health Preparedness. Burkle published a total of 45 PUBMED articles in 2014-15, including four studies on Twitter as a potential disaster risk reduction tool that he co-authored. He served on the Task Force for Mass Critical Care that contributed multiple articles on critical care in resource poor settings. Burkle received the Disaster Medical Sciences Award from the American College of Emergency Physicians in 2014.

Kathryn Falb

Over the past year, Kathryn Falb has launched a multi-country study at the International Rescue Committee evaluating how best to protect girls from violence in humanitarian settings, led a study examining how the needs of women and girls were met in the aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan, and completed a study on experiences of violence against women among urban, displaced populations in Côte d’Ivoire. She also wrote a commentary for Lancet Global Health discussing the links between gender equality and violence against women – specifically highlighting the need for more research and funding for fragile states. Falb engages with many HHI students around research careers in the humanitarian field outside of academia.
Tina Comes / Bartel Van de Walle

Tina Comes and Bartel Van de Walle’s time at HHI has been dedicated to work on the information needs of fields-based humanitarian decision-makers, and the processes, technologies and solutions that we can provide to address those needs. During their time at HHI as senior research fellows, they participated in the organization of two high profile events related to this very topic: one summit in Brussels and an international workshop at Harvard University.

The first event, on November 4, was a summit devoted to the European refugee crisis. In response to the complex and fragmented response, the workshop aimed at gaining a better understanding of the role of data and technology to improve coordination. With the active participation of some of the leading United Nations agencies, notably the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, World Food Programme and International Organization for Migration; Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), among whom Medecins du Monde, Médecins Sans Frontières and Action Contre la Faim; governmental agencies; and local activists who were assisting the refugees in the Balkans, the summit provided a unique opportunity to exchange ideas and possible ways forward in the fields of data collection; decision support; and information sharing and policies.

The second event, to take place in December, is a workshop dedicated to the role of technology in the response to the Nepal earthquake and other natural disasters. Comes and Van de Walle succeeded in bringing together an impressive range of involved organizations, ranging from the Nepalese military command and Kathmandu Living Labs to international search-and-rescue teams. Participants will cover a wide range of aid organisations, from large United Nations agencies such as the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs or the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction to NGOs such as MapAction. While focusing on the Nepal earthquake as a case study, the workshop will lead to recommendations on standards for the use of technology in the response to all global sudden onset disasters.
**PUBLICATIONS**

- “Civil-Military Coordination and Information Sharing in a Digital Humanitarian Age,” Julia Brooks and David Polatty, in *Liaison Magazine* (Fall 2015)
- “Humanitarian Negotiation: Key Challenges and Lessons Learned in an Emerging Field,” Rob Grace / ATHA (June 2015)
- “Conflict-Related Displaced Population Camps Commonly Visible in High-Resolution Satellite Imagery.” Signal Program, in *Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations; Seton Hall University* (Spring/Summer 2015)
- “Gendered Misconceptions of Militarized Identities: Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration of Female Combatants in the DRC,” Marlene Houngbedji, Rob Grace, Julia Brooks / ATHA (March 2015)

• “Examining the needs of at-risk youth in the Middle East and North Africa: A multi-method landscape analysis and systematic literature review,” Youth in Crisis Project (January 2015)


• “Resources and resourcefulness: Roles, opportunities and risks for women working at artisanal mines in South Kivu, Democratic Republic of the Congo,” Jocelyn Kelly, Alexandria King-Close, Rachel Perks / Women in War Program, in Futures (October 2014)

• “‘They have embraced a different behaviour’: transactional sex and family dynamics in eastern Congo’s Conflict,” Beth Maclin, Jocelyn Kelly, Michael VanRooyen, Justin Kabanga / Women in War Program, in Culture, Health & Sexuality (September 2014)

• “Recommendations and Follow-up Measures in Monitoring, Reporting, and Fact-finding Missions,” Rob Grace / Program on Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research (HPCR) (August 2014)


• “‘This mine has become our farmland’: Critical perspectives on the coevolution of artisanal mining and conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo,” Jocelyn Kelly / Women in War Program, in Resources Policy (June 2014)


35 publications in 2014 - 2015; >80 publications with inclusion of fellows

A full library of HHI resources can be found at hhi.harvard.edu/resources
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Cover Photo | United Nations Development Programme
Humanitarian Response Simulation | Boston Globe [pg. i]
Parveen Parmar with students | Harvard Chan School [pg. 4]
Michael VanRooyen speaks at roundtable discussion on Ebola | Harvard Gazette [pg. 4]
Patrick Vinck | Harvard Gazette [pg. 5]
Stephanie Kayden leading Humanitarian Response Simulation Exercise | Harvard [pg. 5]
Zaatari Refugee Camp in Jordan | Skybox Imaging [pg. 14]
Zaatari Camp | UNHCR [pg. 15]
Cartagena | Jairo Paez [pg. 16]
Kai Hsiao | Harvard Chan School [pg. 34]
Year Ahead

Working with MSF: A Career Planning Information Session | September 2015

Health Systems Infrastructure in Post-Earthquake Nepal: Building Back Better Presentation | October 2015

Digital Data Collection and Human Rights Conference | October 2015

Humanitarian Studies, Ethics and Human Rights Seminar Series | October and November 2015

The European Refugee Crisis: Data, Technology, and Coordination Summit | November 2015


Data and Technology in Humanitarian Response Workshop | December 2015

Health of Urban Displaced Populations in Post-Conflict Colombia: the Medellin Social Development Model Wintersession Course | January 2016

Joint Humanitarian Operations Course | January 2016

Harvard Humanitarian Initiative Elizabeth B. Weintz Humanitarian Award Inaugural Event | April 2016 [tentative date]

Humanitarian Response Intensive Course and Simulation | April 2016