

ADAM LICHTENHELD

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Technical advisor and research lead specializing in conflict prevention, stabilization, and forced migration. 13 years of experience in research, analysis, and advising on the design, implementation, and evaluation of humanitarian and development programs in fragile and conflict-affected settings. Supervised and managed organizations and teams in designing and conducting large, multi-stakeholder research projects – including assessments, situational analyses, randomized control trials (RCTs), and other field studies – using a range of quantitative and qualitative methods in Afghanistan, Honduras, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Libya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Syria, Turkey, and Uganda. Led proposal strategy and wrote successful funding applications, provided remote mentorship and oversight of local researchers and practitioners, and translated evidence into timely and actionable recommendations to help refine strategic objectives, promote innovations, and advance the integration of evidence-based policies and programs for USAID, the U.S. State Department, FCDO, IOM, UNHCR, and various implementing organizations. Published a book and dozens of peer-reviewed articles, impact evaluations, and policy reports on conflict, displacement, migration, and post-war governance, including guidance on the U.S. Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability. Developed and taught courses on conflict and forced migration at UC Berkeley and Yale, trained development practitioners on research methods, and delivered briefings, presentations, and commentary to senior government officials, local civil society organizations, multilateral agencies, academic experts, and media such as NBC News.

EDUCATION

University of California, Berkeley

Ph.D, M.A. in Political Science

2019

University of Wisconsin-Madison

B.A. in Political Science and International Studies

2008

EXPERIENCE

Immigration Policy Lab, Stanford University

Executive Director

July 2022 - Present

Stanford, CA

- Lead strategic planning, organizational management, research operations, partnership development, fundraising, and policy engagement for leading evidence and innovation lab on migration and displacement.
- Created five-year organizational strategy; doubled staff size from 8 to 16; expanded annual budget from \$1.8 million to \$3.5 million; secured \$800,000 in additional grant funding; delivered rigorous evidence cited by policymakers, judges, and advocacy groups in several policy reforms in the U.S. and Europe; and developed new partnerships and projects with IOM, UNHCR, USAID, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the International Rescue Committee.
- Serve as Principal Investigator for RCTs and quasi-experimental studies on refugee livelihoods, return migration, internal displacement, remittances, and attitudes towards refugees in Africa, Central America, and the Middle East. Apply quantitative and qualitative methods to design, implement, and analyze surveys, interviews, and field experiments.
- Provide expert advice on migration, displacement, and associated drivers (e.g., conflict, climate, political and economic instability) to policymakers and practitioners through briefings, conferences, workshops, and other fora, including the Global Refugee Forum; Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees; USAID Global Migration Working Group; USAID Latin American Bureau Migration Workshop; and IOM Data Working Group.

Mercy Corps

Senior Researcher, Peace and Conflict

June 2020 - July 2022

Washington, DC

- Planned, coordinated, and implemented assessments, research studies, and RCTs and other impact evaluations related to conflict and fragility drivers, dynamics, and programming around the world in collaboration with Mercy Corps' country and field teams, technical support unit, donor agencies, and academic and practitioner partners.
- Created and advanced a research agenda and portfolio on conflict and fragility that responded to major program and policy questions, wrote successful funding proposals for research and programming, served as a PI for various studies, provided mentorship and quality assurance for field staff, conducted data analysis, and research disseminated findings.

- Engaged with USAID and other donors to identify data and evidence needs related to conflict and fragility – particularly for the U.S. Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability – and provided technical advice to donors, governments, and program teams on adopting evidence-based and data-driven approaches to these issues through reports, memos, briefings, and presentations, including at fora like PEACECON and the World Bank Fragility Forum.

The World Bank

July 2019 - July 2020

Senior Conflict Specialist

Washington, DC

- Provided subject matter and analytical expertise for an evaluation of World Bank engagement in fragile and conflict-affected states, including technical guidance and consultation on issues related to conflict prevention and stabilization.
- Conducted a trend analysis of portfolio and country performance across 30 countries to help officials and development partners understand, communicate, and interpret World Bank assistance in fragile contexts.
- Conducted country case studies and fragility and conflict assessments of the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan based on desk analysis, stakeholder analysis, and interviews.

Yale University

July 2019 - July 2020

Postdoctoral Associate and Lecturer

New Haven, CT

- Conducted research on the political, economic, and social drivers and dynamics of armed conflict, forced displacement, governance, development, and public opinion in conflict-affected societies.
- Devised innovative theories, developed and administered primary and secondary data collection instruments, and applied social science research methods to collect, analyze, and report information on conflict, fragility, and displacement.
- Trained and supervised ten research assistants, managed project budgets, organized academic workshops, and oversaw field research and primary data collection in Uganda, Turkey, and Syria.
- Designed and taught a 15-student undergraduate seminar, *The Politics of Forced Migration*, that examined the causes, consequences, and responses to refugee and displacement flows.

Mixed Migration Centre

August 2019 - October 2019

Research Analyst

Tunis, Tunisia

- Conducted an analysis of the determinants of refugee and migrant detention in Libya using quantitative survey data from 5,000 refugees and migrants gathered over a two-year period.
- Developed the research design, literature review, and hypotheses; cleaned the data; performed the statistical analysis using Stata and R; and wrote the research report.
- Coordinated with European and U.N. organizations in Libya and Tunisia to gather qualitative evidence and interview policymakers and practitioners about detention.

Causal Design

November 2018 - March 2019

Evaluation Team Leader

Jordan, Lebanon, Syria

- Led an evaluation of an FCDO-funded humanitarian program managed by Mercy Corps in Syria, including the design; fieldwork in Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria; and data analysis.
- Managed field teams by providing strategic direction, building out work plans and data collection schedules, developing and piloting collection tools, and conducting stakeholder consultations with donors, implementing partners, and beneficiaries in Lebanon, Jordan, and northeast Syria.
- Analyzed quantitative and qualitative data collected by the program and during the evaluation period to examine project outputs and outcomes and assess impact and performance.

Dexis Consulting Group

March 2016 - June 2017

Senior Research Analyst, USAID/OTI

Istanbul, Turkey

- Provided analysis of political, military, and economic dynamics in Syria for USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI). Produced thematic reports and community profiles detailing governance, security conditions, and service provision in Aleppo, Idlib, Homs, and Rural Damascus.

- Designed and implemented civilian perception surveys in opposition-held areas. Developed a comprehensive research plan that provided strategic and technical guidance, outlined resource needs, and proposed a framework for integrating rigorous analysis into OTI programming.
- Supervised two research officers in conducting primary research and provided strategic direction and management of research processes, product development, and uptake to a broad U.S. government audience. Provided staff training on data collection techniques, survey methodology, data analysis, and Stata statistical software.
- Analyzed and used evidence from 13,000 perception surveys and hundreds of qualitative interviews to help USAID and other agencies understand programmatic impacts and visualize and respond to political, governance, and security dynamics in Syria. Advised staff on programmatic opportunities and constraints, proposed innovative stabilization activities, and helped OTI refine its country strategies and program objectives.
- Conducted briefings for OTI, the U.S. State Department, Department of Defense and other donors on the Syria Transition Assistance and Response Team (START) on research results and political and security developments in Syria.

Chemonics International

Program Manager

February 2010 - July 2012

Washington, D.C.

- Managed the design and implementation of \$100+ million USAID-funded local governance, conflict mitigation, and financial services projects in Afghanistan, Libya, and Pakistan. Provided project oversight; established and maintained operational platforms; reviewed, adjusted, and forecasted budgets; advised on technical program; monitored performance; recruited and hired staff; negotiated subcontracts; and ensured contractual compliance.
- Conducted field assignments to Kabul, Kandahar, and Tripoli to establish and oversee project hiring, finance, operations, procurement, and human resources; train and supervise local staff in operations, grants, and finance; ensure program implementation; and represent Chemonics to local grantees, NGOs, donors, and government agencies.
- Designed, developed, and wrote technical proposals for USAID legislative strengthening, conflict mitigation and governance programs in Afghanistan, Iraq, South Sudan and the Philippines.
- Conducted technical research and recruitment trips to Kabul, Herat, Juba, Baghdad, and Mindanao to prepare for proposals and consult with local stakeholders on program design and staffing and subcontracting opportunities.

National Geographic Glimpse

Contributing Editor

August 2008 - October 2009

Amman, Jordan

- Reported on gender, forced migration, and economic issues in Jordan. Conducted interviews and story research, wrote in-depth narrative articles, and produced original photographic content for magazine publications.
- Cultivated and maintained sources from government, advocacy organizations, and religious leaders.
- Developed, organized and edited stories from Glimpse contributors based around the world.

PUBLICATIONS

Books and Book Chapters

Lichtenheld, A. *Guilt by Location: Displacement and Population Sorting in Civil Wars* (Cambridge University Press, 2024).

Lichtenheld, A. "Armed Conflict and Internal Displacement," in *Oxford Handbook on Internal Displacement* (Oxford University Press, Forthcoming 2025).

Peer-Reviewed Articles

Matanock, A. and Lichtenheld, A.. "[How Does International Intervention Work? A Mechanism for Securing Peace Settlements in Civil Conflicts.](#)" *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 52, No. 4 (2022): pp. 1810-30.

Lichtenheld, A. and Schon, J. "[The Consequences of Internal Displacement on Conflict Dynamics: Evidence from Syria.](#)" *Political Geography*, Vol. 86 (April 2021): pp. 1023-1046.

Carnegie, A., Howe, K., Lichtenheld, A., and Mukhopadhyay, D. "[Winning Hearts and Minds for Rebel Rulers: Foreign Aid and Military Contestation in Syria.](#)" *British Journal of Political Science* (2021): pp. 1-22.

- Carnegie, A., Howe, K., Lichtenheld, A., and Mukhopadhyay, D. “The Effects of Foreign Aid on Rebel Governance: Evidence from a Large-Scale U.S. Aid Program in Syria.” *Economics & Politics*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (2021): pp. 41-66.
- Lichtenheld, A. “Explaining Population Displacement Strategies in Civil Wars: A Cross-National Analysis.” *International Organization*, Vol. 74, No. 2 (Spring 2020): pp. 253-294.
- Lichtenheld, A. “Beyond Ethno-Sectarian Cleansing: The Assortative Logic of Forced Displacement in Syria.” *Refugee and Migration Movements in the Middle East*. Ed. Marc Lynch. Project on Middle East Political Science (POMEPS) Series No. 25 (March 2017): pp. 42-48.
- Lichtenheld, A. “Forced Displacement and Identity Politics in the Middle East.” *Nations and Nationalism*. Ed. Marc Lynch. POMEPS Series No. 14 (June 2015): pp. 22-25.

Policy Analysis and Program Evaluations

- Steele, A., Schwartz, S., and Lichtenheld, A. “The Politics of Forced Displacement and How States Respond.” *Researching Internal Displacement*, April 2024.
- Lichtenheld, A., Sheely, R., and Inks, L. *Mobilizing Communities to Build Social Cohesion and Reduce Vulnerability to Violent Extremism: Evidence from a Peacebuilding Program in Niger*. Washington, D.C.: Mercy Corps (2023).
- Micinski, N., Lichtenheld, A., and Norman, K. “Israel’s mass displacement of Gazans fits strategy of using migration as a tool of war.” *The Conversation*, December 2023.
- Lichtenheld, A., Lupieri, S., and Chaudhuri, N. “The Future of U.S. Immigration Policy in a Turbulent World.” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, December 2023.
- Lichtenheld, A. and Sheely, R. “Overcoming Misperceptions about Violent Extremism.” Mercy Corps (2022).
- Brooks, A., Ferroggiaro, W., and Lichtenheld, A. “Social Media and Conflict: Understanding Risk and Resilience.” Washington, D.C.: Mercy Corps (2021).
- Lichtenheld, A., and Alam, M. “To Ease Iraq’s Displacement Crisis, Restorative Justice and Peacebuilding are Vital.” *Just Security* (2021).
- Lichtenheld, A. and Saadi, S. *Towards Durable Solutions to Displacement: Understanding Social Acceptance of Returnees in Post-ISIS Iraq*. Washington, D.C.: Mercy Corps (2021).
- Alam, M., Lichtenheld, A., and Sheely, R. “The Pandemic Has Reshaped Conflicts Around the World. Here’s What Got Worse.” *The Washington Post Monkey Cage* (2021)
- Aron, G., Herrera Kelly, D., Lichtenheld, A., and Sheely, R. *A Clash of Contagions: The Impact of COVID-19 on Conflict in Nigeria, Colombia, and Afghanistan*. Washington, D.C.: Mercy Corps (2021).
- Lichtenheld, A., Sheely, R., and Inks, L. *From High-Risk to Resilient: The Role of Social and Economic Interventions in Reducing Vulnerability to Violent Extremism in Kenya*. Washington, D.C.: Mercy Corps (2022).
- Lichtenheld, A., and Ogbudu, E. *‘Fear of the Unknown’: Religion, Identity, and Conflict in Northern Nigeria*. Washington, D.C.: Mercy Corps (2021).
- Lichtenheld, A., Sheely, R., and Inks, L. “Understanding the Links Between Social Cohesion and Violence: Evidence from Niger.” Washington, D.C.: Mercy Corps (March 2021).
- Lichtenheld, A., Inks L., Tankora, E., & Morrison, L. “Harnessing Local Sources of Social Cohesion in Niger: Lessons for Building Resilience in Protracted Crises and Conflict-affected Settings.” Washington, DC: The Resilience Evaluation, Analysis, and Learning (REAL) Award.
- Lichtenheld, A., Olawole, I., and Sheely, R. “Prioritizing Research and Learning within the Global Fragility Strategy.” Washington, D.C.: Mercy Corps (February 2021).

- Lichtenheld, A. “Strategic Displacement and the Politics of Wartime Mobility: Implications for Policymakers and Practitioners.” UNHCR working paper, contribution to UNHCR’s *State of the World’s Forcibly Displaced 2021* (2020).
- Lichtenheld, A. *What Makes Refugees and Migrants Vulnerable to Detention in Libya? A Microlevel Study of the Determinants of Detention*, Mixed Migration Centre of North Africa (2020).
- Lichtenheld, A. “Guilt by Location.” *Foreign Policy* (2020).
- Lichtenheld, A. “You Can’t Go Home Again: Pressures and Prospects of Refugee Return to Syria.” Institute for the Study of International Migration, Georgetown University (2019).
- Lichtenheld, A. *Conflict and Fragility: Reassessing Measurement and Policy Frameworks*, Washington, D.C.: Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation, U.S. Agency for International Development (2018).
- Howe, K., Lichtenheld, A., and Mukhopadhyay, M. *Getting to Governance? An Evaluation of USAID/OTI Assistance in Rebel-held Syria*. Washington, D.C.: USAID Office of Transition Initiatives (2017).
- Lichtenheld, A. “How to Really Help the World’s New Refugees.” *The Washington Post Monkey Cage* (2015).
- Lichtenheld, A. “The Identity Politics of Displacement in the Middle East.” *The Washington Post Monkey Cage* (2015).
- Lichtenheld, A. “Syria, Libya, and the Challenge of Intervention.” *UN Dispatch* (2014).
- Lichtenheld, A. “The Problem with ‘Safe Zones’ in the Middle East.” *UN Dispatch* (2014).
- Lichtenheld, A. “What Boko Haram Has Learned from ISIS.” *UN Dispatch* (2014).
- Lichtenheld, A. “The Aid Diversion Dilemma.” *UN Dispatch* (2014).

SKILLS

Languages	English (native), Arabic (conversational)
Software	Stata, R, Python, Dedoose, Adobe, Microsoft Office, Qualtrics, SurveyCTO
Methods	RCTs, quasi-experimental methods (matching, RDD, etc.), statistical analysis, qualitative research (interviews, focus groups, ethnography), context assessments, conflict analysis, case studies
Awards	U.S. Presidential Management Fellowship, Truman National Security Fellowship, National Science Foundation, Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, Phi Beta Kappa, U.S Institute of Peace Fellowship