Covid-19, Conflict, and Governance Evidence Summary No.1

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This weekly Covid-19 Conflict and Governance Evidence Summary aims to signpost DFID and other UK government departments to the latest evidence and opinions on Covid-19, to inform and support their responses.

This week, many of the key themes that emerged at the start of the Covid-19 continue to be discussed, including: allegations of corruption related to Covid-19 funds, increasing authoritarianism, gender based violence, and risks to gender inequality. A newer theme being discussed is the situation of youth e.g. regarding the vulnerability of young people, and providing a new deal for youth.

This week's summary features policy papers reflecting on the resilience of institutions (transparency, accountability and participation) in responding to Covid-19 (published by the UN's Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)); the challenges Covid-19 poses to globalisation (Long Crisis Network) and to global governance (Council on Foreign Relations); whether Covid-19 could 'jump-start' national reconciliation in Palestine (Carnegie); and guidance and reflections on conflict sensitivity in the Covid-19 world (Saferworld). Most papers and blogs fall under the broad area of governance, with fewer focussing on conflict.

The summary uses two main sections – (1) literature: – this includes policy papers, academic articles, and long-form articles that go deeper than the typical blog; and (2) blogs & news articles. The articles in section (1) that are journal articles, or that explicitly state having been peer reviewed, are highlighted in yellow. See the end of this email for details on the method taken for this rapid summary. It is the result of one day of work, and thus is not intended to be comprehensive of all issues or publications.

LITERATURE

GOVERNANCE

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type	Summary
Shooting the Rapids: COVID-19 and the Long Crisis of Globalisation	Alex Evans and David Steven; Long Crisis Network; Report	What challenges does Covid-19 pose to globalisation and what are the policy responses? This paper identifies three levels of crisis: public health (at least two years); economic (five years or more); and polarisation and insecurity (a generation). It calls for collective action, to be promoted through: enforcing rules proportionately, confronting new inequalities, investing in foresight, telling a story of hope, defending the facts, creating consensus around solutions, building innovative partnerships, and giving everyone a role in the response. International cooperation should: firefight better; make people feel secure; protect critical global infrastructure; and offer a new deal to the young.
Resilient institutions in times of crisis: transparency, accountability and participation at the national level key to effective response to COVID-19	Aránzazu Guillán Montero and David Le Blanc; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA); Policy Brief	How are national institutions impacted by Covid-19? This policy brief discusses the risks and features of resilience along key dimensions of Sustainable Development Goal 16: limiting transparency and access to information; eroding safeguards to accountability including integrity violations; fraud and corruption; and restricting participation and engagement. It finds that in many countries, governments, accountability institutions and civil society are innovating to mitigate institutional disruptions while ensuring an effective response to the pandemic.
From Wuhan to the World: How the Pandemic Will Reshape Geopolitics	François Heisbourg; Survival; Journal Article	How will Covid-19 reshape geopolitics? This journal article finds that while it is too early to have certainty, it appears that Covid-19 has "reinforced the power of the state in its traditional role as protector of society from outside threats".

Could the Pandemic Jump-Start National Reconciliation in Palestine?	Zaha Hassan & Nathan J Brown; Carnegie; Article	Could Covid-19 lead to national reconciliation in Palestine? This article finds that Palestinian grassroots organisations are stepping up to lead the response to Covid-19, filling the gap left by a weakened Palestinian Authority (PA). "While this activism has centered more around public health than politics, the atmosphere has drawn comparisons with grassroots organising during the 1987 Palestinian uprising. Some observers are wondering whether the twin pressures from the pandemic and Israel's looming annexation of part of the West Bank, sanctioned by the U.S. administration, could jump-start a long overdue national dialogue leading to institutional reforms".
Outbreaks in East Africa: Desert Locusts and COVID-19	ACAPS; Briefing Note	How are Covid-19 and the ongoing desert locust outbreak impacting East Africa, and what are the policy responses? This briefing note finds the Covid-19 policy response may hinder the response to the locust outbreak.
Governance Implications of Epidemic Disease in Africa: Updating the Agenda for COVID-19	Alex de Waal; LSE; Research Memo	What are the potential governance implications of Covid-19? This research memo examines: (a) impacts of epidemic disease on state capacity; (b) impacts on social and economic distress (especially food insecurity); (c) cycles of interaction between disease, conflict and state failure; and (d) the implications of government responses to epidemics. It finds that alarmist predictions that the epidemic will cause African states to collapse, necessitating international interventions, is not an evidence-based claim.
Khat and covid-19: Somalia's cross-border economy in the time of coronavirus	Sahra Ahmed Koshin; Rift Valley Institute; Briefing	How is Somalia being affected by Covid-19? This briefing focuses on the secondary, economic, effects to the khat trade as an illustration of regional and international connections, cross-border movement and daily life inside Somalia. It finds that "measures to contain Covid-19 have imposed restrictions on khat imports (and consumption) that have affected livelihoods including women's incomes, who make up most of the khat sellers in the country. Yet in spite of official attempts to restrict

		khat imports, the sector is typically finding ways round these measures by developing land-based entry routes and informal methods of distribution. Nonetheless, a reduced supply has led to price increases and hit government revenues, with the formal khat trade shifting into contraband, which may have security implications. Some Somalis have continued to chew khat despite restrictions on imports and price rises but changes in chewing practices have also been observed".
Rapid Gender Analysis - COVID-19 : West Africa	Fatouma Zara Laouan; Care; Rapid Gender Analysis	What are the gender implications of Covid-19 in West Africa? This rapid gender analysis highlights negative and positive impacts including: limitations to women's access to resources; limitations to their representation and participation in formal decision-making; increased incidents of gender-based violence; and examples of women leading the Covid-19 response and finding ways to negotiate equitable relationships with men in their communities, and with husbands/male partners at home.
UNDRR Asia-Pacific COVID-19 brief: Business resilience in the face of COVID-19	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction - Regional Office For Asia And Pacific (UNDRR AP); Brief	The COVID-19 pandemic is having a devastating impact on businesses across Asia-Pacific. Small and medium enterprises - which comprise more than 90% of all businesses in most Asia-Pacific countries - are especially hard hit. This brief highlights the challenges businesses face in building their resilience and offers recommendations to business owners and policymakers.
Six political philosophies in search of a virus: Critical perspectives on the coronavirus pandemic	Gerard Delanty; LSE; Discussion Paper	What are the philosophical responses to Covid-19? This paper looks at the nature and limits of the ethical responsibility of the state, personal liberty and collective interests, human dignity, and state surveillance through perspectives based on Foucault, Agamben, Badieu, Zizek, Latour and Kant.

CONFLICT

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type	Summary
Conflict sensitivity in responses to COVID-19: Initial guidance and reflections	Saferworld; Briefing	How can aid actors ensure conflict sensitivity in the context of Covid-19? This briefing reiterates core principles including: context matters – ensure analysis is up to date; tailor interventions to specific contexts; consider aid diversion and displacement risks; consider how different people and communities will be impacted; and exploit opportunities provided by new ways of working. It provides sector-specific recommendations for: health and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); food security and livelihoods; protection; shelter and camp management; democracy, human rights and governance; gender equality; sustainable economic development; and conflict prevention and peacebuilding.
Policy Brief: Impact of COVID-19 in Africa	UN; Policy Brief	What are the immediate impacts of Covid-19 on health, economies, peace, security, human rights and humanitarian assistance in Africa and policy responses? This policy brief finds that impacts include: food insecurity; lack of medical supplies; loss of income and livelihood; difficulties in applying sanitary and physical distancing measures; a looming debt crisis; and related political and security risks.
COVID-19 Disorder Tracker: Mob Violence, 10 - 16 May 2020	Melissa Pavlik; ACLED; Infographic	ACLED data shows: mob violence has risen around the world since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic; mobs have attacked security forces enforcing lockdown, healthcare workers, and individuals thought to be infected; before Covid-19, the majority of mob violence events targeted civilians, while after Covid-19, the number of mob engagements with state forces rose by nearly 75%.
Hear it From the Girls – Asia and COVID-19	Plan International; Report	How is Covid-19 affecting girls in Asia? This report outlines challenges to girls in the areas of: child marriage; sexual and reproductive health; gender based violence; refugee and displacement crises;

		natural disasters; education; and shrinking labour markets.
Conflict, Health Cooperation and COVID-19 in Myanmar	ICG; Briefing	How is Covid-19 affecting conflict and cooperation in Myanmar? This briefing finds that "amid a lull in fighting in much of the country, the Myanmar government and ethnic armed groups appear willing to put aside politics and work together to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The exception is Rakhine State, where conflict is escalating, putting medical workers at risk and exacerbating a potential health disaster".

BLOGS & NEWS ARTICLES

GOVERNANCE

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type	Summary
The 'youth burden' needs a new narrative and how we respond to Covid-19 in conflict zones can change it	Melanie Pinet; ODI; Comment	How to address the vulnerability posed to young people by Covid-19? The comment argues that: "Young people must be given the necessary tools to co-design programmes that enable them to thrive socially and economically and be recognised as agents of change. And this starts through education and economic inclusion for all and understanding the needs and aspirations of young people."
What West Africa's resilience can teach the world about COVID-19	Nate Haken & Charles Fiertz; The New Humanitarian; Opinion	What are the health, governance and conflict impacts and responses to Covid-19 and Ebola in West Africa? This opinion piece concludes that "resilience to a pandemic like COVID-19 requires strategic leadership, coordination, and consistent messaging. Resilience is stronger when, as in West Africa, people know their neighbours, respect their elders, and maintain civil society, faith-based, and community-based organisations committed to advocating for the vulnerable and raising awareness and solidarity".
Pacific Islands' Leadership Responses and Lessons from the COVID-19 Pandemic	Gordon Leua Nanau; Developmental Leadership Program (DLP); Opinion	What can we learn from the Pacific leadership response to Covid-19? This opinion piece finds: decisive and collaborative leadership has been essential; expert technical advice was sought, verified and acted upon; leadership was effective because of collaboration and clear communication at the national level and in other public institutions, the private sector, civil society, and local communities; and leadership was aided by social capital networks.

How Central Asia's authoritarian regimes have used coronavirus to their advantage The Conversation	Saltanat Janenova & Jonathan Fisher; The Conversation; Opinion	How have Central Asia's regimes responded to Covid-19? This opinion piece finds that the region's authoritarian strongmen have reinforcing their grip on power even further through temporary measures (e.g. legislative measures and surveillance tools), that are likely to remain. "But at the same time, the pandemic has left these regimes dangerously exposed to the risks of rising public discontent unless they take measures to regain the trust of their citizens".
Democracy Delayed: COVID-19's Effect on Latin America's Politics	Christopher Sabatini; Chatham House; Blog	In Bolivia, Chile and the Dominican Republic, public health concerns over Covid-19 have forced the postponement of critical elections; in all three countries social and political upheaval preceded the delays.
Building trust, not tracking, should be the cornerstone of Covid-19 debt relief	Bryn Welham & Mark Miller; ODI; Insight	How should debt relief be used during the Covid-19 epidemic? This piece argues that rich countries should suspend the collection of debt repayments to free up funds for poor countries, and that International Financial Institutions "should put less emphasis on complex, intrusive expenditure tracking systems, and use the aligned incentives that a real crisis brings to help build trust between state and society".
Mexico's narco cartels' Coronavirus relief	Matteo Pazzona; Brunel University; Blog	During the coronavirus pandemic, governments have undoubtedly been the lead actors in imposing restrictions on their populations while financially supporting individuals and firms for lost income. But in numerous countries, governments have very limited capacity or have to live with mafia-type organisations.
SIU wants to investigate Covid-19 corruption cases	Linda Ensor; Business Day; Article	South Africa's Special Investigations Unit (SIU) says it has received allegations of corruption and maladministration regarding relief funds related to Covid-19, as well as other procurement irregularities during the lockdown.
Rethinking anti-corruption for COVID-19	Mushtaq Khan & Pallavi Roy; Oxfam (From	In times of crisis even the best governments are often forced to side-step standard procurement processes to speed up responses. It is not at all

	Poverty to Power); Opinion	surprising that corruption can spike under such conditions in systems that are already corrupt.
Development Finance for COVID-19 Crisis Should Uphold Human Rights	Human Rights Watch; Blog	Human rights should guide the use of billions of dollars committed by development finance institutions to address the Covid-19 health and economic crisis, says the Coalition for Human Rights in Development.
No corruption in purchase of P20B worth of PPE	Aaron Recuenco; Manila Bulletin; News article	Secretary Carlito Galvez, Chief Implementer of Malaysia's National Action Plan on Covid-19, said that there is no corruption involved in the procurement of P20 billion worth of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), despite media reports.
Coronavirus: Health workers face violent attacks in Mexico	BBC News, News article	As of 28 April, there have been at least 47 attacks against health workers, particularly nurses, in Mexico.
Killer Corruption	John Prendergast; Project Syndicate, Op-Ed	This op-ed warns that the failure to fight corruption during the Covid-19 pandemic could undermine urgent response efforts.
Corruption Watch raises concerns over Treasury's emergency procurement process	The Citizen; News article	This news article reports on transparency concerns regarding the release of different instruction notes relating to emergency procurement in South Africa under Covid-19.
Egyptian editor briefly detained in Covid-19 reporting crackdown	The Guardian, News article	Egyptian security forces briefly arrested the founder of the country's last independent media outlet in a growing crackdown on freedom of expression linked to Covid-19.

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type
NRM MPs in another Shs 40m each cash bonanza	URN; The Observer (Uganda); News article	MPs of Uganda's ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) have reportedly benefited from another payment from President Yoweri Museveni.

Extra blogs & news articles – without summary

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type
COVID-19 response in the Middle East and north Africa: challenges and paths forward	Mohammad Karamouzian & Navid Madani; The Lancet; Comment
Covid-19 and Eritrea's Response	Redie Bereketeab; Kujenga Amani; Blog
Community Responses to COVID-19: From the Horn of Africa to the Solomon Islands	World Bank; Feature story
A Call to Action on Open Budgets during the COVID-19 Response	Sally Torbert; Oxfam (From Poverty to Power); Blog
2015 Nepal earthquake and COVID-19: A comparison of the politics of crisis governance	Nimesh Dhungana; LSE; Blog
Do authoritarian measures to tackle the coronavirus entail a Faustian pact?	Andreas Krieg & Anas El Gomati; KCL; Blog
Reflections on Islamic edicts and authority in the COVID-19 response in Somalia	Khalif Abdirahman; LSE blog
Africa Is a Coronavirus Success Story So Far, If Only the World Would Notice	Howard W French; World Politics Review; Blog

Asia-Pacific nations commit the whole region to 'defeat' COVID-19	UN News; News article

CONFLICT

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type	Summary
Will COVID-19 exacerbate or defuse conflicts in the Middle East?	Atlantic Council; Online event video	The reshuffling of priorities needed to combat Covid-19 has cast new light on long-running conflicts, particularly in the Middle East. In this event video, UN Under-Secretary General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs Rosemary DiCarlo discusses potential new openings to advance peace in the region.

Extra blogs & news articles – without summary

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type
A Lack of Data and a Decade of War Undermine Libya's Response to COVID-19	Sukaina Ehdeed; LSE; Blog
COVID-19 Could Worsen Gender Inequality in Latin America and the Caribbean	World Bank; Feature story
Will COVID-19 exacerbate or defuse conflicts in the Middle East?	Masoud Mostajabi; Atlantic Council; Blog
Libya's forgotten half: between conflict and pandemic, women pay the higher price	Asma Khalifa; Open Democracy; Opinion
Pandemic of Violence: Protecting Women during COVID-19	Anya Prusa, Beatriz García Nice & Olivia Soledad; Wilsin Centre; Blog

Surge in violence against girls and women in Latin America and Caribbean	Plan International; Blog
Gender-based violence and COVID-19—"When we are silent, we allow these crimes to multiply"	UNAIDS; Feature Story
COVID-19 in West Africa: "Let's prepare for a long-distance run"	Chibuzo Okonta; Médecins Sans Frontières; Op-Ed
Deputy Secretary-General Tells Africa Dialogues Series COVID-19 Poses Challenge to 'Common Goal of Silencing the Guns' on Continent	UN; Press Release
Violence against Women and Girls in the Shadow of Covid-19: Insights from Africa	Titilope Ajayi; Kujenga Amani; Blog
Africa in the news: Lesotho, Burundi, Malawi, and COVID-19 updates	Chris Heitzig; Brookings; Blog
What's Driving Lebanon's Mid-pandemic Protests?	Amir Asmar, Council on Foreign Relations; Blog
COVID-19 and Climate Change Will Change the Definition of National Security	Stewart M. Patrick; World Politics Review; Blog

DASHBOARDS, TRACKERS & RESOURCE HUBS

K4D - Covid-19 Resource Hub

Global Voices - Covid-19: Global voices for a pandemic

ICNL - COVID-19 Civic Freedom Tracker

ECPR Standing Group on Organised Crime - Controcorrente (dedicated Covid-19 blog series)

The Syllabus - The politics of Covid-19 readings

Political Settlements Research Programme - Conflict, development and Covid-19 resources

IDS - Covid-19: the social science response to the pandemic

GI-TOC - Covid Crime Watch

Jorge Mantilla (UC-Chicago) - Twitter thread curating pieces on Covid-19, conflict and crime

CGD - Coronavirus preparedness & response

ODI - Reforms, initiatives and campaigns on migrants' contributions to the Covid-19 response

The New Humanitarian – Covid-19 and aid - weekly roundup

ACLED – Covid-19 disorder tracker

Various - Crowd-sourced cross-disciplinary coronavirus syllabus

EVENTS

28 May 17:00 (UK time) - COVID-19 and the human side of globalisation – Open Democracy: What the coronavirus tells us about globalisation, neoliberalism and our shared experience as humanity. Usually, profits come before people. But this year, governments across the world have been forced to shut down their economies and put life first. Why?

Suggested citation

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Methodology

Due to the emerging nature of the Covid-19 crisis, this rapid weekly summary includes blogs, and news articles, in addition to policy and academic literature. The sources included are found through searches of Google Scholar, Google, and ReliefWeb with the keywords:

> ("COVID-19" OR "coronavirus") AND ("developing countries" OR "Africa" OR "Asia" OR "Middle East" OR "Latin America" OR "Pacific") AND ("conflict" OR "peace" OR "violence" OR "resilience" OR "fragility") OR ("authoritarian*" OR "democra*" OR "corrupt*" OR "transparency" OR "state legitimacy" OR "non-state actors" OR "state capacity" OR "state authority" OR "politic*" OR "state institutions")

The searches are restricted to articles published in the previous seven days, in English. This is complemented by: a focussed Twitter search (using just the pages of a small selection of research organisations, and key scholars/thinkers, including those funded by the UK government's Department for International Development (DFID)); and through 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 – s.herbert@bham.ac.uk

About this report