



Covid-19, Conflict, and Governance Evidence Summary No.29

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This fortnightly Covid-19, Conflict, and Governance Evidence Summary aims to signpost the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and other UK government departments to the latest evidence and opinions on Covid-19 (C19), to inform and support their responses. Based on feedback from the recent survey, and analysis by the Xcept project, this edition, as a trial, focusses less on the challenges that C19 poses, and more on more on the policy responses to these challenges.

The below summary features resources on: **legislative leadership** during the C19 crisis; and the heightening of risks emanating from C19's **indirect impacts – including non-C19 healthcare, economy and food security, and women and girls and unrest and instability**.

Many of the core C19 themes continue to be covered this week, including: **anti-corruption** approaches; and whether and how C19 is shaping conflict dynamics (this time with articles focussing on **Northwestern Nigeria, Myanmar's Rakhine State, and the Middle East**).

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. See the end of this report for details on the method taken for this rapid summary. It is the result of one day of work, and is thus indicative but not comprehensive of all issues or publications.

LITERATURE

GOVERNANCE

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type	Summary
Legislative leadership in the time of COVID-19	Nic Cheeseman & Rebecca Gordon; Westminster Foundation for Democracy; Report	<p>How have legislators exerted leadership during C19, and what impact has legislative oversight had on government responses? Drawing on qualitative and data analysis, this report concludes that the constraints on legislative leadership during C19 have been significant, but effective scrutiny has played an important role in constraining unnecessarily heavy-handed approaches in some cases and prompting the government into action where it had been slow to respond. This was especially the case where dedicated legislative committees featuring a diverse set of legislators and senior figures were established, as their greater flexibility in adapting to physical restrictions enabled them to continue operating.</p> <p>It recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Technology - Governments should invest in digital communications technology to enable legislatures to continue operating during emergencies and boost the inclusivity of legislative processes at all times by facilitating consultative sessions with experts and civil society.• Regulations - The rules concerning when and how legislatures may sit should be reviewed and revised to ensure that they facilitate operating remotely during health and other crises.• Committee system - Legislatures should be aided to strengthen committees, expanding the administrative support,

		<p>resources and expertise available to them, and deepening the connection between these committees and relevant experts, groups and concerned citizens.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crisis committees - Dedicated legislative committees with senior leadership should be established to deal with health emergencies, with established protocols for accessing independent expertise and gathering evidence from a wide range of individuals and groups. • Funding – Support for legislative strengthening programmes should be increased to enhance horizontal accountability, strengthen committee systems and technical capacity, and enable these recommendations to be implemented.
<p>Humanitarian crises monitoring: Coronavirus in developing countries: Secondary impacts</p>	<p>International Development Committee, UK Parliament; Session report</p>	<p>How is C19 affecting developing countries, and how is the UK government responding? This report highlights how the legacy of humanitarian and development reversals and crises could be worse than C19's direct impacts in developing countries, due to challenges in maintaining routine healthcare, rising national debt, increasing economic crisis and starvation, and increasing gender-based violence, child marriages and other challenges to girls' access to education.</p> <p>It asks the UK Government to strengthen its longer-term response to C19, and ensure its diminished ODA budget is spent all the more effectively, due to significant challenges in vaccine distribution, and C19's longer-term social and economic impacts. It focuses on: non-C19 healthcare; economic performance and livelihoods; food security; and the well-being of women and girls. It calls on the Government to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uphold existing commitments to global health programmes • persuade private lenders to join debt relief schemes and to reconsider its own position on debt cancellation

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extend funding for programmes aimed at mitigating C19's impact on livelihoods and food security, • provide a gendered response to C19: advocate for and increase long-term funding for initiatives which address gender equality, girls' education, sexual and reproductive healthcare, and gender-based violence
<p>Why fighting corruption matters in times of COVID-19</p>	<p>Transparency International; Analysis</p>	<p>How does corruption undermine state capacity to respond to crises like C19? This analysis draws on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index for 2020, and finds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corruption diverts funds from essential services such as healthcare, leaving countries around the world vulnerable and under-prepared to deal with public health crises; • A lack of transparency in the allocation of resources – a practice positively associated with corruption – weakens the efficiency of crisis responses; • Countries that perform poorly in controlling corruption tend to breach human rights and democratic norms in their management of the COVID-19 pandemic. <p>It recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainstream anti-corruption policies in all C19 related policies. This includes conducting corruption risk analyses. • Increase transparency in public contracting, including: timely publication of contracting data in open format and on centralised platforms; designing explicit rules and protocols for emergencies and ensuring they are enforced; and documenting public contracting procedures during the crisis. • Strengthen audit and oversight institutions so they are independent and properly resourced, and so they have

		<p>the tools for real-time auditing in emergencies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect civic space for organisations and journalists to provide checks on corruption • Enforce checks and balances against corruption and any emergency powers that are assumed.
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Extra papers – without summary

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type
Development and Governance Special COVID-19 Edition	Africa Journal of Public Sector; Journal articles
Different Types of COVID-19 Misinformation Have Different Emotional Valence on Twitter	Marina Charquero-Ballester, Jessica Walter, Ida Anthonj Nissen & Anja Bechmann; Pre-publication draft
Building community resilience beyond COVID-19: The Singapore way	Wanfen Yip, Lixia Ge, Andy Hau Yan Ho, Bee Hoon Heng & Woan Shin Tan; The Lancet Regional Health – Western Pacific; Journal article
Unhealthy geopolitics: can the response to COVID-19 reform climate change policy?	Jennifer Cole & Klaus Dodds; Bulletin of the World Health Organization; Journal article
Equitable recovery from COVID-19: bring global commitments to community level	Rene Loewenson, Lucia D'Ambruoso, Duong Minh Duc, Reidar Hjermann, Winfred Lichuma, Elizabeth Mason, Elizabeth Nixon, Norma Rudolph & Eugenio Villar; BMJ Global Health; Commentary
Digital leadership: State governance in the era of digital technology	Bo Peng; Cultures of Science; Journal article

Organizational resilience and social-economic sustainability: COVID-19 perspective

Siddharth Shankar Rai, Shivam Rai & Nitin Kumar Singh; Environment, Development and Sustainability; Journal article

CONFLICT

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type	Summary
<p>COVID 19 and Increased Security Challenges in Northern Nigeria: Interrogating Armed Banditry in Northwestern Nigeria</p>	<p>Noah Echa Attah, Usman Sambo, Babayo Sule, Muhammad A. Bello & M. Yoserizal Saragih; SIASAT Journal of Religion, Social, Cultural and Political Sciences; Journal article</p>	<p>How are security challenges and C19 impacting northern Nigeria? This paper finds that the focus on the health and economic impacts of C19 has led to a reduction in other political, economic and social activities, including countering armed violence. It appears that armed bandits have intensified attacks on communities, against the background of government's anti-C19 policy. Government has equally re-strategized in responding to the bandits' attacks.</p>
<p>COVID-19 & Conflict in the Middle East</p>	<p>Mick Mulroy, Eric Oehlerich & Amanda Blair; Middle East Institute; Paper</p>	<p>How are conflict and C19 affecting the Middle East? This paper details how C19 is an additional factor on top of the Middle East's civil wars, e.g. with high risks for the numerous refugees in Syria, with conflict impeding the C19 response in Libya, and will a worsening humanitarian crisis in Yemen.</p>
<p>Covid-19 and Escalating Conflict: Three Priorities for Rakhine State</p>	<p>The Asia Foundation; Briefing paper</p>	<p>What are priorities to addressing C19 and escalating conflict in Myanmar's Rakhine State? Published before the recent coup, this paper finds that throughout much of 2020, both sides appeared ready for escalation, which would worsen the humanitarian</p>

	<p>challenges already facing many people in the state. However, toward the end of 2020, there were signs of some interest in negotiation. Historically, international humanitarian and health workers on the ground have operated through partnerships with local groups because of long-standing restrictions preventing them from direct implementation. In this complex setting, international responses to reduce the impact of C19 require flexibility and a nuanced understanding of the challenges and opportunities of working with local support networks. It recommends that humanitarian actors prioritize understanding the conditions in areas of strong Arakan Army influence. Promoters of peace must also keep their eye on the bigger picture. The situation in Rakhine State is linked to other conflicts and crises, and the failure to find a political way forward would be a major concern.</p>
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Extra papers – without summary

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type
Now and the future: gender equality, peace and security in a COVID-19 world – Somalia	Saferworld & Somali Women Development Centre and Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS); Report

BLOGS & NEWS ARTICLES

GOVERNANCE

Blogs & news articles – without summary

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type
Opinion: For COVID-19 vaccines to succeed, we must build trust	Tjada D'Oyen McKenna; Devex; Blog
Order from chaos: COVID-19 and democracy in Indonesia: Short-term stability and long-term threats	Thomas Pepinsky; Brookings; Blog
Central Asia: Pandemic Response Threatens Rights	Human Rights Watch; Blog

CONFLICT

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type	Summary
The Sting in COVID-19's Tail: For Poor Countries, What Comes Next Could Be Worse	Tarek Ghani; Foreign Affairs; Blog	How is C19 likely to impact developing countries? This blog highlights the risks that C19 may exacerbate and lead to unrest in developing countries due to increasing poverty, and the possibility that this deepens social divisions and intensifies conflict. It concludes that although vaccine distribution and economic stimulus offer advanced economies a path to recovery, the same cannot be said for poorer countries, where the most at-risk populations live and where the possibility of conflict and war is greatest. In the years ahead, many Western priorities—such as climate change, migration, terrorism, and infectious diseases—will require cooperation with the countries

		currently most threatened by COVID-19's long tail. The aftershocks that the world doesn't deal with today may have destabilizing consequences for decades to come.
Building trust in conflict-affected areas: launch of COVID-19 global platform for practitioners	Blog; European Commission	This blog highlights a new resource hub developed by Search for Common Ground which shares literature on best practices for C19 responses in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

VIDEOS & PODCASTS

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type	Summary
Vaccine equity and resilience building: two tests for global solidarity	OECD; Webinar	In this webinar, the OECD hosts a discussion with political leaders, heads of international development agencies, and civil society organisations about the two great tests for global solidarity: vaccine equity and resilience-building.
Repression and Resilience: COVID-19 Migrant Workers' Rights in East and Southeast Asia during COVID-19	Sasakawa Peace Foundation Webinar	In this webinar, the Sasakawa Peace Foundation hosts a discussion on migrant workers' rights in East and Southeast Asia during COVID-19.

EVENTS

2 March - 12:00–13:30 - [The politics of evidence in global emergencies – Lessons from Covid-19](#), IDS. This event explores the role of experts and the politics of C19 knowledge in different global contexts. We ask how researchers, public health officials and policy actors can work better together during periods of acute uncertainty.

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

CGD - Coronavirus preparedness & response

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

OECD - Tackling coronavirus (COVID-19) Contributing to a global effort resource hub

The New Humanitarian – Coronavirus news, data, and policy response tracker

ACLEED – Covid-19 disorder tracker

Various - Crowd-sourced cross-disciplinary coronavirus syllabus

African Arguments - Coronavirus in Africa Tracker

Insecurity insight – Covid-19 and security monitoring

Council on Foreign Relations - Peace, Conflict, and Covid-19

KPMG – Covid-19 tax developments

European Council on Foreign Relations - European solidarity tracker

Westminster Foundation for Democracy - Pandemic Democracy Tracker

ACAPS - Covid-19 ACAPS Resources

ReliefWeb – Covid-19 Global Hub

The Economist – Covid-19 news

IPA - RECOVR Research Hub

Dalia research - Democracy Perception Index 2020

V-Dem Institute - Pandemic Democratic Violations Index

Gender and Covid-19 - Gender and Covid-19

University of Oxford - Coronavirus Government Response Tracker

UNDP - COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker

K4D - COVID-19 Evidence Search

ACAPS – Secondary impacts of C19

OECD States of Fragility - Covid-19, Crises, and Fragility

International IDEA - Global Monitor of COVID-19's impact on Democracy and Human Rights

International IDEA - Global overview of COVID-19: Impact on elections

COVID-DEM – COVID-19 and democratic governance

COVID-19 Humanitarian - COVID-19 and Humanitarian Crises

World Bank - COVID-19 High-Frequency Monitoring Dashboard

ConnexUs - Resource library on COVID-19 responses, social cohesion, conflict dynamics, behaviour-change communications, and health, aid, and peacebuilding collaboration

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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 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")

("COVID-19" OR "coronavirus") AND ("authoritarian*" OR "democracy" OR "corrupt*" OR "transparency" OR "state legitimacy" OR "non-state actors" OR "state capacity" OR "state authority" OR "politic*" OR "state institutions")

Plus searches of Google Scholar with the keywords:

("COVID-19" OR "coronavirus") AND ("developing countries" OR "Africa" OR "Asia" OR "Middle East" OR "Latin America" OR "Pacific")

("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")

("COVID-19" OR "coronavirus") AND ("authoritarian*" OR "democracy" OR "corruption" 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 FCDO; and through email recommendations from FCDO 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

Thanks to Professor Heather Marquette for expert advice.

About this report

This two-weekly COVID-19 conflict and governance evidence summary is based on 1 day of desk-based research. K4D services are provided by a consortium of leading organisations working in international development, led by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), with Education Development Trust, Itad, University of Leeds Nuffield Centre for International Health and Development, Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM), University of Birmingham International Development Department (IDD) and the University of Manchester Humanitarian and Conflict Response Institute (HCRI).

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