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Covid-19, Conflict, and Governance Evidence Summary No.6

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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 (C19), to inform and support their responses.

This week, features resources on: public perceptions of government responses to C19 (comparing views from democracies and non-democracies) and how C19 is shaping European public perceptions on issues around sovereignty, world order, and European cooperation; C19 impacts on peace and transition processes and political trust and social cohesion in Kurdistan Region-Iraq; and how food vulnerability is increasing conflict risks.

Many of the core C19 themes continue to be covered this week, including: C19 increasing extreme poverty; C19 increasing gender based violence and gender inequality; the rise of authoritarianism with an interesting paper on negotiating states of emergency; and the changing world order.

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 email 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
Democracy Perception Index – 2020	Fred Deveaux; Dalia Research; Report	How do people perceive democracy around the world? The Democracy Perception Index (DPI) is the world's largest annual study on democracy. Based on 124,000 nationally representative interviews in 53 countries, related to C19, it finds: • 70% of people are generally satisfied with their government's C19 response. The countries most critical of their government's response are Brazil and Chile. Those most satisfied are China (95%), Vietnam (95%), Greece (89%), Malaysia (89%) and Ireland (87%). Satisfaction with government response is practically as high in democracies as non-democracies overall (70% vs. 74%, respectively). • About half of respondents think their country applied the "right amount" of restrictions on movement; 28% say "not done enough"; and 17% say "too much". • Nearly all countries say China's C19 response is better than the US's. • People are worried about basic freedoms during C19, about half of respondents think their government has gone too far in violating basic freedoms; this is a more than the 33% who disagree. Generally, democratic countries are split about this feeling, with equal shares agreeing and disagreeing (39% vs. 38%). In non-democracies, , the perception of violated freedoms is much higher (nearly double): ~50% vs ~25%.
Europe's pandemic politics: How the virus has changed the public's worldview	Ivan Krastev & Mark Leonard; European	Has C19 changed the way Europeans see the world? Based on a poll of over 11,000 European in nine countries (not including the UK), this policy brief finds C19 has revolutionised citizens'

	Council on Foreign Relations; Policy Brief	perceptions of global order – previously Europeans were split between 'pro-European cosmopolitans' and 'Eurosceptic nationalists', while now they are split into: • 'DIYers' who see a 19th century world of every nation for itself; • 'New Cold Warriors' who hear echoes of the 20th century and look to Trump's US for defence against China; and • 'Strategic Sovereigntists' who foresee a 21st century world of blocs and regions. The last is the largest group and represents a new form of pro-European who believe Europe needs to support its sovereignty through joint foreign policy, external border control, and re-localised production. This presents a new opportunity for European cooperation, but leaders must make the case carefully to avoid a backlash of re-intensified Euroscepticism. Rather than a 'Hamilton moment' of proto-federalisation, we are living through a 'Milward moment' of strong nation state identities searching for protection in a dangerous world.
Rapid Assessment: Impact of COVID-19 on Women's Civil Society Organizations	UN Women; Policy Brief	Has C19 impacted women's civil society organisations (CSOs) in Asia and the Pacific? Based on a survey of CSO organisations, this brief finds that 71% say C19 is affecting them somewhat or very negatively, and 12% have had to temporarily suspend activities altogether even though gender based violence (GBV), discrimination, economic and emotional pressures, and associated stress and uncertainty have increased.
Bolstering resilience in the Indo-Pacific: Policy options for AUSMIN after COVID-19	Ashley Townshend, et al.; United States Studies Centre; Report	How can resilience be strengthened in the Indo-Pacific region after C19? This report recommends the Australia-United States Ministerial Consultation (AUSMIN): advance health, development and infrastructure goals; counter state-based disinformation and cyber threats; strengthen collective deterrence and defence; and foster defence industry and commercial collaboration.

Authoritarian Rule and Liberal Democracy in Times of Crisis	Philipp Trein; Social Science Research Network (SSRN); Working Paper	How do authoritarian rulers and liberal democracies respond to crises like C19? Based on multilevel regression models, this working paper finds that countries with an authoritarian past tend to impose more restrictions on citizens' individual freedom compared to countries with a democratic past. Based on interrupted time series models, it compares the development of democracy before and after the 'Spanish Flu' (1918-1920) and suggests it did not change the trend of democratic decline at the time.
Introduction: research in the time of Covid-19	Sören Jeppesen & Jason Miklian; Forum for Development Studies; Journal article	How is C19 affecting the global development agenda? This journal article identifies that C19 is exacerbating trends including: asymmetric relations between local and global power structures (deepening divides between North and South as governments, businesses and citizens in the North prioritise domestic challenges at the expense of global consequences); new divides between North and North states (with US and UK leaders questioning alliances created post-WW2); and new constellations of cooperation between South and South countries (seeking influence over global policy and internationalist trajectories due to global leadership vacuums).
The Dangers Ahead: Covid-19, Authoritarianism and Democracy	Luke Cooper & Guy Aitchison; LSE; Report	How is C19 affecting authoritarianism and democracy? This report explores how C19 is aggravating existing systemic risks facing the international order – including the global tendency towards authoritarianism. Features of this tendency are: crony capitalism; democratic erosion; and (c) ethnic nationalism and toxic masculinity. Under C19, key threats being exacerbated are: (1) 'deglobalisation' takes a nationalist form; (2) less democratic participation, more centralisation; (3) surveillance state and erosion of human rights; and (4) inequality goes unchallenged. Responses to these threats are: (1) multilateralist deglobalisation; (2) defend and extend democracy; (3) win popular support for human rights; and (4) a package of measures to fight inequality.

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type	Summary
Exploring the impact of COVID-19 in Africa: a scenario analysis to 2030	Jakkie Cilliers et al; Institute for Security Studies, University of Pretoria & Josef Korbel School of International Studies; Analysis	How will C19 impact economic growth, income, poverty and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Africa until 2030? This analysis explores possible impacts along three C19 scenarios (V, U and L shaped economic impact) and e.g. finds that: direct and indirect C19-related mortality could lead to 1.8-5.3 million additional deaths in Africa by 2030; and C19 could mean 631 million Africans live in extreme poverty by 2030, rather than 570 million. The contraction in African economies will likely see a rise in foreign aid's contribution to gross domestic product (GDP). It recommends: build resilience and improve long-term growth prospects by investing more effectively in health and basic infrastructure for economic transformation; invest in technology; and accelerate structural transformation towards labour-absorptive growth of formal sectors.

CONFLICT

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type	Summary
The Impact of COVID-19 on Peace and Transition Processes: Tracking the Trends	Christine Bell, Tim Epple & Jan Pospisil; Political Settlements Research Programme (PSRP); Report	How has C19 impacted peace processes, armed conflict and responses? Based on an expert survey in 21 countries, this report finds: • Overall pessimism about C19's impact on peace processes due to: the diversion of attention; potentially reduced donor funds; and strategic 'gaming' for conflict-related purposes. • C19 is not 'causing' conflict but plays into existing conflict fault lines and threats to peace processes. • The UN global ceasefire call was of limited success, with tangible, albeit short-lived, impact in Colombia, the Philippines, and Yemen. The ceasefires declared then have not been extended.

		• Governments appear more at risk of losing public support compared with armed groups or non-armed opposition.
		• Authoritarian tendencies appear to be strengthening, especially in already authoritarian governments. Particular concerns: shrinking civil society space (for all forms of activity), and election postponement.
		• The lack of national peace processes and conflict oversight has provided opportunities for armed groups campaigns, with increases in violence e.g. in: DRC; Kenya; Libya; South Sudan, and Yemen.
		• Some peace talks are being kept alive by moving them online (e.g. Sudan, Myanmar) but are challenged by the lack of personal interaction. There is increasing pessimism about C19's impact on peace-making and existing peace processes. However, more optimism for subnational or local settings.
		• Anti-foreigner sentiments, xenophobia, and discrimination are key themes across contexts, including UN staff, expatriates, and other groups. Also discrimination might also be directed against outsider ethnopolitical groups, sometimes linked to conspiracy theories.
		• In some countries, the situation seems to be particularly fluid in terms of C19 conflict risks (especially in the Central African Republic; DRC, Libya, and South Sudan).
Political Trust and Social Cohesion at a Time of Crisis: The Impact of COVID-19 on Kurdistan Region-Iraq	Juline Beaujouan, Amjed Rasheed & Mohammedali Yaseen Taha; PSRP; Report	How is C19 affecting political trust and social cohesion in Kurdistan Region-Iraq (KRI)? Based on an online perception survey of Kurdistanis, this report finds:

• For C19 information, Kurdistanis trust most in television (the most accessible information source). Social media has not been considered reliable.

• There is a strong lack of trust in federal political figures and institutions. At the regional level, Kurdistanis are divided by political affiliation and geography – with a high level of trust in the KRI government in Duhok and Erbil, and open distrust in Silemani. |

		• The institutions responsible for direct C19 responses are the most trusted (e.g. Ministry of Health and Ministry of Interior, including the security forces and police) while both parliaments (Baghdad and Erbil) are least trusted. • C19 has fostered social cohesion in the KRI, with a majority of respondents believing all Kurdistanis (vulnerable and non-vulnerable groups) should be treated equally and receive the same government support. A significant number of respondents recognised the importance of caring for those most vulnerable (e.g. elderly, Syrian refugees, and International Displaced Persons). Respondents rely most on their social circles and family, rather than regional and federal institutions. • C19 preventive measures imposed by the KRG are strongly supported but have had negative economic impacts, especially on youth.
Negotiating States of Emergency	Sean Molloy; PSRP; Report	At the end of a conflict, when and how do governments scale back states of emergency and what types of restraint do they put in place to counter their excessive use? Governments around the world have brought in states of emergency powers to address C!9, this carries significant risks e.g. of human rights abuses and the normalisation of extended powers. Some states have declared broad states of emergency that appear to consolidate already-existing authoritarian tendencies, or extend executive powers in situations where minority groups have long-standing territorial or discrimination claims that are linked to violent conflict, this is a particular concern. Based on PA-X Peace Agreement database analysis, and to help inform current C19 responses, this report explores how states of emergency have been used in conflict and peacebuilding situations, how they have been scaled back, and what types of restraint have been put in place to counter their excessive use.

World Refugee Day Summary: COVID-19 One More Setback for Refugees in MENA – Especially Women and Girls	Care International; Rapid gender analysis	How has C19 affected refugees in the Middle East North Africa (MENA) region? This rapid gender analysis shows C19 has increased the insecurity, psychosocial distress, economic vulnerability, gender inequality, and deprivations that already existed. The modest increases some countries had seen in female labour force participation are endangered by lockdowns where schooling, care, and housekeeping fall mainly to women and girls. There are indications of increased domestic violence. Women entrepreneurs face greater barriers to financing, technical support, and technology to cope with economic shutdowns. Women's voices have not been adequately integrated into official C19 responses, leaving their needs unaddressed. Refugees are especially impacted due to: dense living arrangements; insecure employment; housing insecurity and threats of eviction if unable to pay their rent; and less access to water and sanitation increasing the time needed for household chores. Female-headed households – more prevalent among refugees – are at greater risk, as gender barriers and discrimination limit economic opportunities, and as women disproportionately work in informal labour.
Conflict in Africa during COVID-19: social distancing, food vulnerability and welfare response	Roxana Gutiérrez-Romero; SSRN; Working Paper	Are social distancing measures, lockdowns and food vulnerability fuelling conflicts? Could recently implemented C19 anti-poverty programmes curb such conflicts? Based on econometric analysis, this working paper finds that the probability of riots, violence against civilians, food-related conflicts and food looting has increased since lockdowns. Food vulnerability has been a contributing factor. A 10% increase in the local price index is associated with an increase of 0.7 percentage points in violence against civilians. Nonetheless, for every additional anti-poverty measure implemented in response to C19 the probability of experiencing violence against civilians, riots and food-related conflicts declines by approximately 0.2 percentage points. These anti-poverty measures also reduce the number of fatalities associated with these conflicts.

		Overall, their findings reveal that food vulnerability has increased conflict risks, but there is an optimistic view of the importance of the state in providing welfare safety nets.

BLOGS & NEWS ARTICLES

GOVERNANCE

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type	Summary
What kind of research should inform Covid responses?	Duncan Green & Irene Guijt; Oxfam From Power to Poverty; Blog	What kind of research should inform C19 responses? This blog highlights the need for: (a) research based on actual data, not hypotheses and narratives, and the importance of pre-existing research networks, frameworks, skills, and researchers who can shift to phone/remote methods; and (b) credible, accurate syntheses, to make sense of the growing mountains of blogs, briefing papers, etc. It recommends: more observation of 'emergent agency'; more qualitative research on impact and response; more attention to fragile and conflict-affected settings; and more syntheses of research and blogs.
The China-Africa summit on COVID-19: Geopolitical and economic considerations	San Bilal & Lidet Tadesse; The European Centre for Development Policy Management; Blog	What were the outcomes of the China-Africa summit on C19? This blog notes there were political alignments on political and geopolitical interests (including on: an open world economy, multilateralism, the UN system and the WHO), to be seen as sending implicit geopolitical messages especially to the US. The US has opted out of a global commitment on making a C19 vaccine accessible and affordable to all, contrary to China, and tarnishing the US' health legacy in Africa.

4 Simple Steps to Implement Beneficial Ownership Under COVID-19	Thom Townsend; IMF; Blog	How can governments implement beneficial ownership during C19? This blog provides advice on how to meet beneficial ownership commitments. At least ten countries, including Gabon, Nigeria and Pakistan have committed to the IMF in the context of the coronavirus response to disclose the beneficial owners of contracts awarded to companies. The task now is to ensure these commitments are implemented effectively.
Data fog: Why some countries' coronavirus numbers do not add up	Laura Winter; Al Jazeera; Feature	Can national C19 data be trusted? This feature explores the low number of C19 cases and deaths declared by some authoritarian countries and questions whether they are deliberately under-reporting, or under-testing.
Afghan Anti-Corruption Efforts 'Slowed' Due to Elections, COVID-19	Gandhara; Article	Anti-corruption measures taken by the Afghan government in 2019 and 2020 have made slow progress due to the crisis over the last election and C19, according to a UN report.
Why Governance Matters in the Time of COVID-19	Michael Jarvis; Council on Foreign Relations; Blog	This blog argues that governments with high accountability, transparency, and trust are having more success at responding credibly, responsibly, and effectively to C19.
What Ebola Crisis Can Teach Us About COVID-19 Compliance	Warrington Parker, Kelly Newsome & Kenton Atta-Krah; Law 360; Blog	This blog highlights that where national institutions have been damaged by corruption and other unethical behaviour, a crisis like C19 further exacerbates business pressures and compliance risks. Corporate compliance and legal teams can learn from risks and responses during the Ebola outbreak to anticipate and address similar fraud, corruption and compliance risks.
Zimbabwe's Health Minister Charged for Covid-19 Corruption	Sandrine Gagne-Acoulon; Organized	A Zimbabwe court released the Health Minister Obadiah Moyo on bail after he was arrested over allegations of corruption and misuse of office

	Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP); Article	regarding the procurement of C19 tests and other medical equipment.
Duterte: No corruption on Duque's watch	Leila Salaverria; Inquirer; Article	In a televised address to the nation, the Philippines' President Rodrigo Duterte defended his beleaguered Health Secretary amid an Ombudsman investigation of his handling of the C19 response, including alleged corruption.

Extra blogs & news articles – without summary

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type
Realities of Remote Learning: Lessons from Initial Findings of an 8,000-Household Survey in Peru During COVID-19	Juan Manuel Hernández-Agramonte, et al.; Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA); Blog
Introducing the IPA-IGC COVID-19 Economic Impact Surveys	Lucia Sanchez & Matthieu Teachout; Introducing the IPA-IGC COVID-19 Economic Impact Surveys; IPA; Blog
COVID-19 Rumours as Transcripts of Resistance in South Sudan	Matthew Benson; LSE; Blog
How Important is the Weight of History in Shaping Covid Responses?	Oxfam; Blog
Leadership Observatory: Issue Nine	Kyle Smith; Developmental Leadership Program; Opinion
South Africa has the continent's highest Covid-19 cases. Now it has another pandemic on its hands	Bukola Adebayo; CNN; News
Is Coronavirus Making Southeast Asia More Authoritarian?	Brian Harding; United States Institute of Peace; Analysis and Commentary

Latin America's Virus Villains: Corrupt Officials Collude With Price Gougers for Body Bags and Flimsy Masks	Natalie Kitroeff and Mitra Taj; The New York Times; News
Spike in violence against Venezuelan children as COVID-19 deepens crisis	Save the Children; News
Tech giants partner with UN Women to provide life-saving information to survivors of domestic violence during COVID-19	UN Women; News
How Covid-19 is deepening democratic backsliding and geopolitical competition in the western Balkans	Natasha Wunsch; London School of Economics; Blog
Surge in violence against girls and women in Latin America and Caribbean	Plan International; News
Mauritius, Senegal and South Africa among co-authors of cross-regional statement on COVID-19 "infodemic"	United Nations; News
Economic impact of COVID-19: Protecting Africa's food systems from farm to fork	Jennifer Blanke; Brookings Institute; Blog
West African ministers propose phased re-opening of borders	Ange Aboa et al.; Reuters; News
As war and COVID-19 ravage Yemen, $1.35 billion in international aid isn't nearly enough. Here's why.	Amjad Tadros; CBS News
Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) to probe corruption in COVID-19 safety gears procurement	The Independent (Bangladesh); news article
Fog of corruption has enveloped South Africa in its deadly tentacles	Press Reader; News article

CONFLICT

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type	Summary
Deliberate attacks on healthcare in Afghanistan during COVID-19 pandemic – UN Special Report	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan; News	A UN report finds that attacks on healthcare facilities in Afghanistan during C19 have been carried out deliberately by Afghan security forces, the Taliban, and other unknown gunmen.

Extra blogs & news articles – without summary

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type
COVID-19, conflict and sexual violence: reversing the burden of proof	Sophie Sutrich; Humanitarian Law and Policy; Blog
East Africa: People seeking safety are trapped at borders due to COVID-19 measures	Amnesty International; News
Rohingya children face even higher levels of violence and safety risks as COVID-19 crisis deepens	Educo; Press Release
East Africa: People seeking safety are trapped at borders due to COVID-19 measures	Amnesty International; Press Release
Afghanistan's Covid-19 Bargain	Abdullah Ahmadzai; Asia Foundation; 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

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

ACLED – 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

EVENTS

29 June (time TBC)- Corruption, civil society and Covid-19: Digital empowerment for social accountability, U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre – This event explores the role that digital tools and platforms can play in supporting civil society and donors in this time of social distancing. Through a dialogue between the different actors involved, and the review of case studies, they will explore how donors can tap into citizens as a resource for digital monitoring.

30 June (09:00-10:00 EST) - Learning and Adapting during COVID-19 Series: Can a Planetary Health Lens Inform Pandemic Response? RTI International - This event explores the nascent field of planetary health, examining links with C19 and other health challenges, and how it can contribute to international development policy and implementation.

1 July (16:00-17:00 EDT) - Can we end corruption in oil, gas, and mining? Brookings Institute – This event explores: responses to corruption in the natural resource value chain globally; corruption risks in natural resource governance in the era of C19; and the implications of C19 on global anti-corruption research initiatives.

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

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About this report