



Covid-19, Conflict, and Governance Evidence Summary No.17

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11 September 2020

This weekly 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.

This week, features resources on: **C19 effects on conflict** and how to respond; a huge study on how C19 **impacts children**; and the importance of understanding the link between **good governance, peacebuilding, and public health** in C19 responses.

Many of the core C19 themes continue to be covered this week, including: the **importance of understanding politics** and international relations in C19 responses; the heightened **vulnerability of refugees**; and how **non-state armed actors** are engaging with C19 and responses.

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
<p>The Hidden Impact of Covid-19 on Children: A Global Research Series</p>	<p>Melissa Burgess, et al.; Save the Children International; Research series</p>	<p>How is C19 impacting on children? This huge study draws on survey data from over 31,000 parents and caregivers and 13,000 children aged between 11 and 17 across 46 countries, looking at impacts on children’s health, nutrition, education, learning, protection, wellbeing, family finances and poverty. It finds that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Globally, more than 8 in 10 children felt that they were learning little or nothing at all, and two thirds of parents and caregivers reported their child had received no contact from teachers since their schools closed.• Three-quarters of households lost income due to C19, and the vast majority of households (96%) reported having trouble paying for an essential item or service. Four in five struggled to pay for food and two in five households found it difficult to provide their families with a nutritious diet.• Most parents and caregivers (89%) reported that their access to healthcare, medicine or medical supplies had been affected.• A significant impact on the psycho-social wellbeing of children and their caregivers. More than 8 in 10 children reported an increase in negative feelings.• One third of households had a child or caregiver reporting violence in the home. Children reported that violence was higher when schools were closed, compared to when they were attending in person.• The poorest households, households with disabilities, female headed-households and girls, are the hardest hit.

<p>Briefing;Covid-19: Key Considerations for a Public Health Response</p>	<p>Melissa Leach et al.; Institute for Development Studies; Briefing</p>	<p>What are the key considerations for donors in their public health response to C19? This briefing recommends: Prioritise those furthest behind first; localise and collaborate in all responses; establish firm foundations for comprehensive social protection; build the resilience of food systems; lay the groundwork for transformative approaches in the immediate response; coordinate with key actors and across sectors; and strengthen health systems.</p>
<p>Covid-19 and child marriage in West and Central Africa</p>	<p>Girls not Brides and Plan International; Policy Brief</p>	<p>How will C19 impact child marriage in West and Central Africa? This brief warns C19 may cause 13 million additional child marriages by 2030, and West and Central Africa (WACA) will be severely affected unless multi-sectoral, comprehensive efforts to end child marriage are accelerated in the region. Drivers of child marriage in WACA include: (a) family poverty; (b) barriers for girls staying in or returning to school; and (c) the taboo around female sexuality linked to perceived 'shame' of a pregnancy out of wedlock, and limited sexual and reproductive health services and information during the crisis. Girls living in crisis settings, including during C19, are at greater risk of being married under the age of 18 and other forms of exploitation, gender-based violence and harmful practices rooted in gender inequality.</p>
<p>COVID-19 Mobility Tracking Impact – Points of Entry Analysis: August 20, 2020 – IOM Regional Office for South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia</p>	<p>International Organisation for Migration; Analysis</p>	<p>How have C19 travel restrictions affected mobility in South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SEEECA)? Drawing on data from 627 points of entry (PoE) across 19 SEEECA countries, this analysis finds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PoE: 58% of assessed PoE were fully closed in April and May; 40% were fully closed in June; 36% in July; and 34% in August. • Airports: 38% of the assessed international airports were fully closed in April; 37% in May; 30% in June; 23% in July; and 11% in August • Land border crossing points: 72% were completely closed in April and May; 47% in June; 44% in July and August.

		Blue border crossing points (including sea, river, and lake ports): 19% were completely closed in April and May; and 18% in June, July and August.
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Extra papers – without summary

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type
Is COVID-19 the end of US hegemony? Public bads, leadership failures and monetary hegemony	Carla Norrlöf; International Affairs; Journal Article
COVID-19 exacerbates anti-immigrant prejudice and discrimination	Steven Gordon; Human Sciences Research Council; Journal Article
Child protection and resilience in the face of COVID-19 in South Africa: A rapid review of C-19 legislation	Ansie Fouché et al.; ScienceDirect; Journal Article
China's Foreign Aid Determinants: Lessons from a Novel Dataset of the Mask Diplomacy During the COVID-19 Pandemic	Diego Telias and Francisco Urdinez; Research Gate; Working Paper
Perspectives on the Pandemic: COVID-19 in South Asia	All India Disaster Mitigation Institute; Analysis
Can democracy work for the poor?	Rohini Pande; Science; Journal article

CONFLICT

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type	Summary
<p>Advancing peace in a changed world: COVID-19 effects on conflict and how to respond</p>	<p>Mercy Corps; Report</p>	<p>How is C19 affecting conflict and how should donors respond? Drawing on six months of responses from Mercy Corps teams across 40 countries, this report identifies C19 impacts as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fraying social cohesion: C19 is increasing stigmatisation and scapegoating across groups. In 22 countries where Mercy Corps is active, teams reported C19 has contributed to deteriorating relationships between local groups; only four countries reported an improvement in social cohesion. • Deteriorating state-society relations: Fragile social contracts are further eroding where C19 is seen by local populations as an opportunity for corruption, incompetence, and exclusive or repressive behaviour by governments. In some countries, the inability or unwillingness of the state to respond to citizens' needs, and the diminishing ability of civil society to hold authorities accountable, is deepening mistrust and legitimacy gaps and weakening civic engagement. • Proliferating mis-/disinformation: The infodemic is hampering public health outcomes, contributing to inflaming fears and misperceptions across groups, and deepening mistrust of government officials and health experts. • Armed groups seeking to fill the void - Armed groups, including violent extremist organisations, are capitalising on heightened grievances, lacklustre government responses, weakening state institutions, and increasing social fragmentation to expand their activities and influence, and to gain sympathisers and supporters by winning the hearts and minds of the local population.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing economic scarcity and resource competition: Heightened competition for increasingly scarce resources, weakened resource management, and a significant reduction in economic activity due to movement restrictions and business closures are contributing to an uptick in tension and violence. • Looking over the horizon. Beyond these five immediate effects, the consequences of C19 are likely to pose a long-term threat to stability and peace. In areas hit hard by Ebola, there was an increase in civil violence six to nine months after the outbreak, and the effect lasted up to three years after the epidemic ended. <p>As governments and donors understandably turn their attention to the C19 public health response, diverting interest and investment away from conflict is a missed opportunity, and potentially allows violent entrepreneurs to fill power vacuums, extremism to gain greater currency, and root drivers of conflict to take a firmer hold. They recommend donors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all COVID-19 responses and programs are conflict-sensitive • Address the impacts of COVID-19 on social cohesion, public trust, and conflict dynamics by adapting existing programs or investing in new ones <p>Seize ‘windows of opportunity’ created by COVID-related disruptions to advance peace outcomes</p>
<p>Linking Good Governance, Peacebuilding, and Public Health in the Midst of COVID-19: Lessons from Northeast Nigeria</p>	<p>Mercy Corps; Report</p>	<p>How are governance, peacebuilding and public health linked? This paper finds that when strained state-society relations are part of pre-existing conflict dynamics, responses to C19 that fail to incorporate governance and peacebuilding approaches run the risk of undermining public health goals and also further exacerbating violence. In such contexts, long-standing political grievances and mistrust inform the narratives through which communities understand the spread of C19 and responses to it. These perceptions limit the willingness of communities to comply with</p>

		<p>C19 regulations and can amplify other drivers of violent conflict. The interaction between C19 and pre-existing fragility is a threat multiplier, magnifying grievances and posing lasting challenges to resilience and peace.</p> <p>Northeast Nigeria demonstrates how pre-existing weaknesses in state-society relations interact with insecurity, economic scarcity, fraying social cohesion, and misinformation. Lessons for donors include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linkages between mistrust in government and other causes of conflict predate C19, but also interact with C19 and the response on an ongoing basis. • Strained state-society relations affect how communities and armed groups react to C19 and containment measures. <p>When responding to C19 in contexts where governance is an underlying cause of conflict, programing should mobilise communities around their lived realities of the public health emergency.</p>
<p>Why the COVID-19 response needs International Relations</p>	<p>Sara E Davies and Clare Wenham; International Affairs; Journal Article</p>	<p>How can international relations methods contribute to C19 responses? This article emphasises that C19 is a political problem as much as it is a public health tragedy, and while C19 affects all countries, how governments respond is dictated by politics. Historical efforts to assert technical expertise over politics is redundant and outdated, and a coordinated political cooperation is vital to overcome C19. Thus it is important to include international relations knowledge in the World Health Organisation's (WHO) evidence base, and for the WHO to embrace the politics and engage foreign policy and diplomatic expertise.</p>
<p>Community Views on the Impact of Covid-19 in Rohingya Camps</p>	<p>Saiful Haque et al.; Political Settlement Research Programme; Report</p>	<p>What are community experiences of C19 in Rohingya camps in Bangladesh? Based on interviews with 68 camp residents in July, this report finds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness and understanding of C19: Many camp residents have a fairly basic

		<p>understanding of C19, but lack detailed and accurate information on actions for protection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on livelihoods: Many identified economic harm as the most serious form of harm they have experienced under C19, with remittances and other support from family members outside Cox’s Bazar seriously affected as well. • Impact on family relationships and communication: Almost every respondent struggled to maintain family relationships and communication during lockdown – e.g. missing births and funerals. • Perceptions of medical clinics and hospitals: Testing, isolation and treatment for C19-like symptoms in the health clinics and hospitals have not been appealing options for camp residents. With internet access restricted and limited verifiable news, negative rumours about treatment are prevalent. • Messages for humanitarian agencies and government actors: Community members emphasised the desire to return home to Myanmar. Many are critical of some NGO workers in the camps – e.g. with some not wearing masks all of the time, and a more general concern that NGOs and other humanitarians are less present with the draw-down of humanitarian services.
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Extra papers – without summary

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type
Coming Together For Refugee Education. Education Report 2020	United Nations Refugee Agency: Report
The consequence of COVID-19: how the United States moved from security provider to security consumer	Simon Reich and Peter Dombrowski; International Affairs; Journal Article

BLOGS & NEWS ARTICLES

GOVERNANCE

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type	Summary
COVID-19 exposes deep-rooted corruption in Bangladesh health sector in six months	Manzur Maswood; New Age; Blog	C19 has exposed the inefficiency, mismanagement and deep-rooted corruption in the Bangladeshi health sector. C19 finally spurred the government to spend money on public health, but the mismanagement and incapacity to best utilise the money, while a greater portion of it got lost into the corrupt system, failed to yield expected results, according to experts.
China: Africa to have priority access to COVID-19 vaccine	Eric Olander; The Africa Report	Chinese President Xi Jinping reiterated his oft-stated promise that developing countries, specifically those in Africa, will receive priority access to a Chinese-produced C19 vaccine when it's available for distribution.

Extra blogs & news articles – without summary

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type
In advocacy, which matters more – evidence or relationships? How has Covid changed the balance?	Duncan Green; From Power to Poverty/Oxfam; Blog
Activists in Latin America battle to guarantee access to safe abortion in COVID-19 world	Josefina Salomón and Christopher Alford; Amnesty International; News
OPINION: Building resilience in Africa's food supply chain after Covid-19	Andrew Edewa and Melvin Spreij; AFN; Opinion
The Economic Impacts of COVID-19 in Côte d'Ivoire: Lessons from the RECOVER Survey	Luciana Debenedetti et al.; Innovations for Poverty Action; Blog

Value the work that sustains families, demand domestic workers across Latin America	UN Women; News
In South Africa, COVID-19 has exposed greed and spurred long-needed action against corruption	Transparency International; Blog
The G-20 must show global leadership to tackle COVID-19	M. Emilia Berazategui; Transparency International; Blog
COVID-19 transparency and accountability: promise in governments' responses or governments' responding by overpromising?	Collaborative Africa Budget Reform Initiative; Danielle Serebro; Blog
Brazil's ex-president Lula condemns Bolsonaro over Covid in comeback bid	Tom Phillips; The Guardian; News
Secondary impacts of COVID-19: ACAPS is developing a new global dataset that attempts to capture the secondary impacts of COVID-19	ACAPS; Blog

CONFLICT

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type	Summary
Surviving or thriving? COVID-19 and violent non-state actors in the Southern Philippines	Luke Lischin; New Mandala; Article	How active are violent non-state actors in the Southern Philippines during C19? This blog highlights the paucity of evidence, but suggests that, according to data, Islamic State (IS) associated violence waned in Mindanao and Sulu during C19, while the New People's Army (NPA) has managed to sustain its operations. Although the factors driving these trends require further research, the differing material and organisational capacities of these actors likely explain why the NPA was able to commit more frequent acts of violence than IS-aligned groups.

Blogs & news articles – without summary

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type
Assessing the global ceasefire to help fight COVID-19	Jonathan Allen; Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office; Speech

EVENTS

14 September 2020 - 16:00 (London, BST) [Ahead of the 75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly – Can Multilateralism be Rebuilt for a Post-Covid World: A Conversation Between The Rt. Hon. Douglas Alexander and Ambassador Elizabeth Cousens](#), Royal United Services Institute – This event explores the multilateral response to C19 to date and looks ahead to the key themes of the 75th United Nations General Assembly.

30 September 2020 to 18 November 2020 – 14:00 to 16:00 (CET) [Health Security and Covid-19 Best Practices: A Virtual Learning Journey](#), Geneva Centre for Security Policy – This executive on-line course provides security and health specialists from all sectors with an in-depth and updated analysis of the current C19 situation.

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](#)

V-Dem Institute - [Pandemic Democratic Violations Index](#)

Gender and Covid-19 - [Gender and Covid-19](#)

Suggested citation

Herbert, S. (2020). *COVID-19 Conflict and Governance Evidence Summary No.17*. K4D Evidence Summary. Brighton, UK: Institute of Development Studies.

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 "democra*" 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 "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

Thanks to Priscilla Baafi for research assistance support, and Professor Heather Marquette for expert advice

About this report

This 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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