



Covid-19, Conflict, and Governance Evidence Summary No.21

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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: pandemic preparedness through [health information systems](#); how C19 is impacting on [poverty and inclusive growth](#); the varied ways [non-state actors](#) are responding to C19 in Africa; and [lessons from past disasters](#) in the Asia-Pacific region for C19 responses.

Many of the core C19 themes continue to be covered this week, including: the [gendered impacts](#) of C19; how C19 is undermining the [capacity of actors working to end violence against women and girls](#); and widespread C19-related [corruption](#).

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
Optimizing Pandemic Preparedness and Response through Health Information Systems: Lessons Learned from Ebola to COVID-19	Arush Lal et al.; Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness; Journal Article	How can Health Information Systems (HIS) optimise C19 responses? Drawing on lessons from Ebola, this journal article emphasises the critical role HIS play in optimising decision-making and health emergency responses during epidemics/pandemics. Robust HIS that are adequately financed and developed before a future outbreak can cyclically strengthen health systems and pandemic preparedness and response capacities. High-performing and effectively-leveraged HIS are catalytic in informing coordinated global health governance and ensuring timely, transparent data sharing. They strengthen health infrastructure by reducing fragmentation and costs while streamlining equitable resource allocation. They offer new ways to foster community engagement, combat misinformation, and cultivate trust.
Recovering from COVID-19: Lessons from Past Disasters in Asia and the Pacific	United Nations Development Programme; Report	What lessons are there from past disasters in the Asia-Pacific region for C19 responses? This report finds: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Caught unaware: Countries need to anticipate and plan for pandemics and disasters.• Health first: A faster and stronger health response is critical to contain pandemics.• Preventing a socio-economic crisis: Rapid funding is pivotal to protect the most vulnerable.• Get the evidence: Data and assessments must guide recovery.• Show me the money: Diverse financing arrangements help to sustain long term recovery.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be the leader: Dedicated national leadership is essential to achieve effective recovery. • Stronger together: Engaging local governments and community for an inclusive response. • Build forward: Greener, smarter, better. • Use the data: Disaster data can help countries deal with changing risks. • Innovate, innovate, innovate.
<p>Observing Covid-19 in Africa through a public authorities lens</p>	<p>Duncan Green and Thomas Kirk; Centre for Public Authority and International Development and London School of Economics and Political Science; Working Paper</p>	<p>How have non-state actors responded to C19 in northern Uganda, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Sierra Leone? This paper highlights that as most analyses of C19 responses focus on the state, the realities on the ground are being missed, and therefore it focusses attention on “public authorities” (including local traditional chiefs, self-help groups, kinship networks, professional associations, faith-based groups, civil society organisations, multinational companies, humanitarian agencies, organised criminal gangs, militias and rebels) and anecdotes from researchers (what it calls “vignettes” of life – which it recognises are unclear and sometimes contradictory). It finds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shifts in the balance of power between and within state and non-state actors: The Ugandan government has sought to consolidate control by monopolising the C19 response and pushing out non-state actors. In South Sudan, traditional chiefs are leading the response, during a political vacuum. while in western DRC, customary authorities participate in and reinforce the state’s C19 response. • Contests for control: In eastern DRC embezzlement accusations of C19 funds by state and provincial authorities has led to widespread resentment, with C19 seen as a ‘business’, like Ebola was. In Uganda food distribution has been monopolised by the President and his networks of public authorities following food insecurity triggered by the lockdown.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lockdowns as opportunities: In the DRC reduced movement during C19 has lowered police opportunities for extortion. Soldiers commit violence against women attempting to work on fields across the DRC/Uganda border. In Uganda lockdowns and enforced boundaries have contributing to a potentially dangerous ‘tribalising’ effect. Ugandan youth have challenged long established social orders requiring expensive weddings. • Resistance to responses: In DRC, opportunistic police have sometimes been violently expelled by largely spontaneous citizen action. In north-west Uganda there has been widespread criticism and resistance to the economically damaging and violent imposition of lockdown by Local Defence Units. • Questioning official narratives: In South Sudan, C19 is seen as a foreign illness, brought by UN workers, and confined to cities. Only chiefs appear able to counter these narratives and to persuade people to take precautions. In DRC, the legacies of conflict, Ebola and low C19 incidence, combined with low trust in the state and public authorities fuel public doubt that C19 is real.
<p>The impact of COVID-19 on women's and men's lives and livelihoods in Europe and Central Asia: Preliminary results from a Rapid Gender Assessment</p>	<p>Jen Ross and Kate Taylor; United Nations Women; Assessment</p>	<p>What has been the gendered impact of C19 in Europe and Central Asia (ECA)? Drawing on data from 10 ECA countries/territories, this assessment finds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75% of women and men respondents feel well-informed about C19 and believe information to be clear and helpful. Primary sources of information for women are: traditional media (51%) and internet/social media (37%). • Over 15% of women lost their jobs and another 41% have reduced paid working hours. Self-employed women were worst affected. • Less than 10% of women and men have received government support in all countries/territories except Kyrgyzstan and Turkey, and Georgia.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women’s household burden has increased. In some countries/territories, women are helping men by up to 30% more than men are helping women with household chores and care activities, compared to pre-C19 times. • Over half of all women respondents reported difficulty accessing health/medical supplies and gynaecological services. • In 7 out of 10 countries/territories, women have greater difficulties paying for basic expenses than men. • Access to food products was not a major concern, with over 60% having ‘no difficulty’ in accessing food. However, in 4 of the 10 countries/territories, women more frequently reported difficulties accessing food supplies • 10-18% of respondents from Turkey, Azerbaijan and Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) believe discrimination or prejudice is increasing. Over 15% of women from Kyrgyzstan, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Turkey perceived having felt/heard of an increase in domestic violence. • 45% of men and women in Kyrgyzstan, and 28-38% in Azerbaijan, Kosovo and Albania did not know where to seek help if there was an incident of domestic violence. Women were 7-10% more likely than men not to know where to seek help.
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Extra papers – without summary

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type
Life Between Economics And Politic In The Context Of The Covid 19 Crisis: Readings For Latin America And The Caribbean	Mario Gonzalez Arencibia et al.; Ideas; Article
Beyond the disease: Contextualized implications of COVID-19 for children and young people living in Eastern and Southern Africa	Kaymarlin Govender et al.; Frontiers in Public Health; Journal Article

Balancing the Scales between Government's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic and the Fulfilment of Women's and Girls' Rights in South Africa

Tholaine Mafuku Matadi; African Journal of Governance and Development; Journal Article

CONFLICT

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type	Summary
<p>COVID-19 and the impact on Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) working to end violence against women and girls</p>	<p>Aldijana Sisic et al.; United Nations Women; Report</p>	<p>How has C19 impacted violence against women and girls (VAW/G) civil society organisations (CSOs)? Based on reports from 144 UN Trust Fund funded CSOs in 69 countries/territories, this brief finds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VAW/G impacts: (a) increasing reports of violence and worsening safety of women and girls; (b) specifically - sexual violence, online harassment and harmful traditional practices - are rising; (c) severe impact on marginalised communities; (d) C19 responses are exacerbating existing vulnerabilities and increasing VAW/G risks; (e) economic impacts are the most significant VAW/G drivers; and (f) C19 has revealed the lack of sustainable, structural and societal support for VAW/G work with CSOs continuing to fill the gap. • CSOs working on VAW/G: (a) operating under great uncertainty and significant stress; (b) delivery hampered by lack of recognition that CSOs are essential service providers; (c) project delivery delays due to quarantine and lockdown measures, and moving online is not possible in all contexts due to the digital divide; (d) urgent funding needed to help CSOs adjust and improve organisational resilience to the crisis; and (e) these challenges threaten women's movements as the operational survival of some CSOs is in question. <p>CSOs are adapting programming in: (a) service provision; (b) economic support; (c) prevention</p>

		programming (e.g to online); (d) engaging communities most left behind; (e) data collection and amplifying survivor voices to inform responses; and (f) organisational resilience.
Yemen: Crisis Insight Impact Overview January to August 2020	ACAPS; Report	This broad situation report includes info on how C19 is affecting Yemen, including e.g. how C19 protocols have increased the cost of humanitarian operations and the time they take to deliver. Food distribution or field visits which previously took three or four days now take six to eight days, using more fuel and staff time

Extra papers – without summary

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type
Agile and Adaptive Management of COVID-19: The Case of Iran	Erfan Shamsoddin et al.; International Science Council; Journal article
The Planetary Crisis, Brexit and the Pandemic	John Barry; The Journal of Cross-Border Studies in Ireland; Journal article

BLOGS & NEWS ARTICLES

GOVERNANCE

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type	Summary
Poverty and Shared Prosperity 2020: Reversals of Fortune	World Bank; Report	How will C19 affect global poverty? This report predicts global extreme poverty will rise in 2020 for the first time in over 20 years as C19 compounds conflict and climate change, which were already slowing poverty reduction progress.

		C19 is estimated to push an additional 88 million to 115 million people into extreme poverty this year, with the total rising to as many as 150 million by 2021. It calls for a collective action response.
Covid-19 and Inequality: The Great Divide	Transparency International; Blog	How will C19 affect global inequality? This blog highlights how C19 is deepening divides between rich and poor and the need for urgent global action to tackle illicit financial flows to ensure funding reaches those most in need.
GAFILAT Identifies Money Laundering/Terrorist Financing Emerging Threats	Stanley Foodman; JDSUPRA; Blog	This blog summarises a findings from a Financial Action Task Force of Latin America (GAFILAT) survey highlighting C19-related emerging threats as: bribery, overpricing of products, and misappropriation of public funds; increase in financial fraud and scams; human trafficking; cybercrime (phishing, vishing and smishing); the distribution of counterfeit or low-quality products (false C19 home tests); Individuals may increase the use of pawn shops, moneylenders; large cash movements and increases in the purchases of precious metals and gold; and misuse of non-profit organisations.
Concern in Albania over String of Secretive COVID-19 Tenders	Fjori Sinoruka; Balkan Insight; News article	This news article reports that questions are being asked of the Albanian government's decision to conceal the details of C19-related public tenders worth millions of euros.

Extra blogs & news articles – without summary

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type
Rapid Action Learning and COVID-19	Robert Chambers; The Sanitation Learning Hub; Blog
How Covid and Inequality Feed Off Each Other: Launching the 2020 Commitment to Reduce Inequality Index	Matthew Martin and Max Lawson; Oxfam; Blog

How Beijing gains from Trump's COVID struggles and US electoral dysfunctions	Frederick Kempe; Atlantic Council; Blog
For a more equal world post-covid-19: focus on the financial gatekeepers	Transparency International; News
Shi'ite pilgrimage fans fears of spreading COVID-19 in Iraq	John Davison and Abdullah Dhiaa Al-Deen; Reuters; News article

PODCASTS & VIDEOS

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type	Summary
Webinar: Living with COVID-19: Finding a Sustainable Way Forward	Chatham House; Video	In this video, Chatham House hosts a discussion on sustainable ways of living with C19.

EVENTS

12 October 2020 - 12:00 to 13:30 (BST) [State-citizen dynamics of trust through Covid-19](#), Institute of Development Studies - This webinar discusses C19 in Brazil, China, Pakistan and the UK, and how decision-making around public health has impacted state-citizen relations and institutional trust.

14 October 2020 - 11:00 to 12:00 (GMT) [Webinar: Living with COVID-19: Opportunism and International Security](#), Chatham House – This event explores the international security implications of C19, e.g. cyber-attacks on vaccine research, and readiness to respond to a bioweapons crisis.

15 October 2020 – 17:00 to 18: 00 (BST) [Covid-19 and development: governance and trust](#), Institute for Development Studies – This event explores C19-related governance challenges and responses to help emerging democracies build back better, focusing on Pakistan.

21 October 2020 – 18:30 to 20:00 (BST) [The "state of emergency" as the rule and not the exception: crisis conditions and exploitative law-making during COVID-19 and beyond](#), LSE - This event explores how crises can be exploited to institutionalise laws and policies that violate international human rights with dire implications for the local and international.

20-22 October 2020 - 8:30-11:30 (EDT) / 14:30-17:30 (CEST) [Mining and COVID-19: From crisis to sustainability](#), Intergovernmental Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metals and Sustainable Development – This event examines mining sector trends and government responses related to the ongoing health and economic crisis.

29 October 2020 – 17: 00 to 18: 00 (BST) [Covid-19 and development: cities of the future](#), Institute for Development Studies – This event explores how C19 might shape development in cities.

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

University of Oxford - Coronavirus Government Response Tracker

UNDP - COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker

K4D - COVID-19 Evidence Search

ACAPS – Secondary impacts of C19

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 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

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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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