



Covid-19, Conflict, and Governance Evidence Summary No.25

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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.

This summary features resources on: the need to [rethink development](#) in - how we use evidence in policy, how to rebuild resilient economies, and how to reconfigure citizen-state relations; how C19 has affected [criminal violence in Mexico and the Northern Triangle](#); global [civil society responses to C19](#); and how C19 border closures are [straining cross-border movement of people in West Africa](#).

Many of the core C19 themes continue to be covered this week, including: policy responses to [address the gendered impacts of C19](#); [corruption](#) risks, this time related to vaccines; and the crisis of [rising inequalities and illiberalism](#) under C19.

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>Post-pandemic transformations: How and why COVID-19 requires us to rethink development</p>	<p>Melissa Leach, Hayley MacGregor, Ian Scoones & Annie Wilkinson, World Development; Journal article</p>	<p>How should we think about development post-C19? Drawing on a decade of research on epidemics, this journal article argues for analysis that addresses both C19's structural political-economic conditions alongside its complex and context-specific processes. Through this it identifies key challenge areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rethinking science, policy and uncertainty - in terms of how scientific advice and evidence are used in policy, when conditions are rigidly 'locked in' to established power relations and yet so uncertain.• Rebuilding resilient economies – in terms of how economies function, with C19 revealing the limits of a conventional model of economic growth.• Reshaping citizen-state relations – in terms of how new forms of politics can become the basis of reshaped citizen-state relations in confronting a pandemic, e.g. those around mutual solidarity and care. <p>It concludes that C19 demonstrates that we face an uncertain future, where anticipation of, and resilience to, major shocks must become the core problematic of development studies and practice. Where mainstream approaches to development have been top down, rigid and orientated towards narrowly-defined economic goals, post-C19 development must have a radically transformative, egalitarian and inclusive knowledge and politics at its core.</p>

<p>Solidarity in the time of COVID-19: Civil society responses to the pandemic</p>	<p>CIVICUS; Paper</p>	<p>How has civil society responded to C19 across the world? Drawing on interviews, a survey, and public discussions, this paper details how civil society has met needs, defended rights and forged new paths for civic action during C19. It finds that civil society has provided vital support and information, with much of its responses focused on mitigating the impacts of state policies on vulnerable and excluded groups. It finds that when states partnered with civil society, or when governments created an enabling environment for CSOs, the response was much more effective. People-led, mutual responses were key.</p> <p>CSOs also took on the role of rights defenders in countries where authoritarian leaders used C19 as a pretext to clamp down on civic freedoms. And many protests went online and people found alternate, creative ways of making their voices heard that respected physical distancing.</p>
<p>Free Movement of Persons in West Africa Under the Strain of COVID-19</p>	<p>Abdoulaye Hamadou; American Journal of International Law Unbound; Journal article</p>	<p>How has C19 shaped free movement of persons in West Africa? This journal article notes that in March-April 2020, twelve West African countries officially closed their borders (Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, the Gambia, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Togo). While other countries adopted a more pragmatic approach by limiting entries, and by adopting humanitarian corridors (e.g. Benin, Ivory Coast and Senegal). It finds that these measures have contributed to the disintegration of the legal regime of free movement of persons in the ECOWAS region. Also that they have instrumentalised C19 for political ends in ways that are counterproductive for the region.</p>
<p>Capitalism and COVID-19: Crisis at the Crossroads</p>	<p>Murshed Syed Mansoob; Peace Economics,</p>	<p>How should we respond to rising inequality and illiberalism under C19? This journal article explores how existential threats, like C19, have historically engendered intellectual paradigm shifts, and even systemic</p>

	Peace Science and Public Policy; Journal Article	transformations in the economy and polity, by drawing on the Black Plague as an example. It explains how the current, dominant form of capitalism fosters rising economic inequality and undermines democracy in both developed and developing countries. It argues that, post-C19, we need to harness the positive dimensions of the powerful capitalist system to lower inequality and build a newer world akin to an earlier golden age of capitalism.
The COVID pandemic and social theory: Social democracy and public health in the crisis	Sylvia Walby; European Journal of Social Theory; Journal article	<p>How is C19 shaping social democracy and public health? This journal article identifies the C19 crisis as a potential critical turning point. It speculates that it may be the case that there is a recuperation back to pre-C19 forms of society; the social democratic moment of Keynesian support for the economy may end. It may become a catastrophe in which millions more die. It may be a turning point to intensified neoliberalism with outsourcing of previously state-run health institutions; it may be a turning point to social democracy as grassroots initiatives coalesce with reinvigorated party politics.</p> <p>It concludes that it is more likely, that it is not a single critical turning point, but the start of a prolonged series of linked crises, which cascade through economic recession, intensified cleavages in civil society, political and constitutional crisis, to violence. Theorising these forms of change requires complex systems analysis, which can address the non-linear forms of change involved.</p>
The Interplay of Policy, Institutions, and Culture in the Time of COVID-19	Sheng Fang, Colin Xu, L., Yuanyuan Yi; World Bank; Working Paper	<p>How have pre-existing vulnerabilities, policies, institutions, and culture shaped C19's spread and mortality rates? Based on cross-country regressions, this paper finds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-existing vulnerabilities (share of the elderly, urbanisation, obesity prevalence, and air pollution) increase the spread of C19 and/or the mortality rate. • While a policy delay in mobility restriction, on average, is not significantly associated

		<p>with C19 outcomes, it interacts significantly with pre-existing vulnerabilities. In particular, when the C19 policy delay is longer, the share of elderly population, the urbanisation ratio, obesity prevalence, and the severity of air pollution are positively and significantly associated with greater C19 mortality. Without the C19 policy delay, in contrast, these vulnerabilities often are not associated with worse C19 outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with the notion that better accountability under democracy could both help and hinder containing C19, they find that democratic countries do not experience worse C19 outcomes. <p>The paper also looks at: the role of individualistic culture and trust on C19 spread and mortality rates.</p>
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Extra papers – without summary

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type
Socioeconomic Impacts of COVID-19 in Four African Countries	Josephson, Anna; Kilic, Talip; Michler, Jeffrey D.; Working Paper; World Bank
COVID-19 and fundamental principles and rights at work	ILO; Issue paper
From global risk to global threat: State capabilities and modernity in times of coronavirus	José Maurício Domingues; Current Sociology; Journal Article
The coronavirus pandemic and its challenges to women's work in Latin America	Gutiérrez, Diana, Martin, Guillermina, Ñopo, Hugo; UNDP; Research
Why did Abe's popularity fall during the pandemic?	Kato, Sota, & Yoshimoto, Iku; East Asia Forum Quarterly; Journal article

COVID-19 in missiological and historical perspective	Robert A Danielson, Benjamin L Hartley & James A Krabill; Missiology: An International Review; Journal article
The COVID-19 Crisis: Impact and Implications	Various authors; Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies; Report

CONFLICT

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type	Summary
Virus-proof Violence: Crime and COVID-19 in Mexico and the Northern Triangle	ICG; Paper	How did C19 shape violence and crime in Mexico and the Northern triangle? This paper finds that C19 had an immediate impact on organised crime across Mexico and Central America's northern countries as lockdowns slowed movement of people and goods. But criminal groups swiftly adapted to the new normal, using it to tighten or expand their control over people and territory.

Extra papers – without summary

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type
COVID-19: Reporting on gender-based violence during public health crises: A companion guide to a journalist's handbook	UNFPA; Guidance note
Impacts of COVID-19 on the Private Sector in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations	IFC; Note

BLOGS & NEWS ARTICLES

GOVERNANCE

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type	Summary
<p>Covid Vaccine Distribution: More Fertile Ground For Corruption</p>	<p>Transparency International; Blog</p>	<p>What are the corruption risks around C19 vaccines? This blog highlights the risks around corruption, C19 and inequality, drawing on an example of an experimental vaccine being used in China. It raises concerns about equity and corruption – who can pay to get it first. Also, about public trust – which can be hampered by a lack of transparency if a vaccine is ineffective, or has negative side effects.</p>
<p>Has the Pandemic Reduced U.S. Remittances Going to Latin America?</p>	<p>Matthew Higgins & Thomas Klitgaard; Liberty Street Economics; Blog</p>	<p>Has the Pandemic Reduced U.S. Remittances Going to Latin America? This blog find remittances initially faltered but rebounded in the summer months, performing better than during the last US recession despite more severe job losses. Large government income support payments probably explain some of this resilience. Whether remittances continue to hold up is likely to depend on how quickly the US job market recovers, particularly in hard-hit service industries.</p>
<p>OSR Statement regarding transparency of data related to COVID-19</p>	<p>Office for Statistical Regulation; Statement</p>	<p>How to improve the UK government's transparency on its policy approach to C19? This statement acknowledges that the UK government's communications on C19 have rightly drawn on data and analysis to support decisions being announced. However, the use of data has not consistently been supported by transparent information provided in a timely manner. As a result, there is potential to confuse the public and undermine confidence in the statistics. It recommends:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where data are used publicly, the sources of these data or the data themselves should be published alongside any press briefing and associated slides to allow people to understand their strengths and limitations • Where models are referred to publicly, particularly to inform significant policy decisions, the model outputs, methodologies and key assumptions should be published at the same time • Where key decisions are justified by reference to statistics or management information, the underlying data should be made available
How have Malawi's courts affected the country's epidemic response?	Steve Beloved Kaunga; LSE; Blog	How have Malawi's courts affected the country's epidemic response? This blog explains how lockdown measures in Malawi have been met with fierce public demonstrations and legal challenges, set against further constitutional orders to rerun the previous year's election.

Extra blogs & news articles – without summary

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type
Covid-19: politicisation, "corruption," and suppression of science	Kamran Abbasi; BMJ; Editorial
Governments must demand pharma make all COVID-19 vaccine deals public	Médecins Sans Frontières; Blog
COVID-19 exposes ASEAN's fragility	Michael Vatikiotis; Blog
School reopenings in Malawi face challenges with a lack of financial support	Chikondi Kaponda; LSE; Blog
Far more transparency is needed for Covid-19 vaccine trials	Stat News; Blog

Future implications of the impact of COVID-19 on governance and public service	Geraldine J. Fraser-Moleketi; ACCORD; Blog
Perceptions of Covid-19 in Mozambique and the influence of “intermediaries”	Lúcio Posse & Egídio Chaimite; IDS; Blog

CONFLICT

Extra blogs & news articles – without summary

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type
COVID-19 screening posts and their protection under International Humanitarian Law	Ximena Galvez; Geneva Call; Blog
Lessons from COVID-19 for effective governance and sustainable peace in Africa	Fidon Mwombeki; ACCORD; Blog
School reopenings in Malawi face challenges with a lack of financial support	Chikondi Kaponda; LSE; Blog
Shifting power for peace in times of COVID-19	Conducive Space for Peace, Humanity United & Peace Direct; Blog
The cessation of hostilities during the COVID-19 pandemic	Betty Bigombe; ACCORD; Blog
The Conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh and the Impact of COVID-19 on International Diplomacy	Ayla Göl; LSE; Blog

EVENTS

18 November 2020 - *Too Close for Comfort? Diplomacy, Development and the Future of UK Aid*, Chatham House, This online members event discusses various implications of the FCO and DFID merger, including how C19 is likely to impact the efficacy, impact and attention of aid and development efforts.

19-20 November 2020 - [COVID-19 & Democracy in East Africa Conference](#), The Kofi Annan Foundation in collaboration with the Society for International Development (SID), This online conference explores the state of democracy in East Africa in the context of C19 – what challenges is the region facing and what opportunities could be identified particularly when it comes to protecting voters and protecting the vote?

23 November 2020 - [The Virus, the Vaccine and Violence](#), Chatham House, This online members event discusses the potential for conflict-sensitive approaches to COVID-19 with a focus on vaccines.

10 December 2020 - 17:00 to 18:00 (BST) [Covid-19 and development: queer & feminist perspectives in South Asia](#), Institute of Development Studies – This event explores the views of queers and feminists in South Asia on C19 and development.

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 information hub](#)

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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

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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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