



Covid-19, Conflict, and Governance Evidence Summary No.28

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Welcome back to the 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: [C19's unequal impacts and policy responses](#); responses to [build long-term resilience to both conflict and pandemics](#); responses to [support forcibly displaced people](#) in Africa and the Middle East; and the implications of C19 for [international development cooperation in 2021](#).

Many of the core C19 themes continue to be covered this week, including: C19 [increasing gender-based violence](#); whether [regime type shapes effective C19 responses](#); and [whether and how C19 is shaping conflict](#) contexts.

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>COVID-19 and inequality: A review of the evidence on likely impact and policy options</p>	<p>Ruth Vargas Hill & Ambar Narayan; Centre for Disaster Protection; Working paper</p>	<p>How is C19 impacting inequality? This paper finds C19 is affecting disadvantaged populations more, yet whether this translates into higher inequality in a country depends on the size, distribution, and duration of C19-precipitated economic shocks, and on C19 policy responses.</p> <p>In the short term, the effect on income inequality could go either way, depending on how the impacts are distributed among the poorest members of society (who are often in rural areas and in agriculture in developing countries, which tend to be less affected) versus the less poor, and how relief measures are able to temporarily replace incomes. But over time, these uneven impacts are likely to widen opportunity gaps, leading to lower social mobility and a more unequal distribution of income and wealth, if adequate policy measures are not adopted. A society with larger pre-existing disparities will experience more uneven impacts and recovery, with worse implications for equality of opportunities over time. As disadvantaged groups suffer larger, longer-lasting shocks, they are also more likely to adopt coping mechanisms that: harm their future economic prospects, reduce social mobility across generations, and cause disparities in inequality and wealth to persist and even widen over time. Recent evidence from past pandemics suggests fiscal policy has not mitigated increases in inequality, highlighting the need for a concerted policy effort.</p>

Development Co-operation
Report 2020

OECD;
Annual report

How did development cooperation trends change in 2020? This annual report finds that C19 has reversed progress on meeting the Sustainable Development Goals as over 100 million more people will enter into extreme poverty and 270 million people will go hungry in 2021. Some estimate that C19 will erode all human development gains made in the last decade. For many of the world's poorest and most vulnerable, C19 is not the primary threat to their lives and livelihoods, but it is exacerbating pre-existing inequalities which shape the distribution and severity of multidimensional impacts. While budget strains limit policy responses.

OECD countries account for 84% of total global funding raised to respond to C19, and developing countries still face a funding gap of at least USD1 trillion. All of the issues that development co-operation was grappling with pre-2020— increasing inequality and marginalised populations, women's economic empowerment and gender-based violence, precarious employment, humanitarian crises, and rising displacement— left populations and countries exposed when C19, though forecasted, bore down on an unprepared world.

C19 has tested development co-operation by disrupting working practices, partnerships and business models and putting unprecedented strain on public finances, yet donor agencies showed impressive agility— e.g. in reallocating budgeted funds and raising new resources. Initial estimates in this report suggest that Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members mobilised USD12 billion for C19. Yet the global economic downturn makes it uncertain whether ODA volumes can meet growing needs, and many 2020 appeals for funding missed their targets. Limited evidence and data sharing meant that decision-making faced extreme uncertainty. And while international co-ordination has been successful in some ways, e.g. in

		<p>creating the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator for the development, production, and equitable access to C19 tests, treatments, and vaccines, the international community struggled to broker co-ordinated responses and actions.</p> <p>For resilience building, it recommends international development actors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate climate action in multi-sector development strategies. • Provide long-term support for country systems. • Avoid a development finance crisis. International finance • Step up collective action to provide and protect global public goods. • Develop strategies and contingencies for international crisis co-ordination.
<p>Health-system equity, egalitarian democracy and COVID-19 outcomes: An empirical analysis</p>	<p>Krishna Chaitanya Vadlamannati, Arusha Cooray & Indra de Soysa; Scandinavian Journal of Public Health; Journal article</p>	<p>Does the success of C19 responses vary according to whether a country's form of democracy is more 'egalitarian'? Using econometric analysis, this paper finds that: more equitable access to health care increases testing rates and lowers C19 death rates. However, broader egalitarian governance, measured as egalitarian democracy, shows the opposite effect. It concludes that factors associated with health-care capacity to reach and treat matter more than broader societal factors associated with social capital and trust.</p>

Extra papers – without summary

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type
How to Enhance Organisation Functioning in a Pandemic: COVID-19 Lessons in Leadership	Paul Englert; World Scientific Publishing; Book chapter
Critical Speech in Southeast Asian Grey Literature During the COVID-19 Pandemic	Stewart Manley; Human Rights Law Review; Journal article
The COVID-19 experience in the Fiji Islands: some lessons for crisis management for small island developing states of the Pacific region and beyond	Rup Singh, Sumeet Lal, Mohsin Khan, Arvind Patel, Ronal Chand & Devendra Kumar Jain; New Zealand Economic Papers; Journal article
Role of Islamic Finance during COVID-19	Tanvir Alam; European Journal of Islamic Finance; Journal article
China's Influence on Conflict Dynamics in South Asia	United States Institute of Peace (USIP) Senior Study Group; USIP; Report
Race and Ethnicity in Pandemic Times	Benjamin Opratko, Manuela Bojadžijev, Sanja M. Bojanić, Irena Fiket, Alexander Harder, Stefan Jonsson, Mirjana Nećak, Anders Neegard, Celina Ortega Soto, Gazela Pudar Draško, Birgit Sauer & Kristina Stojanović Čehajić; Ethnic and Racial Studies; Journal article

CONFLICT

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type	Summary
<p>From crisis to opportunity for sustainable peace: A joint perspective on responding to the health, employment and peacebuilding challenges in times of COVID-19</p>	<p>ILO, Interpeace, UN DPPA & WHO; Report</p>	<p>How to harness the C19 crisis for positive peace outcomes? This reports finds that C19 and its responses can exacerbate grievances, increase mistrust, discrimination and perceptions of injustice over access to health services, decent jobs and livelihoods in countries affected by armed conflict or at risk of violent outbreaks. Thus, C19 responses should be part of long-term recovery plans. It identifies responses that can build resilience to both conflict and pandemics including: scaling up existing public employment programmes and social protection schemes, and increasing investment in productive infrastructure. E.g. emergency public works schemes that upgrade infrastructure for primary health care and access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene. While inclusive health and socio-economic responses can give a voice to local actors in decision-making and encourage local responses, which could contribute to increased trust in government institutions and among groups.</p>
<p>COVID-19: Supporting Forcibly Displaced People in the Middle East and East Africa</p>	<p>Social Science in Humanitarian Action; Background paper</p>	<p>How to address the needs of displaced people during C19? This report details the disproportionate effects of C19 on forcibly displaced populations, and examples of how C19 responses are building on existing local social and aid delivery structures particular to the displacement context, including: using displaced peoples' already existing communication channels with politicians and humanitarian agencies for C19 information; leveraging the legitimacy of, and relationships between, medical providers to coordinate responses across fragmented systems; and building on long-term</p>

		<p>relationships between providers and patients to maintain remote services for people with chronic conditions. Refugee-led organisations have also addressed gaps e.g. in providing food.</p> <p>To address the vulnerabilities of displaced populations through localised C19 responses the paper recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting holistic public health responses which address multiple C19 vulnerabilities, avoid complete lockdowns, protect peoples' existing homes and safe spaces, and ensure border controls balance the need to control transmission with protecting asylum rights. • Using research to tailor responses; • Adopting a whole-of-society approach; • Supporting organisations led by displaced people; and • Supporting local peace-making and ceasefire efforts.
<p>The Role of Local Government in the Prevention of Violence against Women and Girls during the COVID-19 Pandemic</p>	<p>Valesca Lima; Bulletin of Latin American Research; Journal article</p>	<p>How to address gender based violence during C19? This article highlights the vital role local governments play, with effective responses including: investment in online care services; temporary shelters for victims; psychosocial support; and a strong messages from law enforcement that aggressors will be prosecuted. Besides providing services, local and national governments need to improve and facilitate data collection. And women must be involved in leading the C19 recovery.</p>

Extra papers – without summary

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type
COVID-19 and the Limitations of Official Responses to Gender-Based Violence in Latin America: Evidence from Ecuador	Andrea Espinoza Carvajal; Bulletin of Latin American Research; Journal article
The COVID-19 Outbreak in North Africa: A Legal Analysis	Francesco Tamburini; Journal of Asian and African Studies; Journal article

BLOGS & NEWS ARTICLES

GOVERNANCE

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type	Summary
Africa: 'Repression & resistance are two key trends heading into 2021'	Nic Cheeseman; The Africa Report; Blog	<p>What are key trends to watch for in Africa in 2021? The blog highlights that the real political story of 2020 is not the containment of C19, but the way in which this set in motion twin processes of repression and resistance. These trends are likely to intensify in 2021 as C19's economic impact has hit Africa hard. As governments have increased spending on healthcare, revenues from tourism had fallen sharply, pushing an increasing number of country's towards a debt crisis. Zambia has already defaulted and others are likely to follow.</p> <p>Contrary to expectations, C19 did not decimate Africa as it did Europe and North America, due to early government shutdowns, the rapid closure of borders, younger populations, and warmer climates.</p>

		This is a significant success story, reminding us that African states can act effectively and decisively when it is in their interests to do so. However, effective C19 responses came at the cost of human rights and democracy, further entrenching authoritarian regimes.
Calling for fair distribution of Covid-19 vaccines to avoid gender setback	Plan International; Blog	How could access to vaccines shape gender inequality? The article highlights that unless the vaccine is fairly distributed across the world, women and girls' rights will be at risk, due to them being disproportionately affected by C19's impacts including gender-based violence, being married against their will, economic downturns, job losses and school closures; Impacts that have already worsened existing gender inequalities.

Extra blogs & news articles – without summary

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type
Africa's Road to Recovery in 2021 is a Fresh Start	Alex Vines; Chatham House; Blog
COVID-19 impacts youth voices and hampers participation	UNESCO; Blog
Corruption, Covid-19 and Inequality: the vital role of companies in preventing this deadly mixture	Transparency International; Blog
Analyzing Africa's Second Wave of COVID-19	Africa Center for Strategic Studies; Blog

CONFLICT

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type	Summary
<p>10 Conflicts to Watch in 2021</p>	<p>Robert Malley; ICG; Commentary</p>	<p>What conflicts are at risk of worsening during 2021 and why? This blog highlights that if there were a contest for the 2020 event with the most far-reaching implications for global peace and security, the field would be crowded. In regards to C19 it recognises that when C19 first broke out, many feared it would have immediate, potentially devastating consequence in developing countries facing deadly conflict. Although several low-income countries were hit badly, many were not; diplomatic activity, international mediation, peacekeeping missions, and financial support to vulnerable populations suffered, but it's questionable whether C19 dramatically affected the trajectory of major wars, be they in Afghanistan, Libya, Syria, Yemen, or elsewhere.</p> <p>Yet the longer-term ramifications are a different matter, with a global economic crisis without precedent since World War II, and an additional 150 million people being driven below the extreme poverty line. Although income levels do not directly correlate with conflict, violence is more likely during periods of economic volatility.</p>

VIDEOS & PODCASTS

Title/URL	Name of author; publisher; publication type	Summary
Conflict, Climate, and Covid-19	Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)	In this audio, the CSIS hosts a discussion on the International Rescue Committee's newly released 2021 Emergency Watchlist, and how nearly every watchlist country is facing the triple-threat of ongoing conflict, climate change, and the Covid-19 pandemic.

EVENTS

25 January – 14:00-15:30, [COVID-19 and its Impact on Gender, Justice and Security](#), LSE. This event explores: How have responses to C19 affected the fight for gender justice and inclusive security? What are the impacts of the crisis on political and social rights agendas? Has C19 exacerbated the closing down of civil society space? How are gender roles and conceptions of masculinity challenged as a result of the reconfiguration of public and private spaces? And, perhaps most importantly, as we head towards a post-C19 reckoning: does the moment of crisis brought about by the pandemic offer opportunities for positive change?

26 January - 13:15-14:15, [Coronavirus and the Politics of Science](#), University of Birmingham. This event explores C19 responses in a number of case studies (Brazil, Britain, China, Germany, Italy, Russia, USA), by comparing responses, it explores the differences in the politics of information, communication, and public policies seeking to balance health and economic objectives.

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

COVID-19 Humanitarian - COVID-19 and Humanitarian Crises

COVID-19 High-Frequency Monitoring Dashboard – World Bank

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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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