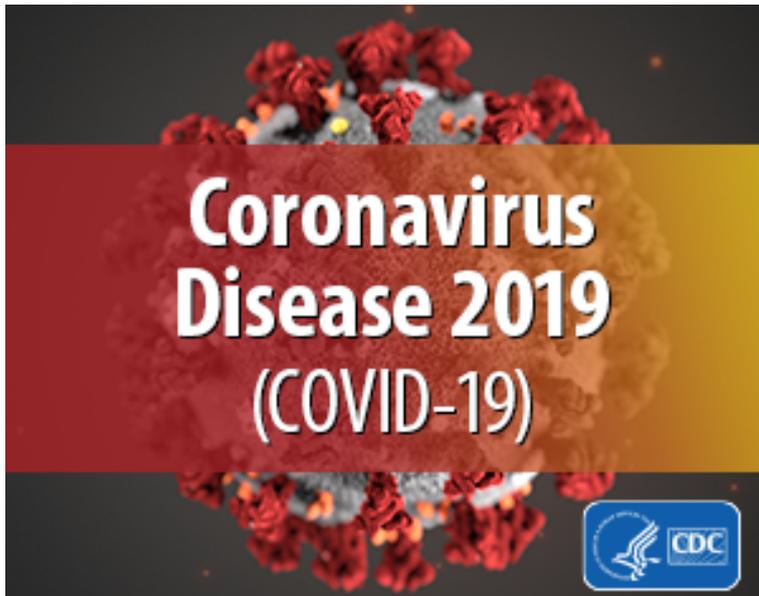


DIA NEWSLETTER

DEMOCRACY IN AFRICA MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

MAY 2020 • ISSUE 3



COVID-19 IN AFRICA: GOING BEYOND LOCKDOWNS VS. LIVELIHOODS

The COVID-19 outbreak pandemic has rapidly re-shaped ways of life in Africa and across the world. As the pandemic continues to spread in Africa, governments are faced with dilemmas. Speculative analyses have warned that with given the continent's poor health systems and lack of ventilators, the pandemic may cause more destruction than what malaria, Ebola and cholera. But anthropologists and economists have also cautioned that given the informal nature of many African economies, and the number of people that live at or below the poverty line, a tight restrictions could harm as many people as the virus itself. African governments are thus grappling with whether they should prioritise containing the virus through lockdowns and risk threatening livelihoods or risk losing lives to COVID-19 while prioritising livelihoods.

Glanis Changachirere argues that resolving this problem, and avoiding it in future, requires us to tackle the underlying structural issues of governance that have consistently undermined the delivery of effective public services in many countries in post-colonial Africa. Read more [here](#)

MOST READ STORIES

POLICY LESSONS FROM
COVID-19 IN AFRICA

#BOOKCLUB: RURAL DEMOCRACY
- ELECTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT
IN AFRICA

THE PROBLEM OF
LEADERSHIP IN AFRICA

THE HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE
TO COVID-19 IN SOMALIA WILL
MAKE THINGS WORSE

NEED FEEDBACK ON YOUR
CHAPTER OR ARTICLE? WE CAN
HELP ...

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“

*We're not just fighting an
epidemic; we're fighting
an infodemic*

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus of the WHO

”

BOOK OF THE MONTH

How have African rulers responded to the introduction of democratic electoral competition? The prevailing narrative of democracy in Africa is pretty grim, and as ever, where there's smoke there's fire; elections in many African countries are marred by violence and fraud. But while these unfortunate practices may be widespread this story is incomplete, because Robin Harding shows that African rulers have also responded to the introduction of electoral competition by seeking to win votes through the provision and distribution of public goods and services. More [here](#)

OXFORD

RURAL DEMOCRACY

Elections and Development in Africa

Robin Harding

OXFORD STUDIES IN AFRICAN POLITICS & INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

PODCAST: DEMOCRACY IN TIMES OF CRISIS



Listen to this great Pacific Council podcast about democracies in times of crisis featuring DiA's very own Fromagehomme, aka Nic Cheeseeman.

As countries around the world respond to a pandemic, many democratically elected leaders have taken extreme, even undemocratic, measures. In many countries, including Hungary, Brazil, Israel, France – and a number of countries in Africa – there is concern that leaders and lawmakers may use the crisis for political gains. These uncertain times prompt the question: How do democracies fare in times of crisis?

Listen for free [here](#).

THINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR ...

Africa. A number of countries have started to take steps to ease their lockdowns. This will please those who have been campaigning against restrictions on the basis that they are unfair on those who depend on the informal economies - but do these steps risk an increase in cases?

Corona denialism. Governments in Burundi, Madagascar and Tanzania have refused to take restrictive measures to contain the disease - and the Tanzanian government is now buying a herbal "cure" from its Madagascan counterpart. Tight media restrictions made it difficult to know the extent of the challenge in Tanzania, amidst suggestions that there are an increasing number of deaths. Will the next few weeks make it increasingly difficult for leaders in these countries to sustain their position - or will COVID19 leave these states relatively untouched?

Democracy in Africa is dedicated to building a bridge between academics, policymakers, practitioners and citizens. We focus in particular on encouraging academics to share their work on African politics in accessible formats, encouraging engagement and wide-ranging debate. Check out the website and find out how to contribute at : <http://democracyinafrica.org/>.