

# D+C

DIGITAL MONTHLY

DEVELOPMENT AND  
COOPERATION

ENTWICKLUNG UND  
ZUSAMMENARBEIT

International  
Journal

ISSN  
2366-7257

D+C

E+Z

2022 10

## ECONOMY

In Pakistan, the informal sector employs almost 75% of the workforce

## REFERENDUM

Why Chileans voted against the draft for a new constitution

## PEACEBUILDING

Germany needs to re-design efforts in Mali and Niger



# Pandemic impacts

## Editorial

- 3 **SABINE BALK**  
Heed pandemic lessons in climate crisis

## Magazine

- 4 **ANDRÉ DE MELLO E SOUZA**  
Brazil's democracy is at risk in the presidential election in early October
- 6 **MARVA KHAN**  
Why the informal sector matters so much in Pakistan
- 8 **JÖRG DÖBEREINER**  
The opportunities offered by Uganda's liberal approach to refugees
- 10 **DASMANI LAARY / MASTHEAD (IMPRINT)**  
Nowadays: Economic recovery in Ghana

## Debate

- 11 **IMRAN MUKHTAR**  
Pakistan's devastating floods show that climate adaptation is indispensable
- 12 **EVA-MARIA VERFÜRTH**  
Why Chile's voters rejected constitution in referendum
- 13 **ANTONIA WITT AND SIMONE SCHNABEL**  
Germany's Federal Government needs new and coherent strategies for Niger and Mali
- 14 **HANS DEMBOWSKI**  
In regard to climate crisis and the defence of democracy, US President Joe Biden is making progress

## Focus: Pandemic impacts

- 16 **CONTRIBUTORS FROM AROUND THE WORLD**  
How the Covid-19 crisis has changed daily life in our countries
- 19 **SAMIR ABI**  
In Togo, lockdown measures led to protests, but eventually to better social protection too
- 21 **GLORY MAKENA AND BRIANNA GUIDORZI**  
Gender specific violence has increased during the pandemic, for example in South Sudan
- 23 **MAHWISH GUL**  
The digital divide thwarts educational opportunities of marginalised people, as became evident in Pakistan
- 25 **INTERVIEW WITH EYRAM TAWIA**  
Ghanaian computer-game entrepreneur sees his company Leti Arts emerging stronger from the crisis
- 27 **KATHRIN BERENSMANN**  
Covid-19 and war in Ukraine have made sovereign-debt problems worse for many governments
- 29 **INTERVIEW WITH MANZUR KADIR AHMED**  
Due to Bangladesh's development progress in past decades, the pandemic caused less harm than initially feared
- 31 **ANDREAS BURGER**  
Stimulus programmes should have done more to drive eco-friendly transformation
- 33 **JANE ESCHER**  
Relevant reading: OMCT on deteriorating human-rights situation in prisons

## FOCUS

# Pandemic impacts

Covid-19 triggered an unprecedented global crisis. It is too early to fully assess all impacts, but some lessons are obvious. Strong infrastructure, including in the health and education sectors, makes nations more resilient. Moreover, it proved feasible to take innovative approaches in situations of unexpected need. On the downside, public finances deteriorated in many places and human rights were disregarded too often.

**Title:** Selling protective personal equipment in Bangladesh in 2020.  
**Photo:** picture-alliance/ZUMAPRESS.com/Md Rafayat Haque





 Our focus section on “pandemic impacts” starts on page 15. It pertains to the UN’s 3<sup>rd</sup> Sustainable Development Goal (SDG): good health and well-being. It also has a bearing on several other SDGs.

educational institutions and various social services.

In most countries, people now think the corona crisis is over. Broad-based vaccination campaigns have led to fewer infections and – what is even more important – fewer severe coronavirus cases as well as fewer deaths. Some political leaders, prominently including US President Joe Biden, have declared the pandemic to be over. We must hope that is true, given that, at least in theory, further mutations may yet cause dreadful suffering.

What the pandemic has certainly taught us, however, is that we must be prepared and that determined action is feasible. At the same time, global coordination was far from perfect. The international community must heed these lessons and apply them to climate change. The global common good is far more important than nationalist aspirations. As Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has exacerbated many problems, it actually amounts to a war on humankind as a whole.

## Pandemic lessons

The Covid-19 pandemic was an unprecedented global emergency. Hardly anyone had believed that anything like this could happen. Only a few, farsighted scientists had warned that the zoonotic diseases, which are transmitted from animals to humans, are becoming more common and might develop rather dangerous strains.

Members of our species tend to not pay much attention to gloomy predictions, even if those predictions are based on science. The common pattern is that we simply hope the worst will not come to pass. Indeed, we tend to underestimate impacts of global heating too, in spite of the science. The climate crisis requires similarly stringent action as the pandemic did, but so far, precious few governments dare to act with the needed determination.

The full truth is that climate change and Covid-19 are interrelated phenomena in several ways. Global heating is making zoonotic diseases more likely. As local climates are changing, animal species are shifting their habitats to cooler places, bringing along germs and viruses. When those pathogens infect local species, mutations may be the result – with potentially devastating impacts on the health of both animals and humans.

On the other hand, there was reason to hope that limited mobility during the pandemic would make people reconsider travelling habits, with traffic-induced emissions declining long-term. Three years after the pandemic started, we now see that this was an illusion. Yes, energy use and carbon emissions did drop briefly during lockdowns. There was, however, no dent in the long-term trend.

It is even more sobering that billions of euros worth of stimulus programs were hardly used for the environmental transformation humanity needs. Policymakers could have done more to promote renewable energy, sustainable transport and energy efficiency. According to Global Recovery Observatory, only three percent of the stimulus measures had a positive impact on natural resources, while 17% contributed to their depletion. In regard to carbon emissions, the negative and positive impacts were about equal. Important opportunities to make our economies more sustainable were thus missed.

Another undeniable insert is that countries with strong infrastructure coped better with the new disease than those with poor infrastructure. In this context, infrastructure includes health care facilities,



**SABINE BALK**

is a member of the editorial team of D+C Development and Cooperation / E+Z Entwicklung und Zusammenarbeit.

[euз.editor@dandc.eu](mailto:euз.editor@dandc.eu)



Eyram Tawia from Ghana was one of the first in Africa to start developing computer games in Accra in 2009. Since then, his company Leti Arts has been growing. His games specialise in teaching African history in an easy way. The Corona pandemic hit him hard like all other companies, anyway he was able to generate many positive things from the crisis. In our interview starting on page 25, he tells how his company recovered, which new work processes he introduced and which projects he is working on now.

► You’ll find all contributions of our focus section plus related ones on our website.



Anti-Bolsonaro, pro-environment protesters in Rio de Janeiro in 2019.

#### RULES OF GOVERNANCE

## Brazil's democracy is at risk

**Brazil's upcoming presidential election scheduled for 2 October (with a possible run-off on 30 October) will certainly be the most consequential since democratisation in the mid-1980s and perhaps ever. Brazil's young democracy is under attack. As has happened elsewhere – including in the USA – the elected head of state is leading the assault on democratic institutions.**

By André de Mello e Souza

President Jair Bolsonaro never made any effort to hide his authoritarian leanings. As a member of Congress, he told a local TV network that, should he ever be elected president, he would lead a coup the next day. As head of state, he has catered to the interests of the military and police. He likes to speak of “his” army, and pretends he enjoys its support whenever he challenges the constitution and the courts.

Bolsonaro has also mobilised radical groups against Supreme Court justices and political opponents. Election polls indicate about one third of voters support him. The radical core is much smaller, but very noisy. The president has done what he could to make access to guns easier, and the number of Brazilians with fire arms has skyrocketed since 2019. He has a habit of copying former US President Donald Trump. The insurrection in the US Capitol on 6 January 2021 is a dark omen. Should Bolsonaro lose the election, he is likely to attempt a coup. He will certainly instigate violence.

Bolsonaro has done his best to dismantle Brazil's system of checks and balances, undermining the independence of institutions designed to oversee the executive branch of government. According to political scientists, the greatest threat to democracy today is not generals who want to grab power, but elected leaders who gradu-

ally but constantly keep undermining institutions. It is no coincidence that the book “How democracies die” by Harvard professors Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt has become a bestseller in Brazil.

Bolsonaro has been casting doubt over Brazil's electronic voting system. There actually has never been any evidence of fraud. The system is transparent and scrutinised by the public. A well-funded and targeted disinformation campaign on social and conventional media is nonetheless boosting Bolsonaro's fraudulent claims.

If Bolsonaro wins re-election, he will probably keep removing institutional barriers to dictatorial rule. That is the pattern that is evident in other countries such as Turkey, Hungary or India, where populist authoritarians have been confirmed in office. It is more likely, however, that Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, the former president who is now running against Bolsonaro, will win. Bolsonaro will not concede defeat easily. The implication is that Brazil will probably see a scenario similar to what happened in Washington on 6 January 2021.

A demise of democracy brought about by Bolsonaro would have international and even global implications. Indeed, the fu-

ture of humankind is at stake, since Brazil is the world's most biodiverse country and its forests are crucial for controlling global warming. Bolsonaro has relentlessly worked on defunding, incapacitating and blocking environmental agencies. Deforestation has accelerated under him. Scientists warn that the Amazon is close to the tipping point, beyond which the rainforest loses the capacity to recover and most likely will become a savannah or even a desert.

With more than 210 million people, moreover, Brazil is the world's fifth most populous democracy. Its end would set a dangerous precedent for South America, where it accounts for roughly half of the population, the economy and the territory. A Bolsonaro dictatorship would represent a victory for extreme right populism worldwide.

Protecting democracy in Brazil requires acknowledging that it is in danger. The international community should pay attention. Fortunately, Bolsonaro cannot

count on the support of any of the world's superpowers. Not even fellow BRICS members China and Russia seem interested in worsening global instability by promoting him.

Nonetheless, an explicit message from the democratic western governments would be helpful. They should state in very clear terms that Brazil's constitution must be respected and that attempts to subvert the rules of democracy are unacceptable. The US embassy in Brasília did well to point out that the Brazilian electoral system is an international model. It is also crucial to dissuade Brazil's military leadership from any temptations to support a coup. That Lloyd Austin, the US secretary of defence, visited Brazil in July, certainly served that purpose.

In response to Russia's attack on Ukraine, western governments have introduced massive and unprecedented economic sanctions. They could state that they will use that arsenal to defend Brazil's democra-

cy. To a large extent, Bolsonaro relies on reactionary agribusiness. The EU should state clearly that Brazil's commodity exports will not be allowed into its market unless they adhere to environmental standards and do not contribute to deforestation. Those conditions should also apply to agreements with the Mercosur group, the South American trade organisation to which Brazil belongs.

Pre-emptive measures by foreign powers can help to deter Bolsonaro and his supporters. They increase the cost of establishing authoritarian rule – and they may even help to assure a peaceful transition of power in Brazil, which is, after all, the most important feature of a democracy.



**ANDRÉ DE MELLO E SOUZA** is an economist at Ipea (Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada), a federal think tank in Brazil.

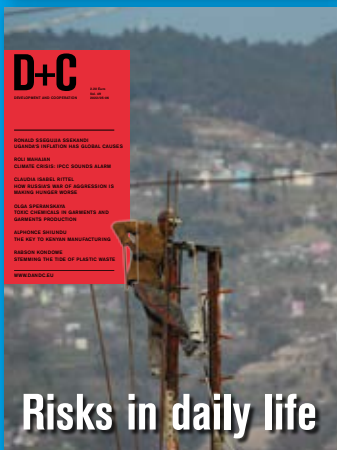
*andre.demelloesouza@alumni.stanford.edu*  
*Twitter: @A\_MelloeSouza*

# FREE PRINT SUBSCRIPTIONS

We are updating our mailing list. Any institution involved in global development affairs can currently subscribe to the print edition of D+C free of charge, and so can any person who has a serious interest in the matter in a professional or volunteering capacity. To get free copies of our future print issues, please sign up at:

[www.dandc.eu/en/dc-subscription](http://www.dandc.eu/en/dc-subscription)

The print issues do not include everything we post on our website ([www.dandc.eu](http://www.dandc.eu)), but they are useful in terms of documenting important aspects of global debate long term.





This informal wool-processing employee lost three fingertips in an accident.

#### INFORMAL SECTOR

## 75% of the workforce, one third of GDP

**Informal and home-based work are prominent features of many developing economies, including in Pakistan. This sector is largely undocumented and operates outside the regulatory framework. Women are affected in particular.**

By Marva Khan

A large informal sector has several important downsides. Persons involved in what is also called the “shadow” or “grey” economy, typically do not benefit from governmental social-protection systems such as pension schemes or health insurance. The businesses concerned, moreover, do not pay taxes and thus do not help to boost governments’ fiscal power. Additionally, non-application of labour rights and environment regulations to informal activities can cause considerable harm.

As is true in many Asian and African countries, Pakistan has a large informal sec-

tor. The World Bank estimates that the informal sector contributes a little more than one-third to the country’s gross domestic product. According to the Asian Development Bank, more than 90% of the businesses with 50 employees or fewer are operating informally.

According to Pakistan’s official Labour Force Survey of 2020/21, the informal sector employs almost 75% of the working-age population. A significant share is busy on farms, which is typical of economies depending on agriculture. One implication is that informal work is slightly more prevalent in rural areas, but it still accounts for almost 69% in urban areas. Some kinds of particularly unpleasant work – such as the sorting and recycling of garbage – are mostly done informally as well.

Many factors have contributed to the growth of the informal sector over the years. The most important is that formally registered businesses and government agencies

have not been able to absorb the rapidly growing workforce, which is a direct consequence of the “youth bulge”. Pakistan has a comparatively high birth rate. In 2017/18 it was an average 3.6 children per women, and almost two-thirds of its 220 million people are between the ages 15 and 33.

Ease of entry and exit of workers in informal businesses make such ventures lucrative. Around 40% live below the poverty line, and 75% of these people are women. People are often forced to earn money in informal occupations while hoping to find a more rewarding formal-sector job. Pakistan is currently struggling with a serious economic downturn and high inflation, so many people are increasingly desperate and willing to accept tough labour conditions.

Moreover, many women work in informal occupations. This is a global pattern, and it is reinforced in Pakistan because many women appreciate the opportunity to pursue income-generating activities at home. Such work is invisible to the public. Conservative households can make it difficult to leave the home, but families often depend on female members contributing to the household income. On the other hand, some women do play visible roles, including as leaders of informal businesses.

In some cases, moreover, people actually prefer to keep things informal. The state administration is known for red tape and tedious procedures, so it is sometimes easier to simply avoid dealing with cumbersome legal processes.

As a general rule, informal businesses are small and labour-intensive. Profits and wages tend to be meagre. A major issue is that informal entrepreneurs struggle to access credit. In Pakistan, however, things have improved to some extent due to efforts made by microfinance institutions (MFIs). Some of them are run by civil-society organisations and faith-based initiatives, others by federal and other government agencies.

A prominent microfinance success story is the Akhuwat Foundation, established by Dr Amjad Saqib. It has distributed the equivalent of approximately \$900 million and boasts a repayment rate of almost 100%.

MFIs have been making access to financial services easier. Some even offer interest-free loans. Financing, moreover, often goes along with technical support, capacity building and benefits for marginalised com-

munities. Many support programmes are systematically designed to benefit women and prioritise this target group accordingly.

Many serious problems nonetheless haunt the informal sector. An important reason is that protective laws are not only bypassed, but often unknown to people involved. Wages are not paid regularly, for example. Occupational safety is poor, so accidents happen. There is no sick or maternity leave, and workers do not get vacations. Child labour persists in some places. Things become especially murky when subcontractors are involved.

Government institutions are aware of these issues. Some legislative efforts have been made, for example in the province of Sindh. The Sindh Home-Based Workers Act of 2018 was designed to safeguard the rights of informal workers. It has established:

- a fund for home-based workers,
- an arbitration committee and
- a system for tracking orders.

The law offers protection against the non-payment of wages. However, it only applies to one province which is home to around one-quarter of Pakistanis. Moreover, there is little awareness of the law even in Sindh, so enforcement continues to be an issue.

Exploitation can indeed be brutal, but it would be a mistake to believe that only the

owners of informal businesses are to blame. Many of them live precarious lives themselves. Due to low productivity, profits stay low too. Owners get undocumented, oral orders, so they do not have much certainty of being paid reliably and on time themselves. They lack options for enforcing agreements made with clients.

### COVID-19

When the Covid-19 pandemic started, the fragility of informal businesses made them highly susceptible. Sudden lockdowns meant that many activities had to be suspended immediately. Even when the raw materials could still be processed at home, access to inputs became difficult. According to Asia Foundation, a San Francisco-based institution, the profits of Pakistan's informal businesses dropped by almost two-thirds from March 2020 to March 2021. Accordingly, 60% of the informal workforce was laid off temporarily. Moreover, a quarter of the businesses cut wages to sustain operations. Women were affected in particular.

The pandemic forced many enterprises to revisit and revamp their business models. Not all relevant leaders are literate, but many started to use social-media plat-

form like Facebook and Instagram for gaining access to larger markets. The platforms also helped businesses connect with one another, making it easier to source inputs, for example, or to cooperate on fulfilling specific orders. While the pandemic caused much pain, some of the surviving businesses have become stronger.

At the same time, cyber-crime has increased incrementally since the first lockdown. The Digital Rights Foundation, a Pakistani digital-rights organisation, reckons that 70% of these offences were against women, who are more vulnerable for many reasons, including being on average more poorly educated than men.

Cyber-crime made life harder for struggling informal businesswomen, many of whom also had to cope with other gender-related pandemic issues. As was true around the world, the levels of domestic violence increased, for example, and kids, who no longer went to school, needed more attention.



**MARVA KHAN**  
is assistant professor of law at LUMS (Lahore University of Management Sciences) and co-founder of the Pakistani

Feminist Judgments Project.  
[marva.khan@lums.edu.pk](mailto:marva.khan@lums.edu.pk)

**D+C/E+C is interested in African contributors sharing their views. If you want to write for us, please send a short proposal to [euz.editor@dandc.eu](mailto:euz.editor@dandc.eu), spelling out your core message and – if needed – supporting arguments.**

www.twitter.com/forumdc

Editorial office D+C

D+C

**Follow us on Twitter!**

To stay in touch with what is happening on our website, follow us on twitter.





Refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo on the Ugandan border in February 2022.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

## Refugees bring opportunities

**More refugees are currently living in Uganda than in any other African country. Experts point out that there are downsides as well as upsides.**

By Jörg Döbereiner

In August, according to the UN Refugee Agency UNHCR, Uganda was hosting more than 1.5 million people who have fled from other countries. The nation with not quite 50 million people has thus become an important refuge internationally and the most important one in Africa.

Uganda is politically stable. People are fleeing from two neighbouring countries: the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan. Conflicts keep flaring up in

both countries, so about 100,000 persons have crossed the Ugandan border this year according to data from the UNHCR and the Ugandan government. Refugees from other countries, including Burundi, Somalia and Rwanda, live in Uganda as well.

Uganda has been welcoming people in need for many years, and its approach to refugees is quite progressive. They are allowed to work and to move freely within the country. Many do not live isolated in camps but in local communities. The children go to the same primary schools. The government has indeed given land to some refugees so they can cultivate fields.

The background of this liberal attitude is that many Ugandans themselves have a history of flight from their country. When

the Idi Amin dictatorship collapsed in 1979, tens of thousands escaped to what is now South Sudan.

### HUGE CHALLENGES

National and international aid agencies are lending support to Ugandan communities which are hosting refugees. Nonetheless, the situation is tense in many places. The nation, after all, is facing various difficulties, including, most recently, fast inflation, which is driving up the cost of living.

On behalf of the German development agency GIZ, Roselyn Vusia is working in the West Nile region in north-western Uganda. Her project promotes vocational training for young refugees and local women. Vusia shared insights at an academic conference organised in Kampala in early September by PEGNet (Poverty Reduction, Equity and Growth Network, see box next page). According to her, some of the most important challenges linked to the presence of refugees are:



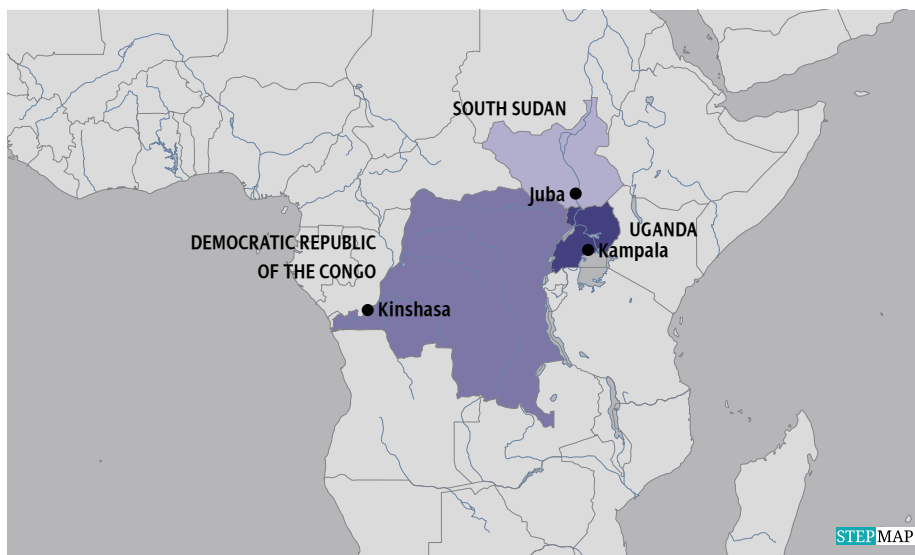
- conflicts over who should have access to resources and social services provided to refugees,
- security issues,
- overcrowded classrooms in host communities,
- disputes concerning funding and
- poor infrastructure.

According to her, there are environmental problems too, for example when refugees cut down trees because they need firewood.

In the eyes of Tony Odokonyero, unsanitary conditions make the spread of diseases more likely in many places. He specialises in health issues at the Economic Policy Research Centre (EPCR), a Kampala-based think tank. He also expresses concern for maternal health, bemoaning the lack of professional staff, appropriate facilities and good equipment. Cesarean sections are thus all too often impossible.

### POSITIVE IMPACTS

There are upsides to hosting refugees too, however. Philip Verwimp, a development economist from the Université libre de Bruxelles, focuses on the potential positive impacts. In Tanzania, for example, many local households benefited from the presence of Rwandan refugees, as the professor reports. Farm productivity increased



due to affordable Rwandan workers, so several farms switched from subsistence agriculture to commercial agriculture. In Verwimp's view, Uganda can benefit too, for example, when refugees cultivate so far unused land.

The scholar points out that the approach to refugees in other world regions, including the EU, differs quite a bit from the Ugandan one. "We are not tapping the refugee's potential," he says. According to him, they should be included in society, rather than accommodated in the isolation of

camps. As consumers and producers, they would then contribute to the development of national economies. Verwimp argues that refugees' inclusion is really a cultural issue, not an economic one.



**JÖRG DÖBEREINER** is a member of the editorial team of *D+C Development and Cooperation / E+Z* *Entwicklung und*

*Zusammenarbeit.*  
[euz.editor@dandc.eu](mailto:euz.editor@dandc.eu)

## PEGNet's annual conferences

PEGNet is the acronym of the Poverty Reduction, Equity and Growth Network. The network is managed by the Kiel Institute for the World Economy. Its mission is to promote research cooperation with developing countries and to foster exchange between academic institutions and development agencies. Annual PEGNet conferences serve this purpose. This year's conference in Kampala in early September was the first one after the pandemic hiatus and co-organised by the

Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC), a think tank based in Kampala. The topic was: "Addressing fragility and conflict in developing countries".

PEGNet was launched in 2005 by the Kiel Institute, Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the GIZ, the KfW Development Bank and scholars from the universities of Göttingen and Frankfurt. It is funded by the BMZ. D+C/E+Z is a media partner of the annual PEGNet conferences. JD



Discussion panel during the 2022 PEGNet conference in Kampala, Uganda.

## Economic recovery in Ghana

Local businesses in Ghana continue to recover from the shocks caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. This is what a survey by the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) in collaboration with the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank indicates.

The survey provides critical information to help the government and other actors to monitor the effects of the pandemic on livelihoods. Like everywhere in the world, hotels and restaurants were some of the most affected businesses by the pandemic.

Approximately 36 % of businesses were forced to close, with 16 % remaining closed even after the lifting of lockdowns. Moreover, the survey found out that 46 % of enterprises reduced pay for about a quarter of their workforce (770,124 workers) while four percent (41,952 workers) were laid off.

The statistical body's findings mirror UNICEF's data that estimates almost 22 million Ghanaians suffering a drop in family income because of the pandemic. Despite the grim picture, the third wave data shows an improvement in the situation from data during earlier waves of Covid-19. Almost all (97.5 %) of the businesses were open in wave three again.

There is an improvement in employment too. Fortunately, only a few employees lost their jobs. One percent of

the workforce reported being laid off in the third wave, down from four percent during the first wave. 3.2 % of the workers reported cuts in their work hours as compared to 14.8 % in the first wave. Only 4.1 % of workers reported wage cuts as compared to 16.5 % previously. People on unpaid leave also reduced from 7.2 % to 0.8 %.

According to the survey, government's support had a positive impact on businesses. In 2021, a programme with 1.2 billion Ghanaian cedis (about € 125 million) was introduced to help medium and small enterprises affected by the coronavirus pandemic. However, Russia's current attack on Ukraine is causing new challenges. The resulting inflation is affecting the prices of basic goods such as food and fuel (petrol and diesel). Ghana is suffering from inflation and citizens are feeling it through daily hardship. The country has one of the lowest minimum wages in West Africa at 13.53 cedis (€ 1.35) per day.

Tax advisor and management consultant, Kofi Benteh Afful, explains: "Local goods do not produce inflation; what we are experiencing now is imported inflation, which impacts almost everything we buy." In his eyes, rising costs will not end soon, and individuals with low incomes will suffer the consequences mostly.



**DASMANI LAARY**  
is a journalist in Ghana.

[laarygna@gmail.com](mailto:laarygna@gmail.com)



## MASTHEAD / IMPRINT

### D+C DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION

Sustainable development requires global awareness and local action.

Vol. 49, 2022  
D+C is the identical twin of the German edition E+Z  
Internet: [www.DandC.eu](http://www.DandC.eu)  
ISSN 2366-7257  
The production of this Digital Monthly was finalised on 29.09.2022.

D+C Development and Cooperation is funded by Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and commissioned by ENGAGEMENT GLOBAL. D+C does not serve as a governmental mouthpiece. Our mission is to provide a credible forum of debate, involving governments, civil society, the private sector and academia at an international level. D+C is the identical twin of E+Z Entwicklung und Zusammenarbeit, the German edition.

We invite people who work in different sectors and live all around the world to contribute to D+C/E+Z. The editors request that no unsolicited manuscripts be sent, but proposals for contributions are welcome. After editing manuscripts according to journalistic standards, we ask the authors to approve the final texts before publishing their items. As we edit interviews for clarity and brevity, we also ask our interviewees for approval of the final manuscripts to ensure we do not distort their message. That is standard practice in German journalism.

ENGAGEMENT GLOBAL gGmbH  
Service für Entwicklungsinitiativen  
Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 40  
53113 Bonn  
Phone: +49 (0) 2 28 2 07 17-0  
Fax: +49 (0) 2 28 2 07 17-150  
[www.engagement-global.de](http://www.engagement-global.de)

ADVISORY BOARD:  
Selmin Çalışkan, Prof. Dr. Anna-Katharina Hornidge,  
Prof. Dr. Katharina Michaelowa, Dr. Susanne Neubert, Bruno Wenn

PUBLISHER:  
Fazit Communication GmbH  
Executive directors: Jonas Grashey, Hannes Ludwig

ADDRESS OF THE PUBLISHER AND EDITORIAL OFFICE:  
Frankenallee 71-81, D-60327 Frankfurt am Main, Germany

This is also the legally relevant address of all indicated as responsible or entitled to represent them in this imprint.

EDITORIAL OFFICE:  
Dr. Hans Dembowski (DEM; editor-in-chief; responsible for content according to Germany's regulations), Sabine Balk (SB), Jörg Döbereiner (JD), Dagmar Wolf (DW; assistant), Maren van Treel (MVT; social media)  
Freelance support: Ronald Ssegujja Ssekandi (Nowadays column), Aviva Freudmann, Jan Walter Hofmann (layout), Malcolm Bell (translation), Claire Davis (translation)  
Phone: +49 (0) 69 75 91-31 10  
[euz.editor@dandc.eu](mailto:euz.editor@dandc.eu)

Disclaimer according to § 5,2 Hessian Law on the Freedom and Rights of the Press: The shareholder of the company is FAZ Fazit Stiftung.

ADVERTISING AND SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE:  
Fazit Communication GmbH  
c/o Cover Service GmbH & Co. KG  
PO Box 1363  
D-82034 Deisenhofen, Germany  
Phone: +49 (0) 89 8 58 53-8 32  
Fax: +49 (0) 89 8 58 53-6 28 32  
[fazit-com@cover-services.de](mailto:fazit-com@cover-services.de)

PRINTING:  
Westdeutsche Verlags- und Druckerei GmbH  
Kurfürstenstraße 46  
D-64546 Mörfelden-Walldorf, Germany

Opinions expressed by authors indicated in bylines do not necessarily reflect the views of ENGAGEMENT GLOBAL, the publisher or the editor and his team. Provided that they indicate the original source, third parties have the permission to republish in complete or abridged versions the manuscripts published by D+C Development and Cooperation and E+Z Entwicklung und Zusammenarbeit. However, those who do so are requested to send the editorial office two hard copies and/or the links to the respective webpages. This general permission does not apply to illustrations, maps and other items with explicitly and separately marked copyright disclaimers.

PRINT SUBSCRIPTION PRICES (INCL. MAILING CHARGES):  
single issue: € 2.20  
annual subscription, Germany: € 14.00  
annual subscription, world: € 18.00

## FLOODING

# Ill prepared for disaster

**Pakistan is suffering impacts of the human-made climate crisis, to which its people have hardly contributed. Policymakers, however, have irresponsibly failed to prepare the nation for the impacts.**

By Imran Mukhtar

Rain-induced floods have devastated homes, roads and crops. Education, health and electricity infrastructure is failing in most parts of Pakistan. The country's already fragile economy is on the verge of collapse.

The unexpected torrential rains started in the middle of June. They have affected over 33 million people. Hundreds lost their lives, according to Pakistan's National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA). Hundreds of thousands have lost their homes. They had to flee to relief camps and other safe places as cities, towns and villages were inundated.

Food prices have skyrocketed in view of lost harvests, so many people's food security has become precarious. In early September, about one third of the country was under water, so the next sowing season may also be affected. Experts reckon, moreover, that over 900,000 farm animals were lost.

The cash-strapped Pakistani government has only limited resources. International aid agencies have geared up their efforts to save the people from starvation, extreme weather and waterborne diseases. Visiting the country, UN Secretary-General António Guterres urged the world to help as a matter of "justice". Pakistan estimates the cost of flood damages at \$30 billion.

Pakistani officials and experts point out that the country is feeling the impacts of climate change, a human-made phenomenon its people have hardly contributed to. Pakistan's share of annual global greenhouse-gas emissions is not quite one percent though it accounts for almost three percent of the world population. By comparison, Germany is home to one percent of the world population, but emits two percent of climate-relevant gases.

The floods can indeed be called a "climate catastrophe". First, there was an unprecedented heat wave, followed by unusually strong monsoon rains. Parched earth does not allow water to percolate. Moreover, the high rate of glacier melting meant that more water than normal was running in the rivers.

In political and economic terms, Pakistan was ill prepared for this kind of disaster. Earlier this year, Prime Minister Imran Khan was ousted, and the new government relies on a multi-party coalition with many internal frictions. In late August, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) agreed to release \$1.1 billion in funding for the country to help it revive its economy.

Pakistani policymakers are demanding reparations, given that the nation can be considered an innocent victim of harm brought about by others. Pakistan's responsibility in terms of mitigating climate change is indeed tiny, but our authorities have paid far too little attention to adaptation. Poor governance, lack of planning and the lack of adaptation strategies have compounded this year's disaster.

It adds to the problems that municipal authorities are weak in Pakistan and rules

often remain unenforced. The floodwaters have destroyed many houses that were built illegally close to riverbeds. To a large extent, poverty makes people encroach and settle on unsuitable land. The mud huts that poor people rely on were washed away fast. In many places, however, brick structures, including houses, hotels and restaurants, stood in the wrong places and could not withstand the force of the floods either.

Similar damages occurred in 2010 when large parts of Pakistan were also submerged. The lessons were obviously not learned. Provincial governments and local authorities did not ensure implementation of relevant laws to stop such illegal construction activities. This time, there was even more water and it caused even more harm.

Successive national and provincial governments have failed to prepare the country. Policymakers have paid very little attention to the climate crisis. The nation urgently needs good adaptation policies and implementation must follow fast. Otherwise, future events are likely to prove even more devastating than the current floods. Our nation is not to blame for global heating, but unless we prepare better, we will not be able to cope with it.



**IMRAN MUKHTAR**  
is an Islamabad-based  
journalist.

[imranmukhtar@live.com](mailto:imranmukhtar@live.com)



People fleeing on submerged highway in Sindh Province.

CONSTITUTIONAL REFERENDUM IN CHILE

## Don't aim too high

Jubilant media and policy analysts were ready to celebrate the “world's most progressive constitution”, but more than 60% of Chile's citizens voted against it. The draft was overambitious and included regulations for two topics.

By Eva-Maria Verfürth

It was supposed to be brilliant, but Chile's people did not approve the new constitution in the referendum of 4 September. Its proponents had hoped it would become the crowning glory of a reform process that had

The current constitution dates back to 1980 and is a legacy of the Pinochet dictatorship, emphasising its authoritarian attitudes and free-market orthodoxy.

In May 2021, a constitutional assembly (Convención) was elected. In December, Gabriel Boric, a young leftist, won the presidential election. He took office in March as the successor of conservative leader Sebastián Piñera. This summer, the convention published its draft constitution. It contained explicit rights to health care, shelter, education, elderly care, internet access as well as clean air and water. It foresaw specific rights

in public institutions and an individual's sexual orientation. Some of these points were quite contentious.

Opponents of the draft took advantage of related controversies in their “rechazo” (rejection) campaign. Web-based disinformation helped them spread fears. The state would nationalise people's private properties, it was falsely argued, and a communist dictatorship was said to be preprogrammed.

On the other hand, many voters indeed disagreed with specific points of the draft constitution. There is no consensus on whether there should be a right to abortion, for example. Some institutional changes, including the abolition of the Senate, were controversial as well.

It equally mattered that the Convención itself was not beyond criticism. Polls showed that, in many people's eyes, its legitimacy was dented due to various scandals. Right-wing agitation further contributed to undermining public trust.

Ultimately, the referendum was thus about party politics. The opposition campaigned to reject the proposal, whereas the government endorsed it. Instead of focusing on long-term principles, debate increasingly revolved around day-to-day politics.

A constitution, however, differs from a political party's platform. In as few words and clauses as possible, it should determine basic values and spell out how a nation will govern itself, how laws will be passed and how the law courts will operate. What the Convención proposed, by contrast, rather resembled the demands spelled out in a left-wing party's election manifesto.

The constitutional process will go on. The Senate has already approved a roadmap. It starts with the election of a new constitutional assembly, which will have the opportunity to do a better job, focusing less on detailed regulations concerning a multitude of issues and paying more attention to all citizens feeling represented. The advice of an expert board is expected to enhance the credibility of decisions, moreover. A crucial point is that the opposition must not be able to systematically cast doubt on the entire process once more.



More than 60% voted “no”.

started three years ago. The new constitution was supposed to be socially more equitable, more modern and more environment friendly.

The reform process started with a wave of protests against poverty and inequality in 2019. In a referendum in 2020, 80% of voters opted for drafting a new constitution.

for indigenous peoples and included protections for animals and ecosystems.

The voters did not appreciate it. For several reasons, over 60% voted “no”.

First of all, the draft text was very long and excessively detailed. It included 388 articles covering a host of issues, including, for example, healthy nutrition, gender par-



**EVA-MARIA VERFÜRTH** is a freelance author. She founded and edits the online magazine *Tea after Twelve*. [eva.verfurth@gmail.com](mailto:eva.verfurth@gmail.com)



Chancellor Olaf Scholz visiting German troops in Tillia, Niger.

## MALI AND NIGER

# Peace requires strategy

**Eight ministries of Germany's federal Government are currently active in Mali and Niger. This engagement, however, is not guided by a shared understanding of sustainable peace. Moreover, there is no coherent political strategy regarding how Germany should promote peace in both countries. This requires action by policymakers.**

**By Simone Schnabel and Antonia Witt**

In 2017, Germany's Federal Government adopted ambitious guidelines on "Preventing crisis, resolving conflicts, building peace". The idea was that all efforts concerning crisis and conflict countries should take a whole-of-government approach. Four principles were explicitly endorsed: namely to

1. respect, protect and safeguard human rights,
2. act in a context-specific, inclusive and long-term perspective,
3. identify risks, make coherent efforts and fulfil demands of diligence, and
4. prioritise prevention and politics.

A recent study has assessed to what extent these principles have shaped Germany's engagement in Mali and Niger. It also looked into how Germany's policies are being perceived by local civil society actors. The study was commissioned by the Advisory Board to the Federal Government for Ci-

vilian Crisis Prevention and Peacebuilding. The Board has 20 members who are professionals in international cooperation, social sciences, foundations and civil society.

The study shows that the Federal Government is insufficiently pursuing the goals defined in its own guidelines. There are several tools for coordinating different ministries. It is a problem, however, that they do not cover all ministries running efforts in Mali and Niger. Also, the ministries neither share a vision of how lasting peace can be achieved nor an understanding of what Germany's role should be in making it happen.

Contrary to the guidelines, the Federal Government so far has failed to draft an overarching country-specific policy for either Mali or Niger. It has thus not defined what Germany's contribution to establishing peace should be. This strategic gap is striking, especially given Germany's massively expanded engagement in both countries since 2012. It now includes the largest military deployment abroad, training programmes for the police, humanitarian relief as well as development cooperation. Lacking a strategy of its own, Germany largely depends on France – but French policies have failed in both political and military terms in the entire Sahel region.

Moreover, Germany's Federal Government would do well to pay more atten-

tion to its guidelines when it comes to the implementation of measures. For example, there is no systematic strategy for conflict prevention in Mali and Niger. Contrary to the guidelines, moreover, there is no focus on human rights. Local civil society complains about this, as impunity and the lack of a legitimate judiciary are considered a key cause of violent conflicts. Germany's long-term commitment to development, however, is expressly praised.

On this basis, we advise the ministries to draft joint and coherent strategies for crisis and conflict countries. These strategies should spell out how lasting peace can be promoted in the respective country contexts. Moreover, we propose investing more in conflict prevention and giving German embassies a stronger role in strategic matters.

In Mali, the German government should lend more support to national and local structures for conflict resolution. For Niger, we recommend the German government to promote an institutionalised dialogue with civil society. This is indispensable, especially against the background of the currently discussed expansion of German (security) engagement in Niger. Otherwise, German efforts may become disconnected from society as they did in Mali.

## LINK

**Policy Coherence for Peace in German Government's action – Lessons from Mali and Niger (Full study available in German, English and French versions will be published soon)**  
<https://beirat-zivile-krisenpraevention.org/publikation/friedenspolitische-kohaerenz-im-deutschen-regierungshandeln/>



**ANTONIA WITT**  
 is Head of the Research Group "African Intervention Politics" at the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt

(PRIF) and co-author of the study mentioned in the manuscript.

[witt@HSFK.de](mailto:witt@HSFK.de)



**SIMONE SCHNABEL**  
 is the second co-author and a doctoral researcher at PRIF. Baba Dakono and Abdoul Karim Saidou have

contributed to the study as well.

[schnabel@HSFK.de](mailto:schnabel@HSFK.de)

## GLOBAL AFFAIRS

# America might indeed be back

Soon after taking office, US President Joe Biden declared: “America is back.” The message was that, after the volatile unreliability of his predecessor Donald Trump, his nation would contribute constructively to international alliances, wholeheartedly endorse democracy and support a rule-based international order. The message was welcome, but it was not entirely convincing.

By Hans Dembowski

Yes, Biden fast re-joined the Paris agreement on climate change, but his own climate agenda was not passed by Congress for many months. Moreover, the president shied away from clearly disowning his predecessor and his supporters in spite of their obviously anti-democratic behaviour. Authoritarian tendencies, after all, were evident not only, but especially in regard to the insurrection of 6 January 2021. A policymaker who speaks out against authoritarian tendencies abroad but stays silent about similar developments at home lacks full credibility.

The past few weeks, things have changed for the better. Congress has passed an ambitious climate agenda, which should, by the end of the decade, cut the USA's

greenhouse-gas emissions to 60% of the level witnessed in 2005. Biden had aspired to achieve 50%, which would have been better, but his diplomats will not arrive empty-handed at the climate summit in Egypt in November.

Moreover, Biden has started to ambiguously spell out that Trump and the Republicans who endorse him are a threat to democracy. Opinion polls show that Biden's party is likely to expand its narrow Senate majority and may even maintain its majority in the House of Representatives. Should both happen, Democrats would be in a position to expand climate action as well as pass legislation to make elections safer and fairer.

These things are of great global and developmental relevance. The climate crisis is escalating, and US action is indispensable. Around the world, extreme-weather disasters are increasing (see our focus section in D+C/E+Z Digital Monthly 2022/06). The USA is affected too.

Negotiations at the climate summit in Sharm el-Sheikh this year will prove difficult for several reasons. The Ukraine war is resulting in enormous climate-relevant emissions, which the international public

so far has largely neglected. In the short term, moreover, interest in fossil fuels has increased. Inflation is affecting many nations, partly as a consequence of the war and partly due to supply-chain disruptions in the Covid-19 pandemic. Disputes regarding what funding high-income nations owe less fortunate ones will be high on the agenda, and it does not help that the former have not been keeping their promises so far. On the upside, the war has also boosted policy-makers' long-term interest in renewables, while the number of those who deny climate change is growing smaller in view of the indisputable damage.

The climate negotiations will be tough. The outlook would be very bleak if it were clear from the start that hardly anything can be expected from the USA.

Biden's invigorated stance towards democracy at home is helpful too. It will prove even more so if his party fares well in the midterm elections in November. Unfortunately, democracies are driven by short-term thinking and very few democracies have been responding appropriately to the mounting environmental challenges since the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992. However, despotic leaders tend to perform even worse. They focus entirely on the survival of their regime and, provided they can rely on strong means of repression, need not worry much about the common good. Russia, for example, has never been a leader in regard to climate issues. Because of Moscow's war in Ukraine, initiatives to protect vital, but endangered boreal forests close to the Arctic have stalled. China, which has played a constructive role in the past, is increasingly emphasising narrow-minded nationalism.

Both in regard to climate protection and democracy promotion, Biden has begun to deliver. More must happen. If others are to ratchet up their environmental policies, the USA will be expected to do so too. The US legal system, moreover, must hold Trump accountable. Otherwise, the expectation of impunity will increase in many countries where right-wing populists are a force to be reckoned with.



President Biden inspecting flood damages in Kentucky in August.



**HANS DEMBOWSKI**  
is editor in chief of D+C  
Development and  
Cooperation / E+Z Entwicklung  
und Zusammenarbeit.

[euz.editor@dandc.eu](mailto:euz.editor@dandc.eu)

School reopening after months of closure in Lagos, Nigeria, 2020.



HERBERT MACAULAY GIRLS'  
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL SABO YABA



FOCUS

## Pandemic impacts

“We did not talk much about what we have been through.” **INTERNATIONAL CONTRIBUTORS, P. 16**

“The government’s crisis management turned out to be the greatest challenge, not the virus.” **SAMIR ABI, P. 19**

“The pandemic led to an increase in violence against women.”  
**GLORY MAKENA AND BRIANNA GUIDORZI, P. 21**

“The pandemic has highlighted the digital divide.”  
**MAHWISH GUL, P. 22**

“Actually, we even work more efficiently than before Corona.”  
**EYRAM TAWIA, P. 25**

“There is an urgent need for the international community to restructure or cancel debts.”  
**KATHRIN BERENSMANN, P. 27**

“Looking back, I would say that we had serious difficulties, but did not suffer a disaster.”  
**MANZUR KADIR AHMED, P. 29**

“From a global perspective, green recovery measures played a minor role to combat the corona crisis.”  
**ANDREAS BURGER, P. 31**

“Covid-19 spread fast in detention facilities.”  
**JANE ESCHER, P. 33**



Malawians waiting to receive the Covid-19 vaccine at Ndirande Health Centre in Blantyre, in 2021.

## Covid-19 impacts worldwide

The pandemic has affected the daily lives of people all over the world. Many lost a loved one and became ill or unemployed. Things that were taken for granted before, such as travelling, shaking hands or one's familiar workplace were suddenly in question. We asked some of our authors to share their personal experiences with us. Here are their impressions.

### MALAWI: BURYING THE DEAD

When the reported Covid-19 cases started to rise in Malawi, the government took very strict measures, including closing of offices, shops and national borders as well as social distancing. One consequence that I found particularly hard to take was the way people who had died of Covid-19 were buried. They did not receive a dignified funeral. Even relatives were not allowed to attend the burial, let alone friends and well-wishers, as it is common cultural practice. This struck me when I was attending a funeral of a former workmate, who had died of kidney failure. When I went to the burial site in Lilongwe, Malawi's capital city, I was shocked to see the grave of another friend I had worked with. I had talked to this person only a month before he succumbed to Covid-19. Now his name is on a grave, and I did not get to bid him farewell at a proper funeral.



**RAPHAEL MWENINGUWE**  
is a freelance journalist based in Malawi.

*raphael.mweninguwe@hotmail.com*

### NIGERIA: TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS AND JOB LOSS

As a journalist, I used to travel a lot before the pandemic. Once per year, for example, I used to attend the International Labour Conference in Geneva, Switzerland. When Covid-19 hit, however, journalists in Nigeria couldn't even attend assignments on the local level as traveling within the country was restricted. Consequently, it has become difficult to generate stories. Some of my colleagues lost their jobs and now work as freelancers without earning much income. I also know of a former leader in the tourism union who became unemployed. He used to work in a hotel and now has to move back to his farm. Many workers in Nigeria were eased out with a promise that they would be recalled once the situation would improve. Yet, they never got a second chance as the country is still in economic crisis. One positive aspect of the Covid-19 pandemic is that Nigerians are now more conscious of their health.



**BIMBOLA OYESOLA**  
is a Lagos-based journalist.

*oritokeoyee@gmail.com*



## NEPAL: MOURNING SOCIETY

Nepal is a grieving nation. All of us have lost someone near and dear to us during the first, second or third wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, including family members, friends and coworkers. My maternal aunt caught the virus and did not receive intensive care on time. She died. I survived two infections and feared for my small kid while staying at home in isolation. At present, there is a lot of talk about the “new normal” or about digitisation. However, we did not talk much about what we have been through. Moreover, it hurts to know that much suffering could have been avoided if Nepal had a better health-care system. During the second wave, too many people died because they lacked oxygen. Some of them might still be alive if more hospital beds had been available, especially in intensive-care units. However, the government failed to respond promptly and take necessary measures.



**RUKAMANE MAHARJAN**  
is an assistant professor of law at Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu.

*rukumaharjan@gmail.com*

## ZAMBIA: RUNNING OUT OF MEDICINE

Zambia’s first cases of Covid-19 occurred in March 2020. Since then, life in the country has been disrupted. The health sector was affected in particular. Medical facilities ran out of essential drugs such as cough syrups, painkillers and vitamin C supplement drugs. The demand was unusually high and beyond health providers’ expectations. This shortage has negatively affected many peoples’ daily lives. For instance, my five-year-old child had been due to undergo a routine surgery at our local hospital at the time Covid-19 broke out. However, he could not proceed, because the hospital lacked necessary drugs and surgical tools. Luckily, the surgery has been performed in the meantime. The government’s failure to plan ahead and procure enough drugs and health equipment is certainly one of the key lessons of Covid-19 in Zambia. The country needs to better prepare for future health emergencies.



**DERRICK SILIMINA**  
is a freelance journalist based in Lusaka, Zambia.

*derricksilimina@gmail.com*

## BRAZIL: MUCH HARM, FEW BENEFITS

For most of the poor and peripheral population in Brazil, the pandemic so far was simply cruel. Many people became unemployed and lost all perspectives in life. Too many people died. President Jair Bolsonaro made things worse by playing down the risk of the virus. Brazil did not have enough vaccine early on, for example, because he refused to buy it. To me it looked like we had no one to fight for us. I felt emotionally exhausted. However, the pandemic has also

brought benefits. I was privileged enough to switch to remote work, so I saved time and was less exposed to risks of violence in Rio de Janeiro. The crisis definitely has made me – and many other Brazilians – think about how we are wasting time with stressful commuting, in jobs that do not value us and with problems that actually have a solution.



**THUANY RODRIGUES**  
is a journalist based in Rio de Janeiro.

*thuanyrodrigues@gmail.com*



Funeral of a Covid-19 victim in Kathmandu, Nepal, in 2021.

**PAKISTAN: REMOTE WORK AND CLASS DIVIDE**

When Pakistan went into lockdown because of Covid-19, many offices and educational institutions initiated work-from-home policies. This added to the disparity between social classes in the country. While much of the urban elite continued with their education and work using digital infrastructure, a substantial part of the population was left behind. A majority of Pakistanis do not have internet access at all, and many of those who do struggled when they were forced to work outside their familiar workplace. I am a law professor at an elite university, so my students tend to be privileged. However, when they had to vacate their dorm rooms, many of them no longer had access to technical devices and stable internet connections. Some lacked a separate space at home where they could sit and attend online lectures. This affected their learning experience, so I had to provide support, including sharing of recorded lectures. Moreover, many female students were tasked with domestic chores and often missed classes for this reason.



**MARVA KHAN**  
is an assistant professor of law at LUMS (Lahore University of Management Sciences).

*marva.khan@lums.edu.pk*

**BURUNDI: SHAKING HANDS**

Before the pandemic, people in Burundi used to greet each other with a handshake – both on the coast in Bujumbura, the country’s largest city, and in the interior. However, due to the risk of infection, people are now dealing with this habit in different ways. For example, during my work as a journalist, I met 60-year-old Marguerite from Muramvya province. She finds it difficult not to shake hands with other older women. Even during the Christian service, she shakes hands

with others now and then, although this is officially forbidden. Others are more afraid, however, like 50-year-old Agrippina from Bujumbura. She never shakes hands with people on the street. Just in case that happens, she always carries an infectious agent in her handbag – a behaviour that I have observed in many city dwellers.



**MIREILLE KANYANGE**  
is a journalist who works for Radio Isanganiro in Burundi.

*mika.kanyange@gmail.com*

**GERMANY: FAST, COURAGEOUS ACTION IS POSSIBLE**

Corona was traumatic for us Germans who were used to prosperity and freedom. Suddenly we were no longer allowed to meet even our closest families. That was unheard of and I went as all of us into a state of shock. On top of that we feared for our lives due to the virus. For my children, the situation was particularly bad. Despite this severe impairment of our lives, I am humbled and grateful to live in Germany. We were among the first in the world to get the life-saving vaccines and medicines and we have access to high quality medical care. I can even see a positive side to the pandemic: It has shown that quick, unorthodox action is possible. Millions of people have switched to working from home from one day to the next. This has saved a lot of carbon emissions. I think the world should keep this up after Corona: as little unnecessary travel as possible and very decisive action on the climate crisis.



**SABINE BALK**  
is a member of the editorial team of D+C Development and Cooperation / E+Z Entwicklung und Zusammenarbeit.

*euz.editor@dandc.eu*



A man in Pakistan refills oxygen cylinders as demand for oxygen rose due to Covid-19 patients in Peshawar, in 2021.



Transport options matter in a pandemic: traffic in Lomé, Togo's capital, in December 2020.

TOGO

## More social protection

**As a disease, Covid-19 was less devastating in many African countries than was initially feared. The measures to control the pandemic, however, had serious impacts. Togo, for example, saw protests, a boom of the shadow economy and, ultimately, more solidarity.**

By Samir Abi

The Covid-19 pandemic hit people in Togo particularly hard, even though statistics show that the death toll forecast for the African continent never materialised. The government's crisis management turned out to be the greatest challenge, not the virus.

From March 2020 to July 2022, a mere 282 deaths were reported in Togo. The nation of 8 million people had 38,410 cases of infection. Figures of this kind should be

considered with a certain caution, since data collection can be quite difficult in Africa. Nonetheless, these numbers explain why Togo's people are frustrated with the government's approach to the pandemic.

At first, fear of the virus was great. However, people soon resented the stringent measures imposed to control the spread of the disease. Non-violent resistance followed. It is still evident, for example, when people refuse to be vaccinated.

Before Coronavirus, doctors had enjoyed great esteem in Togo, but the pandemic has dented people's trust in health-care staff. Access to medical facilities had been poor previously. In 2018, the digital newspaper Republicoftogo reported that the nation had 139 general practitioners and 295 specialists. In other words, there was one doctor per 16,700 people. Fewer than 40,000

people were working in hospitals and care. Less than 10% of Togo's people enjoy the privilege of getting treatment in either public or private health facilities. They are the better-off and government officers.

Indeed, many people must rely on traditional healers or self-medicate with cures sold on roadsides. Patients only go to emergency rooms once their illness has progressed considerably. Many perish for this reason. Science-based medicine only tends to be available in urban settings. The 80% who live in rural areas hardly get professional health care.

### HEALTH CARE MUST DO A LOT OF CATCHING UP

Things used to be different. After Togo's independence in 1960, the government attempted to create a broad-based health-care system with facilities close to the people. Such efforts, however, ended in the 1980s in the course of the austerity imposed by multilateral structural-adjustment programmes. The crisis that led to democratisation in 1990 did not help either. There is



Empty street during lockdown in late 2020.

a lot of catching up to do, after the country missed adequate investments in health-care investments for a quarter-century.

In the first decade of the new millennium, health-care staff responded with strikes to their sector being underfunded. Recurring tensions with the government and lack of appreciation made many doctors migrate to Europe, where they live and work in more comfortable settings.

The Covid-19 pandemic has made health-care investments even more difficult. When it set in, Togo only had four ventilators for the entire population. On short notice, 250 more breathing machines had to be acquired, along with Covid tests, medical masks, other resources and eventually vaccines. The implication was that less money was available for other health issues, including, malaria, cardio-vascular conditions and gastro-intestinal diseases.

Given that people did not trust vaccinations, the government imposed far-reaching measures. For some time, only vaccinated persons had access to government offices. Instead of uniting the people against a common threat, the government unfor-

tunately used the fight against coronavirus as pretext to undermine civic freedoms and take more control of people's lives.

Following the example of other countries, Togo's government closed government buildings and schools. Distancing rules were introduced. There were curfews at night. Travelling from city to city was forbidden. As many people depend on commuting, such rules were hard to accept. Protests arose because of curfews, which the police enforced with brutal oppression. Officers perpetrated violence against informal workers who returned home late during the curfew. One young father died after the police shot him during a curfew.

In Togo, most households depend on incomes generated in the informal sector. That includes agriculture, retail trade on streets, personal services and transport. Therefore, lockdown meant serious hardship. Measures to control the pandemic led to a social crisis. The first to complain were disadvantaged communities in rural areas and urban working class neighbourhoods. The people concerned will no longer be able to earn a living.

To prevent a social revolt, Togo's government had to respond to hunger and dissatisfaction. More social protection was the solution, even though the economic environment was defined by reduced tax generation, internationally declining commodity prices, less tourism revenues and dwindling remittances from migrants abroad.

The government opted for more debt and introduced innovations. It created new transfers for the needy via a digital platform called "Novissi". This word means "solidar-

ity" in Ewe, a language spoken in most regions of Togo. The platform allowed informal workers who had lost their jobs at the start of the pandemic to claim benefits without even leaving their homes. This way, 13.3 billion CFA Francs (the equivalent of about €20 million) were dispersed to 820,000 persons.

## SOLIDARITY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Coronavirus thus triggered a new dynamism in regard to solidarity and universal social protection. Before the crisis, none of this was even dreamed of. Among other things, the state paid power and water bills. Moreover, it supplied food to vulnerable groups.

However, not all needs were covered. To prevent hunger revolts of the kind that occurred in other West African countries, the government fast loosened its lockdown rules, so informal activities became feasible again.

Though air travel was permitted again, land borders remained closed for a long time. West African borders, however, are hard to control and international trade matters very much. That is especially true along the corridor of the big cities Lagos (Nigeria), Cotonou (Benin), Lomé (Togo), Accra (Ghana) and Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire). As border crossings stayed closed until this summer, various kinds of smuggling made the shadow economy grow. Some import goods became scarce, so people had to pay high market prices.

It now looks as though the crisis is over in Togo. The crucial lesson of the pandemic will hopefully never be forgotten by either the government or the people. It is that our global world is interconnected. Millions of people in rural Togo only learned in this international health crisis that events that occur far away may have severe repercussions in their daily lives.

Global interconnectedness means we need global solidarity too. We must take into account what impacts the doings of individual persons can have on our entire species. This is the awareness we need if we want to protect each other from further disasters.



**SAMIR ABI**  
works for Visions Solidaires, a non-governmental development organisation in Togo.

[samirvstg@gmail.com](mailto:samirvstg@gmail.com)



WOMEN'S RIGHTS

# Partners for empowerment

**The Covid-19 pandemic led to an increase in violence against women. South Sudan and other crisis-affected countries were impacted in particular. In the future, humanitarian organisations should work more closely with local women's groups.**

By Glory Makena and Brianna Guidorzi

At the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, violence against women increased so much worldwide that the phenomenon acquired the name “shadow pandemic”. Lockdowns, school closures and shelter-in-place orders made tensions within households escalate, contributing to gender-based violence. In general, the pandemic has hit women harder than men.

The spike in gender-based violence was also visible in Africa, according to a report published by the International Rescue

Committee (IRC) during the pandemic. The international humanitarian organisation surveyed 852 women in refugee, displaced-persons and post-conflict settings in 15 African countries during the first 10 months of the pandemic. Nearly three-fourths (73%) of respondents reported an increase in violence from a partner, 51% cited increased sexual violence and 32% saw growth in early and forced marriages in their communities.

South Sudan was part of this trend. Before the pandemic, an estimated one-third of South Sudanese women and girls had experienced sexual violence by a non-partner, and up to 73% experienced violence by a partner (IRC et al., 2021). Those numbers spiked under the combined pressures of pandemic-related closures and a general breakdown in the social order. The country faces multiple challenges:

- civil strife,

- unrelenting violence,
- an economic crisis,
- the risk of famine,
- the Covid-19 pandemic and
- a weak health system.

As social structures have broken down in South Sudan, international and local humanitarian groups have stepped in to help. With support from Irish Aid, the IRC works with local women's groups in order to offer safe spaces, counselling and skills training in camps for displaced persons. The idea was to ensure women are protected and empowered to improve their lives.

The IRC strives to reduce the incidence of gender-based violence in the first place. We are running a transformative individual behavior change curriculum developed for preventing violence against women and girls called “Engaging Men through Accountable Practices”, as it is important to challenge gender norms that can lead to violence against women. Men need to understand that violence is not a solution to household grievances and that it is costly, too. “I have decided to hold myself accountable for my actions, and my marriage has improved,” one husband said after taking part.

## GOING LOCAL

National and local women's rights organisations were key players in addressing the shadow pandemic of gender-based violence. They are valuable sources of information on the needs of women and girls. Accordingly, they can give valuable advice on the feasibility of interventions. Nonetheless, in a recent report we called Covid-19 a “missed opportunity” to truly support women's organisations. We found that women's groups often are overlooked when humanitarian initiatives are planned. Typically, strategic documents do not even mention them.

At the same time, local and national women's rights groups struggle to find funding. One stakeholder told the IRC that they lack access to donors and find it “impossible to penetrate” the system. Even if a group is lucky enough to receive indirect funding from an international agency, it typically does not get money for supporting its own organisational growth.

Things should be different – women's organisations should have more power over the decisions that affect their communities.



Group of women participating in a skills building session.

After all, Germany is currently spearheading a feminist foreign policy. Additionally, it is UN policy to favour local approaches in humanitarian responses. Commitments of this kind were made in the “Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence”, a global initiative which 97 governments, non-governmental organisations and international institutions have signed up to. Localising the emergency response by partnering with local groups is essential.

A greater focus on partnering with local groups, and providing direct funding to local groups, would also be consistent with the aims of the Generation Equality Forum, held last summer. The forum – which just celebrated its first anniversary – was convened by UN Women and has the ambition of accelerating gender equality worldwide.

The intentions are good, but far too little has changed in humanitarian practice. Systemic reforms would help to ensure a more feminist approach to partnership. The following three things should happen:

- The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) should re-

quire the representation of women’s organisations at every stage of programming of humanitarian action.

- International humanitarian agencies should increase the number and quality of their partnerships with women’s organisations.
- Local and national women’s organisations should get more long-term as well as flexible funding, so they can cover core expenses, train staff and adapt interventions to the changing needs of their target groups.

We need a different system. “Think of us as equals,” one of our interviewees said, representing a grassroots organisation.

**LINKS**

**IRC, 2021: Why not local? Gender-based violence, women’s rights organisations and the missed opportunity of Covid-19.**

<https://www.rescue.org/report/why-not-local-gender-based-violence-womens-rights-organisations-and-missed-opportunity-covid>

**IRC, 2020: What happened? How the humanitarian response to COVID-19 failed to**

**protect women and girls.**

<https://www.rescue.org/sites/default/files/document/5281/ircwpecovidreportv7.pdf>

**IRC et al., 2019: What works to prevent violence against women and girls in conflict and humanitarian crisis.**

<https://www.whatworks.co.za/resources/policy-briefs/item/662-what-works-to-prevent-violence-against-women-and-girls-in-conflict-and-humanitarian-crisis-synthesis-brief>



**GLORY MAKENA**  
works for the International Rescue Committee (IRC) in South Sudan and specialises in women’s protection and

empowerment.

[glory.makena@rescue.org](mailto:glory.makena@rescue.org)



**BRIANNA GUIDORZI**  
works for the International Rescue Committee (IRC) in the UK and specialises in policy on women’s protection and

empowerment.

[brianna.guidorzi@rescue.org](mailto:brianna.guidorzi@rescue.org)

MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY

# Closed schools

**Poverty is not only about money. Education matters very much too. Pandemic lockdowns have compounded social disparities. An important lesson of Covid-19 is that digital poverty deserves policymakers’ attention.**

**By Mahwish Gul**

Poverty is typically defined in financial terms. The World Bank defines those living on less than the purchasing power of \$1.90 per day as extremely poor, while the poverty line for a lower-middle income is \$3.20 per day. Such monetary notions of poverty are based on estimates of the cost of goods and services required to meet the basic subsistence needs.

But not all goods and services can be obtained through markets, as the World

Bank acknowledges. Some require large public investments and government spending. That includes physical and social infrastructures such as the power grid, the sewerage system, schools and health care. Deficiencies in fields like this compound deprivation. A depressing global pattern is that children tend to fare worse than adults, and female persons suffer more than their male counterparts. It also matters that poverty affects different age groups in different ways. Children, for example, are not supposed to be earning a living on their own, and measures of families’ purchasing power only offer a partial assessment at best. Poverty is therefore best understood as a multidimensional phenomenon, which goes beyond income and consumption. Other aspects are critical for well-being too.

The first UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG1) is therefore to end poverty “in all its forms everywhere”. Accordingly, the SDG agenda tackles a multitude of related issues, from good health (SDG3) and quality education (SDG4) to labour conditions (SDG8), infrastructure (SDG9) or environmental hazards (SDG11).

According to the UN Development Programme (UNDP), some 1.3 billion people in 101 countries suffered multidimensional poverty in 2019. Half of them were below the age of 18, and 85% of these young persons lived either in South Asia or sub-Saharan Africa.

Multidimensional poverty tends to affect more people than poverty measured in strictly financial terms. According to the UNDP’s 2019 index for multidimensional poverty, for example, 39% of Pakistanis suffered this kind of poverty, while only 34% had a purchasing power below \$3.20 per head and day. It fits the picture that, according to a study conducted by UNICEF, the UN Children’s Fund, in Pakistan about half of all kids below the age of 18 suffered at least one severe deprivation. For example, they



No interaction possible: third-grader taking notes while watching Tele-School TV at home in Islamabad in 2021.

lacked access to school, health care or safe drinking water. Many of them belonged to families that were not financially poor. The study found deprivation to be worst in regard to informational needs.

Since 2019, moreover, UNICEF has reported a 10% increase of global child poverty. The number of children living in multidimensional poverty is said to have soared to approximately 1.2 billion in 2020.

Things were especially bad in regard to education. As schools closed down, at least one third of the world’s schoolchildren were denied any kind of formal lessons. The main reason was that they lacked digital equipment. Rural areas were affected in particular. Low connectivity and unfavourable student-teacher ratios obviously compounded the problems.

There were gender angles moreover. In male-dominated societies, sons tended to get priority access to mobile devices, while daughters were denied the safe public spaces that schools offer and their development benefits from in normal times (Ipsita Basu has discussed the Indian scenario on [www.dandc.eu](http://www.dandc.eu)). According to UNICEF, only up to seven percent of students could use the internet in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Governments adopted stopgap measures. For example, they opted for TV or radio lessons where digital technology was only insufficiently available. While personal interaction is possible in digitised classrooms, students following broadcasts have no such opportunity. That compounded the problem that poor parents are typically not in a good position to support their offspring’s learning. In Pakistan, a TV channel called Tele-School offered an-hour-a-day educational programming for every level of education. BBC contributor Mehreen Zahra-Malik called the minority who benefited from digital platforms the “lucky ones”.

### DIGITAL POVERTY

The pandemic has thus highlighted the digital divide that exists both within and between nations. UNICEF found a clear association between a country’s gross national income per capita and the percentage of students with access to digital classrooms. The notion of “digital poverty”, which predates Covid-19, has thus been reinforced. The Digital Poverty Alliance, a non-governmental initiative launched in Britain in 2021, defines it as “the inability to interact with the

online world fully, when, where and how an individual needs to”. The Alliance insists that digital exclusion exacerbates existing inequalities in society and leads to new inequalities.

Once again, there is a considerable gender divide. Both access to digital devices and digital literacy tend to be less developed among women and girls, after all.

A crucial lesson of the Covid-19 crisis is thus that every kind of digital divide deserves public attention. The SDG motto is to leave no one behind – and that includes everyone who is still deprived of the opportunities that modern information and communication technology offers. Developing countries must build appropriate digital infrastructure and promote digital literacy. That is a message policymakers must heed at national levels, and international agencies should support related efforts.



**MAHWISH GUL**  
is a consultant from Pakistan who specialises in development management. She lives in Nairobi.

[mahwish.gul@gmail.com](mailto:mahwish.gul@gmail.com)



# Join us on Facebook!



www.facebook.com/development.and.cooperation

facebook



**D+C Development and Cooperation**

@development.and.cooperation · Magazine

Learn more

dandco

Home Videos Photos About More

### About

See all

- 1 D+C Development and Cooperation is a website and print magazine on development and international cooperation. [www.dandco.eu](http://www.dandco.eu)
  - 1 Our mission is to provide a credible forum of debate, involving governments, civil society, the private sector and academia at an international level... See more
- 214,315 people like this
- 214,390 people follow this
- <http://www.dandco.eu/>
- Magazine
- Privacy Policy
- <http://twitter.com/forumdc>

### D+C Development and Cooperation

19 Dec '13

"Biodiversity and climate change mitigation are not a luxury, they are essential for survival – for us and for all generations to come," says Germany's Development Minister.

In a D+C interview, she explains why both are so vital and what's being done in the regard.



dandco

Sustainable development includes progress for people, climate protection and...

Mehr dazu

### Photos

See all







Fight Covid-19 is a trivia game from Leti Arts.

COMPUTER GAMING INDUSTRY

## “We now work more efficiently than before Corona”

The Covid-19 pandemic was a severe disruption for all economies worldwide. But not all entrepreneurs have only had negative experiences. Eyram Tawia, CEO and co-founder of Leti Arts, one of the first companies developing computer games in sub-Saharan Africa, told D+C/E+Z how he and his company got along in the Covid crisis. Eyram Tawia is based in Accra, Ghana, he has a co-founder in Nairobi, Kenya.

Eyram Tawia interviewed by Sabine Balk

### Where are you working right now?

I am in at my office in Accra. I work quite often at the office because here we have very good conditions. I have fast internet, a generator, all the stuff we need. But apart from me, almost nobody is here. All my staff

works from home. Everybody is invited to come and work in the office, but it is not mandatory. If you are able to do your work remotely and deliver, then I am fine with wherever you work. But I do not want to hear that the power was off, or that there was no internet. If you cannot work properly from home, you have to come to the office.

### Is this a new workflow or was it like this before the Covid pandemic?

No, before Corona everybody worked at the office though we worked remotely with our Kenyan teams. But a lot has changed. From one day to another, we were forced to work from home. So we set up the whole team in a virtual environment and we use collaborative and communication tools like Miroboard, Skype, Discord and Slack. Now

all the work and communication goes on remotely and we have a perfect work environment. Actually, we even work more efficiently than before Corona. We had not been able to monitor people and it was harder to supervise them onsite on some cases. Now that is all possible. I do not know why we did not work like this earlier, it is perfect for us. I used to say, God made Covid happen for the gaming industry! For our industry, it is important that everybody knows how to operate a computer. This happened due to Covid. Even my grandmother and my aunties now know about computers and Zoom. For the first time, I played online games with my mother in the village.

### But was it all positive for you? Were there no setbacks in your business?

Oh, yes – there were. In the beginning of Corona, the first six to seven months, it was really tough. We generate 90% of our revenue from funding of non-governmental organisations (NGOs). We develop games for clients – serious games like health education. When Corona started, all of our clients stopped their funds. They needed time to restructure. So that hit us hard. We had to let a lot of our employees go, we went through

hard times of not having any revenue. So we had to beat ourselves up, finding new businesses. But our clients started to come back and our business normalised again. We were even asked to set up an educational game for Covid behaviour. It is a trivia game in the form of “Who wants to be a millionaire” that we launched on our trivia game platform The Hottseat. Players have to answer questions on Covid. Now, we are fully back at the same level as in pre-Corona times and we are growing. We have a core team of 15 to 20 workers for all the projects, full-timers are around 10. The rest are freelancers and interns who join us.

**Did you get any Covid support from your government?**

No, not at all. There were recovery programmes and the government said they had allocated some funding for entrepreneurs. I didn't apply due to how complicated it was to get these funds. My wife, who runs a weaving factory for traditional kente cloth and employs 17 weavers, applied twice. She never got an answer.

**What else changed in your company due to Coronavirus?**

We were not sure whether we should keep our office, because we have a lot of empty space, including a big hall, that we did not use anymore. But it is still important to have a physical place for personal meetings. And we found a great new purpose for our hall. We are actually converting it into a training facility where we coach trainees in game development. That is starting to kick off. We have even completed our first training with women in animation. We got a small grant from an organisation called Scaleup Africa with Mastercard Foundation. They wanted us to train women, because women lack job opportunities and there are very few women in game development and in the tech industry in general.

**That sounds promising. Last time we spoke, you expressed your regret that there is not enough training for game developing and computer science in Africa. Is this a first step to change matters?**

Yes, it is definitely. The course was going quite well. Our approach is that we want to add value to existing skills. So if you like to draw pictures, we try to teach you how to create a comic for a video game. If you like

to programme computers, we show you how to do game coding. There are many different steps in the process of creating a game.

**How did it work out with your female trainees?**

We had 30 women who applied. 20 of them were active throughout the course and 15 graduated with certificate. Teaching women is the same as men; there is no difference. If a lady is interested in programming, she is good in that, if she is interested in art, she does that. We plan to work together with three of the 15 graduates. That is perfect for us. The idea is that we eat from our own farm. The next course will start in October. So now we are setting up a team of instructors. I did the first course myself, but I do not have the time for it anymore.



Leti Arts' main game Africa's Legends.

**Will it be a training for women only again?**

I think it will be mixed. But I am tempted to make a next course again only with women. But there are so many more men interested than women. Let me tell you an example: When we advertised for the first course, we asked for women to apply – and yet, we had 90% male registration. I think one of the reasons is that gaming started with masculine representation. Women often cannot identify with the characters. In most games, women are sexist projections of men. We are trying not to stereotype our characters. We

have women of all different shapes in our game universe. But it will take some time to change matters. And positive affirmation may help. So we think about a scholarship for women.

**Besides promoting women, what are your goals?**

We want to train as many people as possible in video gaming. And we want to contribute to the challenge in Africa to create jobs for the youth. We want to expand the skills of young people and we try to get partners who can absorb the work force. We are also trying to establish a lot of different opportunities for gamers in Africa. We are joining together under a canopy named “Pan-African gaming group” which currently is made of 10 game studios across Africa with the same vision to transform the African gaming industry. We also want to connect entrepreneurs. We have just started the Gamer's Association Ghana officially with around 250 participants in our Whatsapp group.

**The main business of Leti Arts are educational games for NGOs. But you are also working on your own computer games like Africa's Legends, where African superheroes are the main characters. What other games are you planning?**

In the last months, we created a lot of new games. One game is called Puzzle Scout, that is going to be out soon. You are collecting writings across Africa, connect them to chapters and in the end of the game you have built a book. As with our Africa's Legends we want to raise awareness for our history. We are teaching about Ghana, how the British invaded it and how it became independent. Everything we create has a connection with our initial idea to teach history. For that, we are partnering with one of the big museums in Africa, the Pan African Heritage Museum in Accra which is scheduled to be open in 2023. They will be responsible for the historic content. We also have a new game with one of our superheroes, it's called Karmzah Run, and we are upgrading our African Legends. But still, we are looking for a major investor who will fund a few of that projects.



**EYRAM TAWIA**  
is CEO and co-founder of Leti Arts.

[info@letiarts.com](mailto:info@letiarts.com)



**Street vendors in Zambia: The government wants to escape over-indebtedness with IMF and G20 support.**

GOVERNANCE

# Solve the debt problems!

**The Covid-19 crisis and the war in Ukraine have further worsened the already critical global debt situation. There is an urgent need for the international community to restructure or cancel debts – and that the countries concerned must generate more tax revenues.**

**By Kathrin Berensmann**

During the pandemic, in 2020, total global debt rose to 263 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), according to the World Bank. That was the highest level in half a century. Private and public debts increased fast in industrialised nations, emerging economies and developing countries, with loans being sourced domestically and abroad. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) reckons that 60% of low-income countries were heavily indebted in 2022. The comparative share for 2015 was only about 30%.

It matters very much that, in many countries, debt services in relation to exports rose considerably. In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, they increased from 16% in 2019 to 22% in 2020. The implication is that a greater share of exports revenues had to be used for debt servicing, reducing

the scope of investments in sustainability-related matters.

In many developing countries and emerging markets, the deficits in government budgets have skyrocketed. In sub-Saharan Africa as a whole, according to the IMF, the deficit was -3.9% in 2019, but -6.4% in 2020. The figures were worse for oil-importing countries (-4.3% in 2019 and -7.3% in 2020) than for oil-exporting countries (-3.3% and -4.6% respectively).

The deficits were incurred to cope with costs of the pandemic. At the same time, tax revenues decreased in many countries. In sub-Saharan Africa, taxation tends to be quite a bit lower than in high-income countries.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine in February has made matters worse. It has led to yet higher debts and surges in inflation. Especially the increase in energy and food prices are a burden on national budgets and foreign trade balances. Commodity-importing countries are affected in particular.

Monetary policy has tightened in many high-income countries, causing interest rates to rise on international financial markets. Debt servicing is thus becoming

more expensive. Heavy debts stand in the way of economic recovery and will have long-term impacts in business as well as social terms. It is also to be feared that investments to combat climate change will decline.

## WAYS OUT OF DEBT

To manage debt crises, the countries concerned need reforms as well as external support. Their fiscal power is too small. The international community created new policy instruments during the pandemic and should now make full use of them. The Group of 20 major industrialised and emerging economies (G20) has adopted two instruments of relevance to developing countries.

- The Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) is a debt moratorium for low-income countries to solve short-term liquidity problems. During the moratorium period from May 2020 to December 2021, it has been used by 48 of the 73 eligible countries.
- The Common Framework for Debt Treatment beyond DSSI is designed to restructure and – if necessary – even forgive debts accrued by low-income countries. The idea is to prevent both sovereign defaults and long-lasting payment difficulties. So far, however, only three countries have taken part: Chad, Zambia and Ethiopia.

Implementation has been delayed mainly due to coordination difficulties among creditors (Georgieva/Pazarbasoglu 2021). Involving all private and public creditors would help. Moreover, transparency regarding loan conditions is needed. Otherwise, equal treatment of creditors cannot be ensured. It would make sense to expand the Common Framework beyond low-income countries, given that middle-income countries are struggling too. Moreover, an insolvency procedure for sovereign states is necessary.

In the longer run, it would be good to draft and adopt codes of conduct for responsible lending and borrowing. The international community should support related initiatives. Relevant institutions, such as the G20, the UN, the OECD and the Institute of International Finance have drafted such codes and are enforcing them to some extent. To avoid divergence, these codes should be acknowledged and harmonised internationally (Berensmann 2022).



Members of different religions protesting against rising electricity tariffs in Sri Lanka.

## BUILD BACK BETTER

The pandemic proved that our societies are susceptible to shocks. At the same time, we now have the opportunity to build back better in ways that boost future resilience. Current financial crises should be seen as opportunities to restructure debts with an eye to promoting sustainable development (Volz et al. 2021).

The implication is that the Common Framework should be linked to investments in climate action. Debt relief and debt restructuring should be geared to achieving the sustainable development goals of the UN's 2030 agenda as well as fulfilling the aspirations of the Paris Climate Agreement. In a similar sense, the toolkit of multilateral development banks should serve these purposes too (Berensmann et al. 2022).

Global heating is causing financial harm. Therefore, debt sustainability assessments must take climate-related risks into account. Investments in climate adaptation should count too, since they reduce climate risks. The IMF is currently working on proposals concerning how to mainstream climate issues in fiscal policy (Masseti/Bellon 2022).

## TAX REFORMS

Developing countries, however, must mobilise more domestic resources and become less dependent on foreign debt. Raising more tax revenues is absolutely essential.

Both tax administration and tax policy should improve. To broaden the tax base, tax systems must become more transparent, more efficient and more effective. The informal sector should not remain beyond taxation. Technical assistance from high-income countries should prove useful, especially in regard to the digitalisation of national revenue services.

The international tax system must improve too. That is essential for stemming illicit financial flows, tax evasion and tax avoidance. The African Union Commission reckons that illicit financial flows annually deprive African governments of some \$50 billion to \$80 billion (AU Commission, 2019). These estimates are by definition difficult, but the figures are definitely huge.

Two important initiatives are:

- the establishment of the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes and
- the OECD/G20 Inclusive Framework on Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS).

The Global Forum is the most important international institution for fighting tax evasion and tax avoidance. It is enhancing transparency in the international tax system and currently has 165 members. Its secretariat is hosted by the OECD. The Inclusive Framework on BEPS is designed to fight tax evasion, boost the coherence of international tax rules, increase the transparency of tax systems and support taxes on digital businesses (von Haldenwang/Laudage 2019). Donors should increase the

technical assistance they offer developing countries in this field.

The developing countries, in turn, must improve their debt management and use their fiscal means more efficiently. Important dimensions include balancing foreign and domestic debts carefully as well as paying appropriate attention to both interest rates and the duration of loans. Good debt management also leads to greater transparency and can drive the growth of domestic bond markets. Such markets can provide a good source of income for developing countries.

## REFERENCES

- AU Commission, 2019: Domestic resource mobilization: Fighting against corruption and illicit financial flows. AUC Publishing, Addis Ababa.
- Berensmann, K., M. A. Ekeruche, C. Heitzig, A. Ordu, L. W. Senbet, 2022: Resolving debt crises in developing countries – How can the G20 contribute to operationalising the Common Framework?; T20 policy brief, Jakarta.
- Berensmann, K., 2022: How could a new universal code of conduct prevent and resolve sovereign debt crises? Proposals for design and implementation, *Journal of Economic Surveys*, Wiley.
- Georgieva, K., Pazarbasioglu, C., 2021: The G20 Common Framework for Debt Treatments must be stepped up, *IMF Blog*, 2 December 2021.
- Von Haldenwang, C., Laudage, S., 2019: Financing for development and domestic revenue mobilisation: more international reforms are needed, *Briefing Paper 13/2019*, Bonn: German Development Institute (DIE).
- Masseti, E., Bellon, M., 2022: Planning and mainstreaming adaptation to climate change in fiscal policy, *IMF staff Climate note*, 23 March, Washington D.C.
- Volz, U., Akthar, S., Gallagher, K., Griffith-Jones, S., Haas, J., 2021: Debt relief for a green and inclusive recovery: Securing private-sector participation and creating policy space for sustainable development, *Heinrich Böll Stiftung*, Berlin.



**KATHRIN BERENSMANN** is a senior researcher and project leader at IDOS, the German Institute of Development and

Sustainability. She would like to thank Sabine Laudage for valuable comments. [kathrin.berensmann@idos-research.de](mailto:kathrin.berensmann@idos-research.de)

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

# “Holistic understanding”

**Manzur Kadir Ahmed of Gonoshasthaya Kendra, a health-care organisation, says that Bangladesh coped better with the global pandemic that was initially feared. The progress made in recent decades has made the nation more resilient.**

**Manzur Kadir Ahmed interviewed by Hans Dembowski**

**In the summer of 2021, international media ran many stories about the devastating Covid-19 wave in India. Was Bangladesh affected in the same way?**

Well, our country was hit by the pandemic, but we were not overwhelmed in the sense of dead bodies drifting in our rivers, as was apparently the case in India. In Bangladesh, charitable organisations ensured that the deceased were buried properly. When the pandemic started in 2020, we certainly felt overwhelmed, but that was largely mental. We were not sure how we would cope. Looking back, I would say that we had serious difficulties, but did not suffer a disaster.

**What pandemic impacts do the poor communities feel?**

The pandemic affected all communities, including the middle classes and lower-middle classes. Everyone was at risk of infection, many people did fall ill, some had to be hospitalised and some even died. However, the economic impacts hit poor people stronger. For example, all domestic helpers lost their jobs. Their employers told them to stay at home instead of coming to work because they did not want to have an outside person in their households in order to contain infection risks. Markets stayed closed, small business stopped working and transport services were drastically reduced. Even garments production stalled briefly. As a result, many people with low and moderate incomes temporarily lost their livelihoods, and that caused considerable pain.

**Did it lead to hunger?**

Many families certainly only had two meals per day instead of the three meals they are

used to, but Bangladesh did not see a serious hunger crisis. In times of need, community members support one another in our country. Civil-society organisations, including ourselves, delivered food to vulnerable people, and the government adopted selective

even more resilient should a similar disease emerge in 2030. Many social indicators have improved, including average incomes, literacy and life expectancy. Compared with other South Asian countries, our data regarding child and maternal mortality are very good too. The country’s birth rate has been close to the replacement rate for quite some time, so our population is not growing anymore. Our infrastructure has improved, and that includes health care. All this adds up to Bangladeshis’ average health status being better today than it was 30 years ago.



**“We would have achieved more in shorter time if we had been allowed to manufacture a vaccine in Bangladesh”: Health worker preparing a shot.**

support policies for the poorest communities. Civil society, the private sector and state agencies cooperated well. That said, more people than is normally the case probably did not get sufficient amounts of vitamins and proteins. Things have been going back to normal however.

**Bangladesh used to be one of the world’s poorest countries, but after three decades of fast economic growth, it is now a lower-middle income country. Would the impacts of Covid-19 have been worse if the pandemic had started in 1990 rather than in 2020?**

Yes, definitely. On the other hand, our country keeps developing, so we would prove

Therefore, we are obviously in a better position to cope with any new health challenge.

**In many countries, health systems were overwhelmed. For example, there were so many Covid-19 patients in intensive care, that there were no beds left for other patients. Important operations had to be postponed. Moreover, some patients shied away from going to clinics because they feared they might be infected there.**

We obviously had those problems in Bangladesh too. Indeed, many private-sector health facilities closed for some time to avoid infection risks. Coronavirus is a global phenomenon, and it definitely caused hard-

ship here. My point is that things did not turn out as bad as we initially feared. Among other things, we found that mobile telephones were very useful, with many people asking for – and getting – medical advice without going to health centres. In Bangladesh, almost everyone has a mobile phone today. Increased literacy rates helped too, because many people today access information on the internet. Generally speaking, the development achieved in the past decades has proved useful in this health crisis.

**How do you assess long Covid?**

That is hard to say. Much research still needs to be done internationally, and we hope to

doctor. Some poor people do not try to access medical care at all, given that they lack money to pay for services. To get a full picture of all Covid-related symptoms, we will need international studies.

**How did the vaccination campaign go?**

Well, we basically used two vaccines. The one developed by Oxford University and a Chinese one. We made good progress, but would have achieved more in shorter time if we had been allowed to manufacture a vaccine in Bangladesh. We have the industrial capacity. Oxford University prominently cooperated with AstraZeneca, the pharma multinational, but it also made an agree-

**be more effective, but they also require better infrastructure, especially in regard to cold chains. Would it have made sense to manufacture them in your country?**

Yes, of course. In our urban areas, we have the capacity to keep medical supplies cold, though I'll admit it can be quite difficult in rural areas. One lesson for Bangladesh certainly is that we must keep improving the capacities of our pharma sector. So far, only one vaccine is under research in our country. We need more research and must become able to create innovative pharmaceuticals ourselves. We can – and will – get there.

**Looking back, what kind of international support does Bangladesh need in a global pandemic?**

- First of all, we need information. Unless we know what is going on in other countries, we cannot prepare for what may happen here. Honest and comprehensive information is essential. Without it, we cannot adopt evidence-based policies.
- Technology transfer matters too, though our pharma industries have become so strong that in many cases the license to use intellectual property rights will do.
- There is no denying that we also need funding.
- Finally, international supply chains must be kept viable to the extent possible. Our people suffer when imports and exports become restricted.

**Is there any general lesson policymakers should learn from the pandemic?**

I think that Covid-19 showed us once again that we need a holistic understanding of development. Economic growth in itself is not enough. It must be used to improve infrastructure, including in the health and education sectors. Better infrastructure makes communities more resilient, and it will ultimately reinforce economic growth. These things are interrelated. In this sense, the pandemic actually proved that the Sustainable Development Goals add up to a convincing agenda.



“Civil society, the private sector and state agencies cooperated well”: Police officer handing out free food in Dhaka in August 2021.

benefit from such information. I have had three Covid infections myself, and I now experience a kind of mild cramp that I did not have before.

**Are those cramps a consequence of coronavirus?**

I do not know. Eventually, clinical research will provide information. As a matter of fact, many people may be experiencing similar or other symptoms, but they do not inform us. In a developing country like Bangladesh, people will tolerate symptoms that do not really disable them without going to the

ment with an Indian company. In return for the production license, the company promised to distribute the vaccine to developing countries in a cost-covering non-profit approach. But India stopped exporting that vaccine when its death toll started to rise fast last year. Luckily, we could rely on the Chinese vaccine at that point. Bangladeshi facilities could have produced either vaccine, and that would have reduced costs. That did not happen.

**The innovative mRNA vaccines of Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna are considered to**



**MANZUR KADIR AHMED**  
is a medical doctor and the chief executive of  
**Gonoshasthaya Kendra (GK),**  
a non-governmental

organisation focused on health care.  
[gkhealth.org@gmail.com](mailto:gkhealth.org@gmail.com)



Investment in sustainable transport boosts the economy: New metro under construction in the Indian city of Nagpur in 2019.

GREEN TRANSFORMATION

# Crisis as an opportunity

Since the onset of the pandemic, countries around the world have launched economic recovery programmes on a historically unprecedented scale. Green recovery programmes offer a great opportunity not only to tackle the economic crisis but also to address the multiple global environmental crises at the same time. However, this opportunity has so far been insufficiently exploited.

By Andreas Burger

After the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, the German Environment Agency (UBA) conducted a meta-analysis encompassing around 130 studies and position papers on economic stimulus programmes designed to promote sustainable development. That analysis showed that there is a broad consensus on the need for such programmes and their benefits within the scientific community and at international organisations such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

(OECD) and UN Environment Programme (UNEP).

Studies confirm that green programmes can be very effective drivers of economic recovery, sometimes even more effective than conventional measures. For example, investment in renewable energy pays off more in macroeconomic terms than state support for fossil fuels. Investment in nature conservation, too, can have a very high multiplier effect, meaning that it generates high impacts on demand and employment. Money spent on unsustainable land use, on the other hand, tends to have a negative impact on an economy.

## CRITERIA FOR GREEN MEASURES

There is widespread agreement in the scientific community on the criteria that green stimulus measures should meet. It is important that they:

- are feasible in the short run (timely),
- have a high impact on demand and employment (targeted),

- place only a temporary strain on state budgets (temporary) and
- make a positive contribution to socio-ecological transformation.

Some economic areas are particularly suitable for sustainable recovery programmes. They include non-fossil energy production, energy-efficient building renovation, sustainable mobility and measures for the ecological transformation of industry. The last area mentioned encompasses, for example, the development of a hydrogen-based economy and the promotion of technologies to increase energy and material efficiency. Climate adaptation measures and nature-based solutions such as reforestation are also often rated very highly.

Which particular measures can be feasibly implemented depends partly on country-specific circumstances, such as economic structure and administrative, technical and financial capacities, and partly on the availability of projects that are already planned and can be swiftly implemented.

Evaluations of existing green recovery programmes show significant differences. In industrialised countries the range of support areas is very broad, whereas in emerging economies and developing countries the focus is often solely on the development of renewable energy – especially solar energy – and preservation of the natural capital stock, for example economically important ecosystem services such as forests or marine sanctuaries.

Studies on green economic recovery programmes launched during the 2008/2009 financial and economic crisis show that they might only have a momentary effect. For example, although global greenhouse gas emissions declined slightly in 2009, they rose sharply again in 2010. The main reasons for the upturn were low energy prices and high government spending on fossil fuel-based activities.

Therefore, it is necessary to check all economic stimulus measures for environmentally harmful and climate-damaging effects and to embed green recovery programmes in structural reforms. This includes dismantling environmentally harmful subsidies and implementing carbon pricing. In addition, regulatory barriers need to be removed and green investment targets set.

It is also important to promote green financial instruments, build green infra-

structures such as charging points for electric vehicles, expand public transport networks and power grids, and launch training programmes so that the social and ecological transformation is not hampered by a shortage of skilled workers.

### POLICY-MAKING LAGS BEHIND

More than two years after the onset of the corona crisis, questions need to be addressed about the extent to which policy-makers heeded the recommendations of the scientific community and the scale on which green economic recovery programmes were implemented. The answer is sobering: from a global perspective, green recovery measures played a minor role to combat the corona crisis.

The Global Recovery Observatory – a platform created by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), IMF and GIZ to promote knowledge exchange and green fiscal policy – tracks countries' Covid-19 recovery spending. It estimates that total spending worldwide on measures to address the crisis amounted to around \$18 trillion (as of August 2022), most of which went on short-term rescue efforts. Only a little over \$3 trillion was longer-term recovery spending and less than a third of that was used to fund green programmes.

Even so, compared to the 2008/2009 financial crisis the importance of green economic recovery measures has increased

significantly. Evidence of this can be seen, among other places, in many EU countries, partly as a result of the EU Recovery and Resilience Facility earmarking considerable financial resources for green measures.

Green recovery spending has been confined to relatively few countries, most of them in the industrialised world. This is largely due to the fact that the financial resources of developing and emerging economies are much more limited. In 2020, per capita spending on recovery programmes in industrial countries was 17 times higher than in developing and emerging economies. This shows how important debt relief and targeted financial support by the industrialised world is. They empower developing and emerging nations, too, to implement green programmes.

Moreover, green programmes' positive impacts on the environment are often counteracted by negative impacts from other stimulus measures. The IMF found that in the Group of 20 leading economic nations (G20), 1.4% of corona spending in 2020 had a positive climate impact, while 1.7% was harmful to the climate. Analyses by the Global Recovery Observatory conclude that only 3% of expenditures on economic recovery have a positive effect on the natural capital stock but 17% of spending has a negative impact. With regard to the goal of air pollution control, the positive and negative impacts are more or less equal. These are shocking findings and underline the impor-

tance of applying environmental and sustainability checks to all stimulus measures.

Whether the world as a whole will emerge from the crisis greener as a result of the corona programmes that have been implemented is impossible to say at this stage. It is too early to make a final judgement because programmes are still ongoing and quantitative impact studies are hardly available.

Because of the war in Ukraine, the world is now once again in an economic crisis. And the measures taken in response to that crisis will again be decisive. If the sharp rise in fossil fuel prices is used as an opportunity to promote energy efficiency, green energy and post-fossil production technologies, the crisis could become a catalyst for sustainable development. Developing countries and emerging economies urgently need support in this regard because the constraints on their financial capacities have been even intensified by the current surge in energy and food prices and the economic crisis.

If, on the other hand, the response to sharply rising fossil fuel prices and gas supply shortages is to subsidise fossil fuels even more and to develop new sources of fossil fuels, the targets of the Paris Climate Agreement will hardly be achievable any more.

### REFERENCES

- Umweltbundesamt (German Environment Agency), 2020: *The Green New Consensus. Study shows broad consensus on green recovery programmes and structural reforms.* [https://www.umweltbundesamt.de/sites/default/files/medien/376/publikationen/thenewgreenconsensus\\_englisch\\_bf.pdf](https://www.umweltbundesamt.de/sites/default/files/medien/376/publikationen/thenewgreenconsensus_englisch_bf.pdf)
- Green Fiscal Policy Network (UNEP, IMF, GIZ) and University of Oxford: *Global Recovery Observatory.* <https://greenfiscalspolicy.org/observatory/>
- IMF Working Paper, 2021: *Monitoring the Climate Impact of Fiscal Policy – Lessons from tracking the COVID-19 response.* <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WP/Issues/2021/10/29/Monitoring-the-Climatic-Impact-of-Fiscal-Policy-Lessons-from-Tracking-the-COVID-19-Response-501350>



**ANDREAS BURGER** heads the Economic and Social Environmental Issues, Sustainable Consumption section of the German

Environment Agency in Dessau-Roßlau. [andreas.burger@uba.de](mailto:andreas.burger@uba.de)



Non-fossil energy production is particularly suitable for sustainable recovery programmes: solar panel in Côte d'Ivoire.



RULE OF LAW

# Detention in pandemic

**In the course of the Covid-19 pandemic, detained persons suffered an increasing number of human rights violations. A report from the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) highlights abusive practices as well as legal ways to fight them.**

By Jane Escher

People in detention are generally at high risk of infectious diseases. After all, they live together at close quarters. Jails tend to be overcrowded everywhere, hygiene is generally poor and quarantine is often impossible. Persons with pre-existing medical conditions or pregnancies are especially vulnerable.

It thus was no surprise that Covid-19 spread fast in detention facilities. Because of rules that were meant to contain the disease, moreover, infected persons often struggled to get in touch with lawyers and insist on judicial review.

Nonetheless, lawyers did find ways to assist people in jails and improve protection against Covid-19. The OMCT report assesses pandemic-related issues, which were prevalent in many countries. It also discusses interventions made in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Around the world, complaints against unlawful detention helped to fight overcrowding in jails. These complaints are called “habeas corpus” in Anglo-Saxon common law. They can apply to individuals as well as groups. In the course of habeas-corpus cases, prisoners with high health risks were released into house arrest or on bail. In other cases, detention conditions improved. In the Brazilian state of Espírito Santo, collective legal action resulted in the release of people who had been unable to pay bail. An individual habeas-corpus complaint in Nepal restarted bail hearings.

In some cases, courts acted on “amicus curiae” briefs. These are documents that are submitted by third parties with the intention to inform judges of abuses. The Open Society Justice Initiative took this approach to obtain a ruling from the African Court of Human and People’s Rights. The

court indeed condemned the criminalisation of poor and marginalised people under vagrancy laws in various African countries.

Rules to contain Covid-19 restricted contact between prisoners and lawyers. Law

firms and civil-society organisations found strategies to offer legal support without meeting in person. In some countries, they made authorities grant prisoners access to phones or the internet. In Argentina, for example, detainees were temporarily permitted to use mobile phones. Moreover, lawyers spoke with current and former inmates to learn more about the situation inside detention facilities.

In times of crisis, the protection of prisoners’ human rights depends on what



## CHALLENGING DETENTION AND TORTURE IN TIMES OF COVID-19

PROMISING PRACTICES FROM HUMAN RIGHTS LITIGATORS AND ADVOCATES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Briefing report  
February 2022



The OMCT report was published in February 2022.

the public knows about what is going on in detention facilities. In many places, activists launched awareness campaigns accordingly. They highlighted risks to both physical and mental health. As family visits were no longer allowed and access to phone and internet were denied, prisoners suffered considerable isolation. Civil-society organisations in Tunisia produced a ten-minute video to showcase the mental impact on both inmates and guards.

Public pressure can make authorities more willing to cooperate. Indeed, human-rights activists did join forces with judicial authorities to collect data and process individual cases. Civil-society experts also benefited from sharing experiences and ideas internationally. In joint efforts, they developed and tested strategies. Based on international exchange, the Justice Project Pakistan created a map of Covid-19 in prisons around the world as well as a tool to help authorities assess inmates' vulnerability.

Civil-society campaigns helped to shed light on another human-rights crisis,

moreover. As the OMCT report points out, human rights were violated outside prisons in the context of Covid-19 related restrictive policies. For example, pandemic rules were used to criminalise and arrest social activists in Indonesia and South Korea. Moreover, pandemic measures were implemented with excessive force or in the pursuit of other ends in various places. In El Salvador, for example, authorities imprisoned people arbitrarily, claiming they had violated quarantine rules. Such cases were addressed in habeas-corpus complaints.

Campaigns by civil-society organisations and alliances have proven helpful in the defence of detainees' human rights. The toolbox of legal activism includes going to court and the documentation of abusive practices. Up-to-date PR strategies matter too, including public statements, social media posts and the training of volunteers. In Kenya, activists launched a toll-free hotline and an email mechanism for reporting violations. They promoted both options on social-media platforms. In Tunisia, not-for-profit organisations joined hands with

government agencies demanding that more detained persons be released. The result was that some 5000 could indeed leave detention facilities.

The OMCT is an international alliance of non-governmental organisations. The details published in the report were collected during international workshops called "litigation labs" in late 2020. The events were attended by 130 activists. The document was funded by sponsors including George Soros' Open Society Foundations.

**LINK**

**OMCT – Organisation mondiale contre la torture, 2022: Challenging detention and torture in times of Covid-19.**

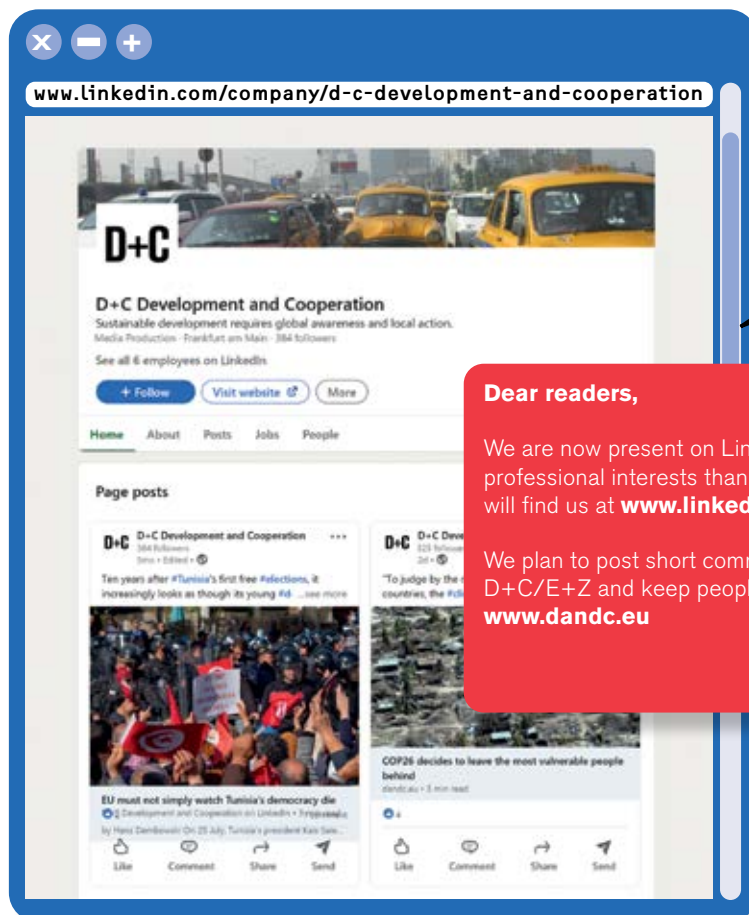
[https://www.omct.org/site-resources/legacy/Report\\_Torture-and-Covid19\\_EN\\_240222.pdf](https://www.omct.org/site-resources/legacy/Report_Torture-and-Covid19_EN_240222.pdf)



**JANE ESCHER**

is a PR trainee with Engagement Global. She wrote this piece during a stint at the editorial office of D+C/E+Z.

[jane.escher@engagement-global.de](mailto:jane.escher@engagement-global.de)



Join us on  
**LinkedIn!**

**Dear readers,**

We are now present on LinkedIn, the social-media platform that focuses more on professional interests than entertainment. We would like to ask you to join us there. You will find us at [www.linkedin.com/company/d-c-development-and-cooperation](http://www.linkedin.com/company/d-c-development-and-cooperation)

We plan to post short comments, discuss questions pertaining to future editions of D+C/E+Z and keep people briefed on important items we post on our website [www.dandc.eu](http://www.dandc.eu)

DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION **D+C**

Manzur Kadir Ahmed: "We would have achieved more in shorter time if we had been allowed to manufacture a vaccine in Bangladesh."

Page 29



Photo: picture-alliance/AA/Stringer