

When COVID and Conflict Collide



1. Theory of the case— “multiphase complex emergency”
2. Compounding issues in fragile and conflict-affected states
3. Model complexity and data collection issues
4. Approaches to mitigate

Theory of the Case (general)

Complex emergencies are situations of disrupted livelihoods and threats to life produced by warfare, civil disturbance and large-scale movements of people, in which any emergency response has to be conducted in a difficult political and security environment.

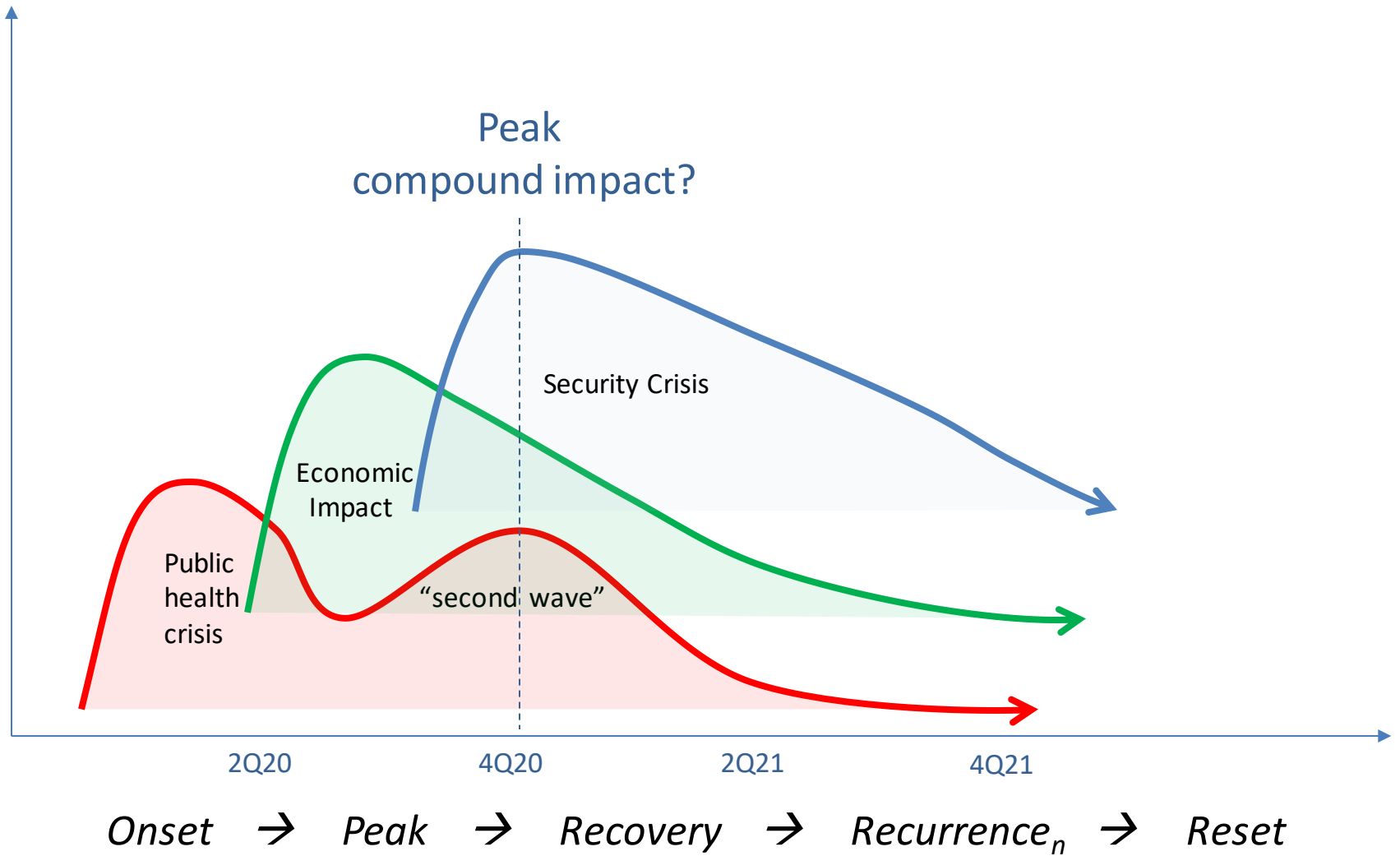
Environmental Health in Emergencies and Disasters: a Practical Guide
(World Health Organization, 2002)

- **DRC**: Second Congo War, Eastern Congo Crisis
- **African conflict zones**: Ebola & cholera outbreaks
- **Horn of Africa**: drought, famine, locust plague + war
- **Arab Spring**: Libya/Syria/Yemen wars + humanitarian crises
- **Venezuela**: economic collapse + oil shock + civil unrest
- **South Sudan**: drought + locust plague + war
- **Myanmar**: Rakhine separatist conflict + Rohingya crisis + cholera

Complex emergencies tend to be multi-phase, with mutually-exacerbating impacts from multiple causes that compound over time and hamper responses.

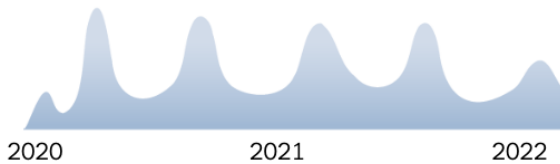
- “This is not an actual economic crisis: it is a government-imposed shutdown and power grab, whereby the state has:
 - Made working and operating businesses illegal, while pretending to bail people out with money it pretends to have;
 - Suspended or seriously attacked rights of assembly, freedom of movement, access to private property and freedom of speech;
 - Demonstrated a mix of arrogance, untruthfulness and incompetence in putting private enterprise out of work yet protecting government employees/unions;
 - Imposed mandatory compliance with constantly-changing guidance;
 - Fostered a culture of snitching and informing to state entities;
 - Proposed a solution that will give government access to every citizen’s DNA, blood test data, infection status, movement tracking and cellphone mobility data as a prerequisite to restore liberties seized during the crisis.”
- Whatever the economic or health outcome, this will damage social cohesion, increase state fragility and provoke anti-government sentiment.

COVID-19 as a multiphase complex emergency

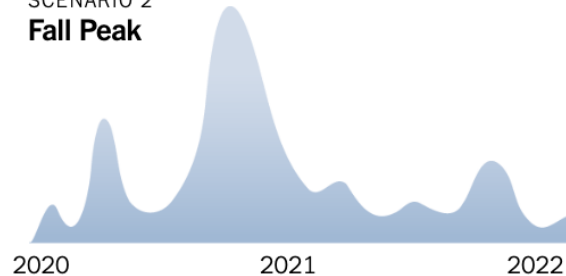


Second and subsequent waves

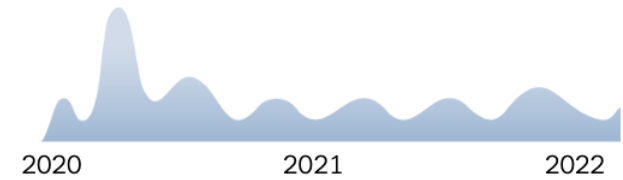
POSSIBLE SCENARIO 1
Peaks and Valleys



SCENARIO 2
Fall Peak



SCENARIO 3
Slow Burn



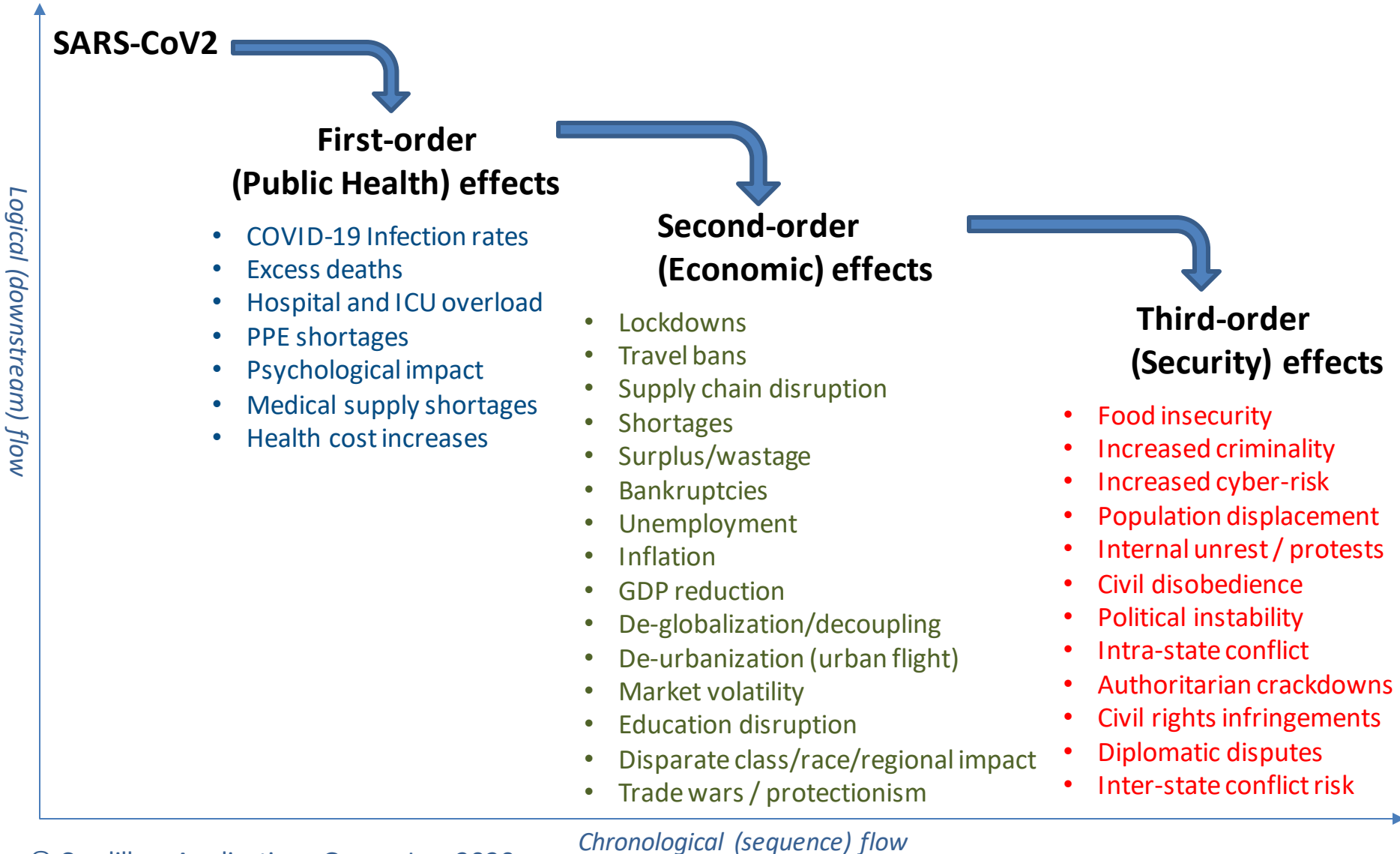
Each public health impact wave is followed by:

- Lockdowns
 - Job losses
 - Bankruptcies
 - Supply chain disruptions
- Economic impact

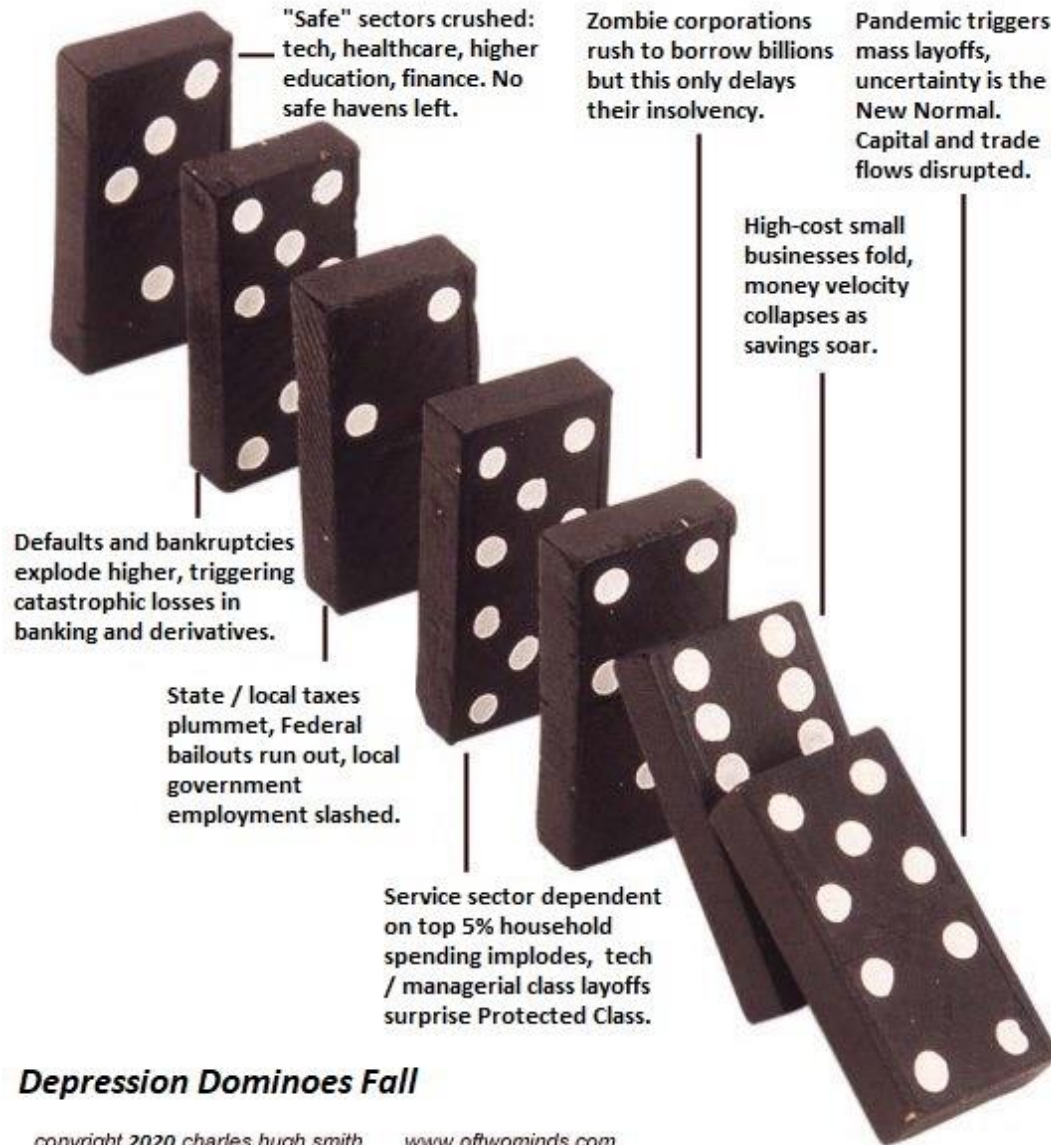
Each economic impact wave is followed by:

- Human security crises (food, water)
 - Civil unrest (armed/unarmed)
 - Political instability
 - Internal security crises
- Enhanced interstate war risk

Cascading Effects of Novel Coronavirus



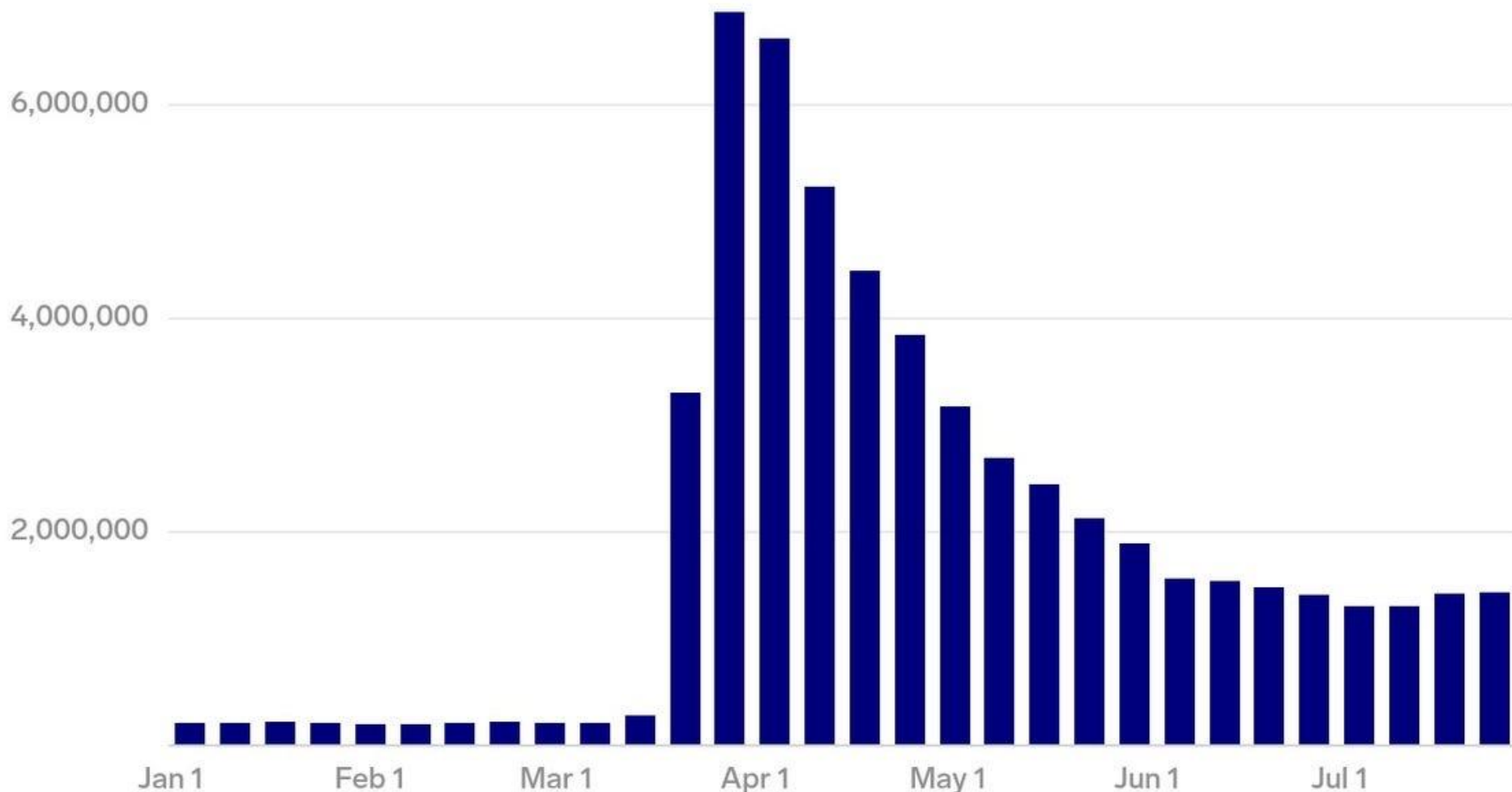
This is a common public view...



Depression Dominoes Fall

copyright 2020 charles hugh smith www.oftwominds.com

Initial unemployment claims



Note: Chart shows claims for the week ending on each date.

Chart: Andy Kiersz/Business Insider •

Source: US Employment and Training Administration via FRED

BUSINESS INSIDER

Compounding issues

(specific to fragile/conflict-affected states)

Compounding issues—food insecurity



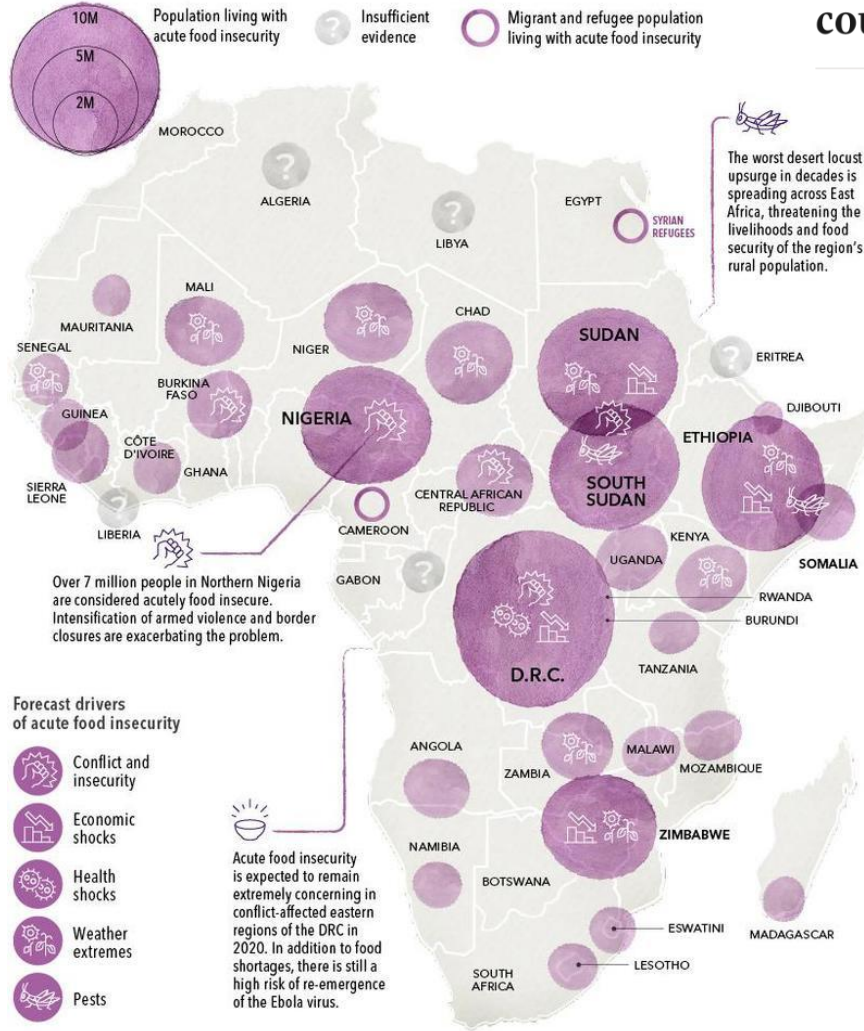


CORDILLERA APPLICATIONS GROUP

Food Insecurity Risk → Political Instability

FOOD INSECURITY RISKS IN 2020: AFRICA

73 million people at risk



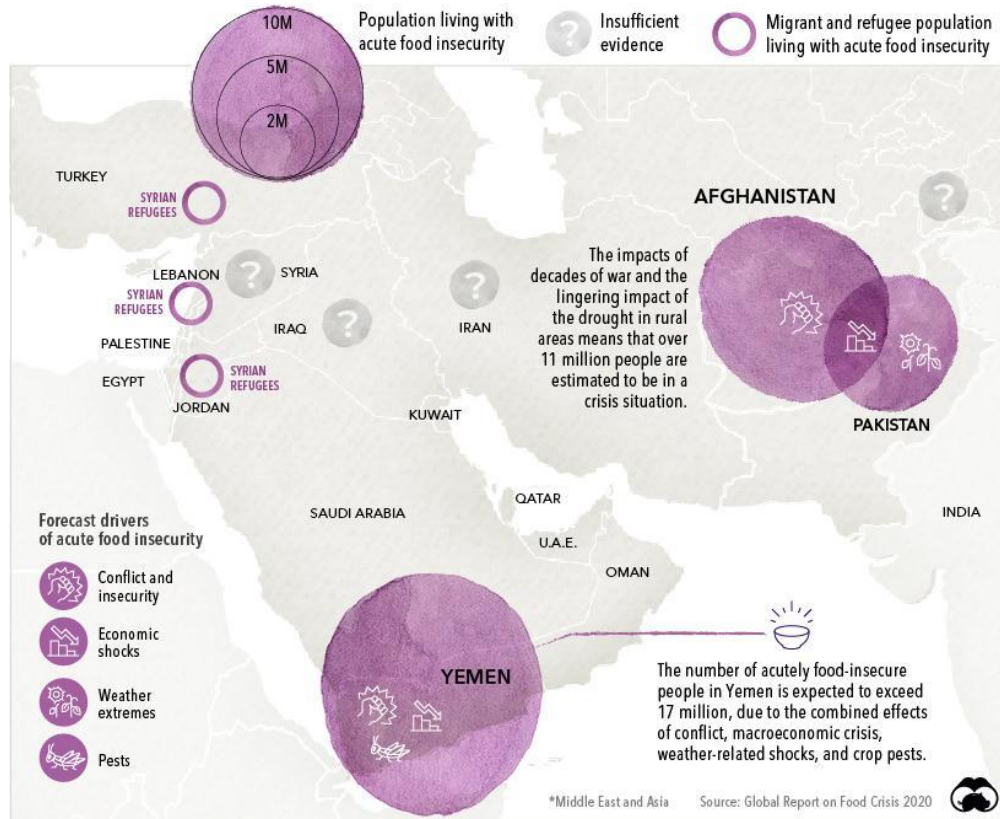
Source: Global Report on Food Crisis 2020

visualcapitalist.com

World Food Programme warns at least 30 million people could die of starvation during pandemic

FOOD INSECURITY RISKS IN 2020: MIDDLE EAST

43 million people at risk*



*Middle East and Asia

Source: Global Report on Food Crisis 2020

Water insecurity → immediate crisis







Hezbollah

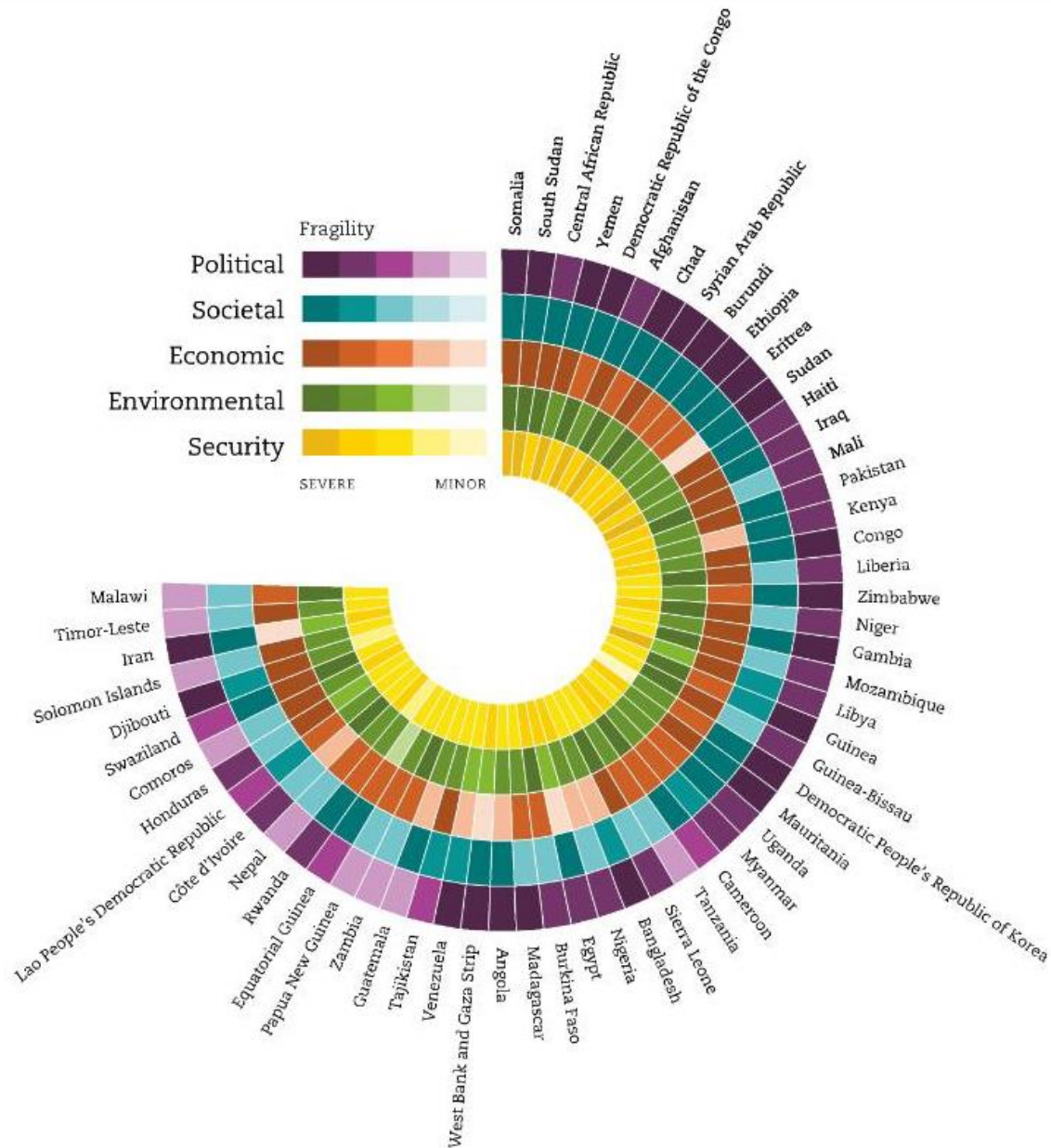
Alejandrina Guzman





Modelling and data issues

Complex and static models proliferate...

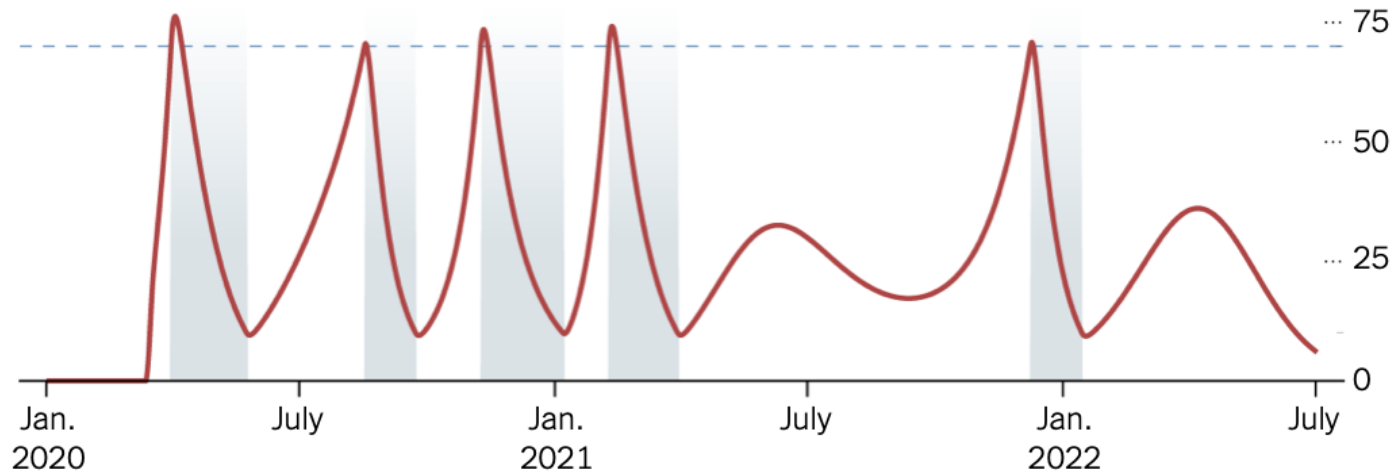


(OECD)

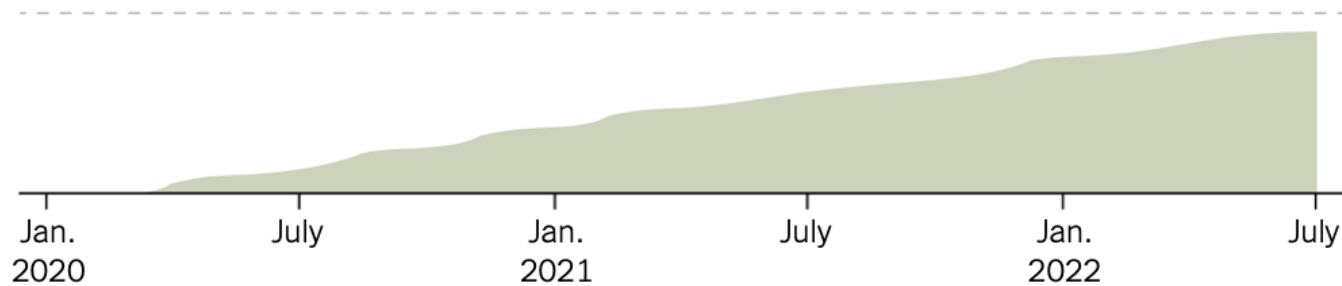
Most data are country-year, not dynamic

Coronavirus infections

per 10,000 people, with seasonality and a doubling of critical care capacity



Cumulative progress toward herd immunity



Modified from Stephen M. Kissler et al., Science | Graphics by Jonathan Corum

- Afghanistan—peace talks in progress
- Congo/DRC—ongoing Ebola and Cholera outbreaks
- West Bank and Gaza—functional blockade in place
- Syria—large internally displaced persons (IDP) population
- Somalia/Somaliland—remittance economy collapse

Way forward

Conflict risk factors:

1. Internal conflict or insurgency
2. Presence of external intervention/PKO forces
3. Ethnic/tribal/regional territorial disputes
4. Territorial disputes with neighbouring countries
5. Illegal immigration / border-crossing
6. Indigenous protest movements
7. Major trading partner is not major security partner

Demographic/structural factors:

8. Percentage of urbanization
9. Percentage of population over 60
10. Multi-family dwellings
11. Multi-generation households
12. Pre-existing public health crises e.g. Ebola, Cholera
13. Racial/ethnic health disparities
14. Prevalence of diabetes, obesity and heart disease
15. Racial/ethnic health disparities
16. Regional/local or urban food deserts
17. Weak public health system
18. Fragile water infrastructure

Political Economy:

19. Performance based legitimacy
20. Head-of-Government or parliamentary election in next 12 months
21. Politicized / polarized media
22. Fractured/polarized political elite
23. Gini coefficient
24. Urban/rural political divide
25. Percentage employed in state-owned enterprises
26. Dollar-denominated debt
27. Major trading partner not major security partner

1. Dependence on remittances from diaspora
2. Dependence on tourism for employment/government revenue
3. Size of diaspora
4. Reliance on food imports, especially staples e.g. rice, wheat flour
5. Reliance on food exports to COVID-affected countries
6. Reliance on oil exports
7. Cross-border labour market / Presence of large overseas workforce
8. Air travel/cruise ship hubs
9. Regional rail/road transport hubs, major ports and harbours
10. Industries requiring close indoor proximity e.g. textiles, clothing
11. Indoor air pollution/Outdoor air pollution
12. Effectiveness/overstretch of health care system
13. BRI debt to China and/or major Chinese-owned infrastructure investment
14. Reliance on overseas imports of consumer goods
15. Large overseas tourist or student population

1. Legitimacy/effectiveness of local/sub-national government
2. Strong non-government local security forces
3. Technocratic (apolitical) medical services
4. Size of subsistence agriculture sector (non-export agriculture)
5. Low national debt-to-GDP ratio
6. Government transparency
7. Percentage of small/medium enterprises serving domestic market only
8. Closed (i.e. already sealed) borders

Source of Instability	Causes	Analysis				Design		
		Causes (Systemic)	Objective	Impact Indicators	Impact Indicator Data Sources	Activities	Output Indicators	Output Indicator Data Sources
Lack of Water	<p>We need more wells</p> <p>We need more drinking water</p> <p>We need water for our crops</p>	<p>Tribal competition prevents people cooperating to dig wells or irrigation</p> <p>Culture of dependency limits people's willingness to dig wells or irrigation</p> <p>Water table could be dropping (investigate)</p> <p>Karezes may be clogged up (investigate)</p> <p>Public wells are too far from some people's homes</p> <p>Flood irrigation is inefficient and adds salt to the soil</p>	<p>GIRoA helps increase availability of drinking water and expand amount of land under irrigation</p>	<p>Fewer people citing water as their primary concern</p> <p>Support for government goes up</p> <p>More land under irrigation</p> <p>Higher crop yields</p> <p>More local food for sale in bazaar</p> <p>Households spend less time fetching water</p>	<p>DSF surveys</p> <p>Patrol reports</p> <p>Interviews with local households, farmers, shopkeepers</p> <p>Key leader engagements</p>	<p>Drip irrigation systems</p> <p>Clean karezes</p> <p>Organize communities to dig own wells</p> <p>Build water cisterns</p> <p>Build/check dams</p> <p>Involve MRRD to establish Community Development Councils (CDCs)</p>	<p>Number of drip irrigation systems operational</p> <p>Number of operational karezes</p> <p>Number of wells dug by local communities</p> <p>Number of water cisterns constructed</p> <p>Number of check dams built</p> <p>Number of CDCs established</p>	<p>Patrol reports</p> <p>Direct observation</p> <p>Sub-governor reports</p> <p>Agriculture Department reports</p> <p>Interviews with local communities</p> <p>Contractor reports</p> <p>MRRD reports</p>
<p>Legend: GIRoA - Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan MRRD - Ministry of Rural Reconstruction and Development</p>								

- Local sources
- Data gaps
- Archetypes
- Observer effect
- Survey fatigue
- Manipulability

David Kilcullen
djk@cordillera-apps.com