

Forecasting COVID-related State Fragility and Failure

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EXPLORE UNDERSTAND SHAPE



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Will the Coronavirus Fuel Conflict?

Projections based on economic and development data show an increased risk of internal violence in fragile states driven by rising prices and falling incomes.

BY **JONATHAN D. MOYER, OLIVER KAPLAN**

JULY 6, 2020, 2:56 PM

EDITOR'S NOTE: We're making some of our coronavirus pandemic coverage free for nonsubscribers. You can read those articles [here](#) and subscribe to our newsletters [here](#).

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The coronavirus pandemic has led to over 500,000 deaths and strained health care systems worldwide. But it has also had damaging knock-on effects for the global economy and governance. One increasing risk is that these effects will lead to more episodes of large-scale internal violence, including civil war.

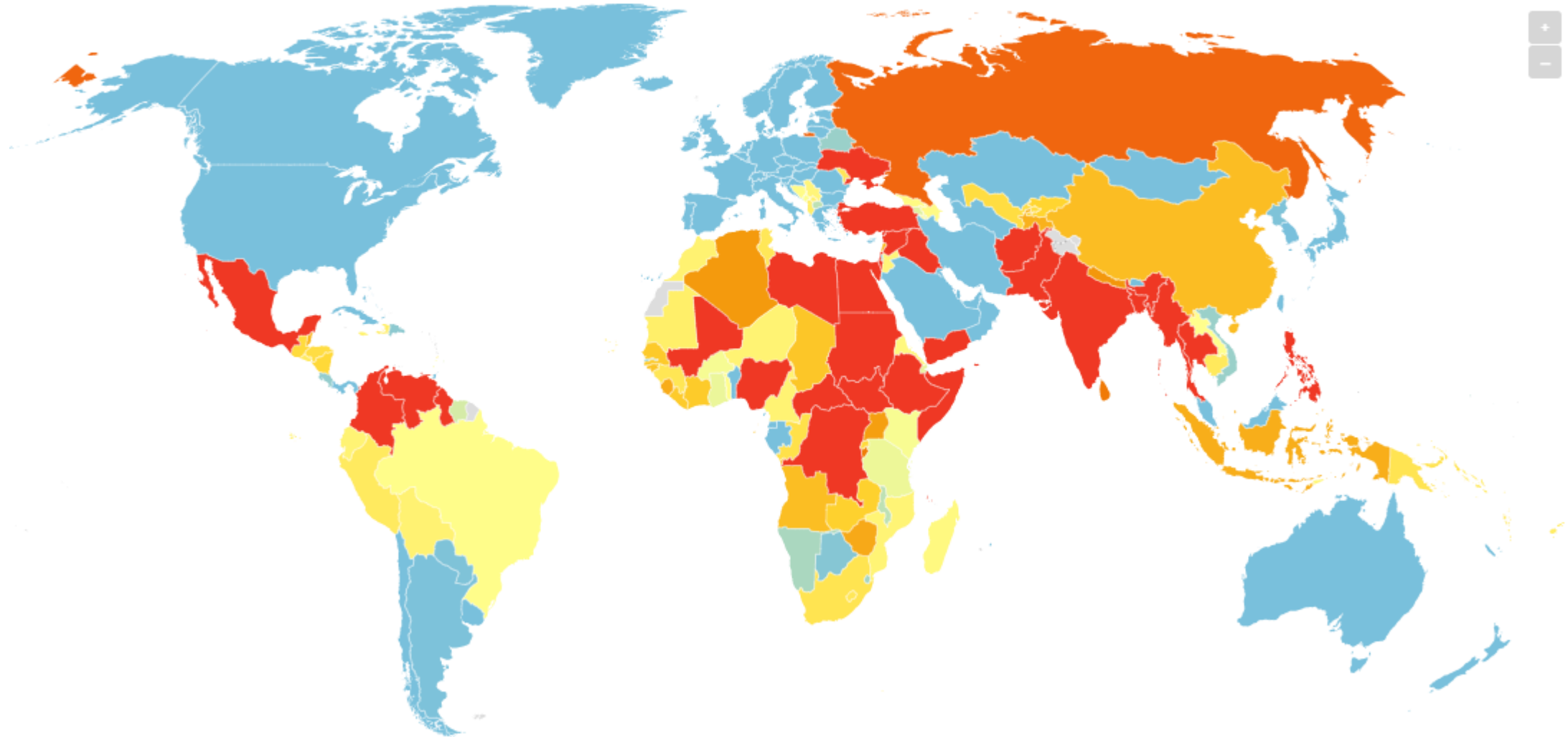
Outline and Results

- **COVID and Fragility:** 56% increase in conflicts through 2022
- **Model Accuracy:** 13 additional conflicts?
- **The *Anna Karenina* Principle:** Conflicts concentrated in Africa?
- **Qualitative insights and policy options:** COVID adds gas for new sparks

Overall Global Fragility Post-Pandemic, 2020-2022

Greatest likelihood of internal war **Lower likelihood** of internal war **Unlikely** to experience internal war

(Hover for probability of war)

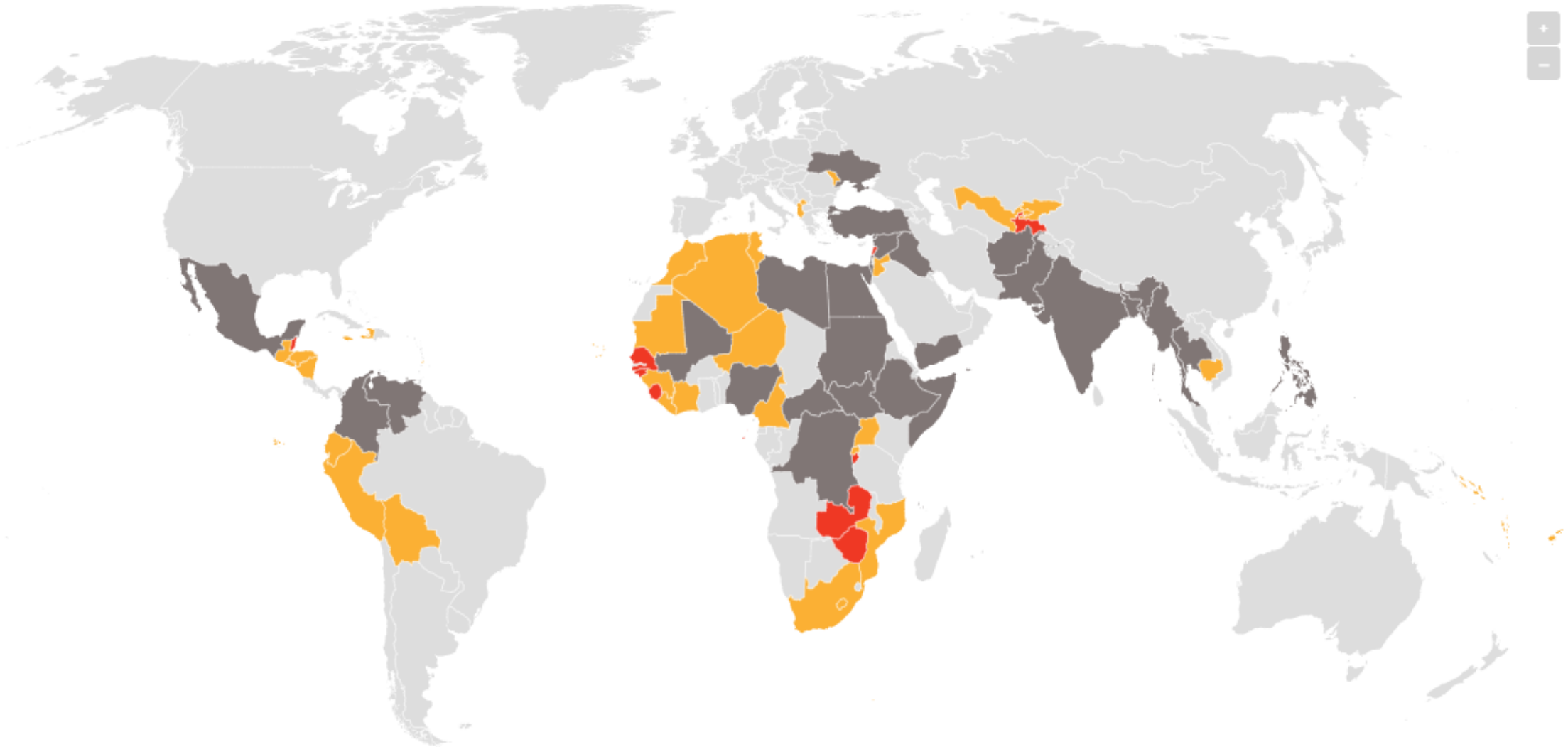


NOTE: NO DATA WAS AVAILABLE FOR FRENCH GUIANA, NEW CALEDONIA, SVALBARD, AND WESTERN SAHARA

Increased Likelihood of War Due to the Coronavirus, 2020-2022

Countries with a more than 0.25 increase in probability of internal war. **Countries** with an increased probability of 0.1 to 0.25.

Countries experiencing ongoing war.



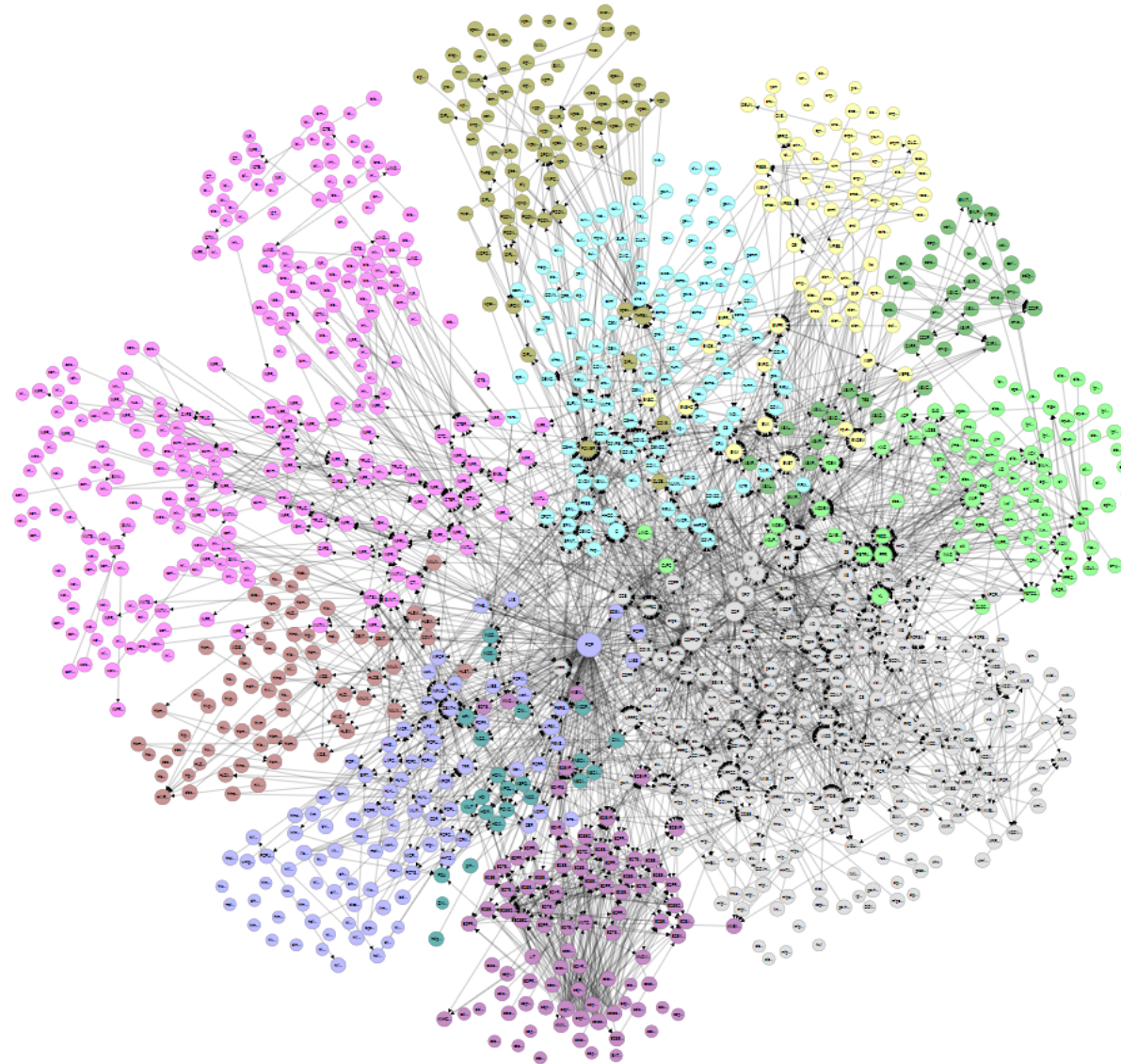
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Drivers of State Failure

- GDP
- GDP growth
- Infant mortality
- Anocratic (mixed) regimes
- State discrimination
- Neighborhood conflicts/
history of conflict
- Trade
- Youth Bulge



International Futures (IFs) Simulated Forecast: Interacting Clusters of Variables

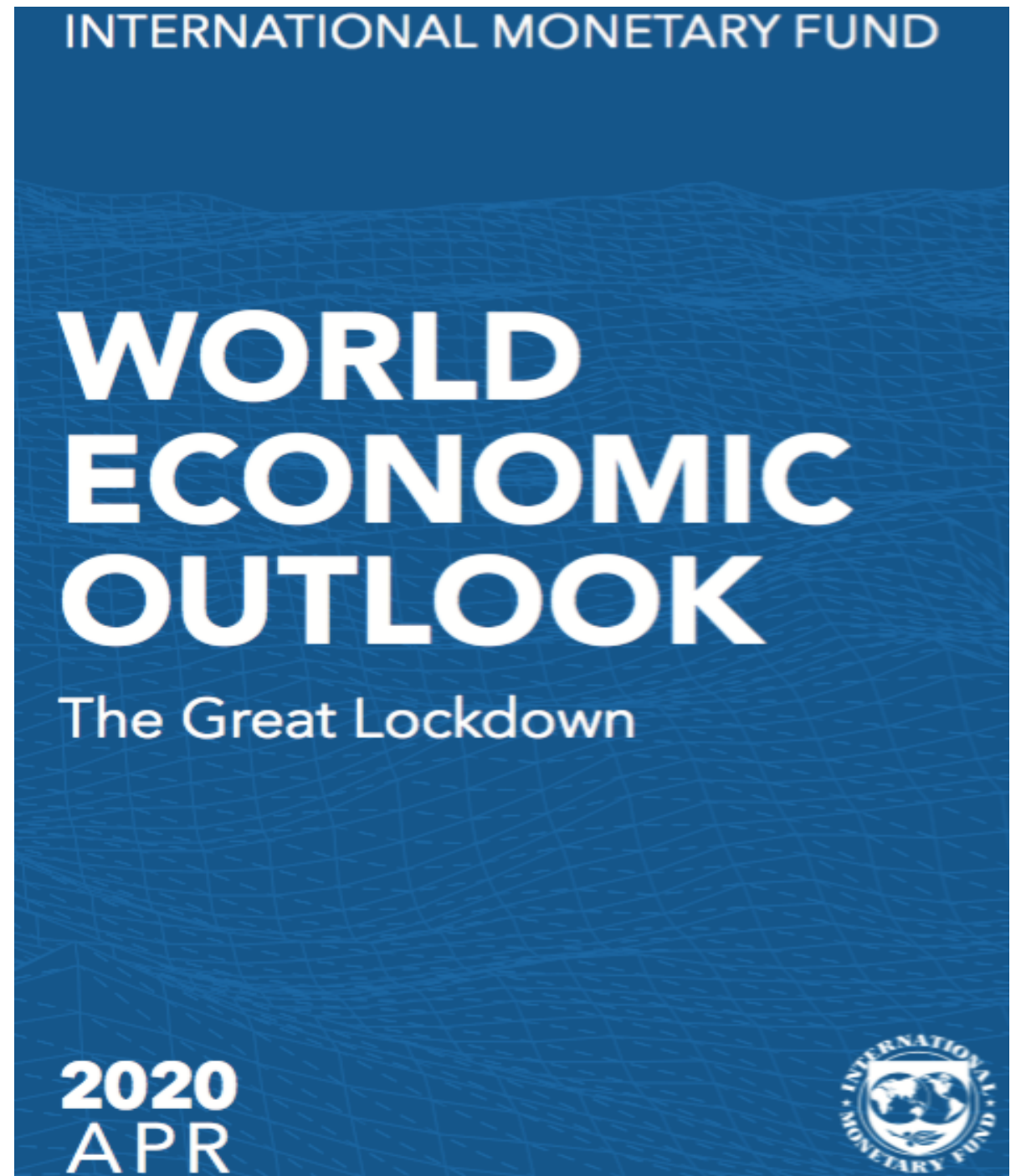


Comparing 2 forecasts:

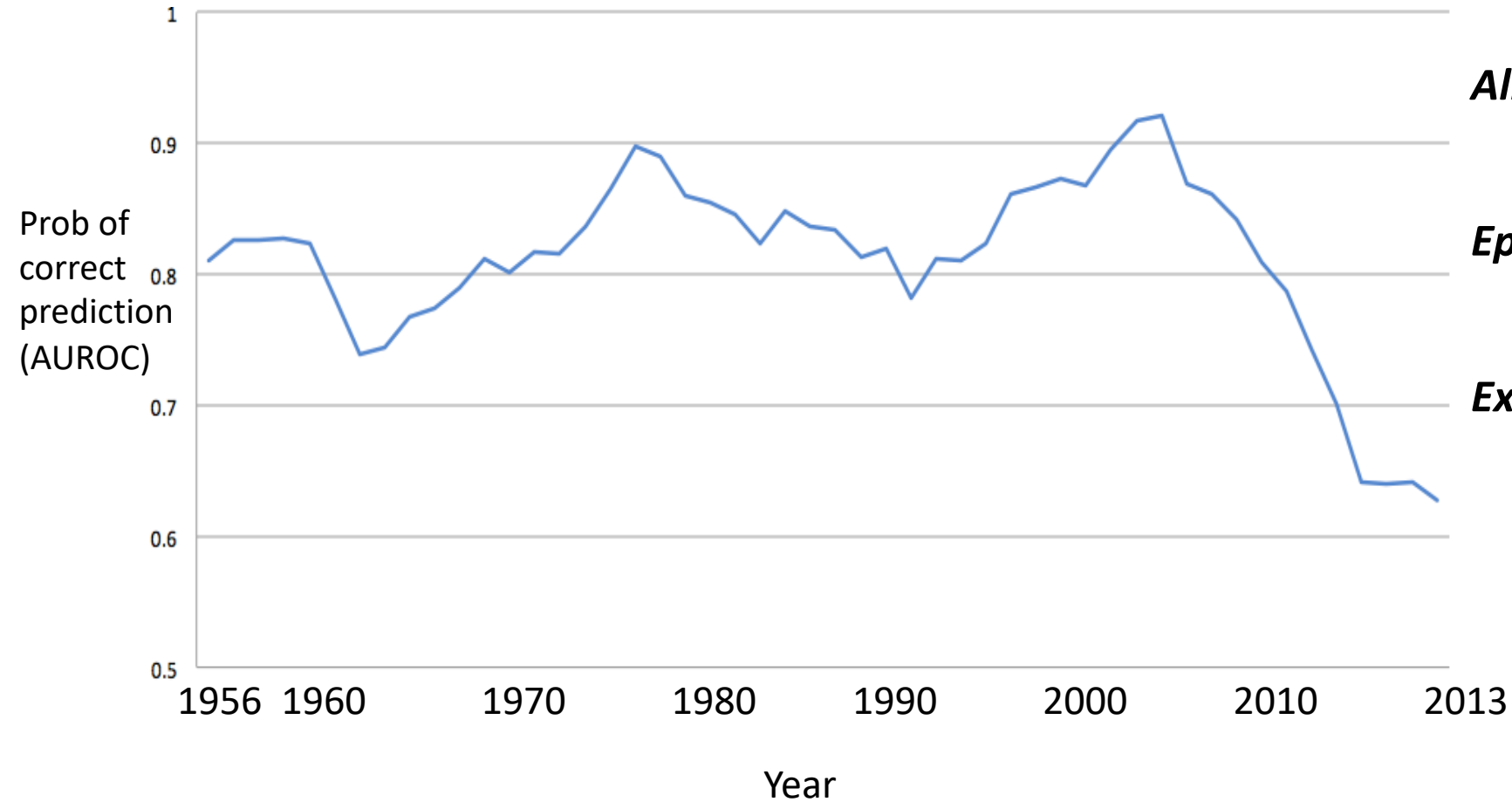
GDP growth rates Pre-COVID

Vs.

GDP growth rates Post-COVID



Modeling Accuracy Varies Across Time



All models are wrong, some are useful

Use single models with caution

Episodes of state failure are complex

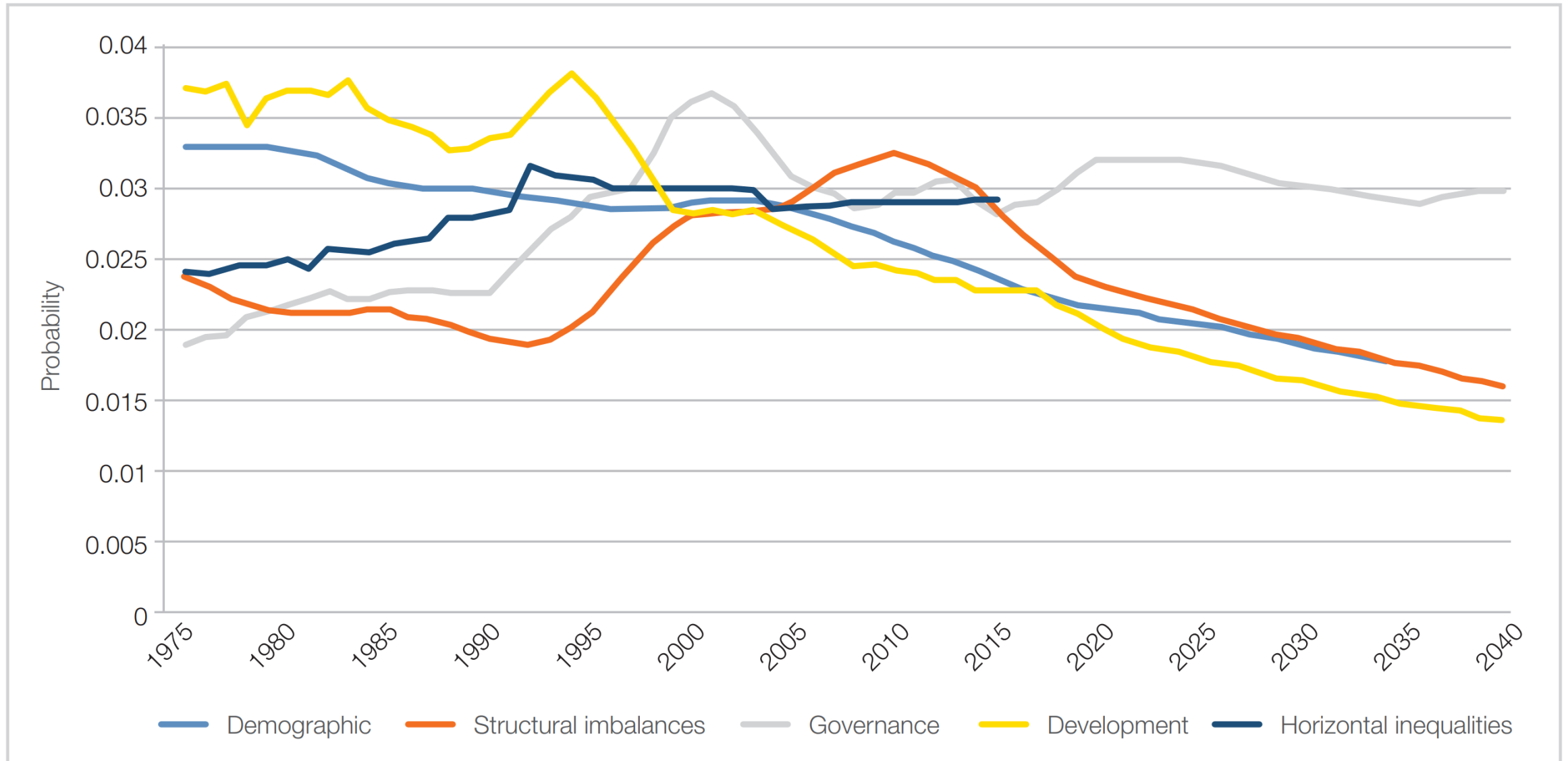
Do not accept simple explanations

Expect to be surprised

~20% of state failure events are not captured by structural models

Different Strokes for Different States

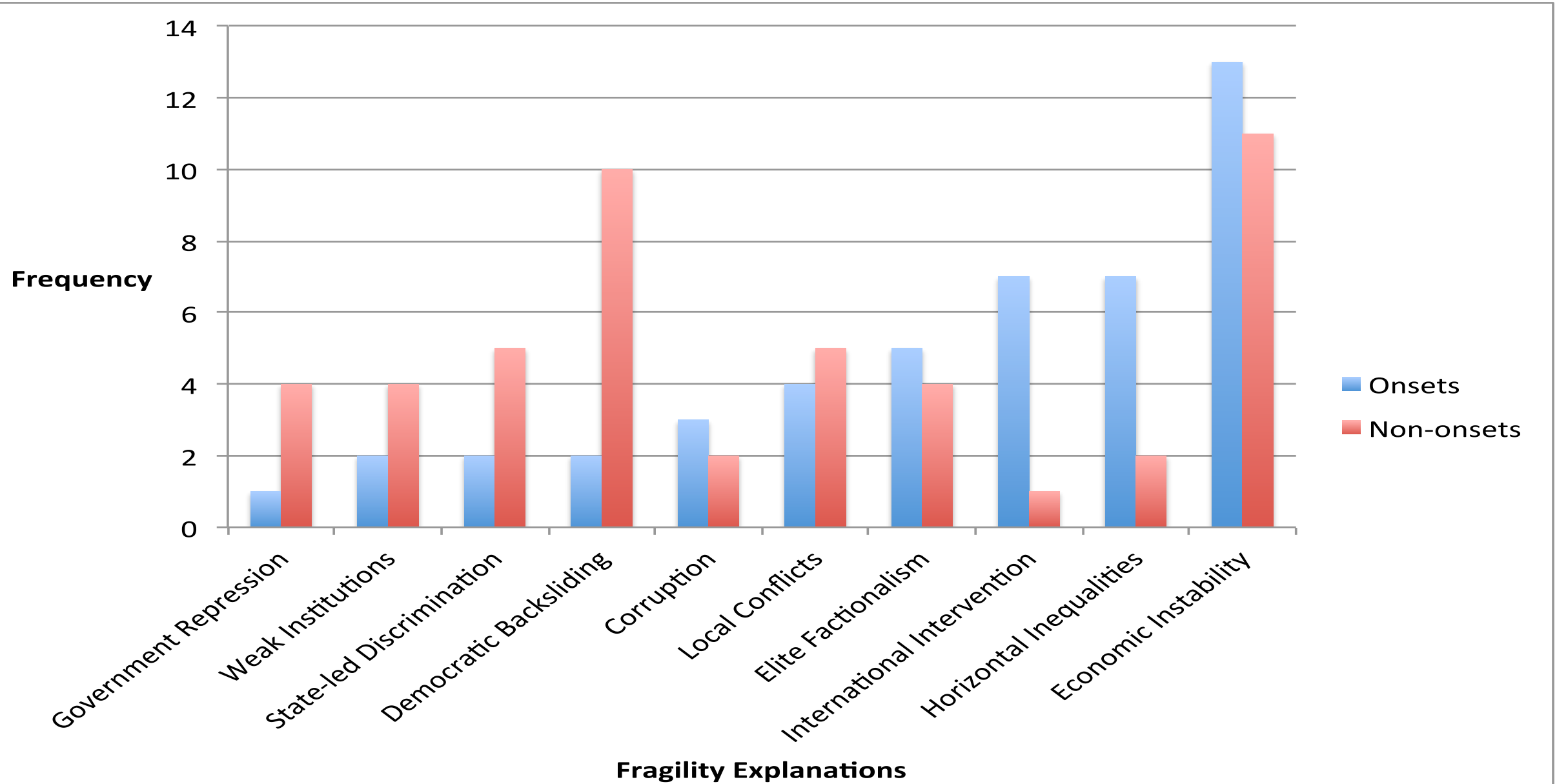
Figure 5: Average probability for the onset of political instability across different models for sub-Saharan Africa, historical and forecast



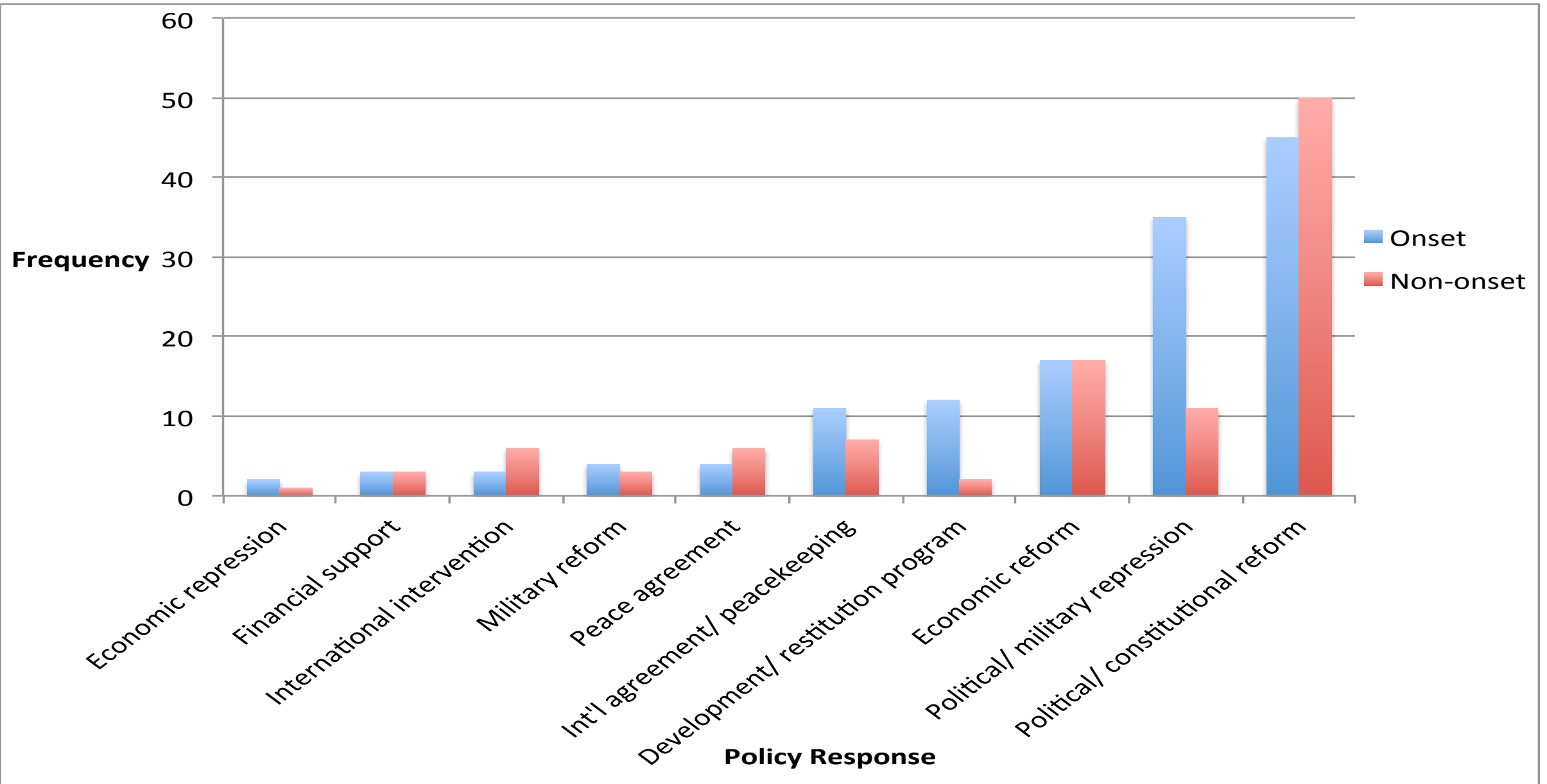
Mixed Methods for Process and Policies

- 50 Qualitative case studies
 - 25 fragility “onset” (wars, coups, genocides)
 - 25 “non-onsets” (also-rans)
- Re-coded quantitative indicators from case narratives
- Summary results

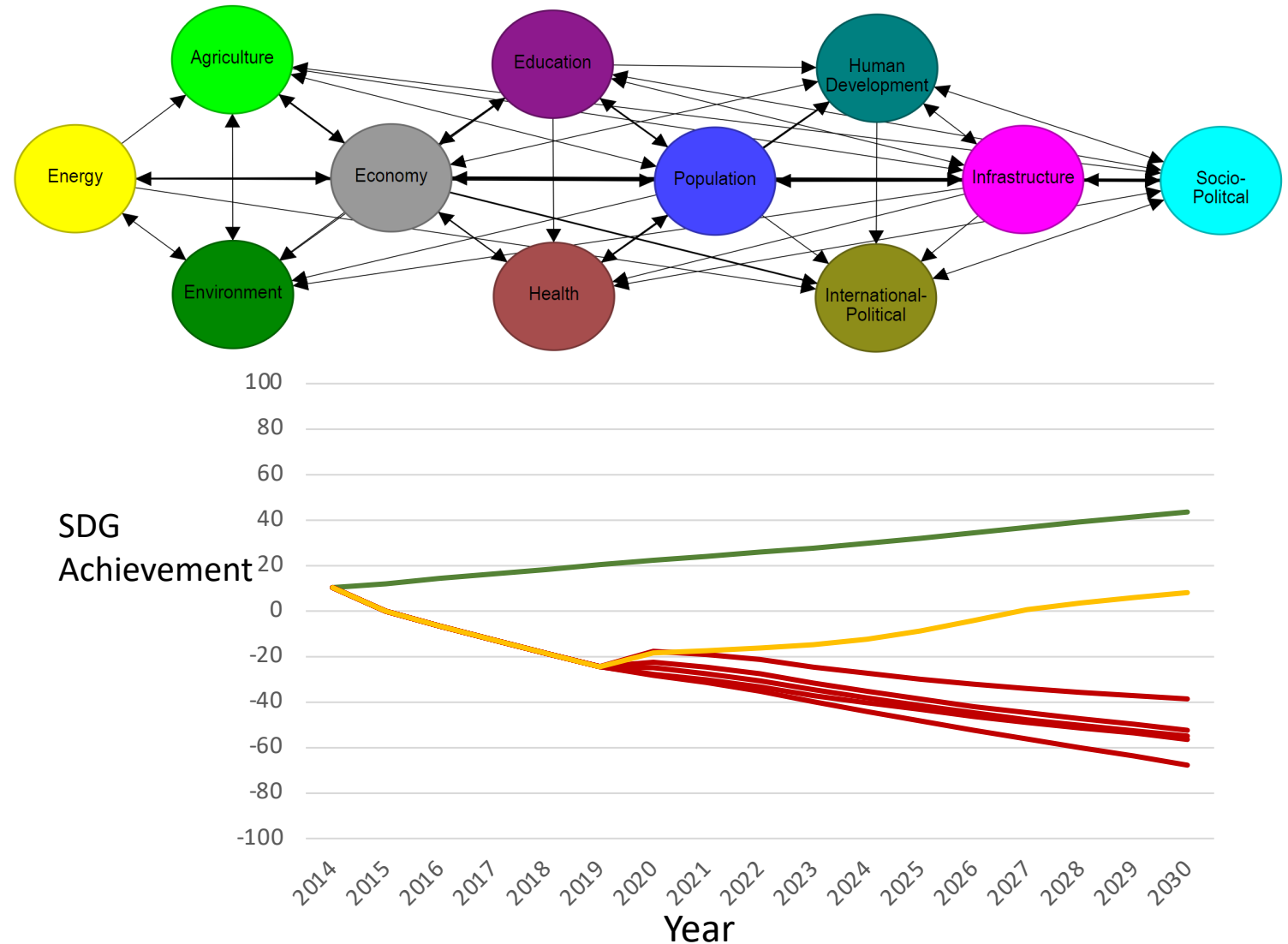
Explanations for State Fragility



Policy Responses to Fragility



YEMEN: Simulating the Conflict-Development Nexus



LEBANON's Literal Spark

Lebanese government quits amid fury over Beirut blast

Michael Georgy, Ellen Francis

6 MIN READ



BEIRUT (Reuters) - Lebanon's prime minister announced his government's resignation on Monday, saying a huge explosion that devastated Beirut and triggered public outrage was the result of endemic corruption.



World Food Programme to send 50,000 T of wheat flour to Lebanon



Reinforce Lebanon's
government??

... Maybe (with conditions?)

If national corruption...

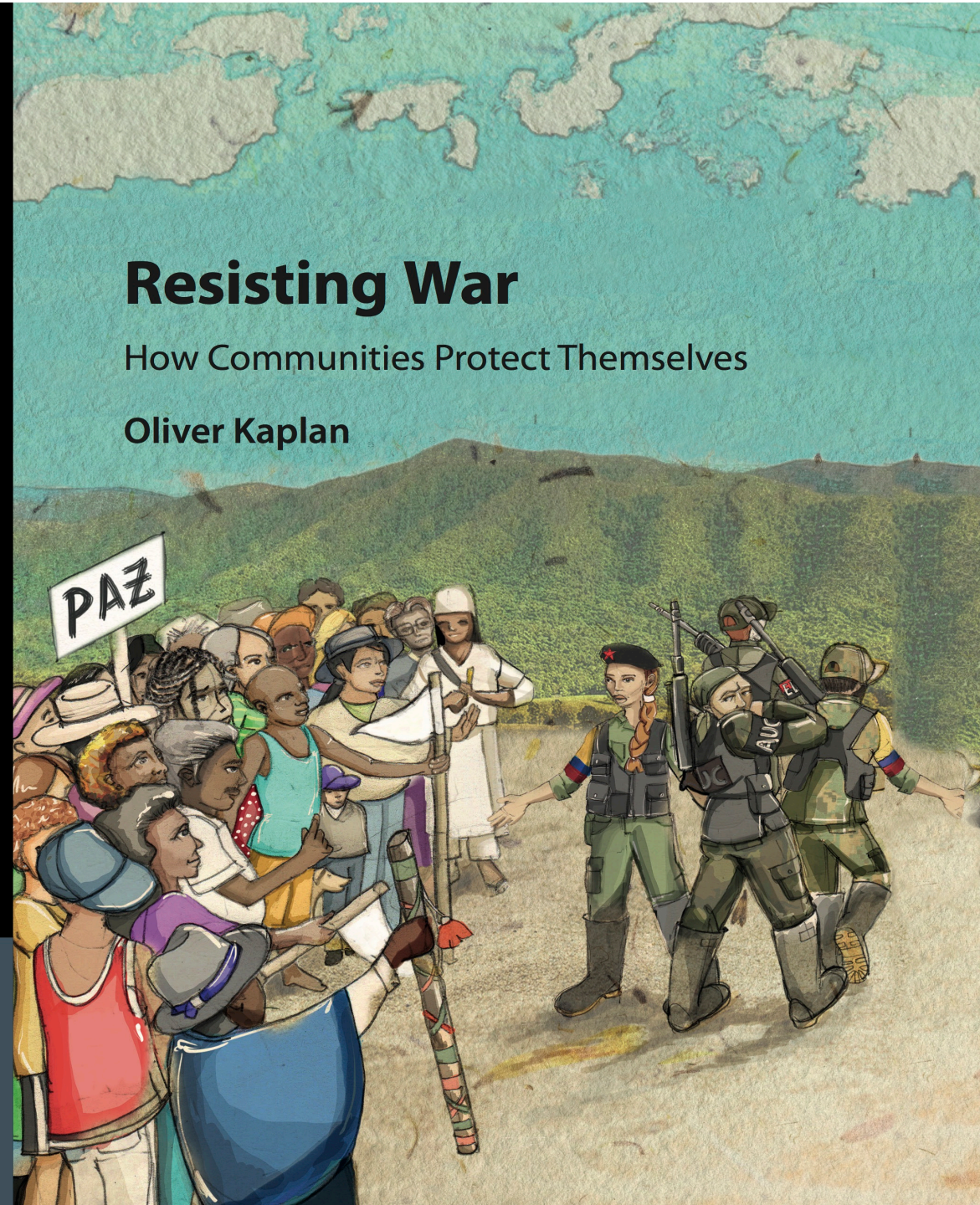
Go *sub-national* and
partner w/ communities

Kaplan
Resisting War

Resisting War

How Communities Protect Themselves

Oliver Kaplan



CAMBRIDGE

Speaking of Colombia...

EL ESPECTADOR

Economía

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Banrepública ve mayor profundización en la caída de la economía para 2020

- GDP to fall by up to **10%** in 2020
- 19% unemployment (formal economy)
- Will Duque government maintain peace financing?

SENEGAL

For Senegal's Biggest Holiday, a Shortage of the All-Important Sheep

Properly celebrating Tabaski, as Eid al-Adha is known in Senegal, requires a sacrificial sheep. Coronavirus restrictions have made the animals more expensive, putting them out of reach of many.

The New York Times



BELIZE: Trouble with Tourism



(https://menafn.com/updates/pr/2020-07/19/CNG_c0d4563b-1image_story.jpg)

**World Bank to assist Belize
response to COVID-19
impacts**

Policy Implications

- Fund the WHO to mitigate the pandemic
- Tailor COVID-response to highest risk countries?
- Support efforts of *communities* to preserve peace
- Some fragile countries have greater geo-political significance
- Address “sparks” that could ignite COVID “gas”
(elections, armed groups, famine, unemployment...)

U.N. report suggests temporary basic income to help world's poorest amid pandemic

Michelle Nichols

2 MIN READ



Thank You

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Onset Cases**Non-onset Cases**

| Country | Year | Onset Type | Predicted Probability | Country | Year | Predicted Probability |
|----------------|-------------|-------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|------------------------------|
| Uganda | 1966 | REG, CIV | 0.405 | Paraguay | 1991 | 0.13 |
| Iran | 2004 | REG | 0.395 | Tanzania | 1994 | 0.11 |
| Peru | 1968 | REG | 0.378 | Malaysia | 1997 | 0.1 |
| Gambia | 1994 | REG | 0.366 | Mexico | 1996 | 0.094 |
| Ivory Coast | 2002 | REG, CIV | 0.359 | Syria | 1993 | 0.091 |
| Fiji | 2006 | REG | 0.285 | Djibouti | 2005 | 0.087 |
| Zambia | 1996 | REG | 0.261 | Zambia | 1985 | 0.077 |
| Burkina Faso | 1980 | REG | 0.257 | Central African | 1986 | 0.073 |
| Lesotho | 1998 | REG | 0.205 | Dominican Republic | 1994 | 0.065 |
| Ghana | 1981 | REG | 0.198 | Libya | 1993 | 0.065 |
| Comoros | 1995 | REG | 0.147 | Venezuela | 1966 | 0.064 |
| Syria | 1979 | CIV | 0.104 | Nepal | 1985 | 0.051 |
| Argentina | 1976 | REG, GEN | 0.087 | Zimbabwe | 2005 | 0.048 |
| Congo | 1992 | REG, CIV | 0.082 | Afghanistan | 1966 | 0.046 |
| China | 1988 | CIV | 0.046 | Algeria | 1980 | 0.044 |
| Chad | 2005 | CIV | 0.035 | Bhutan | 1982 | 0.042 |
| Mauritania | 2008 | REG | 0.027 | Laos | 1994 | 0.042 |
| Peru | 1982 | CIV | 0.027 | Botswana | 2005 | 0.041 |
| Uruguay | 1971 | REG | 0.025 | Cameroon | 2005 | 0.039 |
| Afghanistan | 1978 | REG, CIV, | 0.012 | Rwanda | 1979 | 0.039 |
| Guinea | 2000 | CIV | 0.011 | Honduras | 1966 | 0.038 |
| Nigeria | 2006 | CIV | 0.009 | Ecuador | 2000 | 0.037 |
| India | 1983 | CIV | 0.006 | Egypt | 1972 | 0.035 |
| Czechoslovakia | 1968 | REG | -- | Mali | 1976 | 0.032 |
| Lebanon | 1958 | CIV | -- | Namibia | 2004 | 0.032 |

Findings

- War in Yemen has set back human development 21 years and kills one child every 12 minutes
- War has
 - greatly increased extreme poverty
 - dramatically reduced caloric availability
 - destroyed the ability to produce economically
 - increased income inequality
 - worsened gender inequality
 - Reversed progress towards the SDGs
- International assistance is essential but can only do “so much” to mitigate impacts
- To improve human development, we must ***end the war***