Coronavirus Response in South Africa

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“Through an in-depth analysis of three countries from different continents, this excellent book deepens scholarly understanding of the health care improvements resulting from democratization. In an innovative twist, Joseph Harris highlights how heightened political competition empowers progressive professional movements, which manage to promote poor people’s medical needs and interests against considerable resistance.”—Kurt Weyland, author of Making Waves.

“Joseph Harris has written a masterful account about achieving access to health services and to AIDS medications in three countries—Thailand, Brazil, and South Africa. His book explains both successes and failures in six case studies. He focuses attention on a new idea: the critical role of professional movements in driving policy reforms to expand access. The book offers both theoretical and practical lessons, and will be welcomed by policymakers, academics, and activists. It is an important and readable addition to the literature on achieving access.”—Michael R. Reich, coauthor of Getting Health Reform Right.

“The excellent Achieving Access is very timely, and it helps us understand how specific policies came about (or didn’t) in Brazil, Thailand and South Africa. The reader feels intimately connected to the events that Joseph Harris describes. This is not just an account of lawyers and doctors, but of individual people.”—Joseph Wong, Ralph and Roz Halbert Professor of Innovation, Munk School of Global Affairs, University of Toronto, author of Betting on Biotech.
Coronavirus Politics
The Comparative Politics and Policy of COVID-19

Scott L. Greer, Elizabeth J. King, Elize Massard da Fonseca, André Peralta-Santos, Editors

Global experts develop explanations of how governments responded to COVID-19

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Description
COVID-19 is the most significant global crisis of any of our lifetimes. The numbers have been stupefying, whether of infection and mortality, the scale of public health measures, or the economic consequences of lockdown. Coronavirus Politics and Policy looks at how the global response unfolded, the policies governments crafted, the impact on society, and the lessons for the future.

https://www.press.umich.edu/11927713/coronavirus_politics

Link to blog
Features of the Case

- Officially, 90,000 have died of COVID but excess deaths = 273,000
- Has largest HIV+ population in the world and one of largest TB burdens in the world
- More than half of South Africans live in poverty
- 25-50% unemployment rate pre-COVID
- Top 10% holds 86% of the wealth
- Private health system serving 15% of the population (and holding 70% of the ICU beds) receives the same amount of funding as the public system serving 85% of the population
- Rich countries hoarded PPE (and later vaccines)
Features of Initial Response

- Strictest lockdown on continent
- Some innovations in response
- Slow, uneven rollout of social programs
- Lack of continuity in food programs – school nutrition programs
- Consequences on access to antiretrovirals
- Growing number of excess deaths
- Corruption
- Ebb and then two more waves – Beta and Delta – before current one
South Africa in the news again! Omicron

- First detected case in Botswana
- Genomic sequencing in South Africa
- Now found in 20 countries and growing
- News about cases in Netherlands
- Rapid spread
- Additional concern about potential to escape vaccines due to mutations
- A LOT we don’t yet know but it is here
“This was predictable. If the virus has the opportunity to spread unchecked in the population, then we’re giving it multiple ways in which to evolve and adapt.”

-Boghuma Kabisen Titanji, an infectious-disease physician, virologist, and global-health expert at Emory University in The Atlantic 27/11/21
Global health is German health

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Dr. Cecília Tomori @DrTomori · Nov 26
Let’s get this straight. Rich countries withhold life saving vaccines from most of the world. They watch millions of people die. Then they blame those who have suffered most for new variants. Cannot get a clearer pic into #racism & #colonialism than that.

15 Retweets 256 Likes 980 Loves
How can Germany support South Africa?

- Give credit to South Africa's scientific community
- Use surgical policy instruments rather than blanket bans in travel restrictions
- Support South African pandemic relief programs
- Get South African scientists the reagents they need
How can Germany Improve Health at Home? German Health = Global Health

- Vaccinate and boost more people faster
  - Engage nurses and pharmacies in delivery of vaccinations, particularly boosters
  - Open more sites, particularly in at-risk communities
  - Expand access by increasing hours and days sites are open
  - Offer vaccination for ages 5-11 at schools when available
- Improve COVID policy in schools
  - Improve uneven rollout of HEPA filters
  - Don’t drop mask requirement a week before people go traveling
- Keep free testing sites open, even after current wave ebbs
- Continue to enforce masks and social distancing
- Gradual shift to vaccinate AND test AND mask
How can Germany Strengthen its Response Globally?

- Open a new Center at WZB, or new Leibniz Institute, dedicated to global public health
  - Now is the right time: not just because of COVID, but with Germany trying to carve out greater leadership role in global health
  - Social science deserves a bigger place in the conversation
  - Uphill climb in Germany with emphasis on hard sciences/medicine rather than public health; hierarchical education system; patriarchy
  - But have a chance to create something permanent that is woman-led
    - Could bring together highly visible, internationally recognized experts like Anna Holzscheiter, Tine Hanrieder, Johanne Hanefeld, Ilona Kickbusch, Maike Voss, Katri Bertram
How can Germany Strengthen its Response Globally?

- Work to end patent monopoly on mRNA vaccines: humanity’s future should not be decided by two private companies that have already made billions
- Promote global solidarity, financing, and vaccine access