



On Sunday 5 April 2020, James Cust, Economist in the World Bank's Office of the Chief Economist for the Africa Region, interviewed Francesco Checchi, Professor of Epidemiology and International Health at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

The interview focused on the spread of the COVID-19 virus in African countries and potential public health responses for African governments and alternative mitigation strategies.

The interview transcript has been lightly edited.

JC: African countries grapple with a high burden of preventable diseases on a regular basis. Could you start by telling us why coronavirus is different and why it might require these exceptional economic and social measures that we don't consider for other diseases?

FC: In terms of the Africa context, there are the projections that you mentioned earlier from my colleagues in Imperial College which suggest that the African continent could see very large numbers of infections and a death toll in the millions in the absence of any control. It is a health burden that taken together would not be expected to occur in this type of timeframe in a regular year. So it is a pandemic without any precedent in terms of just how many cases African health systems would see present themselves particularly in hospital facilities.

It is a virus that is both very transmissible but also which results in a large proportion of those infected requiring specialist care, specifically specialist intensive care. And not only do large numbers of people require care but also the type of care they require is prolonged. People tend to require hospitalization for three to four weeks before they recover or unfortunately don't.

If the patterns of transmission we have seen elsewhere also hold up in Africa we will be facing a situation where many more cases present to hospitals requiring specialised care than is currently the capacity to treat, even in advanced African health systems.

There is also something to be said around the projections that have been made so far for Sub-Saharan Africa. They are very much based on parameters from China and Europe and there are reasons to suspect unfortunately that on the one hand the transmissibility could be different and perhaps higher in some African settings; on the other hand that more cases could display disease and thirdly, and most plausibly, there are reasons to suspect the case fatality ratio — the probability of dying once you are infected — might actually be considerably higher in Africa than elsewhere.

Transmissibility [might be higher] because household sizes are larger and there are large urban configurations where people are very crowded and do not necessarily have good access to water and sanitation. Secondly, the pattern of severity could to some extent be worsened by the fact that in African settings you have a high prevalence of some of the chronic conditions that we know are

risk factors—not just a high prevalence but a high prevalence of these conditions in people who are either unaware or unable to access care.

And also, the high prevalence of tuberculosis, which is known to be a risk factor, and two big unknowns HIV and undernutrition. Lastly, it is really important when looking at the projections so far to remember that the assumptions made on the case fatality ratio basically reflect the experience so far in which most cases have had access to some treatment. Usually cases have had access for the most part to intensive care in China and Europe but what we might see in the absence of such care is case fatality ratios that are considerably higher and so the projected death toll should be adjusted upwards to account for that.

JC: Is there any indication that the pandemic is playing out in Africa differently to other regions? Would you expect it to play out differently absent government actions?

FC: It is too early to tell. Data are too fragmentary to see if the pattern is any different. There is some hope at least theoretically that warmer climates might reduce the transmissibility. This is not for now grounded in any robust evidence so I don't think it is something I would count on in any way, shape or form in planning. If it indeed bears out to be the case, then that is going to be fantastic news. It's not going to be most likely a solution but it might just slow down the progression of the epidemic.

Other than that as I mentioned earlier, there is still a question about the transmissibility of the virus. For example if you look at the R_0 which is the average number of cases that a single infection will result in, that has been in the neighborhood of 2-3 in European and Chinese settings. We would expect it to be higher in a slum, we would expect it to be higher in a camp for displaced people. We might expect it to be a bit lower in a rural setting, where people are more scattered and don't come into contact with each other as much. Some of that might need to be measured more accurately in the weeks to come. For now my base assumption is that things are going to play out at least fairly similarly to how they have in Europe.

JC: You talked about the relatively high disease burden and some of these pre-existing conditions that are prevalent in African countries. What you didn't mention is the demography and of course there is a very youthful population in African countries where only 3% of the region is aged over 65. Given what we know now, how do you think countries should weigh these relative risks and factors?

FC: There are different groups, we ourselves at the London School of Hygiene and colleagues at Imperial and elsewhere I believe are in some advanced stage of trying to take into account age distributions and the different prevalence of comorbid conditions in African settings. Yes, you are right that by and large the younger age distribution in African settings will be a factor that will attenuate the epidemic but there is such a thing as biological age which most people will agree is effectively lower in Africa than in Europe and it is the result of lifetime exposure to infections, undernutrition as well as untreated chronic diseases which essentially mean that you could say very roughly that a seventy year old in Spain, for example might have the same resilience to the virus as say a 60 year old in Mali. So in reality I am a bit worried —although to date there is no evidence— that the spectrum of disease will be more severe in younger age groups. And there are all those

comorbid conditions. If you think about TB, there is a much larger number who are younger than seventy or sixty. Same for HIV. So, again, no reason for complacency there.

JC: Your paper is very interesting and one of the things that it emphasizes is that drastic action is likely needed but then goes on to argue that a more targeted approach may be more realistic to allocate scarce resources and maximize impact. The strategies deviate quite strongly in terms of what we are seeing in terms of social distancing and economic shutdowns in the US and in Europe. Can you explain and elaborate on what countries should weigh when choosing the optimal approach in Africa?

The logic goes a bit like this. We assume that most African countries are a few weeks behind (2–4 weeks) compared to Europe. And that under a scenario of no intervention, the progression of the pandemic will be similar. We know therefore that needs in terms of hospitalization are going to be many fold higher than current capacity. If you take a country like Burkina Faso, the information I have at the moment is that at baseline they have 9 intensive care beds. Sudan is a bit luckier, they have 100, Kenya probably quite a few hundreds or at least the rapid ability to scale up to that level of intensive care capacity.

But what you are actually going to require, even in the very optimistic scenario where you are able to implement a very early lockdown, is something in the order of 1000s of beds, if not more. And I think that most people would objectively say that scaling up bed capacity to that extent will not be possible. Remember, it is not just about any hospital beds. It is about intensive, or at least for a portion of patients, sub-intensive care — oxygen, fluid replacement. Things that are even now not necessarily available in district hospitals across sub-Saharan African. Even if it were possible to establish big treatment wards, for example with beds, in many cases the clinical staff is not sufficient. They are already overstretched providing routine services. There will be issues procuring PPE and ventilators, both of which are hoarded by rich countries and the availability of which is going to be very problematic.

Building up treatment capacity is probably a very difficult route to pursue.

General social distancing measures (i.e. promoting handwashing, social distancing, reducing contacts at work) without necessarily shutting everything down has been shown to work in Europe only **very partially**. It has an effect on transmission but does not get you away from the inexorable exponential rise in transmission that would inevitably one fears overwhelm health systems, not just in Africa, but also in Europe.

We therefore come to the lockdown option which [as] is being documented now in a variety of studies is really working in Europe and in China. But it comes at a very considerable economic and societal cost. In Europe of course we are lucky to have financial flexibility to offer economic rescue packages. Again, those packages however sizable they are may not cover an indefinite period. In African countries, my assumption is that flexibility is limited. I would therefore as an economist and public health decision maker think about the effects of a lockdown in terms of suppressing the virus but also its effects in terms of economic recession, impoverishment and therefore ultimate undernutrition, lower ability to offer and afford health services, and ultimately lives lost if not tomorrow then a few years down the line because you are going down a spiral of economic decline. It is a very complicated equation. I don't feel that it is wrong to impose lockdown at least initially as a

measure to slow down the virus and gain time. But what is one gaining time for? What is the exit strategy after a lockdown?

What we are trying to do here in the UK as I understand it is to be prepared to do a South Korea's style, very aggressive test and follow up contacts strategy where you are chasing down every last case. There is no evidence that will work, but it certainly requires an unprecedented effort in terms of availability of testing, or laboratories or public health staff to follow up cases, and it still requires a measure of social distancing.

What we outlined in the paper and what we are currently doing some mathematical modelling to explore is this alternative option where you actually focus on where most of your hospitalization requiring cases are coming from and where most of your deaths are coming from. That is to say these vulnerable groups, people with pre-existing conditions. They are probably not a large part of the population, probably on the order of 15%. Imagine you are able to shield those people from transmission it actually gives you a reasonable prospect of considerably reducing pressure on health services as well as mortality while allowing the economy to remain viable. That the concept in a nutshell.

How to actually implement it, we think would be done best by allowing empowering communities to adopt solutions that are locally feasible and acceptable as opposed to something that is very top down and very militarized and very resource intensive. One advantage with this approach could be precisely that you are not spending all your scarce resources trying to implement the approach.

The way it could look like is for example in a city or in a rural setting, street by street or block by block you have a group of neighbors or extended family who decide to get together and organize their housing in such a way that one or two houses or flats are vacated and vulnerable people are placed within them. When I say placed within them, I don't mean replicating a nursing home scenario. What I mean is that you have housing for vulnerable people where they remain with no contact to the outside world for an extended period of time, months for sure. It does not mean that they are walled alive or that nobody speaks to them,

I am going to see my mom for example later today and I am going to sit with her and I am going to speak with her. That is fine as long as your hands are washed and you are not actually having physical contact. It is not social isolation it is physical isolation and it is being provided with the necessities to live with dignity: food, water and I think also some form of mobile medical care. Outpatient centres actually go and replenish hypertensive prescriptions and go and visit them if they are feeling sickly. I am just presenting you the broad outlines. We have a bit more detailed guidelines on how it could actually work. The right idea will probably lie with communities. It is not a great idea for me here in London to say okay here is how it should be done in Senegal or Kenya or that the Senegal solution will work in Kenya. That is not the idea. The idea is that there are a few discrete epidemiological principles that have to be upheld for this to work and that communities can be supported in coming up with a solution that works for them.

JC: I want to come back to the timeframe. You talk about months of this shielding that might be necessary for these vulnerable groups. Could you say a little bit more about the

timeframes involved if a country does not go down that route? What is the exit strategy if not suppression followed by systematic testing followed by contact tracing?

FC: It's a very good question and one that has not been answered satisfactorily in European countries. We can assume that in 10-12 months time we will have a vaccine available. Perhaps we will be lucky and have one even sooner than that. But establishing a vaccine that works is not the same as it being widely available, distributed and deployed worldwide. There are always issues with production of a vaccine on a large scale - it is very difficult to ramp up production. I'm worried that countries are going to behave in a selfish way and those with the most resources are going to secure adequate supplies of vaccines first and think about African countries last, unless there is a movement orchestrated by the UN to make sure that greater equity is introduced into the allocation process from the start.

If I were an African country - and I apologize for taking this slightly directive tone - I would certainly not assume that I would have a vaccine available for the next 15 months. I can stay in a lockdown situation for 15 months and exit once the vaccine is available - but that would be economically very destructive. If I exit lockdown I have 2 choices:

The first option is to test and suppress: to enter a phase in which I have a wide availability of testing and contact tracing. This comes with its own public health infrastructure and basically replicates what South Korea has done. This involves considerable technology and the ability to trace people using mobile phones and know exactly where they went and which other phone users they came into contact with. Very advanced, fantastic stuff but very difficult to do. If I feel that I am actually able to put that in place then that perhaps is a viable exit strategy. And even if that doesn't buy me 15 months of time it might buy me a few months of time, and perhaps I can institute another lockdown.

But I think that route is very tricky because of the intensive technology and public health infrastructure it requires. If that's not something one can rely on, our suggested approach of radically shielding those who are known to be most at risk, is worth considering. It allows you to maintain the economy, relax the restrictions and get people back into work. What would happen is that the majority of people who are allowed to be out in society, work and go to school, would be pretty rapidly exposed to the virus. You would have herd immunity accumulating in these low-risk groups.

The issue of herd immunity has become quite contentious because in the UK and Holland it was put forward as a strategy but perhaps explained in an unhelpful way. The strategy is not to build herd immunity as such, but rather to recognize that like with the flu season, when a sufficient percentage of the population becomes exposed to the virus and becomes immune, at that point not enough susceptibles are left to sustain the transmission and the virus dies out. The more lockdowns you impose and the more social distancing you do the more you prolong the epidemic.

If you do nothing the epidemic can burn out a country very quickly. If you could 100% shield those who are at risk of dying while allowing transmission to go on in the remaining population that would be the best outcome because you don't need a vaccine as the population is immune. I realize that dividing neatly between those who are at risk and those are not is not possible. Our solution is leaky and less than 100% effective. As we are seeing there are younger individuals who don't seem to have pre-existing conditions, but catch the corona virus and end up dying despite having intensive

care. You won't be able to protect everyone. But as epidemiologists and economists, we need to think about harm/benefits and think about what saves most lives, if not all lives. If not something like this, what else can we do?

JC: Thank you for this comprehensive answer. What kind of threshold do we normally look at with these infectious diseases? These vulnerable groups need never get it under the theoretically isolating/shielding approach: you could get to the threshold of the 60% of population that would give immunity to everyone else including the vulnerable people.

That's right. If you remember the number R_0 : this means how many people one person with the virus can infect on average. This number has been around 2.5. When this number falls below 1 the epidemic starts to go towards extinction as each case is replaced by fewer than 1 case. If that number is fewer than 1, a proportion of the population will be immune. Effectively, if R_0 is 2.5 some 60% of the population need to have been infected for herd immunity to kick in and the virus to become extinct (in an uncontrolled scenario). If R_0 is higher, that proportion will also be higher (the formula is $1 - 1/R_0$). Because our vulnerable people only represent around 15% of the population, you can achieve herd immunity in almost the same amount of time even if these 15% are completely shielded from infection. However, if transmissibility (R_0) is a lot higher, requirements for immunity also go up. But this is not yet clear for sub-Saharan Africa.

AP: What do we know about immunity? Should we expect people to get immunity after having been infected with the virus?

Yes, we should expect that. We've had few reported instances where people were infected more than once but these are exceptions. Maybe these were people who were wrongly diagnosed or had an unusual immune response. Those instances have been very rare and what we know from the other viruses SARS and MERS, they both induce long lasting immunity in people. There is no reason to expect this virus to behave differently - it's a very closely related virus. The long-lasting nature of antibodies suggests that there will be almost universal immunity after infection.

AP: Along timelines and immunity I was thinking about potential waves - when we think about shielding strategies - is that what we have to keep in mind as well, that there could be a new wave a few months from now?

FC: Two things that can happen: You relax stringent measures. Let's take the example of China - they went into lockdown early and it was very effective and brought transmission down to very low levels (but it is still circulating from what I understand). Most of their population has not yet been exposed to the virus and therefore is not yet immune. Now that they relax their measures they could see a second wave.

Another problem could be that the virus mutates. This is not outside the realm of possibilities. I don't know if it would mutate enough in a way that people who have been exposed are no longer immune to the new strains. The virus can mutate and this is the more likely the more bodies it passes. Hopefully it will mutate to a form that is less severe.

AP: A particular question from our advisors is concerning time lags. How quickly do policymakers need to move and what are the timelags they need to be thinking about?

FC: LSHTM published a study recently that suggests if you have a single death of a locally acquired case, at the time the death occurs, you can expect to have for every death around 500-1500 prevalent infections at that time. That's because several transmissions will have happened and that ratio will be even higher in a place where you have incomplete surveillance. If you are seeing a death of a locally acquired case, assume that you have many infections already walking around. One of the big lessons so far from other countries is delayed reaction and an overreliance on imported cases and deaths. Always assume to be further along than the data suggests.

The safe bet would be to assume that one needs to enact a strategy of mitigation in the next 2-3 weeks. If one is to impose lockdowns - and countries are in different places - but if there is evidence of local transmission, think about whether a lockdown is practicable, and try to avoid India's experience that was very unplanned, extremely disruptive and unacceptable for people's livelihoods.

The strategy needs to be determined locally. It could be counter-productive if the strategy damages livelihoods or if it damages the relationship between authorities and the community. Throughout this epidemic, authorities need the population's trust to be able to transmit messages that the population believes in. Not breaking that trust is important.

Whatever is done - one thing that is absolutely essential and that needs to be done today: Aggressive community based risk communication. Leveraging civil society, local actors, faith groups and community leaders - using these channels to start communicating the risk adequately so they perceive the entity of the threat. The most rapid thing can be achieved is if communities are supported in taking steps by themselves instead of imposing stringent measures on them. What can communities do, what can you do to protect your loved ones and your elders and how can the government support you in doing that?

Think about mobilizing resources of humanitarian and development actors - this is an effort that will require everyone to join forces. The Italian government for example has required help from outside from business leaders or associations - they couldn't have done it alone.

JC: What you are describing on the part of government is quite a complicated communications challenge. Given this complexity of the communication challenge to convey the risk, given the lack of visibility and the time delays - is there also a risk of confusing people with mixed strategies? Quite a few African countries are already instituting lockdowns, some of three days for example. Virginia, for example, has a lockdown of 70 days. Is there a risk of a short and unsustainable lockdown, creating more confusion about what the path forward needs to be? Maybe some countries shouldn't be considering lockdowns at all and should right away get to the communication about what a sustainable strategy might look like.

FC: The two must not be in conflict with each other. The risk communication needs to go ahead anyway, partly because it can only promote understanding about why a lockdown is necessary. A three-day lockdown will have a very marginal effect. If you are going down the lockdown route, be

prepared to sustain it for up to a month and a half or so. Three days is more symbolic and may confuse people.

What has been learned from previous epidemics both in HICs and LMIC is that clear, transparent communication actually helps - that I know to be the evidence around this. If you're instituting a lockdown, make sure you explain what your rationale is and what you are trying to achieve.

I am not a specialist on community mobilization and behavior change - it's for people from the country themselves how to convey the right messages. What would confuse me is if your lockdown seems arbitrarily militaristic. The point is to reduce social contact and you can only do that when people understand why. It might not help when it's turned into a show of force.

It's for countries themselves or perhaps for groups such as the World Bank to advise whether they can sustain any form of lockdown. There is a mathematic here of lives: even lockdowns kill - indirectly. That is potentially one of the effects. That mathematic needs to be weighed very carefully.

JC: Thanks. Certainly at the Bank we're very focused on both protecting lives and protecting livelihoods. The economic cost of a lockdown is very daunting. The message I am hearing from you is that the path to a vaccine, the path to herd immunity and the path to containment will take months, not days. The message to policymakers you are giving, is that whatever strategy you've adopted, think about it in months, not days.

FC: Yes, your strategy shouldn't be day by day but rather to set a course for the following weeks or months and communicate that course and get people to understand why certain steps are taken and don't be too sued as pressure mounts. Remain transparent and remain focused. There may be unexpected gamechangers down the line - maybe someone will rediscover an use of an old drug: I know there's a lot of interest in chloroquine - I think that is unfortunately a bit of a hype - but it could happen that an existing drug or antiviral can be used. A smaller game changer could be: once serological tests become available (tests that tell you whether you have been infected - like gaining a certificate that tells you that you are immune). Here is a parallel to Ebola where Ebola survivors knew they were at much lower risk when working in Ebola treatment centers. You could use that accumulated "army of survivors" in creative ways. They can be the ones who support the shielded communities because they are the ones that have the least risk of infecting them. There is scope for changing strategies. But I wouldn't go into the next few weeks or months without a clear public health and economic strategy.

**JC: One of the questions that have come up from advisors concerns time lags:
How quickly one becomes contagious after being exposed to the virus?
How quickly one might become non-contagious after being exposed to the virus including asymptomatic cases? How quickly one could test positive for the test after being exposed to the virus?**

FC: First of all, there is a distribution of all of these quantities in the population. There isn't a fixed incubation period. The timeframe between being exposed to the virus (i.e. infected) to becoming symptomatic (if you do become symptomatic) is on average 5 days.

If you are infected you will become infectious, on average, 1 day or two before you show symptoms. That is a problem because you don't know you're infectious yet. There's a period of infectiousness before you are symptomatic.

Testing: it varies a lot. When people are asymptomatic they often test negative even though they are infected. If you are symptomatic you are very likely to test positive. You remain infectious for as long as you have symptoms (broadly speaking), from the time you have developed symptoms, count a week after that. Most people won't be infectious after that period is over. But there are always individuals who happen to shed the virus a lot more - called super shedders in epidemiology - and they may be infectious for a little bit longer.

What is important in terms of disease control is not outliers but broadly what most people feature.

JC: You talked about timing earlier - policymakers are paying a lot of attention to the numbers coming in in real time. There are time lags involved and problems with certain indicators. What indicators would you suggest they should use and are least biased?

FC: The actual numbers of who tests positive and who dies are most likely going to be a minority of the true burden of disease in the population. I wouldn't overly focus on those numbers. They tell you something about the trend, but you need to know how much testing is going on and how good contact tracing is. If you have a mathematic modelling expertise in your country working with you then they might be able to help you make sense of these partial numbers by inferring what the true total must be.

Another key piece of information that will give you fairly early signal of exponential rising cases is to look at hospitals: follow admissions for acute respiratory distress - especially for adults. Children could be pneumonia or malaria cases. But follow that syndrome for adults - follow the trend you are seeing day by day or week by weeks across hospitals in your country - that tells you where things are headed.

Similarly, if you look at bed occupancy would also be an early signal of things starting to escalate.

In terms of the full impact of the epidemic in epidemiological terms there are 2 pieces of useful information:

1. Serological surveys: once serological tests are available, test a sample of population which will tell you how close you are to herd immunity
2. Mortality estimation: Full impact of this is going to be a sum of deaths due to covid (some of which will not be tested) and unfortunately indirect deaths due to all disruptions to health services that will occur. In Italy there is a spike in general mortality - particularly in the most affected regions. Having a way to quantify mortality rates at the population level will be really important. In a lot of African countries the demographic surveillance system could have insufficient coverage to give you a full picture of how much fatalities are occurring but there are solutions like surveys that can be done. This however is looking further down the line.

JC: One final question that we got from one of our advisors: we're seeing a lot of countries aggressively building up their testing capacities in parallel to strategies to contain and mitigate. Is this kind of testing strategy realistic and feasible in LICs?

FC: I've lived and worked in 20-25 African countries and I think I would have to take stock of the current baseline in terms of laboratory capacity. There are some countries like Kenya, Tanzania, Senegal, Nigeria, where you could imagine being able to scale up testing availability and laboratory capacity. However even in those settings you would need to make sure that you have the required public health infrastructure and teams in place that follow every case and trace their contacts. Those teams need to be functional across the entire country and well coordinated. If you have parts of your country that are conflict-affected like Borno and other parts of northern Nigeria, that system could not operate in those parts of the country and that could act as a reservoir that could reintroduce infection on an ongoing basis, even if you have aggressive testing and isolation approach in the rest of the country. My sense is that this testing strategy is going to be risky to undertake and to count on.

I think that the strategy of allowing herd immunity to build while shielding people as much as possible might be less than 100% effective, but is a surer route to an end of this epidemic.

I presented our preliminary modelling results to the World Bank recently and they showed that the shielding approach is fairly promising in terms of reducing mortality, as long as it's applied in a very radical and widespread way. I will share those papers in a couple of days.

JC: What we're thinking about here is diverging strategies for Europe and North America in some countries. That has implications for the time frame and the presence of the virus persisting for months to come. What does that mean for the rest of the world and neighboring regions?

FC: That's why even the potential European exit strategy of "testing your way out" is really problematic. You are going to be surrounded by other countries which cannot do that. The risk of ongoing re-introduction of cases is going to persist. Presumably you can keep (personal) travel restrictions in place for a long time until a vaccine is available. But that would make the European exit strategy more complex.

I don't know a global response strategy is feasible, mainly because what may work in South Korea does not work in most African settings and I don't want African countries to replicate that at all cost, because it would hurt them disproportionately.

JC: So it sounds like a country-tailored response is necessary but some degree of international cooperation and coordination is also desirable

FC: Absolutely - also hopefully people would be enlightened and understand that you cannot hoard protective equipment. If you do, you are essentially harming yourself because you are not helping other countries protect themselves and that could result in more risk to you. Hopefully some level of cool-headedness, collaboration and generosity will prevail.

JC: To clarify, there is an interest of cooperation because you could still get the virus from other countries that have been unable to contain the virus as effectively, so there is a self-interest in terms of cooperation across borders?

FC: Absolutely. Now everyone is scrambling and locking down, but hopefully in the next few weeks cooler heads will prevail and we will make sure everyone has a locally adapted and viable strategy to mitigate this virus and come out of it.

JC: Do you have any summarizing comments that policymakers should hear?

FC: Particularly because I'm speaking to economists and they are probably some of the best people at these kinds of decisions: when resources are scarce or limited not every intervention has the same value. Therefore, I would encourage countries to think about how best to use their resources to achieve impact. There will be a lot of pressure from different sides to do a long list of things that may help, like "everyone wear masks", "isolate mild cases", "test test test", "build beds". In the middle of this, it's hard to remain cool-headedness.

At the end of the day, having a strategy that maximizes the available resources and that leverages the power that communities and social networks and civil societies have, will probably be the best approach.

The last thing I want to say is around transparent risk communication and communicating your strategies: Make sure people are aware of what's coming and make sure they understand what is being done and why.

For more information or questions please contact James Cust: jcust@worldbank.org