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### 3.4 CONCLUSIONS

The Covid-19 pandemic has enormously impacted the way things are done. Of particular importance is its effect on access to justice and concern for social justice in Uganda. While the declaration of the disease as a pandemic and a public health emergency of international scale led to severe restrictions on normal life to contain its spread, access to social justice was severely hampered. Whereas some of the prohibitions to public gatherings as a means of social distancing helped to contain the spread of the disease, measures such as curfews, prohibitions on distribution of food to the starving citizens did not amount to social injustice alone, but the brutality unleashed by the security forces in effecting the measures has had more damaging effects than the Covid-19 itself. Moreover, most of the victims have not accessed justice because of the difficulties of legal redress due to inadequate digital options.

Prospects for e-justice exist in Uganda as digital technology has already been introduced in the judiciary. Besides, there exists an enabling legal framework. The attempts to provide access to justice during the restrictions in normal court business provides hope that Uganda can apply e-justice during natural calamities. However, the process should be expedited as justice delayed has already been described as bad justice.

Areas that need focus are: the judiciary should fast-track digitalization, train personnel, secure funds to purchase equipment, and assist litigants and officers of the court to embrace e-justice applications to promote access to justice during natural calamities such as the Covid-19. Although the President has suspended the operations of the security agencies that unleashed brutality in enforcing the Covid-19 guidelines, care should be taken by the lead security agencies' top management in any attempts for their redeployment as the force seems to be ill-trained for the task.

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64 Act No. 7 of 2011, Laws of Uganda.