

COVID-19 and HIV: Weekly Digest

5 June 2020

The Children and AIDS Learning Collaborative’s COVID-19 and HIV digest compiles recent knowledge and updates related to the COVID-19 pandemic of interest to those working on HIV among children, adolescents, and pregnant women. The selections below represent views of the authors and do not reflect UNICEF positions.

COVID-19: IMPACT ON HIV AND HIV SERVICE DELIVERY

<p>Lessons learned from HIV for COVID-19 in Senegal 3 June 2020, <i>UNAIDS</i></p> <p>Abdoulaye Ka, who leads on human rights issues at the Senegal National AIDS Control Council discusses Senegal’s work to address stigma and other lessons from the HIV response for the fight against COVID-19.</p>	<p>Impact of COVID-19 on HIV Testing and Assisted Partner Notification Services, Western Kenya 2 June 2020, <i>AIDS and Behavior</i></p> <p>Barriers for patients and staff due to COVID-19 contributed to a decline in HIV testing, number of women enrolled in assisted partner notification services and HIV clinic volume in this field report from western Kenya.</p>	<p>Which People Living with HIV Are at Higher Risk for COVID-19? 3 June 2020, <i>aidsmap</i></p> <p>Two recent studies examined risk factors for COVID-19 within cohorts of people living with HIV; results include race and other co-morbidities.</p>	<p>Youth Counselors Help Their Peers with Medicine and Encouragement During Quarantine 2 June 2020, <i>Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation</i></p> <p>In southwest Uganda, youth peer counselors discuss their work delivering medication according to coronavirus safety regulations.</p>
<p>HIV+ Volunteers Home Deliver ART Drugs in Ganjam 31 May 2020, <i>The Hindu</i></p> <p>In a district in India’s Odisha, the state’s AIDS Control Society and NGOs have distributed ART drugs at home to about 2,000 people living with HIV.</p>	<p>New Law Made It Illegal for Couples from Different Households to Meet Indoors for Romantic Encounters 1 June 2020, <i>The Telegraph</i></p> <p>A new law in the UK adds strict curbs to individuals gathering indoors and staying overnight outside the primary home.</p>	<p>Sex—and PrEP—During the Pandemic 2 June 2020, <i>POZ</i></p> <p>Experts offer guidelines on stopping and restarting PrEP effectively as social distancing guidelines change.</p>	<p>Rate of Sexually Transmitted Infections Falls amid COVID-19 Pandemic 2 June 2020, <i>Irish Times</i></p> <p>Data from Ireland suggest that rates of many sexually transmitted infections declined compared to last year; however, there have been more cases of HIV.</p>

GLOBAL IMPACT OF COVID-19

<p>New WHO Model Forecasts a Different Coronavirus Spread Pattern in Africa 2 June 2020, <i>NPR</i></p> <p>A modelling study predicted the coronavirus will spread differently in Africa than it has elsewhere and claim lives of 190,000 people, which is much lower than earlier predictions.</p>	<p>Manhunts after Hundreds Flee Quarantine in Zimbabwe, Malawi 28 May 2020, <i>Associated Press</i></p> <p>Reports suggest that hundreds of individuals fled from quarantine facilities in Malawi and Zimbabwe. While both countries have reported low incidence of COVID-19, they are seeing most new cases among quarantined individuals.</p>	<p>Mexico’s Hospitals Strain to Treat Coronavirus as Officials Say Cases Are Peaking 3 June 2020, <i>The Washington Post</i></p> <p>Mexico City hits what officials say is the peak of its outbreak. The government originally projected 6,000 to 15,000 deaths but by Monday this week, authorities already confirmed 10,167 deaths.</p>
<p>Misinformation Leads to Increasing COVID-19 Stigma in Sub-Saharan Africa 1 June 2020, <i>Save the Children</i></p> <p>Rapid assessments in sub-Saharan Africa suggest that misinformation on how COVID-19 spreads is contributing to prejudice and stigma, and is a barrier to reducing cases.</p>	<p>We Should Have Done More, Admits Architect of Sweden’s COVID-19 Strategy 3 June 2020, <i>The Guardian</i></p> <p>Sweden’s COVID-19 deaths per capita was the highest in the world in a rolling seven-day average to 2 June. More than half of all deaths occurred in care homes.</p>	<p>The South African Response to the Pandemic 29 May 2020, <i>New England Journal of Medicine</i></p> <p>NEJM’s new COVID-19 Notes series presents a detailed outline of South Africa’s eight-stage national COVID-19 response.</p>
<p>Why Lockdowns Aren’t a One-Size-Fits-All Solution to the Pandemic 2 June 2020, <i>Devex</i></p> <p>Some public health experts have raised questions about the use of</p>	<p>Senegal to Ease Coronavirus Curfew as Protests Spread to Capital 4 June 2020, <i>Reuters</i></p> <p>Senegal will relax its curfew and ban on inter-regional travel after</p>	<p>Thailand’s One Million Health Volunteers Hailed as Coronavirus Heroes 4 June 2020, <i>Reuters</i></p>

national lockdowns in countries with weak health systems and fragile economies, especially those with a large informal sector.	demonstrations highlighted the economic impact of the three-month shutdown. <i>See also:</i> South African court rules lockdown restrictions 'irrational'	Thailand has been praised for effective pandemic control. Village Health Volunteers have been a critical support for the prevention, detection and reporting of COVID-19.
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COVID-19 AND INEQUALITY

<p>Black and Asian People in England More Likely to Die from COVID-19, Says Report 2 June 2020, <i>Reuters</i></p> <p>A new report by Public Health England (PHE) reinforced previous studies which indicated ethnic minority groups were more at risk from the virus. <i>See also:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More key findings: The Guardian • Opinion: BMJ 	<p>'This is what happens to us.' 3 June 2020, <i>The Washington Post</i></p> <p>This report suggests that there was little early action to halt the spread of SARS-CoV-2 among African Americans and the poor reporting of race-disaggregated data continues to hamper efforts.</p> <p><i>See also:</i> Many Black Men Fear Wearing a Mask More Than the Coronavirus</p>	<p>Address 'appalling impact' of COVID-19 on minorities, UN rights chief urges 2 Jun 2020, <i>UN News</i></p> <p>Responding to reports from multiple countries, the UN High Commission for Human Rights called for urgent action to address "the major disproportionate impact" of COVID-19 on racial and ethnic minorities, including people of African descent.</p>
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NOVEL CORONAVIRUS AND CHILDREN

More evidence on the multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children related to SARS-CoV-2 was published:

- A study in [The BMJ](#) describes 21 children and adolescents with features of Kawasaki disease admitted to a hospital in Paris, France. Nineteen had evidence of recent SARS-CoV-2 infection. An unusually high proportion had gastrointestinal symptoms and Kawasaki disease shock syndrome, and were of African ancestry.
- [Healio](#) summarized a study that suggested treatment with intravenous immune globulin is effective for acute cardiac failure associated with the inflammatory syndrome in children.

Based on evidence suggesting lower transmission rates, the South African Paediatric Association released a [statement](#) supporting the reopening of schools. *See also:* [Two girls' lockdown learning underlines South Africa's educational divide](#)

Two weeks after schools were reopened in Israel, more than 200 cases among children and staff have been confirmed; the government has [ordered](#) schools with cases reported to close. The [New York Times](#) reports that some parents in the UK are hesitant to let their children attend schools even if they reopen.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

<p>Updates on Vaccine Development</p> <p>The Gavi replenishment summit this week raised \$567 million towards an initial goal of \$2 billion for an Advanced Market Commitment to buy future SARS-CoV-2 vaccines for low- and middle-income countries.</p> <p>Brazil will be a testing site for the vaccine candidate developed by the University of Oxford and AstraZeneca.</p> <p>The US selected finalists for its Operation Warp Speed; selected vaccine programs will get additional funding, clinical trial assistance and manufacturing support.</p> <p>The WHO unveiled a new initiative called the COVID-19 Technology Access Pool that aims to make treatments, vaccines and tests accessible to all. It builds on the Medicines Patent Pool, which expanded treatment access for HIV and hepatitis.</p>	<p>Treatment Updates: Hydroxychloroquine, Remdesivir</p> <p>The WHO is resuming a clinical trial on the malaria drug hydroxychloroquine for COVID-19 treatment. The trial was temporarily suspended last week after a study published in the <i>Lancet</i> tied the drug to a higher risk of death in hospitalized COVID-19 patients. (STAT) This week, <i>The Lancet</i> issued an expression of concern about the data used and retracted the study.</p> <p>In a new study, the incidence of COVID-19 did not differ significantly among participants receiving hydroxychloroquine following exposure to the virus and those receiving placebo. Participants were mostly healthcare professionals. The study, from the US and Canada, is the first randomized clinical trial that tested the drug as a preventive measure. (MedPage Today)</p> <p>Meanwhile, the government of India issued recommendations that frontline workers take hydroxychloroquine as prevention and the US sent Brazil 2 million doses of the drug.</p> <p>Gilead's Remdesivir has been approved for emergency use in severe COVID-19 patients in India and South Korea. It was approved in the US last month. <i>See also:</i> The Global Need for Open and Equitable Access to Remdesivir</p>
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EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

<p>The Curious Case of COVID-19 in Africa 3 June 2020, <i>Inter Press Service</i></p> <p>From UNDP Africa, this commentary discusses key factors that contribute to Africa's low case numbers and mortality rates as well as lessons for the future.</p>	<p>How My All-Female, HIV-Positive Health Workers Are Fighting Two Epidemics 28 May 2020, <i>Marie Claire</i></p> <p>Ilda Kuleba, Mozambique country director at mothers2mothers, discusses ensuring services for people living with HIV during the pandemic.</p>	<p>Trump's WHO Exit Threatens Polio, Tuberculosis Fights Along With COVID 2 June 2020, <i>Bloomberg</i></p> <p>Experts fear that U.S. decision to terminate its relationship with the WHO will harm efforts to address diseases like polio and TB. <i>See also:</i> Nature</p>	<p>COVID-19 and the Danger of Criminalization 3 June 2020, <i>Maverick Citizen</i></p> <p>South Africa's regulations make it a crime for someone who knows they tested positive for COVID-19 to avoid quarantine. The author suggests that the lesson from HIV is to take a different approach.</p>
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<p>Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo on How Economies Can Rebound 26 May 2020, <i>The Economist</i></p> <p>The Nobel-winning economists recommend a “COVID-19 Marshall Plan” for low-income countries and other policies for economic recovery. <i>See also: The Conversation</i></p>	<p>COVID-19 Shows the World Needs Physicians Who Can Look Beyond Medical Charts 4 June 2020, <i>The Conversation</i></p> <p>The pandemic is stressing the importance of “social medicine,” which centers health equity and multi-sectoral approaches of delivering healthcare.</p>	<p>In the Battle against COVID-19, Women Make Somalia Stronger 1 June 2020, <i>Devex</i></p> <p>Somalia’s Minister of Women and Human Rights Development outlines the contributions of women in the COVID-19 response, including as health care workers and caregivers.</p>	<p>COVID-19 Lockdowns: Impact on Facility-Based HIV Testing and Case for the Scaling Up of Home-Based Testing Services in Sub-Saharan Africa 2 June 2020, <i>AIDS and Behavior</i></p> <p>The authors make case for scaling up home-based HIV testing in response to disruptions to HIV services.</p>
<p>Dr. Fauci: How Larry Kramer 'Transformed the Relationship' Between Activists and Government 29 May 2020, <i>Time</i></p> <p>Dr. Anthony Fauci discusses the vital role HIV activist Larry Kramer played in establishing how the government can be held accountable for health.</p>	<p>UNAIDS Chief Winnie Byanyima: COVID-19 could roll back gains made in fighting HIV in Africa 28 May 2020, <i>UN</i></p> <p>The Africa Renewal programme interviewed Winnie Byanyima of UNAIDS about COVID-19 in Africa and impact on people living with HIV.</p>	<p>The Coronavirus Pandemic Will Last Longer If We Ignore Other Health Threats 2 June 2020, <i>The Telegraph</i></p> <p>In the backdrop of the Gavi replenishment summit happening this week, this comment urges countries to simultaneously respond to other diseases.</p>	<p>COVID-19 Research in Africa 29 May 2020, <i>Science</i></p> <p>Responding to inaccurate claims that ethical and safety standards for clinical trials are lower in Africa, Linda-Gail Bekker and Valarie Mizrahi spotlight the important role Africa has played and continue to play in clinical research .</p>

AROUND THE UNITED NATIONS

- WHO [highlighted](#) the significant impact of COVID-19 on the prevention and treatment of NCDs.
- UN Secretary-General António Guterres [called for increasing aid](#) to the humanitarian crisis in Yemen.
- UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet [called on](#) several countries in the Asia-Pacific to protect freedom of expression during their response to coronavirus-related misinformation.
- The UN [released](#) a policy brief on COVID-19’s impact on refugees, internally displaced people and migrants.

RECENT RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

<p>Epidemiology, Clinical Features, and Disease Severity in Patients with Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in a Children’s Hospital in New York City, New York 3 June 2020, <i>JAMA Pediatrics</i></p> <p>In this case series describing 50 children and adolescents hospitalized with COVID-19 in New York, respiratory symptoms were not always present, but comorbidities were common. Obesity was most prevalent comorbidity.</p>	<p>A Rapid Review of Economic Policy and Social Protection Responses to Health and Economic Crises and Their Effects on Children: Lessons for the COVID-19 response 2 June 2020, <i>UNICEF Office of Research - Innocenti</i></p> <p>The review assesses policy responses to past virus outbreaks, economic crises and natural disasters, including the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and their impact on children and their families.</p>
<p>Clinical Characteristics and Outcomes in People Living with HIV Hospitalized for COVID-19 30 May 2020, <i>Clinical Infectious Diseases</i></p> <p>The paper describes the characteristics of 31 people living with HIV hospitalized for COVID-19 in New York. All patients were on ART and outcomes were similar to those reported in other hospitalized cohorts. <i>See also: A Case Series of Five People Living with HIV Hospitalized with COVID-19 in Chicago, Illinois</i></p>	<p>Secondary Transmission of Coronavirus Disease from Presymptomatic Persons, China 26 May 2020, <i>Emerging Infectious Diseases</i></p> <p>The authors examined secondary transmission rates across different types of contact with persons presymptomatic for COVID-19. The highest risk of infection was among close contacts who lived with or had frequent contact with the presymptomatic individuals.</p>

New resources for global, regional and country level practitioners working on HIV during the COVID-19 pandemic are presented below. To find additional documents and join the discussion, visit: www.childrenandaids.org/covid19

RESOURCES

<p>Children in Monetary Poor Households and COVID-19 28 May 2020</p> <p>This technical note describes the analysis by Save the Children and UNICEF to calculate the number of additional children that could be pushed into household poverty due to COVID-19’s economic impact.</p>	<p>DSD and the COVID-19 Response, Updates on Policy and Practice Adaptations: Mozambique and DRC WEBINAR 2 June 2020</p> <p>ICAP at Columbia University and DSD hosted a webinar on policy and practice adaptations for COVID-19 in Mozambique and the Democratic Republic of Congo.</p>	<p>PEPFAR Technical Guidance in Context of COVID-19 Pandemic UPDATED 3 June 2020</p> <p>Updates can be found in sections on the availability of paediatric ARVs, key population housing referrals, masks and PPEs.</p>
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UPCOMING EVENTS

- 9 Jun 2020: ICAP at Columbia University and DSD webinar series continues with “DSD, supply chain and COVID-19: What to expect and how to be prepared”. 8am ET | 2pm SAST >> [More](#)

To submit feedback or content for inclusion in our weekly digests, please email Rikke Le Kirkegaard at rlkirkegaard@unicef.org.