

COVID-19 and HIV: Weekly Digest

24 April 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 AND THE HIV RESPONSE

[Keeping HIV Treatment Available in Pakistan during COVID-19](#)

15 April 2020, *UNAIDS*

The Pakistan Common Management Unit for AIDS, TB and Malaria, in collaboration with UNAIDS and other partners, is working to ensure uninterrupted supply of antiretroviral therapy for people living with HIV.

[Community Networks Playing a Central Role in Ensuring Access to HIV Treatment during India's COVID-19 Lockdown](#)

20 April 2020, *Aidsmap*

Networks of people living with HIV have been critical in ensuring access to antiretroviral therapy (ART) and supporting service delivery during India's strict COVID-19 lockdown.

[What South Africa Learned from AIDS](#)

16 April 2020, *The Economist*

Professor Salim Abdool Karim notes that South Africa's response to COVID-19 is building on lessons from the HIV/AIDS response. This includes centering medical experts in determining policy and increasing community outreach.

[Egypt: COVID-19 threatens treatment for HIV patients](#)

22 April 2020, *Human Rights Watch*

In March, Egypt designated the country's fever hospitals, the only centers where people living with HIV can get medication, as testing centers for Covid-19. HRW urges Egyptian authorities to ensure that people living with HIV can continue to safely access lifesaving medication.

GLOBAL IMPACTS OF COVID-19

['Will We Die of Hunger?': How COVID-19 lockdowns imperil street children](#)

15 April 2020

The Guardian

According to those working with young people in Kenya and elsewhere, children who rely on the streets for food and shelter are exceptionally vulnerable when cities lock down.

[Children, Women Casualties of Uganda's Coronavirus Transport Ban](#)

21 April 2020

Al Jazeera

Movement restriction imposed to curb COVID-19 spread, but critics say it left no realistic provision for emergency care.

See also: [Uganda's 'Urban Poor' Fear Dying of Hunger during COVID-19 Lockdown](#)

[The Pandemic's Hidden Victims: Sick or dying, but not from the virus](#)

20 April 2020

The New York Times

The pressures of the pandemic on the U.S. health care system are threatening treatment and care for all patients, especially those with chronic illnesses.

[Coronavirus Spread Triggers World Bank Pandemic Bond Payout](#)

20 April 2020

Reuters

The World Bank projected an increase in global poverty for the first time since 1998 ([POLITICO](#)). While allocations are yet to be decided, the Bank confirmed activation of the Pandemic Emergency Financing (PEF) facility.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

[Early Peek at Data on Gilead Coronavirus Drug Suggests Patients Are Responding to Treatment](#)

16 April 2020, *STAT News*

The University of Chicago Medicine recruited 125 people with COVID-19 into Gilead's two Phase 3 clinical trials. All the patients were treated with daily infusions of remdesivir. While there was no control group, early results were positive.

See also: The [latest update](#) from WHO's Information Network for Epidemics (EPI-WIN) describing four promising therapies included in the Solidarity Trial.

[Physicians Launch HIV and COVID-19 Registry](#)

16 April 2020, *POZ*

Physicians from the Institute of Human Virology at the University of Maryland in Baltimore and Arizona Liver Health in Chandler announced the launch of the CURE (Coronavirus Under Research Exclusion) HIV-COVID Database. The registry aims to better understand the natural history of COVID-19 in people living with HIV, to determine the effects of various treatments and to share findings with providers around the world.

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| <p>New Resources to Track the Impact of COVID-19 on HIV Prevention Research 21 April 2020, AVAC</p> <p>AVAC has developed an infographic on COVID-19 effects on key HIV prevention trials, a table with status updates on ongoing and planned prevention trials, and a new webpage dedicated to guidance from regulatory bodies and research updates.</p> | <p>African Regulatory Agencies, Ethics Committees to Expedite COVID-19 Clinical Trial Reviews 20 April 2020, WHO</p> <p>Under the platform of the African Vaccines Regulatory Forum (AVAREF), national regulatory authorities and national ethics committees from across Africa agreed to combine their expertise to expedite clinical trial review and approvals for new multinational preventive, diagnostic and therapeutic interventions to COVID-19.</p> |
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EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

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| <p>Busting Coronavirus Myths Will Take More Than science: Lessons from an AIDS study 17 April 2020, <i>The Conversation</i></p> <p>To tackle the proliferation of misinformation about the pandemic, Professor David Dickinson recommends looking beyond scientific messages and connecting to the beliefs held in the community.</p> | <p>Lockdowns Affecting HIV Trials/Treatment in Africa 20 April 2020, <i>MedPage Today</i></p> <p>In this video interview, Dr. Rashida Ferrand discusses her experiences with the nationwide lockdown in Zimbabwe and disruptions faced by the HIV programme.</p> | <p>Africans Facing Coronavirus Must Not Suffer the Injustices They Saw with AIDS 18 April 2020, <i>The Guardian</i></p> <p>Drawing on her family's experiences with HIV/AIDS in Uganda, Lydia Namubiru calls for ethical clinical trials in African countries that does not delay the continent's access to effective vaccine or treatment.</p> |
| <p>COVID-19 Will Hit Children Hard. Here's Why 17 April 2020, <i>City Press</i></p> <p>Kholofelo Mphahlele presents evidence on the long-term impact of trauma, such as living through the pandemic, on children and how South Africa's response to COVID-19 will affect them.</p> | <p>Prepare for Collateral Damage as Devastating as the Virus 17 April 2020, <i>The Washington Post</i></p> <p>The Post Editorial Board highlights the potential for the SARS-CoV-2 virus to disrupt health care systems and hinder treatments for other conditions.</p> | <p>Are Children Forgotten in the Response to the Pandemic? 20 April 2020, <i>The Jakarta Post</i></p> <p>Esther Indriani advocates for an integrated approach to COVID-19 that prioritizes continued health services to vulnerable populations like children.</p> |

AROUND THE UNITED NATIONS

- The COVID-19 pandemic will likely kill at least 300,000 Africans and risks pushing 29 million into extreme poverty, according to the U.N. Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), which called for a \$100 billion safety net. ([Reuters](#))
- UNICEF and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees pledged "to accelerate work to expand refugee children's access to protection, education, clean water, and sanitation, as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to spread across the globe." ([UN News](#) and [UPI](#))
- According to new figures from the World Food Programme (WFP), the lives and livelihoods of 265 million people in low and middle-income countries, especially in Africa and the Middle East, will be under severe threat unless swift action is taken to tackle the pandemic. ([WFP Insight](#) and [The Guardian](#))
- Initial results from data collected as part of the United Nations' 75th anniversary initiative (UN75) revealed overwhelming support for international cooperation, especially after the start of the pandemic. ([UN News](#))

RECENT RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

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| <p>COVID-19 in Children in the United States <i>Journal of Public Health Management and Practice</i> 16 April 2020</p> <p>This study estimates that for each child who requires intensive care for COVID-19, there are 2,381 children with infections. The authors recommend all state health departments and the CDC to report confirmed COVID-19 cases in age-specific tables, using the standard 5-year age groups for health surveillance.</p> | <p>COVID-19 in Patients with HIV: Clinical case series <i>The Lancet HIV</i> 15 April 2020</p> <p>A letter to the <i>Lancet HIV</i> presented preliminary findings from an analysis of 543 COVID-19 patients in Barcelona. Of these, five were living with HIV. Their clinical characteristics, antiviral and antiretroviral treatment, and outcomes are described. (See also: COVID-19 in Barcelona: first cases in people living with HIV reported)</p> |
| <p>Not a Luxury: A call to maintain sexual and reproductive health in humanitarian and fragile settings during the COVID-19 pandemic <i>The Lancet Global Health</i> 21 April 2020</p> <p>The Inter-Agency Working Group for Reproductive Health in Crises suggest approaches to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on sexual and reproductive health in crisis and in fragile settings.</p> | <p>The Burden of COVID-19 in People Living with HIV: A syndemic perspective <i>AIDS and Behavior</i> 18 April 2020</p> <p>This paper presents a syndemic framework, including considerations of the biological, behavioral, psychosocial and structural drivers of disease, to conceptualize the potential impact of COVID-19 among people living with HIV in order to inform health programming services.</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

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| <p>Questions and Answers for Adolescents Living with HIV in Time of COVID-19 <i>UNICEF</i></p> <p>This Q+A was developed by UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office in partnership with Y+ Global and country-level networks of adolescents and young people living with HIV (A&YPLHIV) in Eastern and Southern Africa.</p> | <p>Assessing the Needs of Young Key Populations in Asia and the Pacific in the Context of COVID-19 <i>UNAIDS</i></p> <p>The Interagency Task Team (IATT) on young key populations (YKPs) in Asia and the Pacific, a regional platform composed of UN agencies and networks of YKP, launched a survey to assess the needs and ability of YKPs in accessing information, medication and other HIV services during the pandemic. The survey can be found here.</p> | <p>Policy Brief: The impact of COVID-19 on children <i>UN</i></p> <p>There are three main channels through which children are affected by COVID-19: infection with the virus; the immediate socioeconomic impacts of measures to stop transmission of the virus and end the pandemic; and the potential longer-term effects of delayed implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.</p> |
| <p>National Policies on Multi-Month Supplies of HIV Medications <i>Georgetown University</i></p> <p>The HIV Policy Lab at Georgetown University released a tracker of national policies on access to ART during the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> | <p>Positive Living in the Time of COVID <i>GNP+</i></p> <p>This April newsletter highlights how young people living with HIV are contributing to pandemic response and includes resources for youth.</p> | <p>COVID-19 Resources <i>Africaid-Zvandiri</i></p> <p>These videos and booklets are tailored for community adolescent treatment supports (CATS) and other young people to understand COVID-19 and learn how to talk about it.</p> |
| <p>COVID-19 Aftershocks <i>World Vision International</i></p> <p>Based on research from the 2014-16 Ebola Outbreak in West Africa, this report estimates the secondary health impacts of COVID-19 on children in the world's poorest and most fragile countries and makes recommendations for the global community.</p> | <p>COVID-19 and Its Impact on Pregnancy and Potential Mother-to-child SARS-CoV-2 Viral Transmission WEBINAR 15 April 2020</p> <p>The Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation (EGPAF) hosted a webinar on current research and data on COVID-19 and pregnant women living with HIV.</p> | <p>COVID-19: What paediatric HIV programmes need to know WEBINAR 20 April 2020</p> <p>The Children and AIDS Learning Collaborative hosted a discussion on the basic science related to the SARS-CoV-2 virus and HIV, emerging research on children and pregnant women in the context of COVID-19, impact on HIV programmes for this population and voices from health care providers at the frontline of the pandemic.</p> |
| <p>Perspectives from Recipients of Care During COVID-19 WEBINAR 21 April 2020</p> <p>The International Treatment Preparedness Coalition in collaboration with ICAP at Columbia University and the DSD Initiative of the International AIDS Society hosted a south-to-south discussion on Differentiated Service Delivery and the COVID-19 Response.</p> | <p>COVID-19 and HIV: Lessons learned from healthcare workers around the world WEBINAR 21 April 2020</p> <p>Two sessions from the IAS Educational Fund included health care worker perspectives from Brazil, China, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Italy, Kenya, Mexico, Lebanon, South Africa, United Kingdom and the United States.</p> | <p>Africa: Confronting COVID-19 WEBINAR 22 April 2020</p> <p>ICAP at Columbia University in partnership with the Columbia Global Centers in Nairobi and Tunis hosted a webinar with a global discussion on the SARS-CoV-2 virus as well as programming updates from regions in Africa.</p> |

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 28 April 2020: Kaiser Family Foundation and the Global Health Council will present a discussion on resource mobilization in response to COVID-19 in low- and middle-income countries. 12:00-1:00 pm ET >> [More](#)

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

COVID-19 and HIV: Weekly Digest

1 May 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 AND THE HIV RESPONSE

South Africa's HIV Failures Cost More Than 300,000 Lives. This Painful Past Is Helping in COVID-19 Fight.

29 April 2020, *CNN*

In South Africa, the COVID-19 response draws on the country’s history with the HIV epidemic. The response includes a strict lockdown as well as around 35,000 government and PEPFAR supported health workers conducting screening in communities.

Sustained HIV and TB Care Good for COVID-19 Fight

30 April 2020, *New Frame*

As the pandemic grows in South Africa, experts are calling on the government to ensure tuberculosis (TB) and HIV screenings and treatment efforts are intensified. *See also:* [High Percentage of HIV-Positive People Skipping Treatment over COVID-19 Fears](#)

COVID-19 Rapidly Reshaping HIV Services Around the World

27 April 2020, *Aidsmap*

Global experts speaking at International AIDS Society (IAS) [webinars last week](#) noted the challenges of HIV provision during the COVID-19 pandemic including the supply of antiretroviral therapy (ART) and needs of vulnerable populations. Another webinar discussion highlighted the impact of HIV clinic closures and the inequitable distribution of technology ([MedPage Today](#)).

UK Sexual Health Services Are Being Decimated by COVID-19

23 April 2020, *Aidsmap*

A survey conducted by the British Association for Sexual Health and HIV (BASHH) found that in-person services in the UK for people seeking HIV testing, treatment and PrEP as well as other sexual health services drastically shrunk since the beginning of the pandemic.

How COVID-19 Response Disrupted Health Services In Rural India

24 April 2020, *Mint*

Data from the Indian Ministry of Health suggest that the provision of health services declined in rural areas; among gaps in other services, HIV testing rates fell.

As Coronavirus Bears Down, Zimbabwe's HIV Crisis Worsens

26 April 2020, *Global Press Journal*

A report from Zimbabwe discusses fears of people living with HIV in the country. Existing gaps and challenges in HIV testing stand to be exacerbated by the pandemic.

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS AND CHILDREN

Emerging reports of an inflammatory condition among children potentially related to SARS-CoV-2

On Sunday, doctors in the United Kingdom reported cases of children with abdominal pain, gastrointestinal symptoms and cardiac inflammation. This has been observed in children with confirmed Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) positive SARS-CoV-2 infection as well as children who are PCR negative. An alert issued by NHS England noted the “growing concern” on a coronavirus-related inflammatory syndrome in children and advised urgent treatment. The symptoms are similar to features of toxic shock syndrome and Kawasaki disease. *See:*

- [At least 12 UK children have needed intensive care due to illness linked to Covid-19](#) (*The Guardian*, 27 Apr)

Clinicians in northern Italy soon reported extraordinary numbers of young children under age 9 with severe cases of Kawasaki disease, which is more commonly seen in Asia. This week, paediatric cases of inflammatory symptoms have been reported from at least six countries. Experts are investigating possible links between the coronavirus and these symptoms. To note, this syndrome is rare and most children with COVID-19 have mild symptoms. *See:*

- [More cases of rare syndrome in children reported globally](#) (*The Guardian*, 29 Apr)
- [COVID-19 complication seen in children is 'rare', WHO says](#) (*Reuters*, 29 Apr)
- [Coronavirus & Kawasaki disease in children: It's an intriguing but unproven link](#) (*The Conversation*, 29 Apr)
- [Coronavirus: 'My son had symptoms of rare syndrome'](#) (*BBC*, 28 Apr)

Evidence on SARS-CoV-2 transmission among children is uncertain

Doctors are increasingly agreeing that children are less vulnerable to COVID-19, seeing fewer cases and hospitalizations due to the virus in this population. These data are a welcome sign for decision makers who are considering reopening schools as the first step in refreshing country economies. *See:*

- [Consensus is emerging that children are less vulnerable to coronavirus](#) (*The Wall Street Journal*, 27 Apr)
- [Children unlikely to transmit coronavirus, says study cited in push to reopen schools](#) (*The Guardian*, 26 Apr)

Meanwhile, a new paper ([preprint](#)) from the Institute of Virology at Charité in Germany reports no significant differences in SARS-CoV-2 viral loads between children and adults. The researchers noted that this means children may be as infectious as adults and advised caution in reopening schools. See:

- [New reports on virus in kids fuel uncertainty on schools](#) (*Bloomberg*, 30 Apr)

GLOBAL IMPACT OF COVID-19

[Millions Had Risen Out of Poverty. Coronavirus Is Pulling Them Back](#)

30 April 2020, *The New York Times*

In the wake of the pandemic, the world will see an increase in global poverty. The World Bank estimates that sub-Saharan Africa will see its first recession in 25 years and South Asia will likely experience its worst economic performance in 40 years.

[ViiV Unveils £3m Fund to Study Impact of COVID19 on HIV Community](#)

28 April 2020, *PharmaTimes*

ViiV Healthcare set up a new GBP£3 million fund to support research for COVID-19 and HIV as well as to support community-based activities that address specific challenges faced by people living with HIV.

[Gates Foundation to Concentrate on Coronavirus](#)

27 April 2020, *Financial Times*

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation will now focus primarily on the COVID-19 pandemic. "We've taken an organization that was focused on HIV and malaria and polio eradication, and almost entirely shifted it to work on this," Bill Gates stated. See also: [Axios](#) and [The Hill](#)

['Where are all our patients?': COVID phobia keeping people with serious heart symptoms away from ERs](#)

24 April 2020, *STAT News*

There is growing concern about the downstream impacts of COVID-19. Clinicians fear that patients are dying at home to avoid risking exposure to SARS-CoV-2 in hospitals.

[Niger Reports New Polio Outbreak](#)

24 April 2020, *WHO Africa*

Two children were infected by polio in Niger, signaling a new outbreak. WHO and partners had earlier announced that polio vaccination activities were halted until at least June 1 due to COVID-19. See also: [Associated Press](#)

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

[Multiple results from trials on remdesivir](#)

Early results of a [federal trial](#) with 1063 patients hospitalized with advanced COVID-19 suggested that treatment with remdesivir can shorten the time to recovery, which averaged 11 days among those who received treatment compared to 15 days with placebo.

Meanwhile, a randomized, placebo-controlled trial in China was inconclusive about the benefits of remdesivir. There was no significant difference in time to clinical improvement or mortality at 28 days among hospitalized patients with severe COVID-19 in the treatment group versus the control. The results were published in [The Lancet](#) along with a [commentary](#) on the challenges of underpowered studies.

Gilead Sciences issued a [press release](#) with results from a Phase III clinical trial comparing the efficacy of 5-day and 10-day treatment courses of remdesivir. Both treatment courses had a similar time to recovery; there were no reports of comparisons with a control group.

See:

- [U.S. Explores Emergency-Use Approval for Gilead Drug After Study Found It Helped Recovery from COVID-19](#) (*The Wall Street Journal*, 30 Apr)
- [Remdesivir Now 'Standard of Care' for COVID-19, Fauci Says](#) (*Medscape*, 29 Apr)

[Global momentum on a vaccine for SARS-CoV-2](#)

[UK Researchers Should Know by July If Coronavirus Vaccine Is Effective](#)

30 April 2020, *CNBC*

A vaccine from the Jenner Institute and the Oxford Vaccine Group entered phase one trials last week. AstraZeneca representatives noted that they expect to know more about efficacy by July. See also: [BBC video](#)

[Trump's 'Operation Warp Speed' Aims to Rush Coronavirus Vaccine](#)

29 April 2020, *Bloomberg*

The Trump administration is pulling together pharmaceutical companies, government agencies and the military to accelerate vaccine development with a goal of having 300 million doses of a vaccine by January.

[US Stays Away as World Leaders Agree Action on COVID-19 Vaccine](#)

24 April 2020, *The Guardian*

Global leaders with the WHO pledged to accelerate cooperation on COVID-19 vaccine development. The European Commission will host a [virtual summit](#) on May 4 to raise EUR€8 billion for the initiative.

[Prime Minister Announces New Support For COVID-19 Medical Research and Vaccine Development](#)

23 April 2020, *Office of the Prime Minister*

The Government of Canada announced more than CA\$1 billion for a COVID-19 medical research strategy.

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

[The Fight against AIDS Has Shaped How Potential COVID-19 Drugs Will Reach Patients](#)

29 April 2020, *The Washington Post*

The legacy of HIV/AIDS activism has shaped access to experimental drugs and allowed them to reach COVID-19

[Three Lessons from Past Epidemics that Will Help India Fight COVID-19](#)

29 April 2020, *The Wire*

India's Former Union Secretary of Health K. Sujatha Rao picks lessons from the HIV epidemic for the COVID-19 response: do not panic, ensure

[Africa's COVID-19 Response Is a Glimpse of How Things Could Be Different](#)

30 April 2020, *Financial Times*

Countries in Africa, in spite of budgetary constraints, have been well coordinated and effective. While

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| patients sooner, according to legal historian Marie-Amélie George. | equitable services and formulate policies based on evidence. | it is still early, there are lessons for others from Africa's COVID-19 response that builds on its experience with previous epidemics. |
| <p>HIV in the Era of COVID-19: Why experts are concerned about an increase in cases 29 April 2020, <i>ABC News</i></p> <p>The closure of free HIV clinics and needle exchange programmes that once helped lower HIV rates in the U.S. can hurt progress and reverse trends in HIV.</p> | <p>Low Coronavirus Testing in Africa Leads to Blind Spots: Africa CDC chief 30 April 2020, <i>Devex</i></p> <p>John Nkengasong, director of the Africa Center for Disease Control (CDC), warns that the low confirmed cases of the coronavirus in the region could be because the full impact is still hidden. The CDC will focus on scaling up testing.</p> | <p>The TB Epidemic Teaches Us the Battle against Covid-19 Won't Be Won in Hospitals Alone 30 April 2020, <i>The Guardian</i></p> <p>The key innovation of the global response to TB was a community-based approach. COVID-19 similarly needs community testing, building trust and providing support for the economic and social risks of the pandemic.</p> |
| <p>Limiting the Spread of COVID-19 in Africa: One size mitigation strategies do not fit all countries 28 April 2020, <i>Lancet Global Health</i></p> <p>Drawing on the experience of early imported COVID-19 cases in Africa, this commentary notes considerations for decision makers in implementing prevention and treatment approaches.</p> | <p>When Pandemics Collide 24 April 2020, <i>The Lancet</i></p> <p>This editorial draws on evidence published in the last month to suggest that HIV and COVID-19 are on a collision course. The potential impact of SARS-CoV-2 on people living with HIV and on health systems in settings with high HIV burdens is becoming a major concern.</p> | <p>The Time is Now: Expedited HIV differentiated service delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic 23 April 2020, <i>Journal of the International AIDS Society</i></p> <p>This commentary urges accelerating access to differentiated service delivery (DSD) for people living with HIV during the COVID-19 pandemic and presents considerations to do so.</p> |

AROUND THE UNITED NATIONS

- The WHO announced the [Access to COVID-19 Tools \(ACT\) Accelerator](#), a new global collaboration that aims to speed global research and production efforts for critical COVID-19 drugs, tests, and vaccines. ([WHO](#))
- The new '[A UN framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19](#)' sets out strategies to address the social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The UN's socio-economic recovery efforts will be [led by](#) UNDP.
- Greta Thunberg and non-governmental organization Human Act launched a child rights campaign to support UNICEF's efforts in the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes protecting children from food shortages, strained healthcare systems, violence and lost education. ([UNICEF](#) and [Reuters](#))
- According to [new data](#) from UNFPA, the number of women and girls who face violence, child marriages, unintended pregnancies and other harmful practice is set to skyrocket due to the pandemic. ([UN News](#))
- UNAIDS featured the work of associations of people living with HIV supporting HIV treatment adherence during the COVID-19 pandemic in Pakistan. ([UNAIDS](#))
- The Global Financing Facility (GFF) warned of a secondary global health crisis, especially in low- and lower-middle income countries, due to disruptions in access to health and nutrition services. ([GFF](#))

RECENT RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

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| <p>Antibody Responses To SARS-CoV-2 in Patients With COVID-19 29 April 2020, <i>Nature Medicine</i></p> <p>This study suggests people exposed to SARS-CoV-2 show an antibody response, supporting more serological testing. Researchers noted that all COVID-19 patients in the study tested positive for antiviral immunoglobulin-G (IgG) within 19 days of symptom onset.</p> | <p>Atypical Presentation Of COVID-19 in Young Infants 27 April 2020, <i>The Lancet</i></p> <p>In a new report from France about five infants (aged <3 months) with COVID-19, the authors noted neurologic symptoms at admission among four of them. They recommend that infants younger than 3 months with isolated fever be tested for SARS-CoV-2 and monitored.</p> |
| <p>Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) Infection in Children and Adolescents: A systematic review 22 April 2020, <i>JAMA Pediatrics</i></p> <p>In this systematic review of 18 studies with 1065 participants, most children with SARS-CoV-2 infection presented with mild symptoms and recovered within one to two weeks. Symptomatic children generally only required supportive care.</p> | <p>Presenting Characteristics, Comorbidities, and Outcomes Among 5700 Patients Hospitalized With COVID-19 in the New York City Area 22 April 2020, <i>JAMA</i></p> <p>In this case series with 5700 patients hospitalized with COVID-19 in the New York City area, relatively few were living with HIV (0.8%). The most common comorbidities were hypertension, obesity and diabetes.</p> |

Epidemiology and Transmission of COVID-19 in 391 Cases and 1286 of Their Close Contacts in Shenzhen, China: A retrospective cohort study

27 April 2020, *Lancet Infectious Diseases*

With data from 391 SARS-CoV-2 cases and 1286 close contacts in China, the researchers estimated metrics of disease transmission. The secondary attack rate did not defer by age; children are at a similar risk of infection to the general population, although they are less likely to have severe symptoms.

Multicenter Initial Guidance on Use of Antivirals for Children with COVID-19/SARS-Cov-2

22 April 2020, *Journal of the Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society*

This panel suggests a decision-making framework for paediatric antiviral therapy for COVID-19 based on disease severity. While acknowledging that supportive care is generally adequate, the panel suggests remdesivir as the preferred agent when an antiviral is needed. This guidance should be updated as new evidence emerge.

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

Blog: Assessing the Needs of Young Key Populations During COVID-19 Outbreak In Asia and The Pacific

30 April 2020

This post shares preliminary findings of the [survey](#) by the Interagency Task Team on Young Key Populations (YKPs) in Asia and the Pacific.

PEPFAR Technical Guidance in Context of COVID-19 Pandemic

UPDATED 29 April 2020

This week's updates can be found in the sections on telehealth, adolescents living with HIV, and faith and community organizations.

Interim Guidelines on the Provision of HIV Prevention and Care Services in the Context of the COVID-19 Outbreak in Tanzania

The National AIDS Control Programme in Tanzania released guidelines for providers to continue HIV services during the pandemic.

COVID-19 and Global Inequality

WEBINAR 28 April 2020

In this webinar from The New School and Health Policy Watch, global health leaders discussed how COVID-19 exposed inequalities in access to medical care, employment and countries' abilities to protect their citizens.

Living Under Lockdown: Girls and COVID-19

30 April 2020

A report by Plan International highlights the potential long-lasting consequences of abuse, neglect, fear and hunger for girls worldwide in the context of COVID-19.

4 Ways HIV Programs Can Go Online to Mitigate COVID-19 Impact

29 April 2020

Experts from FHI360 spotlight digital response strategies that can be used to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on providing HIV services.

Eswatini: Guidance on the provision of chronic care during the COVID-19 pandemic

22 April 2020

This memo from Eswatini's Director of Health Services to health facilities includes guidelines on continuing to provide HIV care and treatment.

Updates on Policy and Practice Adaptations from Ministries of Health (Eswatini and Liberia)

WEBINAR 28 April 2020

The International Treatment Preparedness Coalition in collaboration, ICAP at Columbia University and the DSD Initiative hosted a discussion on policy changes and health system adaptations in Eswatini and Liberia.

Tweet: 8 Ways Governments Can Support Children Living with HIV During the Pandemic

30 April 2020

Social media graphics from UNICEF's HIV programme show how governments can support children living with HIV during the pandemic.

Interim Guidance for COVID-19 and Persons with HIV

UPDATED 21 April 2020

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services provided updated guidance for people living with HIV and their health care providers regarding COVID-19.

The Oxford Union: Winnie Byanyima

PODCAST 27 April 2020

UNAIDS Executive Director Winnie Byanyima spoke of the lessons we can learn from the HIV/AIDS pandemic in this podcast with the Oxford Union.

Test, test, test: COVID-19 and HIV testing updates

WEBINAR 30 April 2020

This webinar from the International AIDS Society included discussions on global updates on COVID-19 testing, strategies for HIV testing and treatment and lessons learned from the pandemic thus far.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **5 May 2020:** The HIV Coverage, Quality, and Impact Network (CQUIN) is hosting a discussion on the impact of COVID-19 on the provision of family planning services. *8am ET | 2pm SAST* >> [More](#)
- **6 May 2020:** The International Association of Providers of AIDS Care (IAPAC) is hosting a virtual pre-conference for Adherence 2020 on continuity of HIV care during COVID-19. *12pm ET | 6pm SAST* >> [More](#)

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

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8 May 2020

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COVID-19 AND THE HIV RESPONSE

[A COVID-19 Conference at AIDS 2020: Virtual](#)

30 April 2020, *The Lancet*

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, AIDS 2020 will be a virtual conference on 6–10 July 2020. The International AIDS Society and partners will focus on HIV science and the theme of resilience. The final day will be the [IAS Virtual COVID-19 Conference](#) on COVID-19 research, policy and frontline experience.

[New Platform for a Coordinated Response against COVID-19 Launched in Central African Republic](#)

1 May 2020, Press release

In the Central African Republic, civil society organizations launched "[Solidarity for Action](#)", a new platform to ensure mobilization and coordinated actions for the continued access to services for HIV, TB and malaria as well as respect for human rights.

[UNAIDS Urges Countries to Stay Focused on HIV Prevention during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

6 May 2020, Press Release

Three new documents by UNAIDS and partners look at how to maintain and prioritize HIV prevention, including measures to address violence against women and children, maintain supply chains and sustain livelihoods.

[Demand for Coronavirus Tests Raises Concerns Over HIV and Malaria](#)

1 May 2020, *The Guardian*

There are fears that the rush for expanding coronavirus testing will come at the cost of producing testing kits for HIV, tuberculosis and malaria.

[U.K. Lockdown Has 'Broken HIV Chain' With Huge Reduction in New STI Cases](#)

1 May 2020, *Forbes*

UK-based sexual health advocates are reporting a reduction in new sexually transmitted infections. This could be due to strict movement restrictions during the lockdown period.

[A Shadow Medical Safety Net, Stretched to the Limit](#)

6 May 2020, *New York Times*

Community health centers in the U.S. serve vulnerable, populations, including people living with HIV. These small centers are even more strained during this pandemic. See also: '[How a Crowded Clinic \[in South Africa\] Makes It Work during COVID-19](#)'

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS AND CHILDREN

[More reports and conversations on an inflammatory syndrome among children related to SARS-CoV-2](#)

The global community is continuing to learn more about inflammatory symptoms similar to the Kawasaki syndrome that were observed in children. According to a news briefing last week, the WHO [is investigating](#) links between the syndrome and coronavirus in children.

On Monday, a New York City [bulletin](#) asked doctors to report cases and mentioned 15 such cases among children, ages 2 to 15, in the city. By May 5, a [health advisory](#) noted 64 potential cases in New York State.

Some doctors are calling it "paediatric multisystem inflammatory syndrome." The cause of the syndrome and reasons for variation are still unclear. See: [New York Times](#), [Washington Post](#)

In the UK, the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health [published a working definition](#) of the syndrome, noting possible symptoms and diagnostic information known so far.

[Uncertainty on SARS-CoV-2 transmission among children](#)

While governments across the world consider reopening schools, the evidence around children's susceptibility to the SARS-CoV-2 infection and their rates of transmission remains unclear.

In one study, [published](#) in *Science*, data from Wuhan and Shanghai in China suggests children were about a third as susceptible to the infection as adults but when schools were open, their increased exposure evened out that difference in risk. Some epidemiologists suggest that schools should be kept closed. See: [New York Times](#)

According to experts, research on the impact of the novel coronavirus on children needs to continue even after schools open to understand transmission events in real-time. See: [Science](#)

UNESCO, UNICEF, WFP and World Bank [issued guidelines](#) on the safe reopening of schools and noted documented adverse effects of school closures on safety and learning.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Global research collaboration to identify crucial clinical strategies for people living with COVID-19 and HIV
29 April 2020, Press Release

A multi-country study by the Kirby Institute at UNSW Sydney and funded by Unitaid and ViiV Healthcare will determine risk factors for COVID-19 among people living with HIV.

Study to Determine Incidence of Novel Coronavirus Infection in U.S. Children Begins

4 May 2020, Press Release

The now-enrolling HEROS study from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) will help determine the rate of SARS-CoV-2 infections in U.S children and family.

World leaders pledge billions for research into coronavirus vaccine

4 May 2020, *Euro News*

The European Union led a pledging event that raised €7.5 for COVID-19 research, which will be spent over the next two years to support promising initiatives across the world. See also: [UN News](#)

GLOBAL IMPACT OF COVID-19

Tuberculosis Can Backslide To 2013 Levels, New Study Reveals

6 May 2020, *Devex*

Tuberculosis cases could increase by up to 11 per cent globally between 2020 and 2025 under a 3-month lockdown, according to [modelling](#) by the Stop TB Partnership.

Exclusive: Virus exposes gaping holes in Africa's health systems

7 May 2020, *Reuters*

A Reuters survey of 48 countries in Africa highlight the shortage of critical care infrastructure and gaps in testing in the context of COVID-19.

Combating Coronavirus

5 May 2020, *Financial Times*

This special report describes efforts to ensure fair access to new COVID-19 vaccines and treatments in low-income countries and to address the threat of antimicrobial resistance.

Development Heavyweights Back Bigger Role for DFIs in COVID-19 Response

4 May 2020, *Devex*

European development finance institutions (DFIs) need more resources and policies to better support the private sector in Africa through the COVID-19 crisis. See also: [Virus 'could undo 30 years of UK's international development work'](#).

South Africa's Mass Screening Helps Stem the Coronavirus Tide

5 May 2020, *Financial Times*

South Africa's active case finding approach, drawn from the country's experiences with HIV and TB, differs from most European governments who have relied on citizens reporting for tests and then tracing contacts.

President Trump Announces Remdesivir Authorized for Emergency COVID-19 Treatment

1 May 2020, *HIV.gov*

The investigational drug remdesivir was authorized by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to treat adults and children hospitalized with severe COVID-19. President Trump's [remarks](#) also mentioned 'Ending the HIV Epidemic: A Plan for America'.

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

Listen: Things can change in an instant

5 May 2020, *The Atlantic*

Gregg Gonsalves, an epidemiologist and AIDS activist, describes parallels between HIV/AIDS in the 1980s and 1990s and today's pandemic.

What Asian Nations Know About Squashing Covid-19

3 May 2020, *CNN*

Professor Jeffrey Sachs highlights lessons for the U.S. and other regions from countries in the Asia Pacific that have successfully controlled the pandemic.

COVID-19 Exposes Global 'Frailties and Inequalities'

3 May 2020, *UN News*

UN Secretary-General Amina Mohammed discusses the compounding threats, calling COVID-19 a health, humanitarian and development emergency.

We Must Act Together to Beat COVID-19 In Africa

1 May 2020, *UN DESA*

Winnie Byanyima of UNAIDS recommends COVID-19 approaches for Africa, drawing on HIV experiences in community-led services and prioritizing human rights.

Ethiopia's Prime Minister Calls on Developed Countries to Help Africa through COVID-19

3 May 2020, *World Economic Forum*

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed calls for debt relief and financial aid to support Africa's COVID-19 response and mitigate the impact of shutdowns.

Modi Government's Targeting of Minorities for COVID Repeats Old Mistakes of HIV Pandemic

2 May 2020, *The Caravan*

With consideration of the effects of stigma in the initial years of the HIV epidemic, India should note the stigmatization of minority communities in the COVID-19 response.

COVID-19 Crisis Underlines Value of African Research Investment

5 May 2020, *Science Business*

The European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) issued grants in 37 African countries. Its director describes the role of these investments.

COVID-19: Shining the light on Africa

5 May 2020, *American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene*

This editorial describes the current landscape and successes of the COVID-19 response in Africa, and describes tools and approaches for regional and global partners.

AROUND THE UNITED NATIONS

- The Pandemic Emergency Financing Facility (PEF) [allocated](#) US\$195.84 million to 64 of the world's poorest countries with reported cases of COVID-19.
- The 'Protect Our Children' initiative was [launched](#) by the European Union, Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC) and members of the Group of Friends of Children and the SDGs.
- UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti is [mobilizing](#) a rapid research response covering reviews of evidence, education analysis, and social and economic policies.
- UNFPA launched a [campaign](#) to highlight the impact of COVID-19 on midwifery and maternal health.
- OCHA released [South Africa's emergency appeal](#) for the pandemic, including its impact on people with HIV.
- UN officials highlighted the [situation in Malawi](#) and warned that the pandemic could have a disastrous toll in the country. See also: [Stories from the field](#)
- UNAIDS [featured](#) a civil society organization that is ensuring access to ART during the outbreak in Indonesia.

- There has been a 70 to 80 per cent reduction in shipments for vaccines since late March and help is urgently needed for vaccine distribution, [according to UNICEF](#).

RECENT RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

Report 19: The Potential Impact of the COVID-19 Epidemic on HIV, TB and Malaria in Low- and Middle-Income Countries

1 May 2020, *Imperial College London*

Researchers modelled the impact of COVID-19 on HIV, TB and malaria in low- and middle-income countries and predicted significant rises in cases and deaths. The greatest impact on HIV is estimated to be from interruption to supply and administering of ART; this could cause a 10 per cent rise in deaths over five years.

Children with Covid-19 in Pediatric Emergency Departments in Italy

1 May 2020, *New England Journal of Medicine*

In this correspondence about the Coronavirus Infection in Pediatric Emergency Departments (CONFIDENCE) study, the author describes a cohort of 100 children with COVID-19 who were assessed between March 3 and March 27 in paediatric emergency departments in Italy.

COVID-19 pandemic in the African continent: Forecasts of cumulative cases, new infections, and mortality

28 April 2020, Preprint

This pandemic model for Africa is intended to help policymakers and healthcare systems prepare for the outbreak by forecasting new cases and mortality rates in the region. See also: [Yale News](#)

The Potential Impact of Interruptions to HIV Services: A Modelling Case Study for South Africa

27 April 2020, Preprint

According to this modelling study in South Africa, the numbers of deaths caused by HIV could increase substantially if the COVID-19 epidemic leads to interruptions in the availability of HIV services. The paper compares COVID-19 mortality with predicted HIV-related mortality that are additional based on possible interruptions in HIV services.

The anti-HIV Drug Nelfinavir Mesylate (Viracept) is a Potent Inhibitor of Cell Fusion Caused by the SARS-CoV-2 Spike (S) Glycoprotein Warranting further Evaluation as an Antiviral against COVID-19 infections

6 May 2020, *Journal of Medical Virology*

A study on the impact of nelfinavir mesylate (brand name Viracept), a protease inhibitor developed for HIV, showed positive results in limiting the spread of the SARS-CoV-2.

Coronavirus Infections in Children Including COVID-19 An Overview of the Epidemiology, Clinical Features, Diagnosis, Treatment, Prevention Options in Children

May 2020, *The Pediatrics Infectious Disease Journal*

In this review, the authors summarize characteristics and treatment and prevention options for coronavirus infections with a focus on infections in children.

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

BHIVA COVID-19 interim adult antiretroviral guidance

1 May 2020

The British HIV Association (BHIVA), the professional body of HIV clinicians in the UK, issued additional treatment guidelines during the pandemic and lockdown.

Dashboard: An analysis of COVID-19 funding in West and Central Africa

7 May 2020

Devex is tracking and analyzing COVID-19-related pledges and relevant funding announcements directed to countries in West and Central Africa.

Synthesized Guidance for COVID-19 Message Development

UPDATED 1 May 2020

Breakthrough ACTION, a project funded by USAID, compiled resources from WHO, UNICEF, CDC and academic resources in this message guide for COVID-19.

Interim Guidance on Public Health and Social Measures for COVID-19 Preparedness and Response in Low Capacity and Humanitarian Settings

6 May 2020

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee outlines key measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread and its impact, adapted for use in low capacity and humanitarian settings.

COVID-19: 4 Ways to Keep Gender in Focus

1 May 2020

This brief from the Partnership to Inspire, Transform and Connect the HIV response (PITCH) describes four different areas where gender, HIV and COVID-19 intersect and how communities can respond.

Dashboard: COVID-19 Racial Disparities in U.S. Counties

2 May 2020

amfAR released a dashboard based on its [paper](#) showing how disproportionately black counties in the U.S. are bearing the brunt of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Provision of Family Planning Services During COVID-19 – Considerations for DSD

WEBINAR 5 May 2020

This webinar from ICAP at Columbia University's HIV Coverage, Quality, and Impact Network (CQUIN) project discussed sexual and reproductive services during COVID-19.

The power—and pitfalls—of modeling for COVID-19 and HIV

WEBINAR 7 May 2020

AVAC hosted a discussion on current COVID-19 models, and the benefits and limitations of mathematical models as they apply to both COVID-19 and HIV prevention.

COVID-19 Expert Series: Child and Adolescent Health with Zulfi Buttha

VIDEO 27 April 2020

Every Woman Every Child spoke with Zulfiqar Bhutta of the International Pediatric Association about the health and well-being of children and adolescents during the pandemic.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 12 May 2020: The CQUIN project's series on differentiated service delivery and COVID-19 will continue with country updates from Zambia and Sierra Leone. *8am ET / 2pm SAST* >> [More](#)

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

COVID-19 and HIV: Weekly Digest

15 May 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 AND IMPACT ON HIV

The Cost of Inaction: COVID-19-related service disruptions could cause hundreds of thousands of extra deaths from HIV

11 May 2020, WHO and UNAIDS

A modelling group convened by WHO and UNAIDS estimates that pandemic-related disruptions to HIV services for six months could cause more than 500,000 additional deaths from AIDS-related illnesses in sub-Saharan Africa in 2020–2021. Gains made in preventing mother-to-child HIV transmission could also be reversed. *See also:* [UN News](#) and [Devex](#) (video)

AIDS, TB and Malaria Set to Get Deadlier Due to Coronavirus

11 May 2020, *Forbes*

In addition to the HIV-focused modelling, this report discusses TB and malaria projections that are set to increase globally due to the pandemic. Experts urge essential services for HIV, TB and malaria be continued instead of waiting for lockdowns to end. *See also:* [Frontline AIDS](#) (statement)

ADAPTING HIV SERVICE DELIVERY

Multi-Month Supplies of HIV Medications – Recommended during Lockdowns – Are Not Authorised in Many Countries

12 May 2020, *aidsmap*

According to [an analysis](#) that reviewed national HIV policies in 126 countries, a third of them do not permit prescriptions of three months or longer. High-income countries in particular have been slower to implement multi-month prescribing, which has been recommended during the pandemic to limit visits to health care facilities.

Eswatini: Tackling COVID-19 amid HIV and TB epidemics

8 May 2020, Médecins Sans Frontières

MSF highlights the challenges of responding to COVID-19 in settings with high rates of HIV and TB and the experience of adapting care in Eswatini.

UNAIDS Ensures Continuity of HIV Treatment for People Living with HIV in Botswana

11 May 2020, UNAIDS

In Botswana, UNAIDS worked with private sector and government partners to ensure availability of ARVs to support the continuity of HIV treatment during the pandemic.

Protecting Mothers and Babies from HIV during the COVID-19 Pandemic

12 May 2020, Global Fund

Current lockdowns and travel restrictions are barriers to accessing health services for mothers and pregnant women living with HIV. Global Fund highlights partner work to deliver HIV treatment in Uganda.

The Health Workers Braving COVID-19 Lockdown to Deliver Medicines to HIV-positive Moms

12 May 2020, *The New Indian Express*

In India during the lockdown, health workers from Plan India are working with the National AIDS Control Organisation to deliver ARVs as well to mothers living with HIV.

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS AND CHILDREN

More questions remain on how the SARS-CoV-2 virus behaves in children compared to adults. There is emerging evidence and more analysis of previously reported data on viral transmission and on the multisystem inflammatory disease similar to the Kawasaki syndrome seen in some children across the world. *See:*

- [Kawasaki-like Disease: Emerging complication during the COVID-19 pandemic](#) (*The Lancet*, Comment, 13 May)
- [Rethinking COVID-19 in Children](#) (*New York Times*, 12 May)

An observational study in Italy evaluated features of children presenting with Kawasaki-like disease in the last five years, divided into groups by before and after the beginning of the SARS-CoV-2 epidemic. Children diagnosed after the epidemic began showed evidence of immune response to the virus, were older and had more severe symptoms. Incidence of the Kawasaki-like disease increased by 30-fold. ([The Lancet](#), 13 May)

A correspondence on the initial case cluster from the UK that triggered global attention presented characteristics, clinical presentations, treatment provided and outcomes for the eight children. The authors noted that multispecialty input was needed due to the multiorgan involvement and its severity. ([The Lancet](#), 7 May)

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) summarized the characteristics of the paediatric inflammatory multisystem syndrome cases seen thus far and recommended including the syndrome as a possible complication to be reported for EU-level COVID-19 surveillance. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also released a health advisory with a case definition and recommendations for health providers. *See:*

- [Rapid Risk Assessment](#) (ECDC, 15 May)
- [Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children \(MIS-C\) Associated with COVID-19](#) (CDC, 14 May)

There is more evidence of other impacts of the pandemic, including related disruptions to health services, education and food security, on children. In the US, there has been a substantial decrease in the administration of childhood vaccines; experts warn of increased risk of vaccine preventable disease and outbreaks. ([Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#), 8 May) UNICEF noted that the pandemic is “quickly becoming a child rights crisis” that could lead to a further 6,000 children under-five dying of preventable causes each day and [appealed for \\$1.6 billion](#) to support its humanitarian response. The International Paediatric Association released a [statement](#) on protecting child health.

Lastly, as countries consider reopening schools, questions remain on how children transmit the virus and if they are less infectious than adults ([Nature](#), 7 May). The WHO released ‘[Considerations for school-related public health measures in the context of COVID-19](#)’ to support decision makers and educators with a review of evidence.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

[Uniting Behind a People’s Vaccine Against COVID-19](#)

14 May 2020, UNAIDS

Ahead of the World Health Assembly, global leaders called for a guarantee that when a safe and effective vaccine for the novel coronavirus is developed, it is produced rapidly at scale and made available to all people in all countries for free.

See also: [AVAC and TAG Statement on Ethical Conduct of SARS-CoV-2 Vaccine Challenge Studies](#)

[Researchers in Senegal are Developing a Coronavirus Test Kit to Be Used Across Africa](#)

11 May 2020, *The World*

The Pasteur Institute in Dakar and British biotech Mologic are developing a COVID-19 rapid detection test kit that could be available by early June and meet the needs of remote populations.

See also: [African Scientists Sense a Once-In-A-Life Opportunity to Push For Research Funding](#) (*Quartz*)

[Remdesivir Is ‘The Best That We Have Right Now’ for COVID-19](#)

May 11, 2020, *Healio*

The Infectious Disease Society of America and the HIV Medicine Association called for transparency on the distribution of remdesivir, in light of its recent approval for emergency use. Earlier, pediatric infectious disease physicians [had suggested](#) remdesivir be used as the preferred antiviral for children with severe illness.

GLOBAL IMPACT OF COVID-19

[Health Workers Become Unexpected Targets during COVID-19](#)

11 May 2020, *The Economist*

In addition to the challenges of treating a new infection, health workers around the world are facing more violence, especially due to fear and misinformation about the pandemic, as well as more psychological distress.

[Over 300 Lawmakers Worldwide Urge IMF, World Bank to Cancel Poor Countries’ Debt](#)

13 May 2020, *Reuters*

In a letter to the World Bank and the IMF, more than 300 parliamentarians from around the world urged debt cancellation for low-income countries amid concern that the pandemic will devastate developing countries and emerging economies.

[Brazil’s Pandemic Is Just Beginning](#)

10 May 2020, *The Atlantic*

Brazil is set to be hit hard by the pandemic and faces compounded challenges of high inequality. Socioeconomic disparities in the country are affecting viral transmission as well as the broader impact of the pandemic.

See also: [COVID-19 in Brazil: “So what?”](#) (*The Lancet Editorial*)

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

[Amid COVID-19, Communities Continue Fight against Other Pandemics](#)

11 May 2020, *Reuters*

The Global Fund’s Linda Mafu notes how the work communities are doing for COVID-19 overlaps with efforts for HIV, TB and malaria.

[A Wake-Up Call: COVID-19 and its impact on children’s health and wellbeing](#)

12 May 2020, *Lancet Global Health*

UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta H. Fore presents six areas of focus to protect the health and well-being of children and mothers in the context of COVID-19.

[Opinion: How to prevent the 2020s from becoming a lost decade for children](#)

11 May 2020, *Devex*

Chief Executive of Save the Children UK, Kevin Watkins discusses critical steps to protect children from COVID-19 and its downstream impacts on poverty, health and well-being.

[Women Are on the COVID-19 Frontline – We must give them the support they need](#)

11 May 2020, *The Guardian*

UN’s Humanitarian Chief Mark Lowcock and UNFPA Executive Director Natalia Kanem discuss the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on women.

[The Problem with Predicting Coronavirus Apocalypse in Africa](#)

7 May 2020, *Al Jazeera*

The authors argue that predicting harsh COVID-19 outcomes in Africa ignores the region’s experience with infectious diseases and “epidemiological know-how”.

[COVID-19 Testing: Lessons from the HIV testing experience](#)

13 May 2020, *Health Affairs*

The authors note lessons from the HIV program experience that are relevant to SARS-CoV-2 and provide recommendations to promote widespread testing.

[Access to Lifesaving Medical Resources for African Countries: COVID-19 testing and response](#)

7 May 2020, *The Lancet*

Global health experts warn against slow and inadequate access to new COVID-19 diagnostics and treatments in sub-Saharan Africa.

[COVID-19 Shines Spotlight on Race and Gender Inequities in Healthcare](#)

12 May 2020, *New Security Beat*

As an event at the Wilson Center on the impact of COVID-19 on inequity, speakers highlighted barriers faced by women and girls.

AROUND THE UNITED NATIONS

- UNAIDS [featured the coordinated work](#) of United Nations entities in South Africa to support government and community responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- WHO’s [2020 World Health Statistics](#) that showed low-income countries reported biggest gains in life expectancy; one critical driver was improved access to services to prevent and treat HIV, malaria and TB.

- United Nations World Economic Situation and Prospects [released](#) its mid-2020 report projecting that the global economy will lose nearly \$8.5 trillion in output over the next two years due to COVID-19.
- United Nations on Monday [held a policy discussion](#) on a range of multilateral solutions for COVID-19 response as well as getting back on track toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- United Nations partners are [working to address](#) stigma, discrimination and xenophobia during the pandemic.
- UNODC, WHO, UNAIDS and OHCHR released a [statement on prisons](#) and the vulnerability to COVID-19.

RECENT RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

[Early Estimates of the Indirect Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Maternal and Child Mortality in Low- and Middle-Income Countries: A modelling study](#)

12 May 2020, *The Lancet Global Health*

The researchers modelled three scenarios to estimate maternal and under-5 child deaths resulting from COVID-19's disruption of health systems and decreased access to food. The least severe scenario over six months showed 253,500 additional child deaths and 12,200 additional maternal deaths and the most severe showed 1,157,000 child and 56,700 maternal additional deaths.

[Triple Combination of Interferon Beta-1b, Lopinavir-Ritonavir, and Ribavirin in the Treatment of Patients Admitted to Hospital with COVID-19: An open-label, randomised, phase 2 trial](#)

8 May 2020, *The Lancet*

A phase 2 randomised trial assessed a combination therapy with lopinavir-ritonavir, ribavirin and interferon beta-1b among hospitalized COVID-19 patients in Hong Kong. Results showed significantly shorter median time to a negative SARS-CoV-2 test with the triple combination versus the control. *See also:* [Commentary](#)

[Characteristics and Outcomes of Children with Coronavirus Disease 2019 Infection Admitted to US and Canadian Pediatric Intensive Care Units](#)

11 May 2020, *JAMA Pediatrics*

This cross-sectional study in the US and Canada describes characteristics of children with severe COVID-19. In general, children admitted to intensive care units in this group had comorbidities. In the group of 48 children, 40 (83%) had preexisting medical conditions, 35 (73%) presented with respiratory symptoms, 18 (38%) required invasive ventilation. *See also:* [New York Times](#), [Medscape](#)

[HIV and Food Insecurity: A syndemic amid the COVID-19 pandemic](#)

8 May 2020, *AIDS and Behavior*

The health, social and economic impacts of COVID-19 may interfere with the availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods. Food insecurity is already an issue for people living with HIV and the pandemic may exacerbate concerns.

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

[Community-based health care, including outreach and campaigns, in the context of COVID-19](#)

May 2020

This guidance by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, WHO and UNICEF outlines the role of community-based care to maintain essential services and respond to COVID-19.

[Framework for Healthcare Systems Providing Non-COVID-19 Clinical Care During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

12 May 2020

The CDC released a framework for the delivery of non-COVID clinical care during the COVID-19 pandemic, balancing need for health services with minimizing risks to patients and healthcare workers.

[Global HIV Prevention Working Group: Briefs on HIV prevention during COVID-19](#)

April 2020

The Global HIV Prevention Coalition released briefs on HIV prevention during COVID-19, addressing: (a) [supply and demand generation for condoms](#), (b) [maintaining prevention services](#), and (c) [lessons from HIV prevention for COVID-19 prevention](#).

[Responding to COVID-19 in Africa: Using data to find a balance](#)

5 May 2020

The Partnership for Evidence-Based Response to COVID-19 (PERC) presents findings from a survey conducted in 20 African countries and provides guidance to governments and decision-makers on using data to make informed decisions.

[Balancing the COVID-19 Response with Wider Health Needs: Key decision-making considerations for low- and middle-income countries](#)

8 May 2020

Center for Global Development (CGD) presents trade-offs and recommendations for decision makers balancing a spectrum of health needs during the pandemic.

[Country Updates on Policy and Practice Adaptations from Zambia and Sierra Leone](#)

WEBINAR 12 May 2020

ICAP at Columbia University and DSD hosted a discussion of program adaptations in Zambia and Sierra Leone in the context of COVID-19 with government officials and program managers.

[Protecting the Vulnerable: COVID-19 Update No. 25](#)

8 May 2020

This update from WHO's EPI-WIN focuses on vulnerable populations, including those with conditions that require sustained treatment.

[Sierra Leone: COVID-19 guidance on comprehensive HIV service delivery](#)

May 2020

Sierra Leone's National HIV/AIDS Control Programme released guidelines on continuing to provide HIV services during the pandemic.

[Promoting Health Equity, Gender and Ethnic Equality, and Human Rights in COVID-19 Responses: Key considerations](#)

UPDATED 5 May 2020

PAHO presents considerations and resources to develop equitable national COVID-19 efforts.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **19 May 2020:** The ICAP and DSD series on differentiated service delivery and COVID-19 will continue with interventions to support uninterrupted treatment during lockdown. *8am ET / 2pm SAST* >> [More](#)

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