

COVID-19 and HIV: Weekly Digest

19 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>Global Fund Survey: Majority of HIV, TB and Malaria Programs Face Disruptions as a Result of COVID-19 17 June 2020, <i>Global Fund</i></p> <p>Survey results of Global Fund-supported programs across 106 countries show widespread disruptions to HIV, TB and malaria service delivery due to COVID-19. Among HIV programs, 85 per cent reported disruptions.</p>	<p>Assessing the Impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic Among Women and Girls Living with HIV in Asia and the Pacific 15 June 2020, <i>UNAIDS</i></p> <p>The International Community of Women Living with HIV and AIDS for Asia and the Pacific launched a survey to assess the impact of the pandemic among women and girls living with HIV in Asia and the Pacific.</p>	<p>New HIV Community Group in Guinea Fighting COVID-19 12 June 2020, <i>UNAIDS</i></p> <p>In Guinea, the recently-created National Platform of Civil Society Organizations on HIV and TB is playing a central role in the development of the Ministry of Health's contingency plan to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on health services, particularly HIV services.</p>
<p>HIV and TB Increase Death Risk from COVID-19, Study Finds—But Not by Much 15 June 2020, <i>Science</i></p> <p>According to preliminary data from the Western Cape, living with HIV or active TB increases the likelihood of dying from COVID-19. But neither HIV nor TB are “major” risk factors for COVID-19, noted public health expert Mary-Ann Davies. The analysis controlled for some but not all known COVID-19 risk factors like obesity, and smaller studies in other low-prevalence countries have not found a higher mortality risk for people living with HIV.</p>	<p>We Cannot Ignore Other Diseases like TB and HIV - Health Minister 12 June 2020, <i>IOL</i></p> <p>South African Health Minister Zweli Mkhize noted that as the country battles the pandemic, the healthcare system should not lag behind in addressing diseases such as TB and HIV. Minister Mkhize stressed the importance of long-lasting investments in the health system.</p>	<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Mental Health and Quality of Life of Young Key Populations and Young People Living with HIV in Asia and the Pacific 12 June 2020, <i>UNAIDS</i></p> <p>The Interagency Task Team (IATT) on young key populations in Asia and the Pacific released a second set of findings from its survey assessing the needs of young key populations during COVID-19. Pandemic-related uncertainty is increasing levels of stress and anxiety among young key populations and impacting their mental well-being.</p>

GLOBAL IMPACT OF COVID-19

<p>Global Coronavirus Cases Reach over 8 Million as Outbreak Expands in Latin America 16 June 2020, <i>Reuters</i></p> <p>Global cases of the novel coronavirus reached over 8 million on Monday. Infections surged in Latin America and the US while China saw fresh outbreaks. The outbreak is growing fastest in Latin America, now 21 per cent of all cases.</p>	<p>Coronavirus Death Rate Is Higher for Those with Chronic Ills 16 June 2020, <i>AP</i></p> <p>According to a new Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report, people with underlying conditions such as heart disease and diabetes were hospitalized six times as often and died twelve times as often as others without underlying conditions with COVID-19.</p>	<p>World Bank Has 'Stretched' Its Capacity in Coronavirus Response, Malpass Says 16 June 2020, <i>Devex</i></p> <p>World Bank President David Malpass noted, “we’ve stretched the capacity of the bank in the commitments that we’ve made”. The bank has currently deployed \$14 billion for emergency response in 100 countries and committed to mobilize \$160 billion in 15 months.</p>	<p>Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam... How Some Countries Kept COVID at Bay 14 June 2020, <i>The Guardian</i></p> <p>Experts say that by acting quickly and drawing on established systems from past epidemics, some countries in Southeast Asia avoided large outbreaks.</p>
<p>The Pandemic Claims New Victims: Prestigious Medical Journals 14 June 2020, <i>New York Times</i></p> <p>There is alarm that the rush for SARS-CoV-2 research is undermining peer review and threatening medical</p>	<p>LMICs Will Face 'Extreme Strain' on Health Systems Despite Younger Populations 12 June 2020, <i>Imperial College</i></p> <p>A new analysis suggests that the protective effects of young populations in low-</p>	<p>Slowing the Coronavirus Is Speeding the Spread of Other Diseases 14 June 2020, <i>New York Times</i></p> <p>After pandemic-related disruptions to immunization, diphtheria, cholera, poliovirus and measles is</p>	<p>Around 9% of Guinea-Bissau health workers have been infected with COVID-19 17 June 2020, <i>Reuters</i></p> <p>More than 170 of Guinea-Bissau's 2,000 health workers have new coronavirus</p>

journals' credibility. See also: Science will never be the same after COVID-19	and middle- income countries are offset by more strained health systems.	reappearing in many countries.	infections, according to the WHO.
African States Contribute \$61m to Africa CDC to Fight COVID-19 17 June 2020, <i>New Vision</i> African countries and the private sector contributed \$61 million for the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention to acquire commodities to tackle COVID-19.	Why Coronavirus Has Placed Millions More Girls at Risk of FGM 16 June 2020, <i>The Guardian</i> Due to pandemic-related disruptions, two million girls are at risk for female genital mutilation (FGM). School closures and economic fallouts are increasing risks of violence and FGM.	Maternal Health and COVID-19: The race to avert a long-term crisis 12 June 2020, <i>Devex</i> Organizations are working to ensure funding and continuity for sexual and reproductive health services. Concerted efforts are needed to ensure safe pregnancies during the pandemic.	African Countries Scramble to Ramp up Testing for COVID-19 16 June 2020, <i>Scientific American</i> Countries across Africa have united to secure 90 million test kits for the next six months. Still, they might not be enough for the region.

COVID-19 AND INEQUALITY

Race Gaps in COVID-19 Deaths Are Even Bigger Than They Appear 16 June 2020, <i>Brookings</i> New data from CDC show that the death rates among Black and Hispanic/Latino people are much higher than for white people in all age categories and differences are especially stark in middle age groups.	Racism and Social Inequality behind BAME COVID-19 Disparities 16 June 2020, <i>GP Online</i> A report from Public Health England notes that racism, socioeconomic inequalities and prevalence of obesity and diabetes contribute to the unequal impact of COVID-19 on Black, Asian and other minority groups.	Coronavirus Pandemic Exposes South Africa's 'Brutal Inequality' 16 June 2020, <i>Brookings</i> The pandemic in South Africa is hitting Black-majority townships hardest and exposing deep-seated inequality in the country. Townships in the Western Cape province have high rates of infection.	Inequality and Poverty Effects of the Lockdown in Europe 16 June 2020, <i>Vox EU</i> Workers who cannot telework were especially affected by enforced social distancing and lockdowns. An analysis shows that wage losses are uneven and inequalities within countries are worsening.
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NOVEL CORONAVIRUS AND CHILDREN

Discussions on the multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children related to SARS-CoV-2 include:

- [More Questions Than Answers About MIS-C, Experts Say](#) (*Medscape*, 16 June)
- [Characteristics, Cardiac involvement, and Outcomes of Multisystem Inflammatory Disease of Childhood Associated with SARS-CoV-2 Infection](#) (*The Journal of Pediatrics*, 13 June)

Gilead [announced](#) that it will soon start trials of remdesivir in children who have moderate-to-severe COVID-19. The phase 2/3 trial will test the drug in about 50 participants, from newborn to adolescents, in the US and Europe. The National Institutes of Health [is launching](#) an effort to evaluate COVID-19 drugs for infants, children and adolescents.

According to a new study published in [Nature](#), children and adolescents are only half as likely to get SARS-CoV-2 infections compared to people over the age of 20 years. The authors note that this suggests school closures may not be effective in reducing the impact of the pandemic ([The Washington Post](#)). Overall, experts agree that the evidence on the impact of the virus on children remains weak and more questions remain on their susceptibility ([STAT](#)).

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Updates on Vaccine Development

CoronaVac, a SARS-CoV-2 vaccine candidate from Sinovac Biotech in China, [showed](#) success in preliminary results of a Phase 2 clinical trial. The Phase 2 trial data indicate that the vaccine induced neutralizing antibodies in 90 per cent of participants after the second dose of the vaccine. The company also [announced](#) new Phase 3 clinical trials in Brazil.

Meanwhile, researchers at Imperial College London [began](#) its trials of a vaccine candidate. The European Commission presented a [new European strategy](#) to accelerate the development and deployment of COVID-19 vaccines.

Treatment Updates: Dexamethasone, Hydroxychloroquine, Remdesivir

Dexamethasone, an inexpensive and widely available medication, is the first drug to be shown to improve survival in COVID-19. In a randomized study, dexamethasone reduced deaths by one-third in ventilated patients. The topline interim results were shared by press release and researchers are working to publish details soon ([MedPage Today](#)). The WHO [noted](#) that it will coordinate a meta-analysis after results are shared and update clinical guidance.

After more evidence on the use of hydroxychloroquine and chloroquine for COVID-19, the US Food and Drug Administration [withdrew](#) emergency use authorizations for the two drugs. The WHO [halted](#) the hydroxychloroquine arm in its multi-country trial of treatments for COVID-19 after new studies showed no benefit.

As research continues, advocates warn that the lack of transparency in new drug agreements are a barrier to equitable access to proven treatments. Recently, Gilead made an agreement with generic pharmaceutical companies in Egypt, India and Pakistan to allow them to produce remdesivir and distribute it in 127 countries ([Devex](#)).

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

10 Lessons from HIV for the COVID-19 Response

12 June 2020, *Open Society Foundations*

We Need DSD Now More Than Ever: The frontier of human rights-centered services for HIV treatment & prevention

How African Nations Can Respond to the Challenges of Both COVID-19 and Future Pandemics

16 June 2020, *Forbes*

Director of the International Harm Reduction Development Program at the Open Society Foundations Daniel Wolfe outlines and describes lessons from HIV for the COVID-19 response.

12 June 2020, AVAC

AVAC urges the expansion of differentiated service delivery (DSD) models to ensure HIV services are continued during the pandemic.

Sierra Leone Vice President Mohamed Juldeh Jalloh and Seed Global Health's Vanessa Kerry discuss how African countries can use their COVID-19 responses to transform health systems.

AROUND THE UNITED NATIONS

- A new UN [report](#) highlights potential for a food crisis in Latin America and the Caribbean due to COVID-19.
- UNICEF [featured](#) its work in Pakistan to prevent COVID-19 among adolescents.
- According to a new [report](#) by the Overseas Development Institute and UNICEF, universal child benefits provided to children are important to mitigate the economic devastation of COVID-19.
- WHO [outlines](#) evidence and expert opinion on the impact of COVID-19 on older people.
- Karin Hulshof, UNICEF Regional Director East Asia and Pacific and Maalla M'jid, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children [urged](#) children to be centered in the COVID-19 response.

RECENT RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

Addressing Health Inequities Exacerbated by COVID-19 Among Youth With HIV: Expanding Our Toolkit

8 June 2020, *Journal of Adolescent Health*

The Johns Hopkins Intensive Primary Care clinic in Baltimore, Maryland describe the approaches taken by its HIV care programme to address the inequities faced by young people living with HIV from marginalized communities that is worsened by the pandemic.

SARS-CoV-2 Infection in a Highly Experienced Person Living With HIV

1 July 2020, *AIDS*

This correspondence from Rome describes the case of a 75-year-old male individual living with HIV for 23 years who was hospitalized with COVID-19 symptoms.

Global, Regional, and National Estimates of the Population at Increased Risk of Severe COVID-19 due to Underlying Health Conditions in 2020: A modelling study

15 June 2020, *The Lancet Global Health*

This modeling study suggests that roughly 1.7 billion people are at increased risk of severe COVID-19 due to at least one underlying condition. The estimate excluded other risk factors like ethnicity, poverty and obesity.

COVID-19 in 3 People Living with HIV in the United Kingdom

15 June 2020, *Journal of Medical Virology*

This correspondence reports clinical characteristics of three people living with HIV admitted to a hospital in the UK with severe COVID-19 symptoms.

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

COVID-19 and the World of Work: A focus on people living with HIV

8 June 2020

ILO released a brief describing the impact of the pandemic on people living with HIV and makes recommendations for a COVID-19 response in the world of work that is inclusive of people living with HIV.

Dual Pandemics: Global youth perspectives on fighting HIV & COVID-19

WEBINAR 17 June 2020

The Edward M. Kennedy Institute and EGPAF hosted a conversation with youth leaders from Africa and US to discuss young people's experiences with HIV and COVID-19.

Modeling of COVID-19 and Other Infectious Diseases

WEBINAR 17 June 2020

ICAP, Treatment Action Group and the COVID-19 Working Group – New York hosted a webinar on modelling COVID-19 and infectious diseases.

Six Concrete Measures to Support Women and Girls in All Their Diversity in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic

15 June 2020

UNAIDS released a report outlining six areas to address the needs, and protect the rights, of women and girls during the pandemic.

COVID-19 Impact on HIV Services & Procurement in Asia-Pacific

WEBINAR 10 June 2020

The Positive Indonesia Network and Global Fund Advocates Network Asia-Pacific co-hosted a webinar on the impact of pandemic-related restrictions on HIV services and procurement in Asia and the Pacific.

aidsmapWOMEN: Emotional well-being/COVID-19 special

VIDEO 16 June 2020

NAM began a three-part video series for women living with HIV. This first episode discusses emotional wellbeing and COVID-19.

Continuity of Care for persons with HIV and NCDs during COVID-19 Learning from Chronic Care Model

WEBINAR 13 June 2020

The Pan Caribbean Partnership Against HIV/AIDS and PAHO highlighted recommendations to ensure continuity of care for people with living with HIV during COVID-19.

Where Are We Now? Policy and Practice Updates from Côte d'Ivoire and Perspectives from Global Stakeholders

WEBINAR 16 June 2020

ICAP at Columbia University and DSD hosted a webinar with country updates from Cote d'Ivoire and a panel of global perspectives.

HIV & COVID-19 – What do we know so far?

PODCAST 4 June 2020

The Sexually Transmitted Infections journal hosted a discussion on information for clinicians and patients about HIV and COVID-19.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 23 Jun 2020: The final webinar in the series from ICAP at Columbia University and DSD will discuss global perspectives and feature breakout sessions. 8am ET | 2pm SAST >> [More](#)
- 23 Jun 2020: Imperial College London and Positively UK invites people living with, affected by, or working in HIV to contribute to discussions on COVID-19 research in the UK. 12pm ET | 6pm SAST >> [More](#)
- 29 Jun 2020: UNICEF's Children and AIDS Learning Collaborative presents a third webinar on what paediatric HIV programmes need to know about COVID-19. 9am ET | 3pm 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

26 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

Global Fund COVID-19 Report: Deaths from HIV, TB and Malaria Could Almost Double in 12 Months Unless Urgent Action is Taken
24 June 2020, *Global Fund*

A [new report](#) by the Global Fund estimates that countries affected by HIV, tuberculosis and malaria need US \$28.5 billion to protect progress achieved in the fight against HIV, TB and malaria in the past two decades. Estimates suggest deaths from HIV, TB and malaria could as much as double with overwhelmed systems, disrupted programmes and diverted resources. *See also: [The Telegraph](#)*

ICAP in Nigeria Supports People Living with HIV During National COVID Lockdowns

22 June 2020, *ICAP*

ICAP at Columbia University features its work in Nigeria to maintain stable supply lines for ART during the lockdown for COVID-19. This included setting up ART pickup locations closer to patients, mobilizing community health workers for in-person and virtual HIV support services at home, and facilitating the delivery of bulk quantities of HIV medications.

COVID-19 Could Affect the Availability and Cost of Antiretroviral Medicines, but the Risks can be Mitigated

22 June 2020, *UNAIDS*

An [analysis](#) of generic antiretroviral medicines in low- and middle-income countries signals disruptions due to COVID-19. Barriers to the value chain and the economic impact of the pandemic could hinder adequate stocks of HIV medicines in the next few months. UNAIDS presented recommendations for countries and manufacturers to maintain production and distribution of generic antiretroviral drugs.

Survey Shows That Many People Lack Multimonth HIV Treatment in Latin America

22 June 2020, *UNAIDS*

In a recent [survey](#), 5 out of 10 respondents from Latin America and the Caribbean reported difficulties in obtaining ART. Less than 2 out of 10 people had medications delivered to their homes. The survey included 2300 people from 28 countries.

We Must Not Forget Our Mission to End AIDS in Children, Mothers, and Families

22 June 2020, *EGPAF*

The Kenya country director of the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation discusses how HIV programmes and service provision in the country have adapted to the new constraints set by the COVID-19 pandemic.

SA 'Can't Afford' to Default on Three-in-One HIV Pill

22 June 2020, *Health-E News*

The South African National Aids Council's (SANAC) Civil Society Forum highlighted the importance of ensure ART access is maintained during the national lockdown. The organization and its partners are working to ensure individuals living with HIV continue to access treatment.

GLOBAL IMPACT OF COVID-19

African Countries Unite to Create 'One Stop Shop' to Lower Cost of COVID-19 Tests And PPE

22 June 2020, *The Guardian*

Countries in Africa united to create the Africa Medical Supplies Platform, which is a one-stop shop to acquire COVID-19 test kits, protective equipment and vaccines when they are ready for use across the continent.

Women, babies at risk as COVID-19 disrupts health services, World Bank warns

24 June 2020, *Reuters*

The World Bank's Global Financing Facility highlighted pandemic-related disruptions in health services for women and children, including for neonatal and maternity care, reproductive health and immunizations.

Shifting Front Lines in West Africa

17 June 2020, *Think Global Health*

Community health promoters are key in protecting vulnerable populations during the COVID-19 response in Nigeria. The frontline health workers also played a critical role in community response during the Ebola outbreak in 2014.

With over 250,000 Cases, Misinformation Is Compromising Africa's COVID-19 Response

22 June 2020, *Quartz Africa*

Health workers in many countries increasingly have to combat misinformation on COVID-19. In a survey, around three-quarters of respondents in Kenya and South Africa reported being unable to detect fake news on the internet.

Key Health Services in Africa Disrupted by Pandemic: WHO chief

24 June 2020, *France 24*

Speaking at a virtual conference hosted by the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, WHO's Tedros Adhanom

8 Hospitals in 15 Hours: A pregnant woman's crisis in the pandemic

21 June 2020, *New York Times*

As India reports increasing numbers of new infections, the country's strained and underfunded health care

Latin America and Caribbean Pass 100,000 COVID-19 Deaths

24 June 2020, *Al Jazeera*

In Latin America and the Caribbean, more than 100,000 people died of COVID-19 by Tuesday; more than half of deaths

Coronavirus Infections Pick Up Speed Across Africa

22 June 2020, *The Telegraph*

The African region passed 300,000 cases and 8,000 deaths last Sunday. While the numbers are still low, experts note that the pace

Ghebreyesus noted that COVID-19 is affecting key health services including for malaria and HIV, and threatens progress made.	system is struggling. A database of recent deaths reveals that many people have died after being denied critical care.	were in Brazil. There are now 2.1 million cases in the region, mostly in Brazil, Mexico, Peru and Chile. See also: BBC	of spread is accelerating in many parts of the continent.
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COVID-19 AND INEQUALITY

[In Conflict-Hit Countries, Coronavirus Testing May Not Reach Women](#)

24 June 2020, Thomson Reuters Foundation

Analysis from the International Rescue Committee suggests that women are accessing COVID-19 testing and care at lower rates than men, especially in conflict-hit areas. The WHO also noted that fewer than half of COVID-19 cases reported from around the world include sex and age disaggregation.

[Racism Drives Inequities in COVID-19, House Panel Told](#)

22 June 2020, MedPage Today

Public health experts speaking at a panel in the US House of Representatives highlighted the role of systemic racism in the disproportionately high rates of COVID-19 among Black Americans. Their worse outcomes may be driven by differences in access to health services, implicit biases within the health system, limited participation in clinical trials, and differences in the social determinants of health.

[Policing of European Covid-19 Lockdowns Shows Racial Bias – Report](#)

24 June 2020, The Guardian

An Amnesty International report examining physical distancing measures for COVID-19 in 12 European countries showed that minority ethnic groups are facing harsher enforcements. It concludes that the pandemic is contributing to increased “marginalisation, stigmatisation and violence”.

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS AND CHILDREN

Updates on the multisystem inflammatory syndrome affecting children related to SARS-CoV-2 infection include:

- [COVID-19 Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Three Teenagers with Confirmed SARS-CoV-2 Infection](#) (*Journal of Medical Virology*)
- [ACR Unveils Guidance for Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children with COVID-19](#) (*Healio*)

A [study](#) in *The Lancet* measuring antibodies to estimate infection rates in Geneva, Switzerland suggests that children and older adults are less likely to show evidence of past SARS-CoV-2 infection. Compared to positive tests in 10 per cent of adults aged 20-49 years in the study, less than one per cent of children aged 5-9 and just over four per cent of adults aged over 65 participants tested positive for antibodies.

UNICEF released a new report that highlights the impact of COVID-19 on children in South Asia. According to ‘[Lives upended: How COVID-19 threatens the futures of 600 million South Asian children](#)’, the pandemic is unraveling progress made in health and education for children in the region. An additional 120 million children in South Asia could be pushed into poverty due to the continuing spread of coronavirus. See summaries in: [NPR](#), [CNN](#)

Across the world, COVID-19 is exacerbating barriers to education for vulnerable children, according to a [new report](#) by UNESCO. Even before the pandemic, an estimated 258 million children globally were excluded from education; the rates of out-of-school primary and secondary school-age children may now be increasing.

Experts have [noted](#) that the pandemic is increasing the risks of violence against children in conflict zones, especially for girls who also face sexual health concerns. According to [data](#) from Save the Children, children as well as women in Venezuela are suffering from a spike in physical, sexual or emotional violence at home during the pandemic.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Updates on Vaccine Development

South Africa [began](#) a SARS-CoV-2 vaccine trial this week with a candidate developed by University of Oxford and AstraZeneca. This is the first coronavirus trial in Africa and [includes people living with HIV](#).

Sanofi Pasteur [announced](#) accelerated clinical trials for its vaccine candidate and a new US \$425 million deal on a new partnership for vaccine development.

The WHO [set out](#) an allocation plan for COVID-19 vaccines when developed. The [framework](#) presented to member states outlines three groups for priority vaccination: health workers, adults older than 65 and adults with comorbidities such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, and obesity.

Treatment Updates: Dexamethasone, Hydroxychloroquine, Remdesivir

Following promising results with the use of dexamethasone in patients hospitalized with COVID-19, the WHO [encouraged](#) adequate production of the drug in a media briefing this week. The WHO noted that dexamethasone should only be used under clinical supervision for patients with severe or critical disease; there is no evidence of effectiveness for mild cases or for preventive use. In fact, experts [warned](#) that the drug may be harmful for mild cases. See also: ‘[Dexamethasone and the Recovery Trial’s High-Speed Science](#)’

After new evidence showing no additional benefit and the WHO’s announcement ending its hydroxychloroquine trial last week, the National Institutes of Health [stopped](#) a trial of hydroxychloroquine to treat symptomatic COVID-19.

Gilead Sciences is [beginning trials](#) of an inhalable version of remdesivir, an antiviral drug that is currently given intravenously and thus limited to use in hospital settings. The inhalable version, administered through a nebulizer, could help support the treatment to be used at various stages of SARS-CoV-2 infection. Meanwhile, industry watchdogs are [discussing fair pricing](#) for the drug.

HIV experts [emphasized](#) that claims about the effectiveness of antiretroviral drugs for COVID-19 treatment have a poor evidence base. Rigorous clinical trials and peer review remain essential despite the urgency of coronavirus R&D.

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

Messaging During COVID-19: What can we learn from previous crises of infectious disease

24 June 2020, *Maverick Citizen*

Ensuring good and consistent public health communication has been important for the responses to HIV, TB, Ebola, malaria and influenza. Key lessons from these experiences include centering trust, providing context and combatting stigma.

Opinion: 'Silent discriminator' — the women global data is leaving behind

19 June 2020, *Devex*

Experts from the University of Global Health Equity advocate for more sex disaggregated data to understand and address the impact of COVID-19 on women and prevent aggravating preexisting inequities.

Opinion: NGOs are withdrawing from Africa when surge capacity is needed most

23 June 2020, *Devex*

Action Against Hunger's Regional Director Hajir Maalim urges nongovernmental organizations and the humanitarian sector at large to expand its capacity and investment in addressing COVID-19 and its broader impacts in Africa.

Challenges and Similarities in HIV, COVID-19 Crises: A Q&A with Anthony Fauci, MD

16 June 2020, *AJMC*

Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Anthony Fauci discusses parallels between the HIV epidemic and COVID-19.

Africa: In the fight against COVID-19, an unsung continent

20 June 2020, *Gates Foundation*

Almost all 55 countries in Africa acted swiftly at the beginning of the pandemic. The authors note that they did so despite the greater economic risks of lockdowns and restrictions in the continent, and with more limited resources than the United States and Europe.

Uganda's COVID-19 Neglect of Minorities Is Bad for Everyone

22 June 2020, *African Arguments*

The author notes that the Ugandan government's pandemic response has systematically excluded religious minorities, which is not only a threat to their rights but also harms epidemic control broadly.

AROUND THE UNITED NATIONS

- In a media briefing, the WHO [predicted](#) the number of global SARS-CoV-2 cases will surpass 10 million in the next week, with 900,000 new cases expected in the coming days.
- The UN [marked](#) Public Service Day by paying tribute to frontline public sector workers for their service.
- The World Food Programme [highlighted](#) a large funding gap that is threatening the continuation of its aid flights that is providing relief during the pandemic.

RECENT RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

Coinfection with HIV and SARS-Cov-2 In Wuhan, China: A 12-Person Case Series

12 June 2020, *Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes*

The researchers conducted a survey about COVID-19 with individuals living with HIV in Wuhan, China. Of 12 respondents, ten were on ART; nine of these had mild COVID-19 symptoms with quick recovery while one died early in the outbreak. Two were not on ART until being hospitalized with severe COVID-19 symptoms.

Outcomes Among HIV-positive Patients Hospitalized with COVID-19

12 June 2020, *Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes*

This retrospective matched cohort study from New York compared outcomes among those living with HIV hospitalized for SARS-CoV-2 infection and those without HIV hospitalized with the infection. The sample included 21 patients with HIV. No significant differences in presentation, hospital course and outcomes were seen.

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

Considerations for HIVST in the Context of COVID-19

23 June 2020

This technical guide from Unitaids's STAR/ATLAS includes case studies from South Africa, Eswatini and Kenya and presents best practices on leveraging HIV self-testing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Updated Government Guidance on 22 June – Advice from the British HIV Association (BHIVA) and the Terrence Higgins Trust (THT)

22 June 2020

BHIVA updated guidance for people living with HIV on social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Community-led Responses in the Time of COVID – UNAIDS Global Survey

24 June 2020

UNAIDS is conducting a [global survey](#) of community-led organizations and networks who work in HIV about the impact of COVID-19 on HIV programming and new efforts adapting to COVID-19.

Scientific Brief: Breastfeeding and COVID-19

23 June 2020

WHO released a scientific brief with recommendations for mothers with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 on breastfeeding and postnatal care.

DSD and CQUIN – Updates from the WHO and Global Perspectives

WEBINAR 23 June 2020

Representatives of the WHO, CQUIN, DSD Initiative and the International Treatment Preparedness Coalition presented global updates on differentiated service delivery during COVID-19 in this webinar hosted by ICAP at Columbia University and DSD.

PEPFAR Technical Guidance in Context of COVID-19 Pandemic

UPDATED 19 June 2020

Updates to the guidance were made to reflect re-opening in some settings and the need for continued attention for other conditions. New online resources were also added.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 29 Jun 2020: UNICEF's Children and AIDS Learning Collaborative presents a third webinar on what paediatric HIV programmes need to know about COVID-19. 9am ET / 3pm SAST >> [More](#)
- 30 Jun 2020: PSI hosts a webinar on adapting HIV self-testing to the COVID-19 pandemic with case studies from Vietnam, Ukraine, Zambia and West Africa. 9 am ET / 3pm SAST >> [More](#)

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

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3 July 2020

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COVID-19: IMPACT ON HIV AND HIV SERVICE DELIVERY

<p>Learning from People with HIV: Their Insights are Critical to Our Response to the Intersecting COVID-19 and HIV Pandemics in Africa 30 June 2020, <i>AIDS and Behavior</i></p> <p>In this field report from East Africa, people living with HIV and HIV care providers note the impacts of COVID-19 and innovative solutions that are being used to continue HIV care.</p>	<p>Delivery of PrEP at Home in the Republic of Moldova 30 June 2020, <i>UNAIDS</i></p> <p>In Moldova, the GENDERDOC-M Information Center is supporting the delivery of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to homes during the lockdown. More than 90 people have received PrEP deliveries so far.</p>	<p>COVID-19 and HIV: What you need to know 29 June 2020, <i>POZ</i></p> <p>This feature story discusses the impact of COVID-19 on people living with HIV, including: the evidence on risks and protection, immune system response and the importance of continuing HIV treatment and care.</p>
<p>Update on Western Cape Data: People with HIV have small increased risks from COVID-19 26 June 2020, <i>i-Base</i></p> <p>The routine public sector data presented by the Western Cape Department of Health in a webinar in June was updated and published this week. In the paper, the authors added a sensitivity analysis to assess unmeasured confounding that could impact the association between HIV and COVID-19.</p>	<p>Old Lessons, New Pandemic: ‘We showed up to do COVID-19 testing & communities told us to pack our bags’ 22 June 2020, <i>Bhekisisa</i></p> <p>In South Africa, HIV prevention projects that supported voluntary medical male circumcision pivoted to the COVID-19 response. When adapting to these services, building community trust and battling misinformation remained most important.</p>	<p>Adapting Community-Based Services during COVID-19 25 June 2020, <i>aidsmap</i></p> <p>GAT Portugal provides peer-led HIV and sexual health services in addition to conducting advocacy. In the context of the pandemic, GAT adapted its services to include more online service delivery. GAT also took temperatures, asked patients about COVID-19 symptoms and offered services by appointment only.</p>

GLOBAL IMPACT OF COVID-19

<p>Africa’s Unsung Army of Women Wage War on COVID-19 26 June 2020, <i>Reuters</i></p> <p>Community health workers, who are mostly women, have been integral in providing support and health services to families living in remote villages and urban slums who lack formal support. These women are now essential foot soldiers of the COVID-19 response in many countries.</p>	<p>Coronavirus Is Battering Africa’s Growing Middle Class 29 June 2020, <i>New York Times</i></p> <p>The pandemic is threatening the growth of Africa’s middle class. About 170 million people among the 1.3 billion in the region are now classified as middle class. According to the World Data Lab, about 8 million of them could be pushed into poverty because of the pandemic.</p>	<p>COVID-19 Casts a Shadow Over Progress on TB 29 June 2020, <i>aidsmap</i></p> <p>COVID-19 response measures have affected TB programmes and other non-COVID care. Barriers include strained health systems, patients’ fear of acquiring infection and disruptions due to restricted travel.</p>
<p>Impacts of COVID-19 Disproportionately Affect Poor and Vulnerable: UN 30 June 2020, <i>UN News</i></p> <p>UN chief António Guterres noted COVID-19 impacts on the most vulnerable: people living in poverty, women and children, persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups. He called for recovery plans that prioritize those at risk and expand universal social protection.</p>	<p>In Midst of COVID Chaos, One Latin American Nation Gets It Right 30 June 2020, <i>Bloomberg</i></p> <p>Uruguay has not had more than 100 active cases at a time in almost a month. The country reopened most schools and began a phased restart of the economy. In addition to early decisions to take action and close borders, Uruguay has been served well by the decades of investments in health care and social programmes.</p>	<p>Singapore Hands Out COVID-19 Contact Tracing Devices to Vulnerable Seniors 30 June 2020, <i>CGTN</i></p> <p>Singapore is issuing wearable devices for COVID-19 contact tracing to vulnerable seniors. The Bluetooth-enabled device will prompt warnings if an individual has close contact with someone with COVID-19. To allay privacy concerns, the device has no GPS or internet connectivity.</p>
<p>Companies Have Raised Prices on 245 Drugs during Pandemic, Advocacy Group Says 29 June 2020, <i>The Hill</i></p>	<p>Despite COVID Surge, Mexico Avoids Overwhelmed Hospitals 1 July 2020, <i>AP</i></p>	<p>CDC: Age nothing but a number for COVID-19 25 June 2020, <i>MedPage Today</i></p>

<p>According to a report by the Patients for Affordable Drugs, pharmaceutical companies raised prices on 245 drugs since the first COVID-19 case in the US. Sixty-one of those drugs are being used to treat COVID-19; price hikes are on par with increases in the last two years.</p>	<p>Mexico chose to invest in expanding hospital beds early in the crisis rather than in testing. Beds are now widely available, despite the country having nearly three times more deaths than predicted. Mexico has reported more than 26,000 deaths from COVID-19, though this could be an undercount due to the low testing rate.</p>	<p>The CDC published data on pregnant women with COVID-19. Pregnant women were 5.4 times more likely to be hospitalized and 1.5 times more likely to receive intensive care versus non-pregnant women. The authors noted that the differences may be due to closer medical surveillance of pregnant women.</p>
<p>In Haiti, Coronavirus Spreads in Slums, Showing Challenge for Latin America 28 June 2020, <i>SwissInfo</i></p> <p>In Haiti, coronavirus cases are increasingly spreading into poor, densely-packed neighborhoods. Residents are largely in the informal labor sector, which has been most affected by the COVID-19 response. Many in these neighborhoods cannot afford to quarantine or meet the recommended hygiene guidelines.</p>	<p>COVID-19 Infection Rate in Rio's Favelas Far Exceeds Official Count, A New Study Says 25 June 2020, <i>NPR</i></p> <p>A survey carried out by Rio de Janeiro's mayor and the Brazilian Institute of Public Opinion and Statistics showed coronavirus infections in almost 1 in 4 of those tested in some favelas. The findings indicate that case rates are much higher than the currently confirmed 3,600 cases in these same areas.</p>	<p>Coronavirus' Invisible Victims: Children in monetary poor households 30 June 2020, <i>Save the Children</i></p> <p>Analysis from Save the Children and UNICEF released at the end of May found that even before the pandemic, 586 children were living in monetary poor households globally. Projections on the economic impact for 2020 show an even gloomier picture, predicting a rise of 90 to 117 million children suffering poverty.</p>

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS AND CHILDREN

The *New England Journal of Medicine* published two new studies from US-based research groups on the multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children:

- [Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in U.S. Children and Adolescents](#) (29 Jun, *NEJM*)
- [Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children in New York State](#) (29 Jun, *NEJM*)

See also: editorial ([NEJM](#)) and summary ([STAT](#))

Other discussions on the syndrome include:

- [Kids' Brains Affected by COVID-Linked Inflammatory Syndrome](#) (1 July, *MedPage Today*)
- [Paging Dr. Hamblin: Are Kids Really Spared From the Coronavirus?](#) (1 July, *The Atlantic*)

An [analysis](#) by the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health suggested that at least nine children died because of lockdown-related delays in getting medical treatment, which is higher than the six children who died from COVID-19.

A recent study added to the evidence that severe COVID-19 among children is rare; children diagnosed with COVID-19 generally experience mild disease with fewer deaths. The cohort study in the [Lancet Child and Adolescent Health](#) included 582 children across 25 European countries. A review in [EClinicalMedicine](#) of 7,780 paediatric patients across 131 studies also suggested that children with COVID-19 are more likely to have good outcomes compared to adults.

In the UK, the government [released plans](#) to reopen schools, colleges and nurseries in September, including guidelines to reduce risks. The American Academy of Pediatrics released [guidance](#) on school reopening that stressed the fundamental role of schools in children's health and well-being, and in addressing racial and social inequity. Starting 6 July, about 6 million students are [expected](#) to return to school in South Africa under the country's phased reopening plan. In Kenya, experts [suggested](#) reopening primary and secondary schools in January while Nigeria has [decided](#) to reopen schools only for students in graduating classes.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Updates on Vaccine Development

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in the US [released guidance](#) for approving a COVID-19 vaccine, including a condition that the vaccine must be at least 50 per cent more effective than a placebo in preventing disease. As the first clinical trial for a COVID-19 vaccine began in Africa, some people [are protesting](#) due to concerns that the trials will include people who are not aware of all risks. See also: [Crafting a framework for Africa's COVID-19 vaccine access](#)

Efforts to speed up manufacturing are also continuing. The Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness and Innovation (CEPI) [is buying](#) 100 million glass vials and identifying manufacturers with capacity to produce four billion vaccine doses per year. Brazil [announced](#) an agreement with Oxford and AstraZeneca to produce a vaccine that is currently in trials; the country will pay \$127 million and receive material to produce 30.4 million doses in December and January.

Treatment Updates: Hydroxychloroquine, Remdesivir, Lopinavir-Ritonavir

A global trial to examine whether hydroxychloroquine and chloroquine can prevent COVID-19 is set to restart after being approved by the British regulatory body, Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency ([Reuters](#)).

The US [announced](#) that it will secure access to more than 500,000 treatment courses of remdesivir and [faced criticism](#) from experts who are concerned about how this deal affects availability of the drug elsewhere. The UK [noted](#) that it has enough supplies currently to treat hospitalized patients. Meanwhile, Gilead in an [open letter](#) set the price for governments of developed countries at \$390 per vial and for U.S. private insurance at \$520 per vial, amounting to \$2,340 and \$3,120 respectively for a typical treatment course of remdesivir ([AP](#)).

HIV drugs lopinavir-ritonavir demonstrated no clinical benefit in hospitalized COVID-19 patients in the UK. The RECOVERY trial found no difference in mortality, length of hospital stay or the risk of being put on a ventilator between 1,596 patients who were given lopinavir-ritonavir for COVID-19 and the control group. ([Reuters](#))

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

<p>Generation Coronavirus? 27 June 2020, <i>The Lancet</i></p> <p>This editorial discusses the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on children and adolescents. Disruptions stand to affect young people's health and well-being in the long term.</p>	<p>Youth Need to Be Central to Government's Policymaking 29 June 2020, <i>Mail & Guardian</i></p> <p>Activate Change Drivers, a network of young advocates in South Africa, discusses the importance of young people in policymaking for COVID-19.</p>	<p>How HIV/AIDS Changed the World 25 June 2020, <i>The Economist</i></p> <p>This commentary presents the enduring effects of the HIV epidemic and lessons learned from the HIV response for the global community, especially in the context of COVID-19.</p>
<p>Q&A: UNFPA chief on harmful practices against girls during the pandemic 30 June 2020, <i>Devex</i></p> <p>The Executive Director of UNFPA Natalia Kanem noted links between lockdowns and coercion of girls into sexual activity as well as early marriages. Harmful practices against girls are projected to rise if interventions are delayed.</p>	<p>Q&A: Henrietta Fore's biggest concerns about coronavirus and children 30 June 2020, <i>Devex</i></p> <p>The Executive Director of UNICEF Henrietta Fore listed five concerns she sees as most important to address for children in the context of COVID-19: immunization, nutrition, remote learning, water and mental health.</p>	<p>Is COVID-19 Different in People with HIV? 28 June 2020, <i>Journal Watch</i></p> <p>The author presents a summary of the current evidence on COVID-19 among individuals living with HIV and those without HIV. The early evidence is largely from small studies and definitive results are still awaited.</p>

RECENT RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

<p>Incidence and Severity of COVID-19 in HIV-Positive Persons Receiving Antiretroviral Therapy 26 June 2020, <i>Annals of Internal Medicine</i></p> <p>In this study from Spain, individuals on ART with the nucleotide reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NRTIs) tenofovir disoproxil fumarate (TDF)/emtricitabine (FTC) had lower risk of COVID-19 than those receiving other types of ART. <i>See also, for a discussion and summary: aidsmap</i></p>	<p>COVID-19 and People with HIV Infection: Outcomes for hospitalized patients in New York City 28 June 2020, <i>Clinical Infectious Diseases</i></p> <p>The researchers in New York compared outcomes of COVID-19 among people living with HIV and a matched comparison group without HIV. There was no difference in COVID-19 severity on admission by HIV status for the 88 patients included in the study.</p>	<p>Disproportionate Burden of COVID-19 Among Racial Minorities and Those in Congregate Settings Among a Large Cohort of People With HIV 25 June 2020, <i>Clinical Infectious Diseases</i></p> <p>The authors examined characteristics of people living with HIV with COVID-19 in Massachusetts. About 77 per cent of people with HIV hospitalized with COVID-19 were Black or Latinx. Nearly half of patients included had exposure to congregate settings.</p>
<p>SARS-CoV-2 and HIV Coinfection: Clinical experience from Rhode Island, United States 19 June 2020, <i>Journal of International AIDS Society</i></p> <p>The authors present clinical experience of HIV and SARS-CoV-2 coinfection from Rhode Island, US. The paper describes 27 people living with HIV treated for COVID-19; the clinical findings suggest COVID-19 presents similarly for people living with HIV and those without HIV.</p>	<p>Clinical Outcomes and Immunologic Characteristics of COVID-19 in People with HIV 30 June 2020, <i>Journal of Infectious Diseases</i></p> <p>The retrospective chart review from New York City examined characteristics and outcomes of people living with HIV with COVID-19. Those who died were more likely to require intensive care and ventilator support. There was no difference in mortality by age, sex, duration of HIV infection or presenting CD4 count.</p>	<p>Outcomes of a Rapid Adolescent Telehealth Scale-Up During the COVID-19 Pandemic 30 June 2020, <i>Journal of Adolescent Health</i></p> <p>The paper describes the scale-up of adolescent telehealth programmes in response to COVID-19 at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, US. Six per cent of video visits were for HIV treatment. Patients who were non-white had lower visit rates than white patients.</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>United Nations Comprehensive Response to COVID-19: Saving lives, protecting societies, recovering better 25 June 2020</p> <p>This report is an overview of the UN response to COVID-19, recounting key guidance, lessons and support so far. It also outlines the path forward to ensure no one is left behind and vulnerabilities are addressed.</p>	<p>COVID-19: What Paediatric HIV Programmes Need to Know - Planning for reopening WEBINAR 29 June 2020</p> <p>UNICEF's Children and AIDS Learning Collaborative hosted a webinar on COVID-19, children, pregnant women and HIV. It included research updates, global guidance, implications for HIV service delivery and frontline perspectives from South Africa.</p>	<p>Strategic Leveraging of HIVST in COVID-19 Pandemic WEBINAR 30 June 2020</p> <p>PSI hosted a discussion on adapting HIV self-testing to the COVID-19 pandemic. Case studies from Vietnam, Ukraine, Zambia and West Africa were presented.</p>
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UPCOMING EVENTS

- 6-10 July 2020: The 23rd International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2020: Virtual) will be hosted online. *Multiple times. Explore the Roadmap to find events on children, adolescents and pregnant women >> [More](#)*
- 10-11 July 2020: The International AIDS Society presents a Virtual COVID-19 Conference on breaking research, policy analysis and frontline experience. *Multiple times, free of charge >> [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

10 July 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 AT THE 23RD INTERNATIONAL AIDS CONFERENCE (AIDS2020: VIRTUAL)

UNAIDS Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic Shows that 2020 Targets Will Not Be Met Because of Deeply Unequal Success; COVID-19 Risks Blowing HIV Progress Off Course
6 July 2020, *UNAIDS*

The [AIDS 2020 report by UNAIDS](#) outlines progress on global HIV targets but notes that achievements have not been made equally within and between countries. The report also warns that severe disruptions due to the COVID-19 pandemic can set back progress on HIV targets by ten years or more. *See also: ‘AIDS report: Kids are lagging and COVID-19 is harming care’ (AP)*

London Study Shows People with HIV Not at Greater Risk of Severe COVID-19 Illness

4 July 2020, *aidsmap*

According to a study from London, people with HIV did not suffer worse outcomes after being hospitalized with COVID-19. The researchers noted that after controlling for age and other confounding factors, people with HIV experienced more rapid improvement than matched patients without HIV.

See also: ‘HIV may not worsen COVID-19 outlook’ (Study from US); ‘HIV raises the risk of death from COVID-19 in South Africa’s Western Cape’ (Study from South Africa)

Efforts to Beat the Coronavirus Pandemic Could Cause Over 1 Million Extra Deaths from Other Diseases, Experts Warn

6 July 2020, *CNN*

According to a [new report by the International AIDS Society](#), economic shifts and disruptions to health services caused by the COVID-19 pandemic could derail progress made in HIV across the world. Recent models from the WHO, Stop TB Partnership and Imperial College London predicted an extra 1 million deaths from HIV, TB and malaria due to these disruptions.

COVID-19 Knocks HIV Goals ‘Completely Off Track’

6 July 2020, *Healio*

The article summarizes four sessions on the impact of COVID-19 on HIV. This includes the pandemic’s effects on PrEP services, increasing the vulnerability of certain populations, access to HIV medicines and inequities seen in both epidemics.

See also: ‘COVID-19 forces biggest HIV conference to go virtual...’ (TimesLIVE)

WHO: Access to HIV medicines severely impacted by COVID-19 as AIDS response stalls

6 July 2020, *WHO*

In a survey by the WHO, seventy-three countries warned that they are at risk of stock-outs of antiretroviral medicines due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Twenty four of these countries specifically reported having either a critically low stock of ARVs or disruptions in the supply of these life-saving medicines.

COVID-19 Has Had a Major Impact on Prep, Sexual Behaviour And Service Provision

9 July 2020, *aidsmap*

Several studies highlighted the impact of COVID-19 on PrEP use, sexual activity and number of partners among men who have sex with men in the US and Australia. Notably, among survey respondents in Australia who stopped using PrEP, 86 per cent noted COVID-19 as one of the reasons.

COVID-19: IMPACT ON HIV AND HIV SERVICE DELIVERY

Coronavirus: ‘Brilliant’ opportunity to combat HIV as demand for home tests rises during lockdown

5 July 2020, *Sky News*

The number of free HIV self-testing kits issued in London was 20 per cent higher during the first eight weeks of the COVID-19 lockdown than the same period last year. In some parts of London, demand for home testing kits increased by over 70 per cent.

Unlocking HIV/AIDS Financing during COVID-19

6 July 2020, *Devex*

The COVID-19 pandemic is straining country budgets and raising concerns for HIV/AIDS financing, especially for low-income countries that are reliant on foreign aid for their HIV response. Total aid volume is expected to decrease.

Support for Uzbek Mothers Living with HIV

8 July 2020, *UNAIDS*

In Uzbekistan, maternal health care providers and HIV care providers are working to ensure more protections for mothers and their babies during the COVID-19 pandemic. UNAIDS and UNFPA have donated personal protective equipment to maternal hospitals.

GLOBAL IMPACT OF COVID-19

How Different Countries Have Handled COVID-19, Ranked

7 July 2020, *UN Dispatch*

A [new report](#), published by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network, ranked countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-

COVID-19 Pandemic in Africa Is Now Reaching ‘Full Speed’

9 July 2020, *AP*

Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention confirmed over 522,000 cases on the continent with South Africa making up over 224,000

Coronavirus: Spanish study casts doubt on herd immunity feasibility

7 July 2020, *BBC*

A large study recently published in [The Lancet](#) found that only 5 per cent of the population in Spain developed antibodies to the novel coronavirus.

operation and Development (OECD) on how well they contained COVID-19 and minimized economic damage. It placed South Korea as the most effective and the UK as the least.	of them. These numbers might be underestimated because most testing has been concentrated in capital cities while infections may now have spread to other regions.	The results raise questions about the feasibility of reaching herd immunity.
Bolsonaro Made Brazil a Pandemic Pariah 7 July 2020, <i>Foreign Affairs</i> While Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro's pandemic response has been criticized, some local leaders are drawing praise because of their work drawing on Brazil's universal public health system, called the SUS, to mobilize a better response.	The Pandemic Could Push Nearly 50 Million More Africans into Extreme Poverty, Afdb Says 7 July 2020, <i>Devex</i> The African Development Bank revised its annual economic outlook report for the first time. It predicted that 49.2 million additional people in Africa may enter extreme poverty by 2021 because of the pandemic.	COVID-19 Pandemic Accelerating and Global Peak Still to Come: WHO 7 July 2020, <i>France24</i> The WHO noted that 400,000 new cases of COVID-19 were reported over the weekend. The outbreak is accelerating. WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus stressed that we have not reached the peak of the pandemic.

COVID-19 AND INEQUALITY

Coronavirus Lockdowns Increasing HIV Risk to Women and Girls 6 July 2020, <i>Thomson Reuters Foundation</i> UNAIDS highlighted how lockdowns are increasing the risk of HIV infections among women and girls globally. COVID-19 lockdowns affect education, protection from sexual violence and access to medical care.	Study of 17 Million Identifies Crucial Risk Factors for Coronavirus Deaths 8 June 2020, <i>New York Times</i> In a new study in Nature , analysis of more than 17 million people in England identified older people, men, racial and ethnic minorities as well as those with underlying health conditions as being more vulnerable to COVID-19.	In France, Study Shows Virus Hit African Immigrants Hardest 8 June 2020, <i>AP</i> According to a study by NSEE , the French government's statistics agency, death rates among immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa doubled in France and tripled in the Paris region during the peak of the pandemic in the area.
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NOVEL CORONAVIRUS AND CHILDREN

Recent publications on the multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children related to SARS-CoV-2 infections include a small case series from London describing brain damage associated with the syndrome ([summary](#)) and an analysis of the systemic inflammation and antibody responses seen ([summary](#)). See:

- [Neurologic and radiographic findings associated with COVID-19 infection in children](#) (1 July, *JAMA Neurology*)
- [Mapping Systemic Inflammation and Antibody Responses in Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children](#) (4 July, pre-print)

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) [approved](#) an investigational allogeneic mesenchymal stem cell product for the paediatric multisystem inflammatory syndrome. Children aged between 2 months and 17 years may receive one or two compassionate use doses of a stem cell therapy.

Science [described](#) considerations for policies and programmes on reopening schools across the world. All schools in Kenya will [remain closed](#) until January 2021. The government had been providing school programmes on the radio, television and online since March but as in other countries, access to these resources remain uneven.

According to a [report](#) by World Vision, millions more children around the world are being forced into begging and experiencing hunger due to the pandemic. Meanwhile, an analysis in the [Canadian Medical Association Journal](#) notes that indirect effects of the pandemic on children will have long-term consequences. This includes delayed medical care and mental trauma. See also: '[Children could be facing long-term health effects indirectly linked to COVID-19](#)'

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Updates on Vaccine Development

The South African Medical Research Council's Professor Jeffrey Mphahlele [discusses](#) the features and challenges of the first COVID-19 vaccine trial in the country. In the UK, Imperial College's Professor Robin Shattock [discusses](#) the experimental RNA vaccine candidate with 'cautious optimism.' A recent survey in the study [suggests](#) that nearly one in six British adults would refuse the COVID-19 vaccine after it becomes available.

The US National Institutes of Health [established](#) a new clinical trials network that will enroll thousands of volunteers in clinical trials for COVID-19 vaccines and monoclonal antibodies. The US government also [committed](#) \$2 billion to Novovax Inc. and Regeneron Pharmaceuticals Inc. for vaccine development and manufacturing treatment.

Meanwhile, POLITICO [featured](#) the dangers of international competition to develop a novel coronavirus vaccine and the WHO [published](#) landscape documents of COVID-19 vaccine candidates.

Treatment Updates: Hydroxychloroquine, Lopinavir-Ritonavir, Remdesivir

The WHO [said](#) on Saturday that it was discontinuing trials of hydroxychloroquine and combination HIV drug lopinavir/ritonavir for patients hospitalized with COVID-19 based on results showing a failure to reduce mortality. A study from China published in the [Journal of Medical Virology](#) indicated that the use of lopinavir/ritonavir is associated with pneumonia resolution for patients with COVID-19.

The European Commission [allowed](#) authorization for remdesivir to treat COVID-19. A case report from The Hague [spotlighted](#) concerns on liver toxicity linked to remdesivir.

South Africa [will be looking](#) at African herbs and formulations for treating COVID-19, particularly through the work of the newly-established Natural Indigenous Products Fund.

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

<p>We Can't End AIDS Without Fighting Racism 9 July 2020, <i>The Atlantic</i></p> <p>Elton John writes about racial disparities seen in the HIV epidemic as well as during the COVID-19 pandemic, and urges a stronger focus on addressing racism and inequality.</p>	<p>Reckoning with Mortality: Global health, HIV, and the politics of data 3 July 2020, <i>The Lancet</i></p> <p>The authors describe the politics of data, such as the type of data collected, for what use and by whom. A lesson from HIV is that to reduce mortality, a more robust approach to tracking is needed.</p>	<p>The global AIDS meeting, the Woodstock of science gatherings, goes virtual amid COVID-19 2 July 2020, <i>Science</i></p> <p>In this interview, infectious disease physician Anton Pozniak discusses AIDS2020: Virtual, the impact of COVID-19 on HIV science and the focus of the conference.</p>
<p>Opinion: Ensuring services for people with advanced HIV disease — more important than ever 3 July 2020, <i>Devex</i></p> <p>Patients with advanced HIV disease are more likely to be affected by pandemic-related HIV service delivery disruptions. In addition, because HIV testing services have been affected, new HIV diagnoses are delayed and risks of developing advanced HIV disease are increasing.</p>	<p>Women are most affected by pandemics — lessons from past outbreaks 8 July 2020, <i>Nature</i></p> <p>The authors note that, like during the Ebola and Zika outbreaks, the social and economic impacts of COVID-19 will impact women harder than men. Women's socio-economic security is being challenged across the world, and governments need to take action.</p>	<p>Disease and the disorder in the COVID-19 crisis 6 July 2020, <i>Mail and Guardian</i></p> <p>The commentary discusses narratives that shame and stigmatize those affected by a disease. These serve to further historical inequities and prevent equitable access to health care. These narratives seen during the HIV epidemic and its response are again emerging as a feature of the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>
<p>How the coronavirus pandemic impacts HIV patients 8 July 2020, <i>DW</i></p> <p>In a video interview, an expert HIV researcher discusses the pandemic's impact on the supply chain of antiretroviral medicines for HIV.</p>	<p>The forgotten pandemic—the fight against HIV continues 8 July 2020, <i>The Economist</i></p> <p>In a segment of the Economist Radio, the Director of HIV programmes at WHO outlines the impact of COVID-19 on access to HIV medications.</p>	<p>HIV, COVID-19 and the importance of public health 8 July 2020, <i>The Hill</i></p> <p>An infectious disease physician writes about the need to have a strong public health system to maintain HIV testing and treatment services.</p>

RECENT RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

<p>Attendance to HIV Antiretroviral Collection Clinic Appointments During COVID-19 Lockdown. A Single center study in Kigali, Rwanda 25 June 2020, <i>AIDS and Behavior</i></p> <p>This single center study examined attendance at clinic appointments for collecting ART during the lockdown in Kigali, Rwanda. Factors associated with attendance included place of residence and WHO clinical stage.</p>	<p>HIV and SARS CoV-2 Co-Infection: A retrospective, record based, case series from South India 7 July 2020, <i>Journal of Medical Virology</i></p> <p>In this letter from Tamil Nadu, India, the authors describe characteristics of six people living with HIV with SARS-CoV-2 co-infection. All patients were hospitalized but did not have coronavirus-related complications and were discharged after recovery.</p>	<p>Multimonth Dispensing of Antiretroviral Therapy for HIV 1 July 2020, <i>The Lancet HIV</i></p> <p>This letter discusses the implementation of multimonth dispensing of ART for HIV. While these recommendations were made earlier, reducing the number of refills has been especially relevant in the context of COVID-19.</p>
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RESOURCES

<p>Start Free Stay Free AIDS Free - 2020 report 7 July 2020</p> <p>This report from UNAIDS shows that while much progress has been made on global HIV targets, progress on eliminating new infections and preventing AIDS-related deaths among children is lagging.</p>	<p>Children, HIV and AIDS: How will progress be impacted by COVID-19? July 2020</p> <p>UNICEF notes that while recent data shows that the gap in HIV service delivery for pregnant women and children have been steadily closing, pandemic-related service disruptions threaten to reverse this progress.</p>	<p>HIV2020 Plenary: Communities Reclaiming the Global Response VIDEO 6 July 2020</p> <p>Hosted online as a community-led event, HIV2020 opened with a plenary on the importance of community engagement and leadership in the HIV response and in the global response to COVID-19.</p>
<p>COVID-19 and HIV: A tale of two pandemics 6 July 2020</p> <p>This report from the International AIDS Society outlines how COVID-19 disrupts the HIV response and makes recommendations for policy makers, healthcare providers, researchers, communities and funders.</p>	<p>AIDS 2020: Virtual DAILY - Episode One ft. Dr Anthony Fauci & Community Members VIDEO 6 July 2020</p> <p>During <i>AIDS2020: Virtual</i>, daily videos feature HIV science and community leaders. In this episode, NIAID's Anthony Fauci discusses the impact of COVID-19 on HIV research and care.</p>	<p>Take as Directed / Coronavirus Crisis Update PODCAST May-July 2020</p> <p>The CSIS Global Health Policy Center highlights global perspectives and analysis on COVID-19, including a discussion on South Africa's COVID-19 response and its impact on those living with HIV.</p>

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **10-11 July 2020:** The International AIDS Society presents a Virtual COVID-19 Conference on breaking research, policy analysis and frontline experience. *Multiple times, free of charge* >> [More](#)
- **15 July 2020:** Devex and CDC Group is hosting a discussion on women's economic empowerment and livelihoods in the context of the pandemic. *9am ET / 3pm SAST* >> [More](#)

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