

THE EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE HIV RESPONSE



PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV ARE AT HIGHER RISK FROM COVID-19

People living with HIV experience more severe outcomes and have higher comorbidities from COVID-19 than people not living with HIV

Repeated visits to HIV clinics to collect medicines put people at risk of contracting COVID-19

The pressure of dealing with both the HIV pandemic and the COVID-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on the mental health of people living with HIV

Access to COVID-19 vaccines in poorer countries is lagging well behind access in the richest

Communities have been key, helping many HIV programmes to rapidly rebound

Communities that had come together to respond to HIV quickly mobilized and refocused to fight COVID-19

People living with HIV are a priority for vaccination: HIV is considered a high-risk condition when developing vaccination programmes

The movement for a People's Vaccine grows stronger every day

UNAIDS and partners reached out to people living with HIV affected by lockdowns to help them to access HIV treatment

HIV self-testing, multimonth dispensing of medicines and the use of telehealth and virtual platforms for information and support have been accelerated, reversing many initial setbacks in HIV service provision

HIV treatment has been delivered to homes

TREATMENT ACCESS HAS SLOWED DOWN

Early lockdowns left people living with HIV who were away from their home unable to access their treatment

The link to HIV treatment has been broken—people who are newly diagnosed are often not starting treatment

People have had difficulty in accessing HIV treatment

The global increase in viral load testing slowed considerably

HIV testing services have been hit—new HIV infections are not being diagnosed

Mental health-care support services have been closed

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HIV PREVENTION PROGRAMMES HAVE BEEN INTERRUPTED

Programmes for preventing vertical transmission, voluntary medical male circumcision, PrEP and other HIV prevention options have been impacted

COVID-19 has put many children out of school. Since education can protect children's health and well-being, many children, especially girls, are now at higher risk of contracting HIV

The more than 11 million people in custody worldwide, and the 30 million people entering and leaving detention every year, have not been able to follow the recommended ways to prevent COVID-19

Harm reduction access for people who use drugs has been curtailed

Sexual and reproductive health and rights services have been scaled back

Harm reduction services have adapted and are reaching people who use drugs where they congregate and live

Where possible, prisoners have been released in order to stop transmission of HIV in jails

VIOLENCE AGAINST VULNERABLE PEOPLE HAS INCREASED

Lockdowns have increased gender-based violence

LOSER! @?#!# UGLY! STUPID!

Sexual harassment and other forms of violence against women continue—on streets, in public spaces and online

There have been increases in violence, harassment and arrests of sex workers, gay men and other men who have sex with men and transgender people during the COVID-19 pandemic

There's been an increase in calls to domestic violence helplines in many countries since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic

Many communities and women's organizations have set up refuges and are first responders to support affected women and girls

STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION HAS WORSENED

COVID-19 stigma has been directed at people living with HIV

SATOSHI IS TRANS

Access to justice has been curtailed and COVID-19 has been used as an excuse to introduce laws targeting transgender people and people living with HIV

Affected communities involved in the definition, implementation and follow-up of COVID-19 programmes have helped to reduce stigma around the disease

Communities have monitored and shone a light on human rights violations, in some cases leading to swift and effective changes in policy and practice

THE ECONOMIC EFFECTS HAVE BEEN HARSH

Sex workers have lost their livelihoods and are often excluded from social protection programmes

People living on the margins of society and working in the informal sector have often not been reached by official social protection schemes

Food and hygiene products have been distributed to the most vulnerable

Some countries have included sex workers and transgender people in social protection programmes