6000 children could die every day from preventable causes over the next six months as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to weaken health systems and disrupt routine services. In countries with already weak health systems, COVID-19 is causing disruptions in medical supply chains and straining financial and human resources. Visits to health care centres are declining due to lockdowns, curfews and transport disruptions, and as communities remain fearful of infection. UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore said, “Under a worst-case scenario, the global number of children dying before their fifth birthdays could increase for the first time in decades.”

Source: UNICEF

**YOUTH VOICES**

This pandemic is affecting all of us and it helps to reach out and share ideas, stories and concerns with one another about all things COVID-19. Please keep sharing your questions with us weekly, and we’ll do our best to find you the most accurate and relevant answers.

**REGIONAL INDICATORS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Confirmed</th>
<th>Recovered</th>
<th>Deaths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>2,383,339</td>
<td>113,061</td>
<td>3,720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>7,846</td>
<td>3,513</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>1,895</td>
<td>1,348</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivory Coast</td>
<td>11,750</td>
<td>5,752</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>509</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Under a worst-case scenario, the global number of children dying before their fifth birthdays could increase for the first time in decades.

Source: UNICEF

**TSHEPANG SEALE (ALEX FM) - SOUTH AFRICA**

**QUESTION:** “Is there any relation between COVID-19 and climate change?”

**RESPONSE:** Efforts to control COVID-19 transmission have reduced economic activity and led to temporary improvements in air quality in some areas. But temporary emissions reductions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases only have a limited impact. Any short-term environmental benefits as a result of COVID-19 came at an unacceptable human and economic cost, such as major unemployment, further challenges for vulnerable communities and increases in illnesses that could overburden the healthcare systems. Access to safe water and sanitation is also essential for communities to practice basic hygiene and reduce transmission of COVID-19. But one in four health care facilities around the world lacks basic water services. Climate change threatens the availability of water for consumption, food production, personal hygiene, and medical care, including for infectious disease.

Source: World Health Organization

**MMAKUBU PHOKWANE (MCRS FM) - SOUTH AFRICA**

**QUESTION:** “Most people here at my village don’t follow safety regulations so there could be a high risk of people getting infected.”

**RESPONSE:** The level of awareness and compliance with the lockdown regulations in South Africa have generally improved, even though there are areas that still remain a concern for the government. The Gauteng premier David Makhura said that compliance to the regulations was mostly due to low enforcement agencies enforcing the rules and combating crime across the province. He mentioned that there has especially been an improvement in the households as well, and to those dependent on other relief programmes which were disrupted during the lockdown, such as the National School Nutrition Programme. Social Relief of Distress has been extended for a short time only – usually for up to three months, which can in some cases be extended for another three months. Food parcels can also be applied for through the Solidarity Fund, which was the first phase of the economic response to vulnerable groups who will be most affected by the virus.

Source: South African Department of Health

**DOPPER RAMABULANA (ALEX FM) - SOUTH AFRICA**

**QUESTION:** “Why can’t alcohol be banned until we reach Level 1, because it’s one of the influencers on the rapid increase of COVID 19 stats right now?”

**RESPONSE:** Through research conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), only 12% of the South African population were in favour of the ban on alcohol being lifted. Which means that the majority of South Africans agree with the restriction of alcohol during lockdown. But there has been much debate around how the policies were decided upon, and for the most part, many argue that the decision was not informed by enough expert evidence. Yet the World Health Organization (WHO) has issued a report stating that the harmful use of alcohol has a serious effect on public health and is considered to be one of the main risk factors for poor health globally. The harmful use of alcohol is a significant contributor to the global burden of disease and is listed as the third leading risk factor for premature deaths and disabilities in the world. But one of the popular arguments supporting the sale of alcohol suggests that a ban could result in defiance and encourage bootlegging and illegal breweries – which could give control of the alcohol market to the criminal underworld.

Source: World Health Organization

**PABALLO PHALADI (MAM’S RADIO) - SOUTH AFRICA**

**QUESTION:** “I don’t want to get COVID-19 because I have asthma, meaning that I might die or something... I’m living in fear.”

**RESPONSE:** As more cases of COVID-19 are discovered and communities take action to combat the spread of disease, it is natural for some people to feel concerned or stressed. But remember that strong emotions can trigger an asthma attack. Some tips for people with asthma or living with someone who has asthma is to take some added precaution. This includes where possible, having someone who doesn’t have asthma do the cleaning and disinfecting. And when they use cleaning and disinfecting products, make sure that they:

- Check that people with asthma are not in the room.
- Minimize use of disinfectants that can cause an asthma attack.
- Clean surfaces like phones, remote controls, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, keyboards, toilets, faucets and sinks daily.
- Another handy tip is to talk to your healthcare provider about creating an emergency supply of prescription medications, such as asthma inhalers. Make sure that you have 30 days of nonprescription medications and supplies in case you need to stay home for a long while.

Source: Centers For Disease Control And Prevention

**PUSELETSO TJANE (MCRS) - SOUTH AFRICA**

**QUESTION:** “Is there any relation between COVID-19 and climate change?”

**RESPONSE:** Efforts to control COVID-19 transmission have reduced economic activity and led to temporary improvements in air quality in some areas. But temporary emissions reductions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases only have a limited impact. Any short-term environmental benefits as a result of COVID-19 came at an unacceptable human and economic cost, such as major unemployment, further challenges for